



## Great Totham Primary School Behaviour Policy

Great Totham Primary School believes in a whole school approach to promoting healthy emotional wellbeing and positive behaviour. The core principles behind this are:

- Hope not hopelessness
- Compassion instead of blame
- Connection not disconnection

We have adopted these from the Essex 'Trauma Perceptive Practice' approach. This is a universal approach based on research and evidence informed practice.

We firmly believe that when every member of staff acts as a role model following these principles, in a consistent manner, then we create a calm, caring and safe environment in which children can flourish.

### Universal Approach

Just as children need to be taught the skills of reading & writing, they need to be explicitly taught how to name and understand emotions and associated behaviours. Our school motto 'Enjoy, Respect, Achieve' and our Learner @ Statements combine with our whole school curriculum to help us to achieve this.

Our curriculum includes teaching children about brain development, Zones of Regulation and developing empathy. Our aim is that all children should be able to cope with life's challenges, recognising that it is normal to experience a range of different emotions and be able to self-regulate.

Relationships are key to the success of our whole school approach. Without establishing strong relationships there can be no trust. We believe that relationships are built on mutual respect and kindness.

### Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and before adults respond they need to try to understand what is really being said. Behaviour is likely to be influenced by strong emotions such as anger, frustration or disappointment. It must be remembered that if we are to effectively support children, they must be calm and ready to engage before any consequences can be discussed or the process of reflect, repair & restore begun.

Co-regulation can be supported by strategies such as:

- Providing physical proximity whilst limiting verbal interaction or providing physical space whilst maintaining visual contact
- The adult being conscious of their own breathing and modelling this to the child
- An open stance
- A calm voice
- The use of scripts (I can see that...) to validate emotions without approving of behaviour

In addition, staff need to consider the impact any incident has had on themselves and consider if they are emotionally able to support the child with the next steps or would another trusted adult be better.

### Consequences

In our school, the most common forms of unacceptable behaviour are low level classroom disruptions and minor friendship issues. Consequences must be logical, linked to the behaviour and specific to the child and situation, as we want children to learn to behave more appropriately should a similar situation re-occur. This relevant and proportionate approach has to be fluid to be effective. It is helpful to view consequences as protective and/or educational.

A protective consequence is one that protects the rights of others and keeps a child safe. This may include:

- Increased staff ratio
- Changes to the school day
- Management of outside spaces
- A child being escorted in social situations

Best practice is for protective consequences to run alongside educational ones.

An educational consequence supports, through intentional teaching and encouragement, the child to behave differently next time. This may include:

- Completing the task they have disrupted at an appropriate time
- The child assisting with repairs when they have caused damage
- Providing opportunities for the child to learn about the impact of their behaviour
- Providing the opportunity to 'put things right' through the process of reflect, repair and restore

Consequences could be stand-alone events or part of a journey. For some children, especially those who have experienced trauma, it will take time to re-build neural pathways and learn new responses.

### **Reflect, Repair and Restore**

Steps for once the situation has been sufficiently calmed

1. Explore what happened (tell the story)
2. Explore what people were thinking and feeling at the time
3. Explore who has been affected and how
4. Explore how relationships can be repaired
5. Summarise what has been learnt so there can be different responses next time

Some examples of restorative questions may be:

- What would you like to happen next?
- How can we make things better for you and the others affected?
- If everything was going to be alright what would need to happen?
- How can you help to put this right?

To be effective the reflect, restore and repair process should be adjusted according to age, understanding and any other needs of the children affected.

### **Additional Needs**

We recognise some children have additional needs that require a specific approach. This could be due to SEND, neurological differences or the impact of trauma.

Required support would be detailed in the child's One Plan, and/or where necessary an individual risk assessment and Personalised Engagement Plan.

### **Beyond the School Gate**

Unacceptable behaviour that occurs beyond the school gate predominately remains the responsibility of the parent. We reserve the right to address unacceptable behaviour that affects school relationships for example when there is a direct link to school or when behaviour creates issues within school.

In addition, with the ever-increasing use of social media and online gaming, the boundaries between home and school are often blurred and school support may be beneficial.

## Use of Physical Contact Including Restraint

There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with children for a variety of reasons, this may include:

- to comfort a child in distress (appropriate to their age and individual specific needs)
- to direct a child
- for curricular reasons (for example in PE, Music, Drama etc.)
- in an emergency, to avert danger

The guidance produced by the Department for Education (July 2013) states that:

*“Schools should not have a ‘no contact’ policy. There is a real risk that such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a child or young person or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a child or young person causing harm.”*

In all situations where physical contact between staff and children takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the child’s age and level of understanding
- the child’s individual needs and history
- the location where the contact takes place (ideally with others present)

### Appropriate Physical Contact

- **Hugging** - a sideways on hug, with the adult putting their hands on the child’s shoulders so the adult’s hands can be seen
- **Hand-holding** - it is natural that young children sometimes enjoy being able to hold hands with adults around them. This is perfectly acceptable when the hand-holding is compliant
- **Side by side sitting/standing** - some children seek comfort by either standing or sitting in contact with an adult. The adult should position the child to the side of their body

### The Use of Reasonable Force

In order to maintain the safety and welfare of our children, it may sometimes be necessary to use reasonable force, as permitted by law. The term ‘reasonable force’ covers the broad range of actions for the purpose of control and restraint. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm (not gripping) or in more extreme circumstances, the need to prevent violence or injury.

The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member and should always depend upon individual circumstances. In the event that reasonable force is used then the requirement is to use no more force than is needed. Physical force will never be used as a punishment.

### Circumstances when reasonable force may be used:

- To remove a disruptive child from the classroom when they have refused to follow instructions to do so
- To prevent a child behaving in a way that disrupts a school event, trip etc.
- To prevent a child from leaving a classroom or the school site when to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts others
- To prevent a child from attacking another individual, or to stop a fight
- To restrain a child who is at risk of harming themselves.

Following any serious incident involving the use of reasonable force, the staff member will make a record which will be kept on file by the Deputy Headteacher and parents informed.

The school acknowledges its duty to make reasonable adjustments for children with SEND and work in partnership with parents, especially with regards to children who may need regular physical contact or restraint.

### Searching and Confiscation

If a staff member has reason to believe that a child is in possession of any item listed in Appendix A, they will ask the child and request it be handed to them. This approach will avoid the need for a search.

In a situation where a child is suspected to have a prohibited item that poses a threat to the child or others and a search is deemed necessary, the child will be supervised in a safe place while parents are contacted to determine the following actions.

1. Parent conducts search in presence of member of SLT on site and a written record will be kept
2. Parent gives permission for a search to take place in their absence in which case it will be conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation which includes the following key points:
  - The search will only be carried out by a teacher authorised by the Head Teacher (who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead) . Whenever possible this will be a teacher of the same sex as the child
  - All searches will be witnessed by a member of the SLT in order to safeguard both child and teacher
  - Searches will be conducted to ensure a child's dignity and privacy are respected and maintained
  - Explain to the pupil why they are being searched
  - Explain to the pupil what a search entails – e.g. I will ask you to turn out your pockets and remove your scarf
  - Give the pupil the opportunity to ask questions
  - The parent will be informed of the outcome of the search at the earliest opportunity
  - A written record will be kept of the search

At no point will force be used to search a child. In the event of non-cooperation the child will be supervised until parents can attend the site. If the parent refuses to attend and the child is deemed at risk, then the Head Teacher will make the decision to refer the matter to social services and/or the police.

**At no point will any child be subjected to a strip search.**

If a child is in possession of a prohibited item appropriate consequences and support will be implemented in line with our TPP approach. In light of the potential seriousness of prohibited items it may be appropriate to consider a referral to other agencies or offer family support.

### Fixed Term Suspension & Permanent Exclusion

We never want to suspend or permanently exclude any child, but sometimes on rare occasions this may be necessary and in the best interests of the child or others. If we have to take this difficult decision, we follow the Statutory Guidance on School Exclusions (September 2017, updated April 2022).

The guidance states that a child may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in any one school year. Following a suspension, a return to school meeting will be held with parents to develop a plan to support reintegration.

In extreme and exceptional circumstances, if the decision is to permanently exclude a child, parents would be informed with clear reasons given and the right to appeal to the Governing Body explained.

The Governing Body has a discipline committee (convened as required). It is the responsibility of this committee to consider any appeals on behalf of the whole Governing Body. When meeting they consider the

circumstances under which a child was excluded, consider any representation by the parents and the LA, and consider whether the child should be reinstated. If the Appeals Committee decide that the child should be reinstated, the Headteacher must comply with this ruling.

All fixed term suspensions and permanent exclusions will be reported to Essex Local Authority.

### Monitoring & Evaluating

In addition to normal behaviour management, records of serious incidents are evaluated by the Senior Leadership Team to identify possible patterns, training needs and support for staff and children. A record is kept of any pupil who is suspended or permanently excluded.

The effectiveness of this policy is monitored with particular reference to the Governor's Statement of Behaviour Principles, Anti-Bullying Policy and Single Equality Scheme. The Headteacher is responsible for reporting to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of the policy and makes recommendations for further improvements. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is administered fairly and consistently.

This policy is evaluated and reviewed annually.

Date	Comment
Summer 2021	Complete re-write in line with TPP
Summer 2022	No changes
Spring 2023	Amendments made following DfE guidance regarding searches
Spring 2024	

## **Appendix A**

Headteachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item listed below or any other item that the school rules identify as an item which may be searched for.

The list of prohibited items is

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images

Or any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used to

- commit an offence
- cause personal injury
- damage property

In addition Great Totham Primary school does not allow the following:

- mobile phones/smart watches and similar devices
- chewing gum
- sweets