

Behaviour Policy

Date: May 2025

Approved by: Head Teacher

Review Period: Annually

Next review due: Summer 2026



Vision and Values Statement

At Springhallow School we make student's well-being a priority through our behaviour support, safeguarding procedures and curriculum. We understand that our pupils have differences in the way they communicate and socially interact, understand and process information, and process and integrate sensory information. The school's aim is to support students to understand and manage their emotions and behaviours, so that they are enabled to access learning and make progress to achieve positive outcomes. Staff understand that all behaviours are attempts at communication and it is up to us to work together to find out what the student wants, needs, thinks, feels and understands. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of behaviour in our school, in line with Therapeutic Thinking and the key principles of Team Teach. The policy also aligns with the main principles and ethos of other autism affirming practices such as SCERTS, the Autism Education Trust, the National Autistic Society and The Challenging Behaviour Foundation. The well-being of pupils and staff is paramount.

Valued Behaviour

Valued behaviour relates to behaviour which is positive, helpful, and values social acceptance. Universally, all staff are expected to model and respond appropriately to attempts by pupils to express valued behaviours. These are behaviours that are expected within society, the local and wider community and family home. All staff should work consistently within their daily practice to model and explicitly teach understanding of valued behaviour. In a school population where communication misunderstandings are common, it is important that clear messages about behaviour are repeatedly demonstrated and taught in a variety of contexts, to facilitate a growth in understanding, rather than rote compliance, driven by external control. For some students, who have a personalised 'Regulation Plan', strategies to maintain valued behaviours are made explicit. These should be recognised and celebrated when appropriate with the individual and their families, through home school communication channels such as Class Dojo.

All staff are expected to listen and try to understand pupil interactions and be respectful and consistent in their responses. Staff must use clear and explicit, positive language and try to see the situation from the pupil's point of view. They should promote an ethos of belonging and inclusion for all pupils, noticing and responding positively to all prosocial behaviours.

Staff must not shout, threaten, humiliate, hold a grudge or be unkind to a pupil. They must not use physical interventions unnecessarily. The consequences of difficult or dangerous behaviour must be fair, reasonable, logical and incorporate a teaching element, to support the pupil to learn how to behave in an appropriate and safe way in future. Staff must not make assumptions or be punitive in their responses to pupil behaviours. Instead, they should analyse, not punish behaviours such as 'noncompliance'. We should aim to increasingly develop 'internal discipline' so that the pupil behaves appropriately without the need for a sanction if they don't.

Staff must not use seclusion practices and pupils in crisis or dysregulation must always be closely monitored at all times.

Supporting all Learners

All pupils are individuals and are supported with personalised strategies when needed. All pupils have a Pen Portrait to help others understand their needs and promote consistency in approaches and support. The needs and responses of the individual pupils must be considered to ensure their rights are respected. Staff should avoid being judgemental, for example, labelling a pupils' interest as an obsession. Class teams are expected to be consistent in their approaches and responses to behaviours, and to reflect on how to avoid repeating similar upsetting situations, by teaching strategies and reflecting on everyone's responses. It is paramount that pupils have opportunities to learn from their experiences when dysregulated and are part of the developing process. Staff should support each other positively to improve responses to behaviours and the language that is used. Any disagreements in approaches must be resolved at the earliest appropriate opportunity, through discussion.

Unsocial Behaviour

Unsocial behaviour is not the same as being antisocial or disruptive. Generally, unsocial behaviour is quiet non-compliance that does not negatively impact on other pupils learning. Staff should strive to interpret unsocial behaviour as communication and accept that many of our pupils have a preference for limited social interaction. Staff should respond with agreed strategies to encourage and motivate the pupil to engage and participate, while balancing this with a respect for the pupil's preferences. Staff must not punish unsocial behaviour but recognise the pupil's underlying needs and perspective.

Detrimental Behaviour

Detrimental behaviour will be described as either difficult or dangerous as it causes harm to an individual, a group, the community or the environment and this may be dependent on the context. Pupils who are known to display difficult or dangerous behaviours will have an Individual Regulation Plan, devised by the class staff team and this will be reviewed by the team, at least termly. This includes a detailed risk assessment that analyses if a behaviour is difficult or dangerous, alongside strategies in response to the behaviour. Classifying a behaviour as dangerous will be the result of discussion among the class team. For example, scratching one's own arm, could be a non-harmful, self-stimulating behaviour in one situation, difficult behaviour to manage in another situation and dangerous in yet another circumstance. The context and individual circumstances will be discussed by the class team. Dangerous behaviour may require a response that includes the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention and the planned use of a Safe Space, in order to maintain safety. All contracted class-based staff have received Positive Behaviour Training (Level Two) through Team Teach and are expected to attend termly refresher training delivered by school-based Team Teach trainers. Whenever they are needed, the school will endeavour to use agency staff who have received Team Teach training. The overarching aim of this training is to promote safety and reduce risks. Staff should conscientiously aim to reduce the need for restrictive physical intervention. Restrictive physical intervention is never used as a 'default' or first response strategy to manage difficult or dangerous behaviour without ongoing consideration of other, non-physical de-escalation strategies. It is the responsibility of those involved in its use, to ensure that it is recorded appropriately in a timely manner, every time.

Unforeseeable Behaviour

Unforeseeable behaviours are those behaviours that have never previously been experienced and evidenced, or those that have happened in the past that are so historic, that it would be reasonable to believe they would not reoccur. Staff are expected to make a 'dynamic' (informal, on the spot) risk assessment at the time about how to respond, considering their options in acting in a necessary, reasonable and proportionate way. Staff should be able to explain what they were thinking in relation to weighing up risks: What they expect could happen to the way that they respond, if they respond in a different way, or if they don't respond, but continue to monitor the situation. This could include the need to seek external support, including emergency responses. It is important that staff keep open channels of communication with the relevant staff members whilst the incident is occurring. They should also consider the impact of their communication about what is happening, to the young person. Every incident of unforeseeable behaviour will be recorded on MyConcern. It is important that these situations are analysed by the appropriate team members, which may include the senior leadership team, external professionals and parents/carers.

Communicating and Recording in School

When communicating or reporting behaviour, staff need to remain neutral and avoid judgemental descriptions and unprofessional language (such as 'naughty', 'defiant', 'kicking off' etc). Language should be clear and concise, avoiding under and over describing. All pertinent information should be included. Details that are not relevant, should not be included. Reports must be clearly based on evidence, or where opinion is used, based on a dynamic risk assessment, this should be made explicit. Recording of incidents should be made in a timely manner using the following methods (dependant on the situation):

- MyConcern
- Safe Space recording
- Emails
- Home School book
- Telephone call
- Verbal reporting

Recording should be transparent and used for analysis with the aim of increasing prosocial behaviour and reducing anti and unsocial behaviour.

The school's senior leadership team meet regularly as Designated Safeguarding Leads to monitor the recording of behaviour.

Communication with Parents and Carers

Staff need to ensure any communication with parents and carers regarding an incident should be done in a timely manner, in order to maintain open and transparent communication, including when difficult messages need to be relayed. Typically, the member of staff who is responsible for the class at that time will make contact using the agreed method. Staff will report back sensitively and in a non-judgemental manner considering any individual known safeguarding concerns.

Individual Regulation Plans will be discussed with parents and carers as part of the Annual Review process.

Team Teach

Teach is fully accredited and quality assured by the Institute of Conflict Management (ICM). “It is training for children and adult services in positive handling strategies through a whole setting holistic approach, working with leadership and management, actively committed to reducing restraint and risk.” (Team Teach) Springhallow school has a number of Team Teach accredited trainers in school. All permanent staff will receive 12 hours initial Team Teach Training and at least one hour refresher training per term, delivered during twilight sessions. It may also be possible for long term cover staff to attend Team Teach training. Trained staff may also request additional training regarding specific interventions from the trainers in school at any time. Staff are responsible for keeping an up-to-date record of their Team Teach training. Staff, volunteers, therapists and other visitors who have not participated in Team Teach training and presented an up-to-date certificate to the trainers in school, are not allowed to use physically restrictive interventions with pupils. On rare occasions, in an emergency, it may be necessary to use unplanned physical interventions, in order to ensure safety is paramount. In these cases, an incident form should be completed and uploaded to MyConcern, and parents should be informed as early as possible. The pupil’s Regulation Plan should be updated or drawn up (if there was not already one in place) as soon as possible to lower the risk of a repeated incident in the future.

Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)

As a school, we are constantly aiming to reduce the need for restrictive physical intervention (RPI). All staff are fully aware that RPI should be used as a last resort, always with the aim of reducing the use over time. As a guide, we would aim to use other de-escalation strategies for at least 95% of the time that an intervention is required, and only up to 5% RPI – this is not a target but a guiding principle of risk reduction within Team Teach. Another key principle to ensure safety is that the use of RPI should be the least intrusive response, over the shortest amount of time that was necessary.

Planned Intervention (identified on a Pupil Regulation Plan) - Occasionally individual pupils are likely to need RPI as part of a planned and agreed response to avoid an escalation of unsafe behaviours. The goal is to reduce this.

Unplanned Interventions – In the event of a pupil behaving in an unexpected dangerous way, a dynamic risk assessment (on the spot as opposed to planned) will be carried out by staff considering whether to physically intervene, distract or not intervene, but continue to monitor the situation.

Staff must be able to explain why they took the actions they took. The action may not have resulted in a successful outcome, as we are all human and cannot guarantee what will happen; however, the incident should be reflected on as soon as possible, and a plan put into place for managing similar risks in the future.

If a staff member who is Team Teach trained becomes unable to participate with RPI, it is their duty to inform other staff members and the Senior Leadership Team. This means they will be involved in supporting their colleagues in other ways when responding to a situation. Team Teach refers to the holistic approach, not just physical interventions.

Physical Intervention – Positive Touch

There will be times when pupils seek physical contact with staff or need physical reassurance. Staff may also need to be ‘hands on’ with the pupils when delivering curriculum sessions. Any physical touch must be

justifiable and appropriate to the age and stage of development of the student. We believe that learning about appropriate touch and consent, is an important part of development. All physical contact between pupils and staff should be, transparent and accountable, open to scrutiny.

Use of Safe Spaces

These procedures apply to all pupils in relation to the use of the designated safe spaces at the school, or any other area that is used as a safe space within the school and college buildings. Safety is paramount. The ultimate goal is that pupils will learn to utilize strategies for recognising, understanding and responding appropriately to their own emotions.

In times of dysregulation or crisis, it may be necessary to move a pupil to a place of safety. Staff should be aware that this does not have to be a designated 'Safe Space'. In some cases, an outdoor play area may be more suitable. Staff should risk assess the options for individuals in each situation and listen to the pupil. The use of a safe space may be in response to a dysregulated, difficult or dangerous behaviour.

The school Safe Spaces have been designed to be safe, low arousal places that reduce the risk of harm and provide privacy where pupils can use strategies to help them to de-escalate when they are in crisis. Over stimulating environments can maintain or escalate dangerous behaviour, and this will be taken into account for individuals by the staff team, in consultation with parents, except in emergency circumstances. Because of their location, moving a child in crisis to the designated Safe Space may increase the risk of injury to them or others. In this case, some classes have designated rooms near to their classrooms as 'safe spaces'. Some of these may have been modified and made low arousal, to help children de-escalate. As a result, all parents/carers will be familiar with calming strategies used with their child in school, including the use of the Safe Space.

Parents and visitors are welcome to view the Safe Spaces.

These procedures apply to all safe spaces used in school.

- The use of safe spaces follows the key principles of Team Teach, including the least amount of intervention (Safe Space) necessary over the shortest amount of time when a child is in crisis.
- Without exception, pupils must be constantly observed by a member of staff while using a safe space. Staff will monitor the well-being of the child, including how hot they are and offer them a drink/toilet when appropriate. Visibility from the glass panels in the door may be reduced from the outside to protect privacy and minimise an escalation of behaviours. This could be as a result of engaging with other people outside the room, but staff must ensure that the pupil is always visible to them. **CCTV has been installed in the two shared Safe Spaces at the main school within the corridor, to provide additional oversight and to address blind spots if visibility is reduced. This may also be used to support the recovery process. This live footage can only be accessed by members of the Senior Leadership Team as needed because the pupil cannot be directly observed. An additional member of staff will be present while this live footage is being viewed and this will be stated on the Safe Space recording sheet. The school's use of CCTV is detailed within the separate CCTV Policy.**
- All use of Safe Spaces must be recorded, including all physical interventions used, and the record added on to MyConcern.
- Safe spaces are never locked by staff. All doors are able to be opened from the inside.
- Over time, it is a goal that the use of a safe space is pupil initiated and incorporated as part of their Regulation Plan.

Pupils should have as much input into their use of the safe spaces as is possible. Whenever practicable, pupils should:

- Access the safe spaces for positive experiences including practicing calming strategies when they are not in crisis and participating in enjoyable activities in the safe space
- Request the use of the safe space when they are feeling distressed, dysregulated and ultimately when they feel that they are in crisis)
- Be consulted on whether or not they would like the door open or closed, lights on or off, if they want staff to stay in the room with them or wait outside
- A time limit for the use of this space is not imposed, to support the development of self-regulation

Safe spaces should NEVER be used

- As a threat
- As a punishment for specific behaviour
- As a response to non-compliance or engagement
- As a staff response to low-level difficult behaviours

Exclusions

The school will follow national guidance and the local authority's policy for exclusions. Any form of exclusion will be as a last resort and as a result of unsafe and dangerous behaviour, not as a result of repeated anti-social behaviour. The school will always endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to ensure safety and limit exclusions, as the outcomes for a pupil who has been excluded are less favourable – see separate Exclusions Policy.

Glossary

Behaviour: Everything a person says or does. The spectrum of behaviour goes from extreme prosocial to extreme anti-social behaviour. A behaviour policy should increase pro-social behaviour and reduce anti-social behaviours through planned responses.

Being Therapeutic: An approach to behaviour that prioritises the pro-social feelings of everyone within the dynamic. A school's policy establishes the methodology by which pro-social behaviour replaces anti-social behaviour through planned and sustained pro-social experiences.

Bribery: The threat or action of withholding of desirable objects or experiences until the child has completed the task or activity dictated by an authority.

Conscious behaviours: Those that are the result of thought and planning; a behaviour chosen by the child in order to secure a desired outcome or meet a specific need.

Consequence: A logical, explainable response to a pro-social or anti-social behaviour. A consequence is a logical or natural outcome of something occurring earlier; a conclusion reached via reasoning.

Consequences are designed to help children learn and develop prosocial behaviour transferable to all contexts.

Dangerous behaviour: That which is anti-social and will predictably result in imminent injury or harm (the level of injury and harm that constitutes the label dangerous should be defined within policy). This includes harm to self or others, damage to property or behaviour that would be considered criminal if the person was the age of criminal responsibility, such as racist abuse. Except within an unpredictable first manifestation, the behaviour described as dangerous will be supported by evidence of severity and frequency of outcomes such as 'three children required first aid for minor bruising as a result of Jane's kicking'.

Detrimental Behaviour: Behaviour that causes harm to an individual, a group, to the community or to the environment.

Difficult behaviour: That which is anti-social, but not dangerous. Difficult behaviour should be acknowledged in terms of context: 'Daniel continually shouting out is difficult within a group teaching activity'.

Dynamic: Any group of people brought together through choice, circumstance or obligation.

Equality: Affording people the same equal status, rights, and opportunities. **Equity:** The differentiated measures to provide equal opportunities.

External discipline: Authoritarian control of behaviour outcomes and achievement using threat and bribery. Often imposed by adults with the intention of generating a disincentive or a motivation where the child has no investment in the task or required behaviour.

Externalising: When a person's natural response to anti-social feelings is to act on the world around them, which can lead to physical and verbal responses that affect the wellbeing of others. Examples include fighting, bullying, property damage etc.

Extrovert: A person who is naturally collaborative and competitive and tends towards social interaction. Extroverts seek and are motivated by public recognition.

Internal discipline: Participate, contribute, and achieve, independent of external control or competition, where behaviour outcomes and achievement are controlled by the individual's motivation.

Internalising: When a person's natural response to anti-social feelings is to withdraw from the world around them. This can impact the wellbeing and opportunity of the individual concerned and result in refusal to communicate, self-isolation, school refusal, self-harm etc.

Introvert: A person who is naturally a quiet and reserved individual. They do not generally seek out attention or social interactions and tend to avoid public recognition and attention.

Punishment: The imposition of an undesirable or unpleasant experience upon a group or individual, meted out by an authority. Punishment is designed to suppress and control behaviour within a specific context.

Reward: A desirable object or experience given to celebrate outcomes already achieved.

Subconscious behaviour: That which is present without any thought or planning; a behaviour a person is unable to contain.

Unsocial Behaviour: Not enjoying or needing to behave sociably in the company of others, but not to the detriment of others. This includes quiet communication of anti-social feelings.

Valued Behaviour: Relating to behaviour which is positive, helpful, and values social acceptance.

Team Teach and Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) Addendum

In line with the holistic approach of Team Teach, at Springhallow school, the safety and well-being of our pupils is paramount, both in and outside of the school and college settings. We also acknowledge our responsibilities to ensure the safety of colleagues, visitors, the public and the learning environment. Our principles include the responsibilities of all staff to use vigilance and reflection in order to continually reduce risks that compromise safety, over time. Within a range of de-escalation strategies, permanent staff are trained to use Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI) in order to maintain safety, and as a general principle, this is used as a last resort, using the least amount of force for the shortest period of time that is necessary in a given situation. There may be rare very occasions when a risk assessment has been made, and this is not the case. For example, in the (previously evidenced) foreseeable risk of a pupil being unlikely to respond to other de-escalation strategies, and the risks of harm are more likely to be escalated, it may be decided to use a RPI earlier so that the crisis comes to an end more quickly, rather than prolong the incident by using RPI as a last resort. This must be written into the pupil's Individual Regulation Plan, discussed with parents/carers, and regularly reviewed.

In all cases where there is a foreseeable risk that RPI may be used as an intervention with a pupil, this will be discussed with parents/carers. If RPI has been used with a pupil, it is then deemed that there is now a risk that it may be needed again, and staff will discuss this with parents/carers. All staff who are involved in the use of RPI are responsible for recording the incident, regardless of their role in school. Staff who have not undergone Team Teach training or who are unable to support with RPI may not use physical interventions but are expected to support pupils who are in crisis or dysregulated, by communicating with the team to see how they may assist. Staff are expected to have open and transparent communication with parents and carers and be open to scrutiny of their actions.

Terminology (From Team Teach workbook pages 7 – 8)

- RPI = Restrictive Physical Intervention
- Risk Assessment = Making an effort to identify potential hazards and judging the likelihood of someone being hurt.
- Dynamic Risk Assessment = When people have to think 'on their feet' in the heat of the moment, and balance risks as best that they can.
- Last resort = When other less restrictive options have been considered and judged to be less likely to succeed. They do not all have to be tried and seen to fail.
- Restraint = The positive application of force to overcome rigorous resistance; completely directing, deciding and controlling a person's free movement in order to keep people safe.
- Restriction = Any intervention that prevents someone from doing what they want to do.
- Team Teach uses psychology and biomechanics in order to keep people safe, contribute to improving the quality of life and improve relationships.

Team Teach disclaimer:

“Health and safety involves anticipating foreseeable risks and taking reasonably practicable steps to reduce them. It is not possible to eliminate risk in settings where people work closely with people who exhibit hazardous behaviour, so the fact that somebody has been hurt does not necessarily mean that someone is to blame.

Team Teach supports a range of techniques that have been risk assessed by independent experts. There may be circumstances when staff use other techniques which are not supported by Team Teach. That does not mean that other techniques are improper, unacceptable or unlawful. Any use of reasonable force will be judged according to whether it was reasonable, proportionate and necessary in those particular circumstances. If staff do deviate from a standard technique, they should attempt to give a clear and accurate description in the incident and accident records. The truth is that sometimes people do not have a clear memory of stressful events, in which case they should be encouraged to tell the truth and admit it.”

Page 6, Team Teach workbook

The vast majority of de-escalation interventions to support pupils at Springhallow school do not use RPI. For example, in the case of a child who sits on the floor and refuses to move, RPI would not be used, unless there was a risk of harm to them. People who need to use the space they are occupying may be redirected to another route or supervised to walk around them. RPI would not be used to ‘make’ a pupil comply with instructions or because their behaviour causes inconvenience.

Strategies that are used in day-to-day practice predominantly focus on using clear, supported communication, distraction, active listening and other personalised strategies; The school aims to use RPI in de-escalation strategies for less than 5% of overall interventions, with an aspiration to continually reduce that amount. Recent observations noted that whole classes and individuals employed a wide variety of mutual regulation and self-regulation strategies across the school in order to support individuals to learn how to manage situations they may find potentially challenging.

We encourage discussion, questions and scrutiny of our practice of RPI and our approach to managing the behaviour of our pupils.

Flow Chart – Therapeutic Thinking Process

