



SCHOOLS ACHIEVING SUCCESS TOGETHER

Behaviour Management Principles and Policy Guidance

SAST Document Control Table			
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Version	Date	Author	Notes of Revisions
1.5	July 2026	Alice Brown	Parts have been re-written to reflect ideas and language of describing behaviour explored at both the “Leading an Inclusive Culture” cross MAT Conference (July 25) and the SAST Leadership Conference that followed in November 2026. However much of the original text remains. DFE document references are updated.

BEHAVIOUR PRINCIPLES

Each school in SAST will develop and implement a policy outlining how behaviour will be managed in the school. The detail of these policies will vary according to the culture and nature of each individual school. Nevertheless, they will all be designed in accordance with the following principles which reflect SAST's vision and ethos.

"All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life." ([EYFS, 2024](#))

- **A commitment to a positive and respectful culture within our school or setting.**

It is accepted that a whole school approach focusing on positive emotional wellbeing and behaviour culture requires deliberate creation. Through strong leadership this is designed and detailed through a clear vision and values focusing on realistic social and academic expectations for all.

- **Behaviour is a form of communication; and not all behaviours are a choice.**

Pupils with poor emotional wellbeing exhibiting detrimental behaviours are regarded as vulnerable rather than troublesome. It is accepted that some behaviours can be driven by a communication need, a perceived outcome, or a biological reaction to overwhelming feelings. Emotional wellbeing and behaviour are viewed in a non-judgmental, curious, and empathetic way.

- **Clear boundaries are paired with an individualised graduated response where needed**

Nurturing and structured environments are needed to keep all pupils safe. A clear well-communicated behaviour policy is used to set standards and create consistency. In setting out these expectations clearly, pupils will know the boundaries and be better placed to succeed in school. Adults are expected to model appropriate behaviours and set the right example

- **Children may develop academically and emotionally at different rates**

It is accepted that there may be a difference between a child's chronological age, their academic achievement, and their emotional literacy. Children achieving well academically may well still require differentiated planning with regard to their behaviour.

- **Children and young people are supported to develop internal discipline/self-regulation and resilience**

A variety of feedback, rewards, or consequence systems are used to develop pupils as resilient independent learners with positive emotional wellbeing and behaviour.

- **Behaviours can change and improvement can be secured**

Expectations of pupil's emotional wellbeing and behaviour are high but realistic and grounded in a belief that change can be affected and improvements secured.

- **A commitment to equality and equity**

Each child receives resources appropriately differentiated to enable equality of access to school, learning and social opportunities. The Equalities Act 2010 recognises that some pupils may need additional support to increase positive emotional wellbeing and support behaviour. Policies must enable reasonable adjustments for clear, well-communicated individual planning where differentiation from the policy is essential to meet pupil needs.

- **Engagement of families, outside agencies and the wider community is sought when planning support for CYP**

There is proactive engagement with families, outside agencies and the wider community to promote consistent support for CYP. Parents and carers are key in promoting positive emotional wellbeing. These adults have an informed perspective, and their insights are of value in informing planning and decision-making.

- **A commitment to exclusion reduction**

There is a clearly defined rationale for exclusion linked to an understanding of vulnerable groups such as those affected by attachment, adverse childhood experience, trauma, mental health, and protected characteristics such as disability or race. Permanent exclusions are only ever used only as a last resort.

'The purpose of education is not just to produce good learners, but also good people'
(Hardin, 2008)

POLICY GUIDANCE

- Behaviour policies will take account of relevant guidance, such as the Department for Education documents [Behaviour in schools \(2024\)](#), [Restrictive Interventions including the use of reasonable force in schools \(2026\)](#), [Searching, screening and confiscation in schools \(2023\)](#), [School suspensions and permanent exclusions \(2026\)](#) and [Keeping children safe in education \(2026\)](#)
- These policies should be considered alongside relevant SAST policy documents. These include the following:
 - Suspension and Exclusion
 - SEND
 - Safeguarding
- Behaviour management policies will be written in accordance with the UN convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC) and the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Charter.
- Policies must reflect a number of legal duties, in particular:
 - under the Equality Act 2010, to take such steps as is reasonable to avoid any substantial disadvantage to a disabled pupil caused by the school's policies or practices
 - under the Children and Families Act 2014, to use their 'best endeavours' to meet the needs of those with SEND; and
 - if a pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan, the provisions set out in that plan must be secured and the school must co-operate with the local authority and other bodies.
- Policies will set out the rationale for the behaviour system in place in each school and describe the principles that underpin it. The rationale and principles will reflect the context, culture and ethos of the school, explaining why the policy is in the best interests of pupils. For example, the policy might explain how the principle of respect for the rights and dignity of every individual has helped to shape the behaviour management system in place.
- Policies should emphasise the importance of "belonging" and "mattering" and be grounded in attachment aware, relational practice. They must encourage professional curiosity and highlight the application of pro-active strategies which support co-regulation and repair (such as PACE and Emotion Coaching).

'Happy, calm children learn best'. (Daniel Goleman)

- Policies will set out how schools plan to recognise, promote and reward valued behaviour and attitudes. For church schools, their approach in this regard will be

informed by their Christian values, such as forgiveness and reconciliation. Praise, positive relations, fairness and non-confrontational communication are the bedrock upon which policies are built.

‘Establishing a pattern of reactive consequences can have disastrous effects on classroom efficiency and morale. Rather, a proactive strategy helps to give students an opportunity to demonstrate a positive contribution to the classroom community.’ (Michael Mills, Effective Classroom Management: An Interactive Textbook)

- Policies should set out the typical approaches to encouraging valued behaviours and to managing inconvenient, detrimental behaviour. In addition, given the contextual nuances that apply in certain situations and for some pupils, they should set out and support a graduated approach to meeting need when difficult, detrimental behaviours are experienced.

‘One who smiles rather than rages is always the stronger’ (Proverb)

- Where dangerous and detrimental behaviours are evident in school, the policy should set out the analysis and planning for risk mitigation which will be undertaken, in order to ensure an orderly environment for all learners.
- Policies will make a clear distinction between the behaviour of a pupil and the pupil themselves. If a pupil exhibits determinantal behaviour, it is important that staff convey that it is the behaviour that needs to change, not the pupil.

“You can’t teach children to behave better by making them feel worse. When children feel better, they behave better.” (Pam Leo)

- Behaviour policies should have due regard for safeguarding guidance and highlight how certain behaviours may indicate that a child is at risk, and that staff should be vigilant and sufficiently curious when presented with unusual or challenging behaviours.
- Parents are a vital partner in the management of good behaviour. Policies should be developed with parents and indicate that staff will work closely with them to ensure parents understand the purpose and workings of the behaviour system. This will help to ensure that there is greater consistency of understanding and support for the approach to behaviour management across the school community.
- It is important that behaviour policies are clear and easily understood so that they are accessible to all members of the school community.
- Behaviour management policies should be reviewed and monitored at intervals to ensure they are fit for purpose.