Brighter Futures
Educational Trust

TRUST BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Policy Number: 21

Review Committee: Standards

Type of Policy: Statutory

Review Period: Annually

Approved: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027

Brighter Futures
Educational Trust

VERSION CONTROL

V1.1	October 2024	New Policy
V1.2	September 2025	New layout due to rebrand and DfE guidelines dates updated
V1.3	September 2026	Policy rewritten due to it being very long

CONTENTS

1. Purpose and scope
2. Legal and guidance framework
3. Trust approach and expectations
4. Roles and responsibilities
5. Behaviour curriculum and routines
6. Recognition and consequences
7. SEND, disability and vulnerable pupils
8. Safeguarding, bullying and discriminatory behaviour
9. Attendance, punctuality and engagement
10. Mobile phones, online and off-site behaviour
11. Searching, screening and confiscation
12. Internal suspension and removal from lessons
13. Suspension, permanent exclusion and pupil movement
14. Restrictive interventions and reasonable force
15. Absconding and pupils missing from supervision
16. Recording, reporting and post-incident support
17. Staff training, family partnership and complaints
18. Monitoring, governance and linked policies

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy sets the Trust-wide framework for promoting positive behaviour, maintaining safe and orderly learning environments and responding consistently when behaviour falls below expectations. It applies to all BFET schools, satellite provisions, off-site activities and behaviour connected with school, including online behaviour where it affects pupils, staff or the orderly running of a school.

Each school will maintain concise local procedures describing its age-appropriate routines, rewards, consequences, communication routes and named leaders. Local procedures must remain consistent with this policy. The Headteacher retains overall responsibility for the main school and any satellite provision; the Assistant Headteacher or Head of School and senior leaders manage day-to-day implementation at each provision.
The policy applies to pupils, staff, trustees, governors, volunteers and visitors. It should be read with the Trust's safeguarding, attendance, equality, SEND, exclusions, restrictive-intervention, complaints and online-safety arrangements.

2. LEGAL AND GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

The Trust will have regard to current legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Education Act 2011, including the statutory power to discipline and the lawful use of reasonable force;
- Equality Act 2010, including the public sector equality duty and the duty to make reasonable adjustments;
- Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice;
- Behaviour in Schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, updated 2024);
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (statutory guidance effective 26 July 2026);
- Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (DfE guidance effective 1 April 2026), section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the

Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025;

• Mobile Phones in Schools (statutory guidance to be followed from 1 September 2026);

• Searching, Screening and Confiscation at School; Preventing and Tackling Bullying; and Working Together to Improve School Attendance; and

• the Ofsted state-funded school inspection toolkit in force from September 2026 and the Schools White Paper Every Child Achieving and Thriving (2026).

Where legislation or statutory guidance changes, the current requirement takes precedence. The policy will be reviewed promptly where a material change affects Trust practice.

3. TRUST APPROACH AND EXPECTATIONS

BFET provides specialist SEMH education. We combine high expectations, consistent boundaries and meaningful consequences with relational, trauma-informed and therapeutic practice. Understanding the cause or function of behaviour informs the response; it does not remove responsibility, accountability or the right of others to learn and feel safe.

Our approach supports the 2026 Schools White Paper direction towards inclusive education, early identification of need, stronger attendance and behaviour systems, partnership with families and preventing pupils from being unnecessarily sidelined. Staff will use the least intrusive effective response and seek to prevent recurrence through teaching, support, reflection and repair.

Pupils are expected to attend regularly and punctually, be ready to learn, follow reasonable instructions, treat others and property with respect, keep themselves and others safe, and avoid discriminatory, abusive, intimidating or harmful behaviour. Expectations apply in lessons, social times, transport, visits, work experience, online activity and conduct outside school where there is a clear connection to school.

Staff will model calm, respectful behaviour; teach expectations explicitly; use consistent language and routines; recognise success; intervene early; challenge unsafe or discriminatory conduct; record significant incidents accurately; and make reasonable adjustments without creating unsafe or unfair practice.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Trustees

The Board approves this policy and assures itself that the Trust meets its legal duties. It reviews Trust-wide behaviour, attendance, suspensions, permanent exclusions, bullying, restrictive interventions, safeguarding themes, equality information and any disproportionate impact on groups of pupils.

CEO

The CEO provides Trust-wide assurance, ensures appropriate leadership and resources, challenges significant or repeated concerns and reports material risks to trustees. The CEO is consulted on proposed permanent exclusions and other cases of significant Trust risk, without replacing the Headteacher's statutory decision-making role.

Headteachers and Heads of School

The Headteacher is responsible for the behaviour culture and implementation of this policy, including staff expectations, publication, lawful sanctions, safeguarding, equality and SEND duties. Only the Headteacher, or the acting Headteacher, may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

Assistant Headteachers and senior leaders

Assistant Headteachers and senior leaders monitor day-to-day practice; scrutinise incidents, attendance, bullying, suspensions and restrictive interventions; ensure support plans and risk assessments are current; coach staff; oversee reintegration; and evaluate whether interventions improve safety, engagement and learning.

Staff

All staff must apply the policy fairly and consistently, while using professional judgement and agreed individual adjustments. Staff must report safeguarding concerns immediately, record incidents promptly and seek support when risk is escalating.

Pupils and families

Pupils will be taught the expectations and supported to reflect, repair harm and make safer choices. Parents and carers are expected to work with the school, share relevant information, attend review or reintegration meetings and reinforce agreed expectations.

5. BEHAVIOUR CURRICULUM AND ROUTINES

Positive behaviour is taught, practised and reinforced through the curriculum, assemblies, tutor or class time, PSHE, planned interventions and daily routines. Schools will define what

successful behaviour looks like in classrooms, transitions, social times, transport and online spaces. New pupils and pupils returning after absence, suspension or placement change will receive additional teaching and support.

Therapeutic Thinking principles guide prevention, de-escalation and reflective practice. Staff use positive phrasing, limited choices, predictable routines, appropriate scripts, planned regulation opportunities and calm adult behaviour. Individual behaviour support plans and risk assessments identify known triggers, protective factors, communication needs, successful strategies and agreed responses.

The curriculum will develop self-regulation, respectful relationships, consent and boundaries, online conduct, recognition of prejudice and harmful behaviour, conflict resolution, reflection, repair and preparation for adulthood. The Trust will not rely on sanctions alone to secure lasting improvement.

6. RECOGNITION AND CONSEQUENCES

Schools recognise effort, progress, attendance improvement, learning behaviours, kindness, responsibility and contribution. Recognition may include specific praise, feedback to families, privileges, responsibilities, certificates or age-appropriate school systems. Rewards will not discriminate against pupils whose disability or circumstances affect behaviour or attendance. Consequences must be lawful, reasonable, proportionate and clearly linked to the behaviour. Staff will consider the pupil's age, needs, disability, understanding, previous incidents, safeguarding information and any reasonable adjustment. Consequences may include a reminder or reset, completion of missed work, loss of a privilege, restorative or reparative action, detention, supervised removal, internal suspension or, where the statutory threshold is met, suspension or permanent exclusion.

Collective punishment, humiliation, deprivation of food or drink, unsafe exercise and any use of force as punishment are prohibited. A pupil must never be prevented from using a toilet where this would compromise health, dignity or a reasonable adjustment. Detentions and same-day arrangements will follow legal requirements and consider transport, safeguarding and welfare.

7. SEND, DISABILITY AND VULNERABLE PUPILS

The Trust will not assume that behaviour is a deliberate choice without considering SEND, disability, communication, mental health, trauma, sensory needs, medical needs, care

experience and safeguarding factors. Staff must consider whether unmet need contributed to the behaviour and whether additional assessment, provision or an EHCP review is required. Reasonable adjustments may change how an expectation is taught, supported or responded to, but do not mean that dangerous or harmful behaviour is ignored. Adjustments will be purposeful, recorded where significant and reviewed for impact. Leaders will involve the SENCO, DSL, parents, the pupil and relevant professionals where behaviour is persistent, escalating or unusual.

The Trust will monitor whether sanctions, suspensions, removals, searches or restrictive interventions disproportionately affect pupils with protected characteristics, SEND, children known to social care, children in care or other vulnerable groups. Leaders will act where patterns suggest inequity, unmet need or ineffective provision.

8. SAFEGUARDING, BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATORY BEHAVIOUR

Behaviour may be a sign that a pupil is at risk of harm or has experienced harm. Staff must follow the Child Protection Policy and speak to the DSL where conduct suggests abuse, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, harassment, coercion, criminal exploitation, online harm, self-harm, radicalisation or another safeguarding concern. Behaviour management must not delay a safeguarding response.

Child-on-child abuse will not be dismissed as banter, part of growing up or an inevitable feature of school life. The school will safeguard and support the child who may have been harmed, assess risk, respond appropriately to the child alleged to have caused harm and consider the needs of other pupils. Victims will not be made responsible for avoiding the alleged perpetrator.

Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, is prohibited. Racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, disablist and faith-based incidents will be challenged, recorded and reviewed for patterns. Reports will be investigated and families informed as appropriate. Police or local safeguarding partners will be involved where the threshold is met.

A knowingly false or malicious allegation may be addressed under this policy, but no pupil will be sanctioned merely because an allegation is unsubstantiated, unfounded or withdrawn. The Trust will first consider safeguarding, vulnerability, communication and the pupil's understanding.

9. ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND ENGAGEMENT

Attendance and behaviour are closely connected. The Trust will maintain clear expectations while taking a support-first approach to identifying barriers early and working with families and services. Absence linked to anxiety, SEND, health, bullying or safeguarding will trigger assessment and coordinated support rather than being treated only as misconduct.
Schools will use attendance, punctuality, behaviour and engagement data together to identify pupils at risk of disengagement. Support may include a trusted adult, transition planning, reasonable adjustments, pastoral or family work, curriculum adaptation, targeted intervention and multi-agency support. Attendance sanctions, where used, must follow the Attendance Policy and statutory guidance.

10. MOBILE PHONES, ONLINE AND OFF-SITE BEHAVIOUR

In accordance with statutory guidance from September 2026, BFET schools will provide a mobile phone-free environment throughout the school day. Each school's local procedure will explain how devices are stored, what happens when the rule is breached and how families can contact pupils. Exceptions will be limited to agreed medical, disability, safeguarding or other exceptional needs and recorded as reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

Authorised staff may confiscate a phone or similar device for a proportionate period in accordance with school rules. Searching a pupil or device must comply with the searching section of this policy and safeguarding, data-protection and equality requirements.

Schools may respond to behaviour outside school or online where it threatens another pupil or staff member, could adversely affect the school's reputation, disrupts the orderly running of the school, or occurs while a pupil is taking part in school-related activity, travelling to or from school or wearing school identification. Any response must be lawful, proportionate and connected to the impact on the school community.

11. SEARCHING, SCREENING AND CONFISCATION

Searching, screening and confiscation will follow current DfE guidance. The Headteacher may authorise staff to search for prohibited items and items identified in school rules. Before a search, staff should normally assess risk, explain the reason, seek cooperation and consider safeguarding, SEND, communication, age, sex and any trauma-related factors.

A search without consent may take place only where the legal power applies. Except where there is an immediate risk of serious harm, the authorised searcher and witness must meet

the statutory requirements concerning sex. Searches must be conducted respectfully, away from other pupils where practicable, and must not involve an intimate search. Strip searches may only be carried out by police under the law and must be managed in line with safeguarding guidance.

Confiscated items will be retained, returned, disposed of or passed to the police as the law and guidance require. Searches and outcomes will be recorded where required or where safeguarding or risk makes a record appropriate. Parents will be informed where required and where it is appropriate to do so.

12. INTERNAL SUSPENSION AND REMOVAL FROM LESSONS

Removal from a lesson is a serious, supervised response used to restore calm, protect learning or complete a planned intervention. It must be proportionate, for no longer than necessary, educationally purposeful and recorded. The pupil must receive appropriate work, supervision, welfare support and a planned route back to normal learning.

An internal suspension is supervised, structured, time-limited and focused on learning, reflection and reintegration. It is not seclusion or isolation. A pupil must not be placed alone in a locked room, prevented from leaving by a physical barrier or left without meaningful staff interaction. Repeated removal or internal suspension will trigger leadership review of need, provision and impact.

13. SUSPENSION, PERMANENT EXCLUSION AND PUPIL MOVEMENT

Suspension and permanent exclusion will follow the statutory guidance effective from 26 July 2026. Only the Headteacher, or acting Headteacher, may make the decision on disciplinary grounds. A suspension may be for one or more fixed periods up to 45 school days in an academic year. Permanent exclusion is a last resort and may be used only in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the behaviour policy where allowing the pupil to remain would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others.

Decisions must be lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate. The Headteacher must establish the facts on the balance of probabilities; allow the pupil to give their account where appropriate; consider SEND, disability, safeguarding and contributing factors; consult the DSL where relevant; and avoid discrimination. An informal or unofficial exclusion, sending a pupil home to cool off, or encouraging a family to remove a pupil is unlawful.

Parents, the Trust, local authority, social worker and Virtual School Head will be notified as required. Education during suspension and from the sixth day will be arranged in accordance with statutory duties. A reintegration meeting will normally follow every suspension and will agree expectations, support, reasonable adjustments and responsibilities with the pupil and family. Reintegration must not be made a condition of return.

Managed moves must be voluntary, in the pupil's best interests and agreed with all parties. Off-site direction must be used to improve behaviour, not as an alternative to exclusion, and must be kept under formal review. The Board will scrutinise suspensions, exclusions and pupil movements, including repeat use and the impact on vulnerable groups.

14. RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS AND REASONABLE FORCE

Restrictive intervention is used only when necessary, lawful, reasonable and proportionate, and never as punishment or merely to secure compliance where no relevant risk exists. Prevention and de-escalation are the first response. Any force used must be the minimum necessary for the shortest time and must take account of the pupil's age, SEND, disability, medical needs, trauma, communication and individual risk assessment.

School staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in circumstances permitted by law, including to prevent injury, serious damage to property or serious disorder. Planned interventions will be set out in an individual plan developed with parents and relevant professionals. Emergency intervention may be required where the risk could not reasonably have been predicted.

Seclusion and restraint are restrictive interventions and may only be used within the law and current guidance. Seclusion must not be routine, disciplinary or used because staffing or provision is inadequate. The pupil must be safe, supervised and released as soon as the immediate necessity ends. Mechanical restraint and pain-inducing techniques are not part of ordinary BFET practice and must not be used except where specifically lawful, professionally advised and authorised within an individual healthcare or safety plan.

Every significant incident involving force, and every incident of seclusion or restraint that falls within statutory recording requirements, must be recorded and reported to parents in accordance with section 93A and the 2025 Regulations. Staff must also follow Trust and local recording procedures, complete injury and safeguarding reports where applicable and notify senior leaders promptly. Any departure from normal parental reporting must be based on safeguarding advice and documented.

15. ABSCONDING AND PUPILS MISSING FROM SUPERVISION

Staff will use prevention, agreed supervision and individual planning for pupils at risk of leaving a lesson, site or supervised activity. If a pupil leaves supervision, staff will immediately assess the risk, alert the designated senior leader, follow the local missing-pupil procedure and maintain proportionate observation where safe.

Parents, police and other agencies will be contacted according to the level of risk and local procedure. Staff must not place themselves, the pupil or others at unreasonable risk. The response and return will be recorded, followed by a welfare check, safeguarding consideration and review of the support plan and risk assessment.

16. RECORDING, REPORTING AND POST-INCIDENT SUPPORT

Significant incidents will be recorded promptly on the Trust's agreed system. Records should be factual, distinguish observation from opinion and include antecedents, behaviour, risk, action taken, consequences, restrictive intervention, injuries, pupil voice, witnesses, family communication and follow-up. Safeguarding records must be made on the safeguarding system and not solely within behaviour records.

Following a serious incident, leaders will ensure immediate safety and medical attention, provide opportunities for the pupil and staff to recover and give their accounts, inform families as appropriate and consider safeguarding, staff welfare, learning and repair. A restorative conversation will take place only when safe, appropriate and not coercive.

Leaders will analyse patterns rather than considering incidents in isolation. Analysis will include frequency, severity, location, time, triggers, pupils and staff involved, protected characteristics, SEND, attendance, removals, suspensions, injuries and restrictive interventions. Findings will inform training, staffing, curriculum, environmental changes and individual provision.

17. STAFF TRAINING, FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AND COMPLAINTS

Staff will receive induction and regular role-appropriate refreshers on the behaviour curriculum, Therapeutic Thinking, safeguarding, SEND, equality, searching, suspensions and restrictive interventions. Only appropriately trained staff should use planned restrictive techniques, always applying the law and the least restrictive response.

Schools will explain expectations and local procedures clearly and involve families early where behaviour or risk is increasing, including in support, reintegration and risk planning. Concerns should normally be raised with the class teacher or form tutor and then a senior leader. Formal complaints follow the Trust Complaints Policy. Any allegation that an adult harmed a pupil, used excessive force or poses a safeguarding risk must be referred immediately through safeguarding and allegations procedures.

18. MONITORING, GOVERNANCE AND LINKED POLICIES

The Trust will evaluate whether practice produces calm, safe and inclusive environments in which pupils attend, participate and learn. In line with the Ofsted toolkit, leaders will consider safeguarding, inclusion, attendance and behaviour, achievement, personal development and wellbeing, leadership, consistency, stakeholder experience, learning time, repeat incidents, suspensions, restrictive interventions and outcomes for different groups.

Headteachers will report at least termly through the governance structure. The Board will challenge trends, disparities, serious incidents and impact. The policy will be reviewed annually and sooner following statutory change, a serious incident, audit or inspection finding, or evidence of ineffective practice.

Linked policies and procedures include:

- Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- SEND
- Equality
- Attendance
- Exclusion
- Online Safety
- Health and Safety
- Complaints
- Whistleblowing
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Each school's local Behaviour Procedures.