



HERITAGE HOUSE SCHOOL

RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

Approved by: [FGB]

Date: [1.12.25]

Last reviewed on: [November 2025]

**Next review due
by:** [November 2026]

Purpose and context

The prime purpose of the Relationships policy is to promote equal opportunities, ~~and~~ value each learner and to maintain and support an ethos engendering mutual respect, positive relationships and clear consistent expectations thus creating and fostering learning and achievement. It determines the approaches, learning environment and supports used, prioritising the developments of emotional literacy and emotional regulation, in order to achieve high standards of behaviour.

All learners at Heritage House School have an EHCP for their special educational needs. These may include, autism, profound and multiple learning difficulties and severe learning difficulties. The learners' specific needs may cause the learner to present with behaviours of concern.

It must be remembered that most learners with severe learning difficulties (SLD) are functioning at the level of a much younger child and therefore behaviours observed and consequences of these behaviours must be appropriate to the child's developmental age, rather than their chronological age.

We share our ethos with all new staff, as part of induction that learners with additional needs who are trying to communicate may exhibit behaviour of concern. The staff are therefore dedicated to trying to understand the reasons for particular behaviours displayed by individual learners and to helping them cope with the anxieties, frustrations and difficulties associated with their own needs

Everyone has a responsibility in developing positive relationships across school. New staff and supply staff receive a copy of this policy as part of the induction process and are expected to be a positive role model.

At Heritage House School, we recognise and define all behaviour as communicative effort. Staff should seek to understand what the learner is communicating and how to support the learner in their communication, understanding and emotional regulation to promote positive relationships.

Aims

- All learners have the right to learn in a calm, safe and purposeful environment.
- All learners can be supported to learn and behave with dignity
- That securing positive relationships with and between learners is key to them developing into secure, happy young people who are interested in their own learning.
- That effective support can only be achieved through partnership with parents and other agencies.
- Staff have confidence to engage and support learners in all aspects of their development through appropriate training and support

Legislation, statutory requirements and statutory guidance

This policy is based on legislation and advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2024](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools 2022](#)

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#)
- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils
- Sections 88 to 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which requires schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and gives schools the authority to confiscate pupils' property
- [DfE guidance](#) explaining that maintained schools must publish their behaviour policy online

Definitions

Behaviour of concern refers to any actions or behaviours that pose a risk to the safety, well-being, or development of the person exhibiting the behaviours, as well as to others around them.

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of 1 person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Learners at Heritage House typically experiences differences with their communication, social interaction and empathy which can effect the impact their behaviour has on others or to self-manage their behaviour. These differences can mean that they are less likely to intentionally 'bully' others, although behaviour that could be bullying can occur on occasions. While these actions may not have the same degree of intention as is usual when describing bullying, the effect may still be the same therefore must be addressed.

Please refer to our school's Anti-bullying policy for further information.

Safeguarding

The school recognises that changes in behaviour may be an indicator that a learner is in need of help or protection.

We will consider whether a learner's behaviour may be linked to them suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Where this may be the case, we will follow our child protection and safeguarding policy, and consider whether pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information.

Studio III approach

Heritage House School utilises the Studio III approach. The ideals of Studio III are to promote the management of behaviours of concern in a totally non-violent, gentle and dignified way, by providing a better understanding and insight into the needs of our learners and by the use of low arousal approaches and gentle physical skills.

The Low Arousal Approach emphasises a range of supportive strategies that focus on the reduction of stress, fear and frustration. These strategies are put in place in order to prevent escalation and avoid creating crisis situations. The low arousal approach seeks to understand the role of the 'situation' on behaviour by identifying triggers and using low intensity solutions to avoid punitive consequences for individuals with additional needs.

As part of the Studio III approach, it is recognised that stress is transactional in nature. This means that stress can be passed on to another person. Staff are encouraged to reflect on their own stressors and stress responses and to explore their own well-being and coping strategies.

The low arousal approach has been proven to enable practitioners to defuse crisis situations within a variety of settings through early identification and intervention.

There are four key components considered central to low arousal approaches, and those include both cognitive and behavioural elements:

1. Decreasing staff demands and requests to reduce potential points of conflict around an individual.
2. Avoiding potentially arousing triggers, such as direct eye contact, touch, and removal of spectators to the incident.
3. Avoidance of non-verbal behaviours that may lead to conflict, such as aggressive postures and stances.
4. Challenging staff beliefs about the short-term management of challenging behaviours.

All staff receive Studio III training and refresher training.

Stress Reduction Supports (SRS)

At Heritage House school each learner has their own personalised Stress Reduction Support this is co-produced by families, class team, therapists and members of the schools multi-disciplinary team. The Stress Reduction Support merges Studio 3, LASER and SCERTS strategies and ethos. Therefore, focusing on an overall Low Arousal approach for our learners. Areas on the Stress Reduction Support include, likes/dislikes/motivators, sensory needs; and Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, Transactional Supports. The Stress Reduction Support uses the Zones of Regulation to explore emotions, how to reduce stress and what each learner needs in their 'backpack'. Each learner's 'backpack' states specific strategies to support the individual learner during a crisis and to as a pro-active stress reduction approach.

See Appendix 2 Stress Reduction Support

Coproduction and Parent Partnership

- Parents/ carers will be positively involved in all aspects of their children's behaviour in school.
- Parents/ carers will be encouraged to work in partnership with the school to encourage and promote positive relationships
- Stress Reduction Supports are coproduced with families
- Partnership working with families and respite providers is integral to supporting our learners.
- We endeavour to work with parents/ carers and other professional involved in the learner's lives for the purpose of sharing appropriate information in order to offer a consistent, supportive approach.

Teaching and learning

Personalised provision

Learners at Heritage House School have a personalised plan based on their individual needs and areas for development, built around their interests, preferred learning modalities and made meaningful to them. This is created collaboratively as a multidisciplinary team. The personalised plan includes a learning focus on PSED, communication, physical development, literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

Achievements are celebrated through use of praise and positive feedback, stickers, certificates, publicised in newsletters and are shared with families.

Where it is identified that a learner needs support with their regulation, the multidisciplinary team meets to discuss teaching strategies and interventions to support learners. The learner's SRS is then updated to reflect this. Strategies and interventions may include, but are not limited to, sensory supports (sensory diets, sensory circuits, chew tools) to support regulation, social interaction groups to develop positive relationships, social stories to develop understanding of social situations.

Zones of Regulation:

Heritage House School uses the Zones of Regulation; a curriculum designed to help people gain skills in consciously regulating their emotions and actions. This, in turn, leads to increased control and problem solving abilities. Learning activities and adult modelling help everyone to recognise when they are in different states, called zones. Each of the four zones are represented by a different colour and shape. People are taught to use different strategies or 'tools' to stay in each zone, or move from one to the other. Tools include sensory supports, calming techniques and cognitive strategies. The focus is on them recognising which zone is expected in different circumstances.

Learning environments

The low arousal approach is applied to learning environments to promote a safe, calm, accessible and engaging space. Staff create a positive ethos in their learning environments; ensuring that teaching and support accurately reflects learners' needs, is engaging, purposeful and motivational.

Recording, monitoring and learning from behavioural incidents: ~~ABC Chart~~ CPOMS

The School uses CPOMS to log all behaviour incidents and staff are asked to reflect on the function of the learner's actions and how staff responded. These are reviewed on a daily basis by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

and followed up fortnightly at DSL meetings and Senior Leadership Meetings. The Behaviour lead is the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Physical intervention

The use of all forms of physical intervention and physical contact, or even the imminent threat of force, are governed by criminal and civil law. The unnecessary or inappropriate use of force may constitute an assault and may also infringe the rights of a child or young person under the Human Rights Act 1998.

Studio 3 provides an approach to de-escalate challenging situations. Studio 3 aims to reduce and eradicate the use of all forms of restraint. The Studio 3 approach outlines:

- Restraint should only be used as a last resort
- Always teach alternatives to restraint
- Never accept restraint as inevitable
- Restraint is never therapeutic

All forms of physical contact, not just physical intervention, must be reasonable and necessary in the interests of:

- The learner's learning and development
- The learner's well-being
- The wellbeing of others.

Use of reasonable force

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows the use of reasonable force to:

- Prevent or stop the committing of any offence by a pupil;
- Prevent or stop personal injury to, or damage to the property of any person (including the pupil themselves) by a pupil; or
- Prevent or stop a pupil prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline.

Reasonable force is defined as 'no more than is absolutely necessary'.

Exclusions

As our learners have severe learning difficulties they will rarely learn from exclusion.

A decision to exclude a learner will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy, **and**
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

Before deciding whether to exclude a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the headteacher will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked
- Allow the learner to give their version of events
- Consider the learners special educational needs (SEN)

Please refer to our school's Exclusion policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Upon joining Heritage House School, a Stress Reduction Support (SRS) is created for each learner, coproduced with families. Where learners engage in behaviours of concern, a record is kept and the SRS is updated. If learners engage in frequent behaviours, a frequent behaviour chart may be used to log instances whilst interventions and supports are being used to monitor effectiveness.

Behaviour of concern are recorded on CPOMS and the information monitored daily by a Designated Safeguarding Lead. Learner stresses and behaviour is discussed regularly in class staff meetings/SLT meetings and at the learner's Annual Review and /or Child in Need (CIN) meetings.

The Multidisciplinary team including teachers, coaches, support staff, therapists and senior leaders can discuss aspects of learner behaviour as needed.

Learners also have individual risk assessments which are reviewed at least annually, or as required.

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher and full governing board at least annually, or more frequently, if needed, to address findings from the regular monitoring of the behaviour data. At each review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links to other policies

Antibullying Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Child Protection Policy
Online safety Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Exclusions Policy

Appendix 2: Stress Reduction Support

parent/carer signature: teacher signature: phase leader signature: respite/community signature:	Stress Reduction Support (SRS) Home, Heritage House School, Respite	date: updated:
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likes / motivators / dislikes likes: motivators: dislikes:		sensory needs
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Social Communication	Emotional Regulation	Transactional Supports
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when I am sad I... please support me by...	when I am happy I... please support me by...	when I am stressed I... please support me by...	when I am cross I... please support me by...
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reduce stress for me by	what I need in my 'backpack'...
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