



HOMEBROOK WOODS

Independent Special School

Ages 5 -11

Autism, Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and
Associated SEND

Behaviour, Regulation and Positive Support Policy

Independent School Standards – Part 3 (Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils)
Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 – Paragraphs 7, 9 and 10

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Headteacher:	Vonika Shelley
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1. Introduction

This Behaviour, Regulation and Positive Support Policy applies to all pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors at Homebrook Woods and to behaviour occurring on site, off site during school activities, and online where it impacts the safety, wellbeing or reputation of the school community.

This policy should be read alongside the following key policies and statutory frameworks, which collectively ensure pupil safety, dignity and compliance with the Independent School Standards:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- SEND Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Physical Intervention / Positive Handling Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy

These documents operate as an integrated framework.

Where behaviour incidents indicate potential safeguarding risk, discrimination, unmet SEND need, or systemic concern, the relevant linked policy will be applied in conjunction with this policy.

Leadership oversight ensures alignment across all policies and ensures that practice remains lawful, proportionate and ethically defensible.

2. Vision, Ethos and Guiding Principles

Homebrook Woods is a specialist independent school for pupils with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN). Our behaviour approach is inseparable from our educational philosophy.

At Homebrook Woods:

- Behaviour is understood as communication.
- Emotional regulation is a prerequisite for learning.
- Safety is non-negotiable.
- Relationships are the foundation of progress.
- Dignity and respect are preserved at all times.

Many of our pupils experience heightened anxiety, sensory processing differences, communication barriers and challenges with flexible thinking. What may appear as defiance, aggression or withdrawal is frequently an expression of:

- Overwhelm or distress
- Communication frustration
- Sensory overload or unmet sensory need
- Fear of change or unpredictability
- Social misunderstanding
- Trauma response

Our responsibility is not merely to manage behaviour, but to understand it, respond ethically, and teach safer and more effective ways of communicating needs.

This policy balances warmth and relational support with clear, defensible boundaries. Compassion does not remove accountability; rather, it shapes how accountability is approached.

3. Aims of This Policy

This policy aims to:

- Promote a calm, structured and emotionally safe learning environment.
- Safeguard the physical and psychological wellbeing of pupils and staff.
- Establish consistent expectations rooted in mutual respect.
- Provide clear procedures for preventing, responding to and reviewing behaviour.
- Reduce the likelihood of crisis through proactive planning.
- Ensure behaviour management is lawful, proportionate and SEND-informed.
- Comply fully with:
 - Education and Inspections Act 2006
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Children and Families Act 2014
 - SEND Code of Practice (0–25)
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version)
 - Behaviour in Schools (DfE guidance)
 - Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

4. Whole-School Behaviour Framework

4.1 Core Expectations

Expectations at Homebrook Woods are developmentally appropriate and individualised.

Pupils are supported to work towards:

1. Keeping themselves safe.
2. Keeping others safe.
3. Respecting property and shared spaces.
4. Using communication systems to express needs.
5. Engaging in learning at their individual level.

Expectations are:

- Explicitly taught.
- Modelled consistently by adults.
- Reinforced visually.
- Practised daily within structured routines.

We recognise that some pupils may not consistently meet expectations due to SEND-related needs. Where capacity is compromised, support and adjustment precede consequence.

6. Proactive and Preventative Practice

Homebrook Woods operates a preventative model of behaviour support.

5.1 Predictability and Structure

Staff maintain:

- Clear daily routines.
- Visual timetables and structured transitions.
- Advance preparation for change.
- Low-arousal classroom environments.
- Reduced sensory clutter.
- Consistent adult language.

5.2 Communication Adaptation

All communication is adapted to the pupil's profile, including:

- Visual supports.
- AAC systems.
- Reduced language processing demands.
- Concrete phrasing.
- Processing time.

5.3 Regulation Support

Regulation opportunities are embedded throughout the school day, including:

- Movement access.
- Sensory tools.
- Quiet spaces.
- Outdoor regulation areas.
- Adult co-regulation.
- Planned regulation breaks where indicated.

Each pupil may have:

- A Pupil Passport.
- An Individual Behaviour Support Plan.
- A Risk Assessment.
- A Regulation Profile identifying triggers, early indicators and effective strategies.
- A Positive Handling Plan where physical intervention risk has been identified.

Behaviour support is integrated with EHCP outcomes and therapeutic input.

6. Recognition and Reinforcement

Homebrook Woods prioritises intrinsic motivation and relational reinforcement.

Recognition may include:

- Specific verbal praise.
- Visual affirmation.
- Shared celebration with families.
- Photographic learning updates.
- Additional access to preferred regulation activities.
- Increased responsibility where appropriate.

Rewards are:

- Immediate.
- Meaningful to the individual.
- Linked to effort and progress.
- Never used to control or shame.

Traditional competitive reward systems are not used where developmentally inappropriate.

7. Understanding Distress and Escalation

Staff are trained to recognise early indicators of dysregulation, which may include:

- Withdrawal.
- Increased vocalisation.
- Repetitive questioning.
- Physical agitation.
- Avoidance.
- Refusal.

Intervention at early stages reduces the likelihood of crisis.

7.1 De-escalation Principles

When behaviour escalates, staff will:

- Remain calm and regulated.
- Reduce verbal demands.
- Lower environmental stimulation.
- Offer supportive proximity.
- Remove audience where appropriate.
- Provide clear and simple reassurance.
- Avoid confrontation and power struggle.

The focus is:

- Safety.
- Containment.
- Regulation.
- Preservation of dignity.

8. Responsive Strategies and Consequences

8.1 Graduated Response

Where behaviour impacts safety or learning, staff may implement:

- Gentle redirection.
- Re-teaching of expectations.
- Supported regulation time.
- Change of environment.
- Temporary reduction of demands.
- Logical consequences (e.g., repairing damage).

8.2 Sanctions

Sanctions are:

- Rare.
- Proportionate.
- Developmentally appropriate.
- Never humiliating.
- Never applied publicly.
- Never rooted in emotional reaction.

Before applying any sanction, staff must consider:

- Did the pupil understand the expectation?
- Was the pupil capable of meeting it at that time?
- Were reasonable adjustments made?
- Was the behaviour primarily a result of SEND-related difficulty?

Where behaviour arises directly from disability-related need, adjustment and support take precedence.

9. Restorative and Reflective Practice

Following regulation, pupils are supported to:

- Reflect at an appropriate developmental level.
- Understand impact.
- Practise alternative strategies.
- Repair relationships where possible.

Restorative conversations are adapted using visuals, social stories or modelling where needed.

The aim is learning and reconnection, not punishment.

10. Bullying Prevention and Response

Homebrook Woods maintains a zero-tolerance stance on bullying.

Bullying is defined as repeated, intentional harm involving an imbalance of power. It may be:

- Physical.
- Verbal.
- Emotional.
- Prejudice-based.
- Online.

Given pupils' social communication differences, careful contextual assessment is required to distinguish between:

- Social misunderstanding.
- Conflict.
- Crisis behaviour.
- Intentional targeted harm.

All concerns are:

- Investigated proportionately.
- Recorded.
- Reviewed for patterns.
- Addressed through education and safeguarding where necessary.

Support is provided to both the harmed pupil and the pupil responsible.

11. Sexualised Behaviour and Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Some pupils may display developmentally inappropriate sexualised behaviours linked to curiosity, social misunderstanding or communication differences.

Responses are:

- Educational.
- Clear and boundaried.
- Safeguarding-informed.
- Dignified.

Where behaviour raises safeguarding concern:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is informed immediately.
- KCSIE procedures are followed.
- External agencies are engaged where required.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never dismissed as banter.

12. Restrictive Physical Intervention

12.1 Physical Intervention and Restrictive Practice

Physical intervention is:

- A last resort.
- Used only to prevent injury or serious damage.
- The minimum force necessary.
- For the shortest possible duration.
- Never used as punishment.

12.2 Legal Framework

Use of reasonable force is exercised in accordance with DfE guidance and statutory duties.

12.3 Safeguards

- Only trained staff use restrictive techniques wherever possible.
- Each incident is recorded immediately.
- Parents/carers are informed on the same day.
- Leadership reviews all incidents.
- Behaviour and risk plans are updated where required.
- Patterns are analysed termly.

A full debrief is offered to both pupil and staff involved.

12.4 Restrictive Intervention, Seclusion and Restraint Arrangements

Homebrook Woods is committed to reducing the need for restrictive practices through proactive, therapeutic and preventative approaches that prioritise communication, co-regulation and reasonable adjustments.

Restrictive interventions, including physical restraint, will only ever be used where it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to prevent imminent harm to the pupil or to others, or to prevent serious damage to property where this presents a risk to safety. Any intervention will always be the least restrictive option available and used for the shortest time necessary.

Homebrook Woods does **not** use seclusion as a behaviour management strategy. Pupils will never be deliberately isolated or prevented from leaving a room as a means of controlling behaviour or enforcing compliance.

Some pupils may choose to access a quiet, low-arousal or sensory space as part of their agreed regulation plan. These spaces are voluntary, supportive environments designed to help pupils regulate safely and are never used as punishment, isolation or seclusion. Pupils remain appropriately supervised and supported by staff at all times.

Following any restrictive intervention, staff will undertake a structured debrief with the pupil (where appropriate), the staff involved and, where relevant,

parents or carers. Individual Behaviour Support Plans, Positive Handling Plans and Risk Assessments will be reviewed following any significant incident to identify learning, reduce future risk and minimise the need for restrictive practice.

13. Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Homebrook Woods follows current statutory guidance.

Searches may occur where there is reasonable suspicion of prohibited items, including:

- Weapons.
- Drugs.
- Alcohol.
- Stolen property.
- Pornographic material.
- Items posing significant risk.

Searches are:

- Authorised by leadership.
- Proportionate.
- Recorded.
- Parents informed.

Strip searches are not conducted by school staff.

14. Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion

Exclusion is an absolute last resort at Homebrook Woods and will only be considered where there is clear evidence that safety cannot be maintained through reasonable adjustments, risk management or alternative support arrangements.

The Headteacher (who is also the Proprietor) has the legal authority to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

A suspension or permanent exclusion will only be considered where:

- Serious harm has occurred; or
- There is a demonstrable and ongoing risk to the safety or wellbeing of pupils or staff that cannot be mitigated through reasonable adjustments; and
- A graduated response of support, intervention and risk management has been implemented and reviewed.

In exercising this authority, the Headteacher/Proprietor will:

- Ensure the decision is lawful, reasonable and proportionate.
- Fully consider the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- Consider the pupil's SEND profile and whether behaviour arose from disability-related needs.
- Ensure all relevant documentation, including behaviour records and risk assessments, is reviewed prior to decision-making.
- Follow current statutory guidance relating to suspension and permanent exclusion in independent schools.
- Notify parents/carers in writing, setting out reasons clearly.
- Inform the Local Authority where required, particularly in relation to pupils with an EHCP.
- Arrange appropriate reintegration planning where a suspension has occurred.

Suspensions and Exclusions

Homebrook Woods operates a separate Suspensions and Exclusions Policy, which sets out the exceptional circumstances in which a suspension or permanent exclusion may be considered. As a therapeutic specialist setting, suspensions and exclusions are regarded as measures of last resort after reasonable adjustments, behaviour support strategies and appropriate interventions have been exhausted, unless immediate action is required to protect the safety of pupils or others.

EHCP Considerations and Oversight

All pupils at Homebrook Woods have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Therefore, any suspension or permanent exclusion decision will automatically trigger formal consideration of:

- Whether the behaviour is directly linked to identified needs.
- Whether all provision specified within the EHCP has been fully implemented.
- Whether additional reasonable adjustments could be made to reduce risk.
- Whether the current placement remains appropriate and able to meet need safely.

Following any suspension, the Headteacher/Proprietor will:

- Notify the Local Authority without delay.
- Consider whether an emergency annual review of the EHCP should be requested.
- Convene a structured reintegration planning meeting prior to return (unless permanently excluded).
- Ensure that risk assessments and behaviour support documentation are updated.

All suspensions and exclusions will be formally recorded, including rationale, proportionality analysis, and consideration of SEND duties. Patterns, frequency, protected characteristic data and contextual factors will be reviewed termly as part of safeguarding and behaviour governance oversight to ensure:

- No pupil is disproportionately impacted.
- Legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 are fully met.
- Decisions remain lawful, reasonable and defensible.

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15. Safeguarding Integration

Changes in behaviour may indicate:

- Abuse.
- Neglect.
- Trauma.
- Exploitation.
- Mental health difficulty.

All staff are trained to identify behavioural indicators of safeguarding concern. Concerns are reported immediately to the DSL. Behaviour management and safeguarding operate as integrated systems.

16. Roles and Responsibilities

16.1 Governance Structure

At Homebrook Woods, the roles of Proprietor, Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) are held by the same individual: Vonika Shelley.

The school operates as a proprietor-led independent special school. In this structure, governance and operational leadership are unified. To ensure appropriate checks, scrutiny and compliance:

- Formal internal self-review processes are embedded.
- Behaviour and safeguarding data are analysed systematically.
- External professional advice and supervision are accessed where appropriate.
- Local Authority liaison is maintained in relation to EHCP duties.
- Policy compliance is reviewed against Independent School Standards requirements.

This structure ensures that statutory duties are met while maintaining clear lines of accountability and documented oversight.

16.2 Proprietor and Headteacher Responsibilities

In her capacity as both Proprietor and Headteacher, Vonika Shelley is responsible for:

- Ensuring full compliance with the Independent School Standards.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented consistently and lawfully.
- Reviewing behaviour, restraint and exclusion data at defined intervals.
- Ensuring decisions are reasonable, proportionate and SEND-compliant.
- Ensuring safeguarding and behaviour systems operate cohesively.
- Maintaining accurate statutory records.
- Undertaking formal policy review annually.

Oversight is exercised through structured internal review, documented monitoring, and external consultation where necessary.

16.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Vonika Shelley.

In relation to behaviour, the DSL is responsible for:

- Determining whether behavioural incidents meet safeguarding thresholds.
- Assessing whether behaviour may indicate abuse, neglect, exploitation or trauma.
- Liaising with external agencies where required.
- Ensuring behaviour records are reviewed alongside safeguarding records.
- Ensuring staff understand the link between behaviour and safeguarding risk.
- Making referrals in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Where behaviour and safeguarding concerns intersect, safeguarding procedures take precedence.

16.4 SENDCo

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Monitoring individual Behaviour Support Plans.

- Ensuring EHCP provision is implemented.
- Analysing patterns of dysregulation linked to SEND need.
- Advising on reasonable adjustments.
- Coordinating multi-agency input where required.

16.5 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Maintaining calm, regulated conduct.
- Following individual pupil plans consistently.
- Recording significant incidents promptly and accurately.
- Escalating safeguarding concerns immediately.
- Participating in reflective practice and debrief processes.

16.6 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Share relevant information affecting regulation or behaviour.
- Attend review meetings when required.
- Work collaboratively with the school.
- Reinforce agreed strategies where appropriate.

17. Recording, Monitoring and Review

All significant incidents are logged using the school's secure system.

Data is reviewed:

- Weekly by senior leaders.
- Half-termly for pattern analysis.
- Termly by the Proprietor.

Monitoring includes analysis by:

- Type of incident.
- Time of day.
- Individual pupil.
- Protected characteristic.
- Staff deployment.

Where trends emerge, action plans are implemented.

The school ensures compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and actively monitors for disproportionate impact.

18. Training and Professional Development

All staff receive training in:

- ASC and communication differences.
- Trauma-informed practice.
- De-escalation and regulation strategies.
- Safeguarding and KCSIE.
- Use of reasonable force (where applicable).
- Equality and unconscious bias.

Training is refreshed annually and through continuous professional development.

19. Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights

This policy operates in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Homebrook Woods:

- Makes reasonable adjustments for all pupils with disabilities.
- Avoids discrimination.
- Promotes respect for protected characteristics.
- Ensures behaviour systems do not disadvantage vulnerable groups.

Inclusion is central to our ethos.

20. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes.
- Monitoring identifies concerns.
- Significant incidents require procedural refinement.
- Inspection feedback requires update.

The Proprietor approves all revisions.

Appendices

Appendix A

Staff Behaviour and Therapeutic Practice Training Record

[FORM-BEH-01 Staff Behaviour Training Record.xlsx](#)

Appendix B

Behaviour Incident Record

[FORM-BEH-02 Behaviour Incident Record.docx](#)

Appendix C

Serious Behaviour Incident / Sanctions Record

[FORM-BEH-03 Serious Behaviour Incident Record.docx](#)

Appendix D

Behaviour Monitoring Log

[FORM-BEH-04 Behaviour Monitoring Log.xlsx](#)