



Behaviour Policy

1. Introduction

NewHeart Learning is committed to creating a safe, respectful and supportive environment where all pupils can thrive. Our therapeutic approach to behaviour recognises that all behaviour is a form of communication and aims to support pupils in developing emotional regulation and self-awareness. Ethos and Values

At NewHeart Learning, our ethos is rooted in the belief that every young person deserves the opportunity to thrive in a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment. We recognise that many of our pupils have faced challenges in mainstream education and may have experienced difficulties that impact their social, emotional, and academic development. Our commitment is to provide a setting where pupils feel valued, understood, and supported to reach their full potential.

Our values are expressed through the acronym NewHeart – Nurture, Empowerment, Wellbeing, Hope, Equality, Achievement, Resilience, and Togetherness. These values shape our culture, teaching, and behaviour expectations:

Nurture: Staff and pupils show care and kindness, creating an environment where everyone feels safe and supported.

Empowerment: Pupils are encouraged to make positive choices, take responsibility for their actions, and have a voice in their learning. We empower by amplifying their voice, offering curriculum individualised to help build progression over perfection. We create personalised learning journeys that balance academic achievement with emotional growth to help students reengage in education, creating positive outcomes.

Wellbeing: We prioritise mental health and emotional safety, supporting pupils to regulate behaviour and develop healthy coping strategies.

Hope: Every incident is seen as an opportunity to learn and improve; mistakes do not define a young person's future.

Equality: We treat all members of our community with fairness and respect, ensuring no one feels excluded or discriminated against.

Achievement: Positive behaviour is recognised and celebrated, reinforcing the link between effort, perseverance, and success.

Resilience: Pupils are supported to keep going when things are difficult, learning to manage setbacks and bounce back positively. Through encouragement and consistency, we help build confidence, overcome barriers and rebuild children's ability to engage in learning and life.

Togetherness: We value collaboration, respect, and teamwork, understanding that a strong community is built when we all work together.

At NewHeart Learning, we use a clear Behaviour Escalation Pathway to help everyone feel safe, respected and supported. This pathway has different levels, depending on how someone is feeling and what support they need at that moment.

Level 1: Low-Level Dysregulation might include things like finding it hard to focus, using inappropriate language, refusing work, or having a phone out. At this level, staff will give a gentle reminder, offer choices, or suggest a short break to help you reset.

Level 2: Ongoing Dysregulation may include repeated difficulty engaging, continued refusal, or signs of increasing frustration or anxiety. Staff will support you with a private check-in, a regulation break, or time in a calm or reset space to help you feel more settled.

Level 3: Escalating Dysregulation can include heightened emotional responses, leaving the room without permission, or behaviour that is starting to affect others. At this stage, staff will support you to step out with an adult, use a calm space, and help you regulate before returning to learning.

Level 4: High-Risk Incident (Safety Response) is used when behaviour could put yourself or others at risk, such as physical aggression or serious unsafe behaviour. Staff will focus on keeping everyone safe, following a crisis plan and involving senior staff if needed.

Level 5: Critical Incident (Emergency Response) is very rare and only used when there is a serious risk to safety. This may involve outside help and contact with families and will always be handled respectfully and carefully.

After any level of difficulty, we focus on a restorative return. This means staff will help you reflect on what happened, who was affected, and how things can be made better next time, so you can move forward positively.

These principles underpin our Behaviour Policy and provide the foundation for consistent expectations across the school. By modelling and promoting them, we encourage pupils to reflect on their behaviour, build positive relationships, and prepare for successful reintegration into education, employment, and wider society.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

At NewHeart Learning, everyone plays a key role in promoting and maintaining a calm, respectful, and therapeutic environment. Responsibilities are outlined below:

All Staff Are Responsible For:

- Always acting as positive role models.
 - Understanding and consistently applying NewHeart Learning's therapeutic behaviour approach.
 - Creating a calm, well-ordered environment that promotes pride in learning and the school community.
 - Setting and maintaining high expectations and recognising and praising pupils when those expectations are met.
 - Building and maintaining positive working relationships with all colleagues based on mutual respect and tolerance.
 - Promoting our core values by treating others how they wish to be treated.
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Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Are Responsible For:

- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of the Behaviour Policy.
 - Establishing a positive ethos and ensuring that all sites are happy, safe, secure, and well-maintained.
 - Upholding the right of every pupil to be treated equally, without discrimination based on race, religion, culture, or protected characteristics.
 - Overseeing the implementation of therapeutic behaviour approaches and reviewing their effectiveness.
 - Ensuring regular staff training at whole-school and individual levels.
 - Recording serious behavioural incidents and ensuring proactive steps are taken to prevent recurrence.
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Teaching and Support Staff Are Responsible For:

- Applying therapeutic behaviour strategies to promote socially responsible choices.
- Using therapeutic language when managing, describing, and recording behaviour.
- Participating in reflective conversations and debriefs following behavioural incidents to develop improved strategies.
- Modelling and facilitating restorative conversations and approaches.
- Proactively preventing difficult and dangerous behaviours through use of the Predict and Prevent framework.
- Valuing each pupil as an individual and recognising their emotional and academic needs to help them reach their full potential.
- Supporting children to behave safely through proactive supervision and early intervention (e.g. stopping unsafe games).
- Encouraging pupils to take increasing ownership of their learning and behaviour by teaching emotional literacy.
- Implementing rewards and consequences consistently, ensuring one pupil's behaviour does not negatively impact another's learning or wellbeing.
- Always maintaining active supervision.
- Liaising with parents/carers about any issues that may affect pupil happiness, behaviour, or progress.

- Delivering PSHE and wider curriculum content that supports pro-social and respectful behaviour.
- Maintaining regular communication with parents/carers and commissioning bodies to support pupils' behaviour and development.
- Recording behaviour incidents factually, objectively, and without emotive language.

Parents and Carers Are Responsible For:

- Understanding and supporting NewHeart Learning's therapeutic behaviour approach.
- Accepting responsibility for their child's behaviour and reinforcing positive choices at home.
- Attending key meetings when requested.
- Maintaining open communication with their child's key worker and sharing relevant information to support their child's needs.

Pupils Are Responsible For:

- Taking responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.
- Following site rules and expectations.
- Engaging positively with staff and support offered.
- Taking pride in their work and respecting the learning environment.
- Accepting responsibility for their actions and understanding that educational and protective consequences may follow certain behaviours.
- Respecting the property and opinions of others.
- Valuing their own learning and contributing positively to the community.

Commissioning Bodies Are Responsible For:

- Providing up-to-date and relevant documentation regarding each pupil's behavioural needs.
- Attending all relevant review meetings (e.g., IAEP, EHCP, behaviour reviews).
- Maintaining regular contact with key staff members.
- Sharing safeguarding and behavioural information that supports the pupil's development and safety.

3. Procedures

At NewHeart Learning, we recognise that pupils will not always make the right choices and it is our role to guide, support, and teach them how to repair and improve their behaviour.

When Behaviour Does Not Meet Expectations

When a pupil's behaviour falls short of our expectations, staff at NewHeart Learning will follow a clear, supportive process:

- **Verbal Reminders:** Staff will begin by giving calm, clear verbal reminders to help the pupil reflect and return to expected behaviour.
- **Private Conversations:** If needed, staff will speak privately with the pupil to discuss the impact of their actions and explore how to make more positive choices moving forward.
- **Time Away:** If behaviour continues to be disruptive or unsafe, the pupil may be supported to move to a different space for a short time. This helps reduce disruption and gives the pupil time to regulate and reflect.

Supporting Pupils in Distress or Dysregulation

NewHeart Learning adopts a trauma informed and relational approach to behaviour management. We recognise that behaviours described as “difficult” are often a communication of unmet need, distress, or previous adverse experiences rather than deliberate defiance. Staff are trained in trauma informed practice, including understanding the impact of trauma on brain development, recognising triggers, supporting emotional regulation, and using de-escalation and co-regulation strategies.

Restrictive physical intervention is not a primary behaviour strategy and will only ever be used as a last resort, in line with statutory guidance and where there is an immediate risk of harm.

We understand that emotional dysregulation may present in different ways. When a pupil becomes dysregulated, staff will:

- **Connect First:** Offer immediate emotional support through connection with a trusted adult.
- **Follow Safety Plans:** Ensure any individualised safety plan is followed to keep the pupil and others safe.
- **Offer Regulation Activities:** Provide a choice of calming, regulating or re-engagement activities suited to the pupil's staff.
- **Involve Additional Staff:** Use a “change of face” if helpful, allowing another familiar adult to step in, especially if requested by the pupil.
- **Follow the Behaviour Escalation Pathway:** Level 1 for low level dysregulation, level 2 for ongoing dysregulation or level 3 for escalating dysregulation.

Restorative and Supportive Responses to Harmful Behaviour

Where a behaviour has caused harm or significantly disrupted learning, we may implement the following restorative and reflective responses:

- **Loss of Privileges:** Temporary removal of specific privileges (e.g., free time, enrichment activities), linked clearly to behaviour.
- **Written or Verbal Reflection:** Pupils may be supported to reflect on what happened, why it was inappropriate, and how they can respond differently in the future.

- **Restorative Conversations or Apologies:** Pupils may be asked to engage in a restorative dialogue or give a verbal/written apology to rebuild trust and repair harm.
- **Parent/Carer Meetings:** Staff may arrange a meeting with parents/carers to share concerns and collaboratively plan strategies for support.
- **Pastoral Support Referral:** Pupils may be referred to our in-house pastoral or therapeutic support specialist to explore underlying causes of behaviour.
- **Behaviour Monitoring:** A behaviour log, chart, or report may be introduced to monitor patterns and support progress, in partnership with pupils, staff, and parents/carers.
- **Follow the Behaviour Escalation Pathway:** Level 4 for escalating dysregulation.

These responses are designed to be constructive, proportional, and always focused on learning, repair, and growth not punishment.

Communication and Partnership

When behaviour does not meet expectations, parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible usually the same day.

We will also notify the commissioning school or Local Authority promptly, to maintain open communication and consistent support.

Exclusions

In rare and serious circumstances, pupils may be temporarily or permanently excluded from NewHeart Learning. This decision is not taken lightly and will follow careful consideration and the use of multiple supportive strategies beforehand.

Permanent exclusion may be considered if a pupil:

- Commits or threatens serious violence towards others
- Is involved in drug or alcohol-related incidents
- Brings an offensive weapon onto the premises
- Commits arson
- Engages in any other act deemed by the Director to significantly undermine the safety or wellbeing of the school community

In such cases, permanent termination of contract may be the final step following repeated interventions and failure to resolve ongoing concerns.

Our Ethos on Recognition and Reward

At NewHeart Learning, we do not rely on extrinsic rewards to promote positive behaviour, instead, we focus on building strong relationships through personal praise and celebrating progress, fostering positive experiences, and recognising effort and growth in meaningful, authentic ways.

4. Behavioural Definitions

Valued Behaviours:

These are behaviours that are positively regarded and contribute to personal, social, or environmental wellbeing. They include:

- Actions respected by the individual, community, or that support the environment
- Behaviours that promote positive emotions in oneself and others
- Demonstrations of care and consideration for the rights, feelings, and welfare of others
- Actions that support or benefit others and the wider society

Detrimental Behaviours:

These are behaviours that have a harmful or negative impact. They include:

- Actions that harm the individual, community, or environment
- Behaviours that lead to negative emotional outcomes for oneself or others
- Conduct that may cause injury, harassment, alarm, or distress
- Actions that infringe upon the rights of others

Understanding Levels of Detrimental Behaviour:

It's important to distinguish between behaviours that are *difficult* and those that are *dangerous*:

- **Difficult Detrimental Behaviour:** Harmful behaviour that poses no immediate danger
- **Dangerous Detrimental Behaviour:** Behaviour that is likely to imminently result in injury, property damage, or would be considered criminal (e.g., racist abuse) if committed by someone above the age of criminal responsibility

Unsocial Behaviours:

These behaviours reflect a preference for independence or non-participation without causing harm.

They include:

- Choosing solitude without negatively affecting oneself or others
- Opting not to engage socially without causing harm
- Choosing not to follow instructions where no harm results to oneself or others

5. Searching, Screening and Confiscation

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, a search may be conducted without the pupil's consent and without prior parental permission or notification.

All searches will be carried out by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). If necessary, SLT members may examine data or files on electronic devices as part of the search process, with appropriate support from external professionals if required.

If a NewHeart Learning member of staff believes a search may be warranted, they **MUST** consult the Senior Leadership Team.

Prohibited items include (but are not limited to):

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco, vapes, lighters, or other smoking paraphernalia
- Fireworks
- Pornographic material
- Any item that may be used to commit an offence, cause injury, or damage property

All searching, screening and confiscation procedures are carried out in accordance with the

Department for Education's most recent guidance:

Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools – GOV.UK

6. Pupil Transitions at NewHeart Learning

Pupils attending NewHeart Learning are referred from a variety of educational settings, and the length of their placement with us varies depending on individual need. As such, transitions both into and out of the provision must be managed with care, structure, and a strong support framework.

NewHeart Learning follows a robust on-boarding process to ensure pupils are welcomed and settled effectively. This includes a series of assessments, such as the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), which help us to understand each pupil's emotional literacy and behavioural needs. As part of the referral process, we also gather key information from the pupil's previous setting to build a full picture of their background and support requirements.

For pupils preparing to transition out of NewHeart Learning, a comprehensive and personalised transition plan is developed. We work closely with the receiving school or provision to facilitate a smooth handover, including effective strategies to support the pupils, staff visits and in-setting support from NewHeart key workers where appropriate.

Every pupil referred to NewHeart Learning who begins the process of moving on will receive a bespoke transition package tailored to their individual needs. For more detailed information, please ask for our transition and reintegration information pack.

7. Consistent Language

At NewHeart Learning, we place great importance on the consistent use of positive, supportive language. All staff are encouraged to carefully consider how they speak to—and about—pupils.

We do not use punitive language at NewHeart Learning. Instead, we adopt a restorative and therapeutic approach that promotes emotional understanding and growth:

- Children are not ‘banned’ from activities. Instead, we look for a more appropriate time to reschedule the activity when the pupil is emotionally regulated and ready to participate.
- Children are not ‘punished’. Rather, we support them in reflecting on what happened, discussing what went wrong, and exploring how alternative behaviours might have led to a more positive outcome.
- We do not administer punitive sanctions. Instead, we help children recognise the natural consequences of their actions and encourage them to make informed, positive choices.
- We use neutral and non-blaming language when describing incidents. For example:
 - Say “the child became emotionally dysregulated” instead of “the child was behaving badly”
 - Say “there was a conflict” rather than “they were out of control”
 - Say “the primary and secondary strategies we’ve tried so far were unsuccessful” instead of “nothing’s working”
- Children are not isolated from others. Instead, we work to understand the root causes of conflict, reduce triggers for heightened behaviour, and put in place strategies to repair relationships.

We acknowledge that this approach takes time, restoring trust and repairing relationships is a process. However, we ask staff, pupils, and families to commit to this journey for all learners at NewHeart Learning.

Being part of a supportive group helps pupils to:

- Resolve conflict through discussion
- Learn to compromise
- Consider and accommodate the needs of others
- Build tolerance and resilience in shared spaces

These are all essential life skills. For many pupils, developing these relational and emotional competencies is the initial focus, before gradually increasing academic expectations at a pace that suits their individual needs.

8. Restrictive Physical Intervention

At NewHeart Learning, staff have a duty to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of all pupils, staff, and visitors. In exceptional circumstances, and only after trauma informed de-escalation strategies have been exhausted, positive handling (also known as restrictive physical intervention) may be used by trained staff.

Physical intervention is only considered when it is necessary to prevent serious harm or risk, such as:

- Preventing significant disorder or the need to evacuate a room
- Preventing harm to the pupil or others
- Preventing deliberate damage to property where there is risk of injury or escalation

All staff are trained to consider the age, developmental stage, emotional needs, and personal history of each pupil before any physical intervention is used, as some pupils may find this distressing or triggering.

Examples of situations where physical contact may occur include:

- Offering comfort to a distressed pupil, appropriate to their age, level of understanding, and consent).
- Gently guiding or directing a pupil to ensure safety.
- Participating in physical activities (e.g., drama, catering or sports) where appropriate contact is required.

If Restrictive Physical Intervention is Used:

Physical intervention at NewHeart Learning must always adhere to the following principles:

- **Last Resort Only:** Physical intervention is only used when no other safe, effective alternative is available
- **By Trained Staff:** Wherever possible, only staff trained in approved methods should carry out interventions
- **Minimum Force, Minimum Time:** Only the least amount of force necessary should be used, and only for as long as needed to reduce the immediate risk
- **Preserving Dignity:** Every effort must be made to ensure that interventions preserve the pupil's dignity and emotional wellbeing
- **Never a Punishment:** Physical intervention must never be used as a disciplinary measure or to enforce compliance
- **Properly Recorded:** All incidents of restrictive physical intervention must be recorded in the **Physical Intervention Log** and reported in line with safeguarding and incident-reporting procedures

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