



‘Improving the quality of family life’

Behaviour Policy

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Purpose

This Behaviour Policy outlines the expectations, strategies, and processes for promoting positive behaviour and addressing challenging behaviour within Snowflake School, an independent Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) school for children with autism. The policy is designed to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment that fosters personal growth and development for all students.

We believe that every member of the Snowflake community has the right to feel safe and respected within the school environment. It is therefore our responsibility to model and promote positive behaviour in all that we do in order to foster self-regulation and appropriate communication.

This policy is designed to be read in conjunction with other Snowflake Policies, specifically:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

It is designed to help all members of the community to make sound decisions and take appropriate actions which are consistent with relevant legislation and the aims and values of the school.

Through the application of the science of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), Snowflake School actively encourages socially significant appropriate behaviours and reduces and replaces socially significant inappropriate behaviours. This is largely done through positive reinforcement. ABA utilises functional behaviour assessments (FBA) of challenging behaviour in order to understand the function of behaviour. Understanding the function of challenging behaviour allows for the teaching of appropriate alternative behaviour which results in the same consequence for the individual. For example, FBA has determined the function of screaming to be escape from instructions, an appropriate alternative to screaming can now be taught i.e. asking to leave/asking for help. While this policy applies to everyone at the school, every student has their own individual behaviour support plan (BSP) and risk assessment to enable their time at the school to be as positive and successful as possible.

Principles

It is understood that every pupil at Snowflake has certain essential rights. These are:

- **Respect and Dignity:** Every pupil is treated with respect and dignity, with their individual needs, abilities, and circumstances taken into account. Each pupil will be seen as an individual who is able to achieve.
- **Evidence-Based Practices:** The policy is grounded in the principles of ABA, using data-driven approaches to support positive behaviour and reduce challenging behaviours.

- **Collaboration:** Staff, families, and external professionals work together to promote consistency in behaviour management.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Emphasis is placed on reinforcing desired behaviours to encourage skill development and social engagement.
- **Safety:** The physical and emotional safety of students and staff is paramount. All pupils must be safeguarded from neglect or abuse whether it be physical, emotional, or sexual. All pupils have the right to feel safe and secure.
- **Independence:** Each pupil will be given every opportunity for independence across all activities. All pupils will experience equity of resources and provision as appropriate for their individual needs.
- **Pupil voice:** Pupils will be given the opportunity to express their views and regardless of their communication methods. Pupils will be listened to and involved in decision making. Pupils will be given information about what is happening before it happens.
- **Connection:** All pupils will be supported to form friendships and experience meaningful connections with peers, teachers and the wider community.

Snowflake School is fully committed to its duties under the Equality Act 2010. All pupils at the school are recognised as having protected characteristics due to disability, and behaviour is always understood and addressed within this context.

The school takes all reasonable steps to ensure that no pupil is treated less favourably, directly or indirectly, because of their disability. Behaviour that arises as a result of a pupil's special educational needs or disability will not be viewed in isolation and will never be addressed through punitive or discriminatory practices.

Reasonable adjustments are made proactively to policies, procedures, environments, teaching approaches, and behaviour management strategies to ensure that pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to their peers. These adjustments are informed by individual risk assessments, Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs), and Functional Behaviour Assessments (FBAs).

Any response to behaviour takes full account of a pupil's communication needs, sensory profile, emotional regulation, and level of understanding, and is designed to support inclusion, dignity, safety, and positive outcomes.

The school regularly reviews its behaviour practices to ensure ongoing compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and to promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations, and eliminate discrimination.

Definitions

There are pupils that may, at some time in their school career at Snowflake, display more **challenging** behaviour.

The term challenging describes a continuum of behaviours which may have the following impact:

- preventing the pupil or their peers from participating in school activities and learning opportunities
- isolating a pupil from both adults and peers
- preventing a pupil from forming relationships
- adversely affecting the learning of other pupils
- making excessive demands on staff time and other resources
- placing the pupil or others in danger of physical harm

Some challenging behaviours may be more specifically identified under the following headings:

Physical aggression/abuse towards self or others

This may include;

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Punching
- Hair pulling
- Biting
- Pinching
- Self-harm
- Head Butting
- Spitting
- Non-consensual touching of private areas of another person's body

Verbal Aggression towards others

- Name-calling
- Swearing
- Threatening

Damage to school property

- Throwing furniture or equipment
- Breaking windows/furniture
- Damaging resources

Other

- Attention-seeking behaviours
- Hyperactivity
- Excessive crying/shouting/screaming/movement (eg, running within a classroom)
- Echolalia

As a school we need to continually work towards recognising that we are challenged by the behaviour and not the pupil.

Roles and responsibilities:

The School and Trustees

The school recognises its responsibility for the safety and well-being of all under its care. To achieve this, the school environment will be constantly assessed and any risks reported and recorded. Where any persons are involved in an activity that could result in personal injury or high levels of stress the school will evaluate the situation and minimise the risk.

Snowflake School will endeavour to ensure that all in their care (staff, students etc.) are not exposed to unreasonable risks, and recognises that responses to physical danger and psychological stress will differ in individuals, and the support available will reflect these needs.

- The school will ensure that students' achievements are positively recognised.
- The school will inform parents of any concerns they may have about a student's behaviour with a view to working with them to promote positive change.
- The school will support staff in the maintenance of good classroom management skills.
- The school will adopt a programme of positive behaviour management in which students are given a clear expectation of appropriate behaviour. This will be supported by attention to the effects of the physical environment and teaching strategies.
- The school will record incidents of physical restraint and/or planned, supervised, withdrawal for students. (Refer to the Positive Handling Policy.)
- The school will offer training in attitudes and approaches to behaviour management.

Parents and Carers

Snowflake School recognises that parents play a vital role in the promotion of acceptable behaviour in school and the importance of positive home /school liaison, encouraging opportunities to discuss students' individual needs with carers. The school expects parents and carers to:

- Inform the school of behavioural challenges they may be experiencing at home.
- Inform the school of any health issues or medication that may affect a student's behaviour. This includes any changes in or withdrawal of medication.
- Inform the school of any change of routine which may affect a student's performance or behaviour.
- Inform the school if they seek external advice or support for behavioural difficulties.

Staff will:

- Constantly assess the environment and the way it impacts on the students.
- Use a holistic approach to the behaviours of students and will constantly monitor and record their observations, recognising that there may be underlying causes, e.g. medical, social etc. By ascertaining the function of behaviours, appropriate strategies will then be employed.
- Act as models for acceptable behaviour, thus promoting clear expectations of pupil behaviour.
- Make every effort to understand the importance of individual behaviour support programmes and the need for risk assessments.
- Not participate in physical intervention or restraint without being qualified to do so through training from a qualified Team-Teach instructor, unless to avert serious injury or danger in the most exceptional circumstances. In all cases, staff will work to the principle that the best interests of the student are at the centre of all decisions (Children Act 2004); that minimum force will be used for the minimum amount of time, and that interventions used will be reasonable and proportionate and used only where necessary (Use of Reasonable Force- DfE, 2013)
- Participate in the development of any behaviour support strategies for students that they are working with and follow the agreed strategy
- Raise any concerns or queries about a behaviour support strategy and/or a physical restraint with the appropriate members of staff.
- Support one another and be open enough to discuss difficulties honestly with a commitment to seeking a solution.
- All staff are expected to work within school policies and to work together as a team, communicating effectively and in a professional manner.

Staff will not

- Verbally demeaning pupils
- Behave threateningly towards pupils as a result of losing control. In stressful circumstances, affected staff should hand over to another member of staff where possible.
- Shout unnecessarily.
- Deprive any pupil of their entitlement to sustenance i.e. Lunch, pudding, mid-morning snacks.
- Physically harm pupils through rough handling e.g. pulling, pushing, squeezing, pulling, slapping.
- Handle pupils by their clothes unless necessary, for example, in a situation in which it would be necessary to ensure a pupil's safety.
- Use force to gain compliance.
- Withdraw curriculum entitlement except on the grounds of the health and/or safety e.g. unsafe behaviours in public places. Curriculum withdrawal should only take place with the permission of the Headteacher.

Behaviour management strategies:

Proactive Strategies

In-order to create a calm, supportive and purposeful learning environment we will

- **Individualized Support Plans:** Each student has a tailored Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) based on a Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA). Analyse why a behaviour is happening and demonstrate empathy (reflective listening).
- **Visual Supports and Schedules:** Visual aids, schedules, and prompts help students understand expectations and transitions. Set clear and reasonable boundaries in a manner that can be understood by the pupil.
- **Teaching Replacement Behaviours:** Students are explicitly taught functional and socially appropriate behaviours to replace challenging behaviours.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Desired behaviours are consistently reinforced through tangible rewards, praise, or other individualized reinforcers. Use reassuring physical contact where appropriate – a gentle pat on the back, well done handshake etc.
- **Skill-Building Activities:** Opportunities for learning and practicing social, emotional, and communication skills are embedded in the curriculum. Use every opportunity to allow pupils to rehearse desirable behaviours
- **Acknowledge appropriate behaviour:** Praise freely but specifically e.g. good sitting, good walking. Always use the pupil's name and be sensitive to their feelings. Use public activities to reinforce the praise of desirable behaviours such as the assemblies, plenary sessions, act of collective worship time as well as the use of displays
- **Class-based strategies:** As appropriate incorporate class-based strategies and reward systems based on the needs of the pupils e.g. group reward chart, clear classroom rules and expectations.
- **Staff training:** Ensure that as staff we feel emotionally equipped and supported to manage challenging behaviour. Provide ongoing training and support to all staff to ensure they feel confident and competent in managing all instances of challenging behaviour. This includes team teach training, ongoing coaching, and debriefs following incidents to ensure best practice.
- **Physical safety:** Ensure the environment is appropriately organised to promote both safety and learning. Ensure that pupils and staff are physically as safe as possible by not wearing sharp jewellery, long nails, chewing gum where this may cause choking (staff wearing long hair pinned up is advisable in some cases)

Addressing Challenging Behaviour

- **Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA):** All interventions are based on understanding the function of the behaviour.
- **Least Restrictive Interventions:** Strategies start with the least restrictive and escalate only as necessary, always prioritizing the student's dignity.

- **De-escalation Techniques:** Staff are trained in evidence-based de-escalation strategies to manage situations calmly and safely.
- **Data Collection and Monitoring:** Behaviour incidents are documented and analyzed to inform ongoing support and intervention adjustments.
- **Crisis Management:** If a behaviour poses an immediate risk to the safety of the student or others, staff will follow the school's crisis management protocol, which may include temporary use of restrictive interventions, as outlined in the student's BSP and in compliance with relevant regulations.

Sanctions

The Behaviour Analyst Certification Board (BACB) emphasises that strategies based on reinforcing appropriate and socially significant alternative behaviours should always be the primary approach when seeking to reduce behaviours of concern. In situations where additional measures are required, procedures that involve withholding reinforcement for behaviours that should decrease or implementing carefully selected consequences designed to reduce the likelihood of a behaviour recurring may be considered. Such approaches will only be used with parental consent, under the supervision of a qualified professional (BCBA), and in full compliance with relevant legislation and human rights frameworks, and only when clearly necessary.

Any use of these procedures will always be paired with active reinforcement of acceptable and replacement behaviours, and all implementation will be documented in detail and subject to close, ongoing monitoring.

Snowflake School acknowledges the right of all members of its community to feel safe. We are aware that the nature of some students' behaviours will be challenging and that, although sanctions will be used as the last resort, intervention may be necessary. The following procedures may be instigated:

- Re-appraisal of behaviour support plans
- Further analysis of information gathered to ascertain the function of behaviours more clearly
- A formal Functional Analysis may be considered
- Clear warnings may be given e.g. through the use of token boards
- Withdrawal of privileges e.g. removal of a reinforcer (i.e. DVD)
- Supervised time-outs

Where additional sanctions are necessary, they will reflect each pupil's differing need and the good of the school as a whole. The determination of the following sanctions will be at the discretion of the Head Teacher in consultation with ABA specialists and the Board of Trustees. Other key partners may be consulted where necessary. Such additional sanctions may include:

- Short-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Individual Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan

An individual risk assessment must be completed for all pupils outlining when there is *any* element of risk to pupil or staff member. A positive handling plan must be written for all pupils who have required the use of restrictive physical intervention to maintain their safety/safety of the other pupils (refer to positive handling policy).

If in doubt see the headteacher.

- The risk assessment will outline the specific behaviours and who is at risk and how.
- The completion of the form involves determining the actual level of the risk with a traffic light rating (High=red, medium =amber, green=low)
- The risk assessment is shared with all individuals who are involved with the pupil.
- The risk assessment is reviewed termly and updated as required.
- A Positive Handling Plan is then developed which outlines proactive strategies to reduce the likelihood of the requirement of physical intervention. The plan also outlines reactive strategies which are approved and may be used to support the pupil during crisis situations.

Child-on-child abuse

Definition of child-on-child Abuse: Any harmful interaction between children that may include physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual harm, whether intentional or unintentional. This may occur in person or online. Where behaviour indicates that a pupil may be at risk of harm, or that others may be at risk, the matter will be treated as a safeguarding concern rather than solely as a behaviour management issue. Such concerns will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. Behaviour support strategies will continue alongside safeguarding processes as appropriate.

Principles

- **Safety First:** The physical and emotional safety of all pupil is the highest priority.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Encourage and reward pro-social behaviours to reduce the likelihood of abusive behaviours.
- **Individualized Support:** Tailored interventions based on each pupil's needs and developmental stage.
- **Data-Driven Approach:** Use data collection and analysis to understand and modify behaviours effectively.
- **Collaborative Effort:** Work closely with parents, caregivers, and multidisciplinary teams to ensure consistency in interventions.

Preventive Strategies

- **Environmental Adjustments**
 1. Maintain safe and structured environments that minimize triggers for challenging behaviours.
 2. Supervise areas where conflicts are more likely to occur, such as playgrounds and hallways.
- **Teaching Pro-Social Skills**
 1. Use ABA techniques to teach functional communication, emotional regulation, and problem-solving skills.
 2. Incorporate role-playing and social stories to model appropriate interactions.
- **Clear Rules and Expectations**
 1. Communicate clear behavioural expectations using visual aids, schedules, and reinforcement systems.
 2. Ensure all staff consistently apply rules and procedures.
- **Training and Awareness**
 1. Train staff on recognizing and addressing signs of pupil-on-pupil abuse.
 2. Foster peer awareness and inclusivity through age-appropriate programs.

Intervention Strategies

- **Immediate Response**
 1. Separate the pupils involved to ensure safety.
 2. Provide emotional support to both the victim and the pupil displaying the behaviour.
 3. Document the incident accurately and notify relevant staff members including a member of the senior leadership group (SLG).
- **Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA)**
 1. Conduct an FBA to identify the triggers and functions of the abusive behaviour.
 2. Analyze antecedents, behaviours, and consequences (ABC) to create effective intervention plans.
- **Behaviour Support Plans (BSP)**
 1. Develop individualized BSPs with input from teachers, parents, and therapists.
 2. Use evidence-based ABA strategies, such as differential reinforcement, shaping, and task analysis.
- **Restorative Practices**

1. Facilitate restorative conversations to help pupils understand the impact of their actions.
2. Encourage empathy and accountability in a supportive setting.

Reporting and Monitoring

- **Reporting:** All incidents of pupil-on-pupil abuse must be reported to the safeguarding lead.
- **Data Collection:** Maintain detailed records of incidents, interventions, and outcomes to monitor progress.
- **Review and Evaluation:** Regularly review behaviour data and intervention plans to ensure their effectiveness.
- **Parental Involvement:** Communicate openly with parents about concerns, incidents, and strategies. Provide resources and training to help parents reinforce positive behaviours at home.

Additional Support

There may be situations where additional support is needed by the school. A referral may therefore be made to a relevant agency or professional such as an Educational Psychologist

All such referrals will be made by the Head Teacher. All staff will have the opportunity to take part in basic risk and team teach training and some staff will have additional training to support them in the use of safe handling where appropriate.

All staff should be aware of their own level of coping ability at any one time and be comfortable to ask any other member of staff to support them in a difficult or stressful situation. They may, occasionally, need to withdraw from a situation for a short period of time.

All staff will be guided through this policy as part of their induction to the school.

Monitoring and Review

The school's governing body and Board of Trustees maintain active oversight of behaviour and safeguarding practice. Anonymised reports on behaviour incidents, the use of restrictive interventions, exclusions, and safeguarding concerns are provided to Trustees on a regular basis.

Behaviour and incident data is systematically analysed to identify patterns, trends, and emerging risks, including any disproportionate impact on individual pupils or groups. This analysis informs strategic decision-making, staff training, policy review, and the ongoing development of safe and inclusive practice.

Safeguarding oversight is embedded within this process. Trustees receive appropriate safeguarding information, including trends in child-on-child abuse and serious incidents, and ensure that behaviour management practices are aligned with the school's safeguarding duties and *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Where concerns are identified, the Board of Trustees holds school leaders to account for the implementation of timely and effective actions to reduce risk, improve outcomes, and ensure compliance with statutory guidance and the Independent School Standards.

This policy will be reviewed annually in consultation with staff, families, and external professionals to ensure it remains effective and reflects current best practices in ABA and special education.

Communication of the Policy

The Behaviour Policy will be shared with staff, families, and other stakeholders. It will be available on the school website and provided as part of the transition process for new pupils.

Complaints and Concerns

Concerns about behaviour management practices should be directed to the school's leadership team, who will address them promptly and in accordance with the school's grievance procedure

Revision

Version Update	March 2026
Review due	September 2027
Reviewed By	Tara Morgan
Approved by Board of Trustees on	March 2026