



**William Henry
Smith Foundation**

Positive Behaviour, Relationships and Engagement Policy

Policy Details

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Lead member of staff:	Karl Adamski
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1.0 Introduction

At William Henry Smith Foundation, children and young adults are part of a highly consistent, relational and inclusive community where expectations are clearly understood, embedded and lived by staff, learners and families. Our culture is not reactive or short-term; it is sustained over time, rooted in shared values, and underpinned by strong relationships and a deep understanding of individual need.

Positive behaviour, relationships and engagement are seen as an integral part of the curriculum, supporting children and young adults to develop the social, emotional and communication skills they need to feel safe, secure and ready to learn. We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and that children may experience barriers which impact their engagement, attendance or behaviour.

Our approach focuses on early identification of barriers, understanding why children and young adults struggle rather than simply responding to what is seen. Support is highly responsive and individualised, with bespoke interventions and timely adjustments made when strategies are not effective. This ensures that support leads to meaningful, sustained and transformational impact, particularly for our most vulnerable learners.

Every child and young adult is valued as an individual, with a strong emphasis on belonging, dignity and empowerment. We aim to create an environment where learners want to attend, feel confident to engage, and are supported to become the best that they can be.

2.0 Principles and Ethos

Our Positive Behaviour, Relationships and Engagement Policy is grounded in a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) ethos, recognising that the quality of relationships and the wider school climate are critical to successful learning and wellbeing.

At William Henry Smith Foundation, we are committed to:

- Creating a safe, caring and psychologically secure environment where children and young adults feel valued, respected and understood
- Maintaining a highly consistent culture, with shared expectations, routines and approaches applied equitably by all staff
- Building strong, meaningful relationships with children, families, carers and colleagues, based on mutual respect, trust and understanding
- Viewing behaviours of concern as opportunities for reflection, learning and growth, rather than punishment
- Identifying barriers early and responding with tailored, responsive and solution-focused support
- Ensuring that practice is sustained and embedded, rather than reactive or short-term

We understand that children and young adults experience behaviour, learning and attendance differently. Therefore, we adopt a graduated, person-centred approach, informed by quantitative and qualitative data,

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lived experience and professional judgement. Support is adapted to individual need, recognising that equity requires different levels of support to achieve equal ambition.

Our culture promotes a strong sense of belonging, where children and young adults feel safe to take risks, express themselves and engage confidently in learning. Predictable routines, clear expectations and relational practice enable learners to feel secure and ready to succeed.

Through this approach, we aim not only to support positive behaviour, but to develop confident, resilient learners who can reflect on their actions, build positive relationships and prepare for life beyond school.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Positive Behaviour, Relationships and Engagement Policy at William Henry Smith Foundation is to sustain a highly effective, relational and inclusive culture where all children and young adults feel safe, valued and supported to engage positively in learning and school life.

Through a consistent and embedded Positive Behaviour Support approach, we seek to achieve meaningful and lasting change, particularly for those who experience the greatest barriers to learning, attendance or engagement.

Our objectives are to:

- Ensure the safety, wellbeing and dignity of every member of the school community through a culture of vigilance, shared responsibility and strong safeguarding practice
- Create a strong sense of belonging, where children and young adults feel secure, respected and confident to engage, take risks and express themselves positively
- Maintain a highly consistent culture of expectations, routines and relational practice that is understood and applied equitably by all staff, over time
- Identify barriers early to behaviour, attendance and engagement, focusing on understanding why children and young adults struggle rather than reacting solely to presenting behaviour
- Provide highly responsive and individualised support, including bespoke interventions and timely adjustments, ensuring strategies are adapted when they are not effective
- Teach self-regulation, emotional literacy and personal responsibility, enabling children and young adults to reflect on their actions, make informed choices and develop independence
- Promote positive attitudes to attendance and engagement, recognising the link between belonging, wellbeing and sustained participation in learning
- Work in close partnership with parents and carers, recognising the importance of shared understanding, consistency and collaboration in achieving positive outcomes
- Equip children and young adults with the social, emotional, communication and life skills needed to prepare for adulthood, independence and life beyond school
- Embed a solution-focused, reflective approach across the school, where behaviour is viewed as a form of communication and opportunities for learning and growth are prioritised
- Ensure that impact is sustained, monitored and evaluated over time, using both qualitative and quantitative information to inform decision-making and continuous improvement

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Through these aims and objectives, the school seeks not only to promote positive behaviour, but to develop a culture that is highly conducive to learning, where children and young adults consistently achieve well from their individual starting points and experience transformational outcomes.

4.0 Positive Behaviour Support (and reducing the need for restraint)

At William Henry Smith Foundation, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is a whole-school, evidence-informed approach that underpins our culture, relationships and responses to behaviour. PBS is not about managing behaviour in isolation; it is about understanding, teaching and supporting children and young adults to succeed.

PBS focuses on why behaviour occurs, recognising behaviour as a form of communication. Our approach does not seek to “fix” the child, but to remove barriers, adapt environments and teach alternative, more effective behaviours. Punitive approaches are not used.

Our PBS approach is characterised by:

- Early identification of need, using skilled assessment to understand triggers, functions and unmet needs
- Highly responsive, individualised support, with strategies adapted promptly when they are not effective
- Consistent relational practice, where positive relationships and emotional safety underpin all interactions
- Proactive support, prioritising prevention and de-escalation over reactive responses
- Sustained and embedded practice, applied consistently across classes, houses and the wider school

Through PBS, children and young adults are explicitly taught the skills they need to regulate emotions, communicate effectively and make positive choices. New behaviours are reinforced so that they are more effective and meaningful than behaviours of concern, leading to lasting change over time.

Reducing the need for restrictive physical intervention

The foundation is committed to minimising the use of restrictive physical intervention. This is achieved through:

- High-quality PBS planning and implementation
- Consistent use of proactive and preventative strategies
- Skilled staff who understand individual children and young adults and respond early
- Reflective practice and learning following incidents, including Post Incident Learning

Restrictive physical intervention is only used as a last resort, when there is a significant risk to the safety of the child, others or property, and always in line with statutory guidance. All staff receive appropriate training, and

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incidents are reviewed to ensure learning informs future practice and further reduces the likelihood of recurrence.

Through this approach, PBS contributes to a calm, predictable and supportive environment, where children and young adults feel safe, experience a strong sense of belonging, and are supported to engage positively in learning with reduced reliance on restrictive interventions.

5.0 Expectations

At William Henry Smith Foundation, expectations are clear, consistent and relational, supporting a calm, predictable environment where children and young adults feel safe, respected and ready to learn. Expectations are not imposed; they are explicitly taught, modelled and reinforced, ensuring they are understood and embedded over time.

Children and young adults learn positive behaviour through high-quality role modelling, consistent adult responses and strong relationships. All staff share responsibility for upholding expectations, recognising that consistency across the school is essential to supporting engagement, emotional regulation and positive behaviour.

6.0 Rewards and Learning Consequences

At William Henry Smith Foundation, rewards and learning consequences are used purposefully to develop positive behaviour, intrinsic motivation and self-regulation. They are an integral part of our Positive Behaviour Support approach and are designed to promote lasting change, rather than short-term compliance. We recognise that children and young adults are motivated in different ways. While appropriate extrinsic rewards are used, there is a strong emphasis on developing intrinsic motivation, helping learners to feel proud of doing the right thing, making progress from their individual starting points and overcoming barriers to success.

Rewards

Rewards are used to recognise effort, progress and positive contribution, reinforcing behaviours that support learning, relationships and wellbeing. They are applied consistently and fairly, ensuring all children and young adults can experience success.

Rewards may include:

- Positive verbal feedback, recognition and encouragement
- Celebrating achievements in class, house and whole-school contexts
- Weekly awards recognising positive contribution and effort
- Opportunities for responsibility, leadership and purposeful school roles
- Sharing successes with parents and carers

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Rewards are meaningful, proportionate and accessible, ensuring children and young adults understand why they are being recognised and how their actions align with shared expectations and values.

Learning consequences

Learning consequences are used to support reflection, learning and behaviour change, not punishment. They are relational, restorative and proportionate, focusing on helping children and young adults understand the impact of their behaviour and develop more effective alternatives.

Where behaviour of concern occurs, staff respond with calm, consistent and empathetic practice, seeking to understand underlying need and remove barriers. Learning consequences may include restorative conversations, problem-solving and Post Incident Learning, delivered at a time when the child or young adult is ready to engage.

The school recognises that some children and young adults may require flexibility and additional support to meet expectations. Responses are therefore individualised, informed by PBS plans and professional judgement, while maintaining high expectations for behaviour and engagement.

Sustained impact

Through consistent use of rewards and learning consequences, the school supports children and young adults to:

- Develop self-awareness, reflection and accountability
- Strengthen emotional regulation and communication skills
- Build positive relationships with peers and adults
- Experience success and belonging within the school community

This approach contributes to a calm, predictable and highly supportive environment, where behaviour improves over time, learning is protected, and reliance on reactive or restrictive approaches is reduced.

Post Incident Learning

Post Incident Learning (PIL) is a non-punitive, relational process used to support reflection, learning and behaviour change following incidents of concern. It is a key component of the school's Positive Behaviour Support approach and contributes to sustained improvement over time.

PIL is undertaken when the child or young adult is emotionally regulated and ready to engage. Through skilled, supportive conversation, staff help learners to reflect on what happened, explore feelings and identify more effective alternative behaviours for the future. This process strengthens self-regulation, emotional literacy and personal responsibility.

PIL is used consistently and proportionately, informed by individual PBS plans and professional judgement. Learning from incidents is used to adapt support, reduce recurrence and further minimise the need for reactive or restrictive responses.

7.0 Parents/carers

We believe that highly consistent practice is fundamental to supporting positive behaviour and sustained improvement over time. Consistency across school and home strengthens children's sense of security,

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predictability and belonging, enabling them to feel safe, understood and ready to learn. To support this, we work in close partnership with parents and carers, offering guidance and support in behaviour strategies and Post Incident Learning through Family Support, Family Systemic Work and Key Worker outreach, ensuring shared understanding and a joined-up approach.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and psychologically safe environment for all children and young adults, where they feel valued, protected and empowered to engage positively. Peer-on-peer abuse, including bullying of any kind, is not tolerated. Children and young adults are encouraged to speak up and are confident that concerns will be taken seriously, addressed promptly and managed effectively.

The school adopts a restorative, relational approach, supporting those involved to understand impact, repair relationships and rebuild trust through facilitated discussion, mediation and mutual resolution. This approach reinforces accountability while promoting learning, reflection and positive relationships. Further detail is outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy (WS6).

8.0 Being my best plan

The Being My Best Plan is a highly personalised, proactive support plan designed to promote a child or young adult's safety, emotional regulation and wellbeing, particularly during times of challenge or heightened need. It reflects a deep understanding of the individual, recognising that effective support must be tailored, responsive and consistent.

Each plan identifies early warning signs and triggers, alongside clear, agreed strategies that help the young person regulate, feel safe and navigate challenging moments successfully. This includes personalised self-soothing techniques, preferred de-escalation strategies, trusted adults for support and adaptations to the environment that reduce anxiety and risk.

The Being My Best Plan is unique to each child or young adult and is informed by their lived experience, strengths and needs. It is shared with relevant staff to ensure a consistent, joined-up response, enabling adults to act early, respond calmly and provide the right support at the right time. Through this approach, the plan supports positive engagement, reduced escalation and sustained improvement in wellbeing and behaviour.

9.0 Reasonable force

The Department for Education's guidance Use of reasonable force in schools provides clear advice on the lawful and proportionate use of reasonable force, emphasising that restrictive interventions must be minimised, used only when necessary, and applied for the shortest possible time. This guidance will be strengthened further through the statutory guidance Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools from April 2026.

At The William Henry Smith Foundation, our practice is underpinned by a highly consistent culture, where expectations are clearly understood and embedded by staff, children and young adults, and families. We are committed to creating a strong sense of belonging, ensuring that all learners feel safe, valued and

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empowered. As a result, the use of restraint is avoided wherever possible and is never routine, reactive or punitive.

Restrictive physical intervention is used only as a last resort, when there is an immediate risk of harm to the child, other children or young adults, members of staff, or where there is a risk of significant damage to property. Our approach prioritises early identification of barriers, highly responsive and individualised support, and relational practice, recognising the lived experience of our children and young adults and the underlying reasons for behaviour.

All staff receive high-quality compulsory training and regular refresher training, ensuring practice is safe, lawful and of the highest standard should staff have no alternative but to intervene. Staff are expected to work collaboratively, seeking support from colleagues and sharing skills, strategies and ideas to support behaviour effectively. This reflects our commitment to shared responsibility, psychological safety, and a culture of professional reflection and support.

The leadership team and accredited PRICE trainers provide ongoing guidance, coaching and reflective feedback. This enables sustained and embedded practice, supporting continuous improvement and ensuring that restrictive interventions reduce over time through preventative, trauma-informed and evidence-informed approaches.

Reasonable force may be used only to:

- Prevent a child or young adult from leaving a room or area where doing so would place them or others at risk, with careful consideration given to restriction of liberty and proportionality
- Prevent a child or young adult from physically attacking another person
- Stop a fight or serious disorder within the setting
- Prevent a child or young adult from harming themselves or causing significant damage to property

Any use of reasonable force is necessary, proportionate and time-limited, always respecting dignity, safeguarding needs and emotional wellbeing.

All incidents are recorded and reported, with parents or carers informed as soon as practicable. Post-incident reflection and support are central to our practice, ensuring learning is captured, relationships are repaired, and future planning is adapted to secure significant and sustained impact, particularly for our most vulnerable learners.

Seclusion

Definition - A non-disciplinary intervention in which a pupil experiencing severe dysregulation is supervised in a safe space away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction, blocking or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave. It must only be used until the risk has reduced and must never be used as punishment.

The use of seclusion is recognised as a restrictive practice and must be recorded and reported in accordance with the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025. In line with Positive Behaviour Support principles, incidents must be documented as soon as is reasonably practicable after the event, ensuring a focus on understanding triggers, evaluating the proportionality of the response, and identifying strategies to reduce the likelihood of future restrictive interventions.

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10.0 Anti-Bullying, Inclusion and Child-on-Child Abuse

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment in which children and young adults can learn, thrive and feel a strong sense of belonging. Bullying of any kind — including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying — is unacceptable.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, bullying is recognised as a form of child-on-child abuse and is addressed through our safeguarding systems (see Child Protection Policy WS7, Section 5). Our approach reflects an open safeguarding culture — lived, not just compliant — with vigilance, timely action and purposeful multi-agency working where required.

We are a TELLING school. Children, young adults, staff and visitors are actively encouraged to report concerns, confident that issues will be addressed promptly, effectively and consistently. This reinforces our positive behaviour culture, where relationships underpin behaviour and equity is achieved through tailored and responsive support, not uniform responses.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy (WS6) sets out clear preventative and responsive measures in line with national guidance and standards, ensuring inclusion beyond lessons, full participation in school life, and high expectations for all.

11.0 Items banned in school

In line with the Department for Education's Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance, all school staff have the power to search students with the pupil's consent. The principal is responsible for determining which members of staff are authorised to carry out searches within the school and must ensure that those staff are appropriately trained and supported to exercise these powers lawfully, safely and proportionately.

Authorised staff may conduct a search without consent where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, as defined in legislation and statutory guidance. Searches without consent must be conducted in accordance with DfE guidance, taking into account the age, sex and safeguarding needs of the pupil, and must always be reasonable, proportionate and respectful.

Under the Education Act 1996 and the schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012, prohibited items include:

1. Knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items
2. Tobacco products, vapes and cigarette papers, fireworks, and pornographic images
3. Any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, cause personal injury, or damage property
4. Any item banned by the school rules which is identified within those rules as an item that may be searched for

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The Principal will ensure that searches are only carried out by authorised staff and that clear procedures are in place for recording searches, managing confiscated items, and safeguarding students following a search. In line with statutory guidance, parents or carers will be informed as soon as practicable, and a written record of the search will be made.

Where a search has taken place, the school will consider any appropriate follow-up support or intervention, recognising that searches should be part of a wider educational, safeguarding and behaviour-support approach rather than a solely punitive response.

12.0 Fixed-term and permanent exclusions

The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012 require schools to set out, within their behaviour policy, the circumstances that may lead to a suspension (fixed-term exclusion) or permanent exclusion. These regulations continue to operate alongside the Department for Education's statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion, most recently updated in August 2024.

At The William Henry Smith Foundation, we are committed to ensuring that all students can access education in a safe, calm and supportive environment. We believe that children learn best when they remain in school and, as such, suspension or permanent exclusion will always be a last resort, used only after a range of appropriate and proportionate interventions have been implemented to support the individual to maintain their learning and regulate their behaviour.

Any decision to suspend or permanently exclude a student is made by the principal, is lawful, reasonable and fair, and takes full account of the pupil's individual needs, circumstances and any identified vulnerabilities, including special educational needs or disabilities. Decisions are informed by a risk assessment and are taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil, other students and staff, in line with statutory guidance. Exclusion is never used as a substitute for appropriate support, but may be necessary in exceptional circumstances to maintain high standards of behaviour and safeguard the school community.

13.0 Monitoring and review

We recognise that consistency is a fundamental element of effective behaviour support. Consistent implementation of this policy is addressed at two levels.

Firstly, all members of the school community are expected to take collective ownership of the policy, applying it consistently and appropriately, and being mindful of students' rights, dignity and wellbeing in all interactions.

Secondly, the Senior Leadership Team monitors the consistent application of the policy across the school. This monitoring ensures a shared and coherent approach to behaviour support and includes ongoing review of students' progress, analysis of serious incident data, and observations of behaviour

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across a range of contexts. These contexts include lessons, assemblies, lunchtimes, in-house provision and all other times when students are engaged in social interaction.

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