



**Minerva**  
Learning Trust

## **Behaviour Policy Principles**

<b>Date first published</b>	September 2020
<b>Last approved</b>	September 2023
<b>Version</b>	5
<b>Cycle</b>	Annual (September 2024)

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## Changes to this edition

- Added in Aims section
- Updated Links to other documents
- Updated section 3.11 – Physical Intervention

# 1. Purpose

Minerva Learning Trust take as our first priority the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our students. As such, the Trust Board of Minerva Learning Trust is charged with the duty to set the framework of the behaviour policies of each school by providing a written statement of general principles relating to behaviour and discipline, considering the needs of all staff and students.

Headteachers of all schools within our Trust should take responsibility for implementing measures to secure acceptable standards of behaviour to meet the national minimum expectation. In line with this, each school must therefore produce a statement of behaviour principles annually, which sets out clear guidance on how to promote good behaviour good behaviour.

The purpose of this Statement is to provide guidance to support Headteachers to develop an individual Behaviour and Exclusions Policy so that it reflects the shared aspirations and beliefs of all stakeholders in Minerva Learning Trust schools, Local Governing Bodies, staff, parents and students, as well as taking full account of law and guidance on behaviour matters. It is intended to help all staff to be aware of and understand the extent of their powers in respect of recognition and reward for good behaviour, discipline and sanctions for unacceptable behaviour and how to use them. Staff should be confident that they will always have the Trustees' support when following this guidance.

This is a statement of principles, not practice: it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to draw up the school's behaviour and exclusions policy, though the Headteacher must take account of these principles and guidance when formulating this policy. The Headteacher should also take account of all updated DfE guidance, which is detailed in the section below.

With consideration of our duty of care to the students, this written statement and the policies that are influenced by it apply to all students when in school, when travelling to and from school, when engaged in extra-curricular activities such as educational trips and visits (residential and non-residential) and when being educated as a member of the Trust community off-site.

Each school's Behaviour and Exclusions Policy must be updated annually and published on the school's website and distributed to all members of staff including new staff as part of the induction process. The policy should be clear and be understood by all stakeholders, school staff, parents and students. Each school's approach to managing behaviour must sit within a wider inclusion provision for all students within the school.

For the purposes of this policy, the Trust defines "serious unacceptable behaviour" as any behaviour which may cause harm to oneself or others, damage the reputation of the school within the wider community, and/or any illegal behaviour. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Discrimination** – not giving equal respect to an individual on the basis of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation
- **Harassment** – behaviour towards others which is unwanted, offensive and affects the dignity of the individual or group of individuals

- **Vexatious behaviour** – deliberately acting in a manner so as to cause annoyance or irritation
- **Bullying** – a type of harassment which involves personal abuse or persistent actions which humiliate, intimidate, frighten or demean the individual being bullied
- **Cyberbullying** – the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature
- Possession of legal or illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco
- Possession of banned items
- Truancy and running away from school
- Refusing to comply with disciplinary sanctions
- Theft
- Verbal abuse, including swearing, racist remarks and threatening language
- Fighting and aggression
- Persistent disobedience or disruptive behaviour
- Extreme behaviour, such as violence and serious vandalism
- Any behaviour that threatens safety or presents a serious danger
- Any behaviour that seriously inhibits the learning of pupils
- Any behaviour that requires the immediate attention of a staff member

For the purposes of this policy, the Trust defines “low-level unacceptable behaviour” as any behaviour which may disrupt the education of the perpetrator and/or other pupils, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Lateness
- Low-level disruption and talking in class
- Failure to complete classwork
- Rudeness
- Lack of correct equipment
- Refusing to complete homework, incomplete homework, or arriving at school without homework
- Disruption on public transport
- Use of mobile phones without permission
- Graffiti

“Low-level unacceptable behaviour” may be escalated to “serious unacceptable behaviour”, depending on the severity of the behaviour.

## 2. Aims

The aims of the policy are to:

- Ensure high standards of behaviour and engagement across all schools.
- Ensure consistency of expectation of all children.
- Set out expectations school leaders and staff when managing behaviour in schools
- Ensure statutory compliance across all settings
- Target appropriate and timely help and support for those children and families who need it.

## 2. Links to Statutory Requirements and Legislation

### 2.1 This behaviour policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Health Act 2006
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008
- DfE (2022) 'Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2013) 'Use of reasonable force'
- DfE (2022) 'Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools'
- DfE (2023) 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained school, academies and pupil referral units in England'

### 2.2 Links to other school and Trust policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Physical Intervention Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Smoke-free Policy
- School Online Safety Policy
- School Suspensions and Exclusions Policy
- Searching, confiscation and screening

## **3. Behaviour Principles**

### **3.1 High Standards of Behaviour and Attendance**

The Trust Board believe that high standards of behaviour and attendance lie at the heart of a successful school which enables all its students to make the best possible progress in all aspects of their educational life and that all staff should be able to teach and promote good learning without interruption. It should be clear that behaviour should not jeopardise the health and safety of any member of the school community.

Attendance and punctuality will be strongly encouraged for all students as per the attendance policy and guidance.

The school's policy must set out how the school is going to maintain high levels of student conduct and behaviour and what measure will be implemented to achieve this. It must also clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of all staff, making clear teachers' responsibilities to teach and model expected behaviour and positive relationships, not tolerating disruption and taking proportionate action to restore acceptable standards of behaviour.

### **3.2 The Right to Feel Safe at All Times**

All students, staff and visitors have the right to always feel safe in the school and free from the effects of unacceptable behaviour. There should be mutual respect between all members of the school community and the policy should help to foster this. Additional safety measures will be put in place to ensure that students, staff and visitors are safe and that any risk is mitigated. Each policy will need clear and proportionate consequences for misbehaviour and serious breaches which compromise the safety, welfare and education of others.

### **3.3 Inclusivity**

Minerva Learning Trust is an inclusive Trust. All members of the Trust's community should be able to work or study, free from any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying (as laid down in the Equality Act, 2010.) To this end each school must have a clear and comprehensive Anti-bullying Policy (within its Behaviour Policy or a separate policy) that is known and understood by all, consistently applied and monitored for its effectiveness. The Anti-bullying Policy must include measures to prevent bullying including cyber bullying and any prejudice based and discriminatory bullying. Measures to protect students from bullying and discrimination because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment or sexual orientation (protected characteristics) should be clearly set out and regularly monitored for their effective implementation.

### **3.4 Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment**

The behaviour policy must include what it is and how to minimise the risk of it occurring and what to do when it does occur or is alleged to have occurred. Further guidance can be found in Part five of KCSIE and Departmental advice [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)

### **3.5 Engaged Community**

Parents/carers should be encouraged and helped to support their children's education, just as the students should be helped to understand their responsibilities during their

time within the school. Parents/Carers and students will be made aware of the behaviour expectations of the school during the admissions process. All schools are encouraged to positively engage with parents and carers to support education of their child. Schools are advised to inform parents when students have breached rules and routines so they can work alongside school to educate and correct these behaviours. Each school's behaviour policy must clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all stake holders.

### **3.6 School Rules & Behaviour Expectations**

Each school's rules, behaviour expectations and relevant sanctions/consequences should be clearly stated in the school's Behaviour Policy. These should set out expected standards of behaviour and be shared with and explained to all students. The Trust Board expects the rules to be consistently applied by all staff. They should be regularly and explicitly communicated to all students, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders, visually displayed around each school and should be consistently and fairly applied by all staff.



### **3.7 Rewards**

The emphasis will be on encouraging positive behaviour through;

- high expectations
- the modelling of good behaviour
- a focus on learning
- praise and rewards

The Trust Board would like to see a wide range of rewards consistently and fairly applied in such a way as to encourage and reward good behaviour in the classroom and elsewhere. These should be made clear in the Behaviour Policy (or other policies).

Due consideration for praise and rewards should be given when students are in school especially in helping to establish compliance and responsibility around the rules and routines. For home learning schools are encouraged to consider rewarding students efforts whilst at home as a way of engaging and motivating them, impacting positively on their wellbeing.

### **3.8 Unacceptable and Poor Behaviour**

A range of initial intervention strategies to help pupils manage their behaviour and reduce the likelihood of more severe sanctions should be used. The school's behaviour and exclusions policy must set out the arrangements for managing repeated incidents of negative behaviour. This should include an overview of the range of preventative strategies, interventions and support the school puts in place, alongside that available from outside agencies.

This support must consider the pupil's specific needs and may be delivered outside of the classroom, in small groups or in one-to-one activities. A system must be in place to ensure relevant members of the SLT and pastoral staff are aware of any pupil that is:

- Persistently misbehaving
- Not improving their behaviour following low-level sanctions
- Displaying a sudden change in behaviour from previous patterns of behaviour

Instances of unacceptable behaviour must be taken seriously and dealt with immediately. Staff should respond promptly, predictably and with confidence to maintain a calm, safe learning environment. Staff will consider afterwards how to prevent such behaviour from recurring.

Reasonable and proportionate sanctions should be used where a student's behaviour falls below the standard that is expected, alongside support to prevent recurring misbehaviour.

The Trust acknowledges that behaviour can sometimes be the result of educational needs, mental health issues, or other needs or vulnerabilities, and school are expected to address these needs via an individualised graduated response.

To help reduce the likelihood of behavioural issues related to social, emotional or mental health (SEMH), each school should aim to create a safe and calm environment in which positive mental health and wellbeing are promoted and students are taught to be resilient through use of the following methods:

- **Culture, ethos and environment** – the health and wellbeing of students and staff is promoted through the informal curriculum, including leadership practice, policies, values and attitudes, alongside the social and physical environment
  - **Teaching** – the curriculum is used to develop students’ knowledge about health and wellbeing
- Community engagement** – the school proactively engages with parents, outside agencies and the wider community to promote consistent support for students’ health and wellbeing

Sanctions for unacceptable / poor behaviour should be known and understood by all staff and students and consistently applied. The range of sanctions should be described in the Behaviour Policy so that students, staff and parents can understand how and when these are applied. Sanctions, when necessary, will enable the student to reflect on, and learn from, their behaviour and to make reparation wherever possible. The focus on positive behaviour, forgiveness and reconciliation will significantly reduce the need for exclusion, however, when making decisions the Headteacher must balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider school community. Where student behaviour places others at risk, the safety of the student body is paramount.

Each school will make it clear to parents and students that they are able to use detention as a sanction to deter future misbehaviour, both during and outside of school hours. The use of detention as a sanction will be applied fairly and consistently, and staff and pupils will be made aware of when it may be used. The process for issuing detention will be clearly explained in the school’s behaviour and exclusions policy.

### **3.9 Making Reasonable Adjustments for SEND**

In respect of students with an identified special educational need or disability (SEND), schools must recognise its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent students with a protected characteristic from being at a disadvantage and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to the school’s behaviour policy or sanction system to support vulnerable learners and those at risk due to individual and complex need.

The Trust strongly feel that exclusions (suspensions), particularly those that are permanent, must be used only as a very last resort. If it is deemed necessary to permanently exclude a child then the Headteacher must discuss this with the CEO as soon as possible, and before the decision is communicated to the student or parent/carer. In this instance, the DfE and Local Authority guidelines for permanent exclusion must be followed.

Behaviour will always be considered in relation to a pupil’s SEND. If it is deemed that a pupil’s SEND has contributed to their misbehaviour, the school will consider whether it is appropriate and lawful to sanction the pupil.

Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, the graduate approach will be used to assess, plan, deliver and review the impact of support being provided.

The school will aim to anticipate likely triggers of misbehaviour and put in place support to prevent these, taking into account the specific circumstances and requirements of the pupil concerned. Measures the school will implement where appropriate include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Short, planned movement breaks for a pupil whose SEND means they find it difficult to sit still for long
- Ensuring a pupil with visual or hearing impairment is seated in sight of the teacher
- Adjusting uniform requirements for a pupil with sensory issues or relevant medical condition
- Training for staff in understanding autism and other conditions

### **3.10 Additional Support Strategies**

Schools should highlight in their policy the range of support for students who continue to provide the school with a challenge in terms of behaviour. This should be based on their knowledge and early identification of potentially vulnerable students. This will take into account information shared from other sources including social care and the student's previous setting. The Trust board would like to see a range of successful and supportive strategies to help students to modify and improve their behaviour. This would include any support provided at key transition points.

The school has the power to direct a pupil off-site to improve their behaviour. Parental consent is not required in order for the school to direct a pupil off-site but all efforts will be made to ensure this is a collaborative process between parents/carers, pupils and the school. Any off-site directed activity; such as Alternative Provision, will be time-limited and the pupil will remain dual-registered.

Reduced timetables should not be used to manage a student's behaviour. All students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a student's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the student is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.

Where alternative provision is used as a **preventative, time limited measure**, prior to engaging with the provider the school must:

- Ensure the offer is appropriate in meeting the child's needs
- Visit the provision to carry out basic H&S checks and assess the suitability
- Carry out relevant safeguarding checks on staff leading the provision
- Ensure the qualifications and experience of staff are adequate in meeting the child's needs
- Ensure parents are fully informed of the school's plans
- During the off-site direction to another school, students must be dual registered

Where it is thought to be in a student's best interest to transfer them to another mainstream school permanently, the Headteacher and Local Governing Body will discuss this with the parents of the child, and the LA if the pupil has an EHC plan. Managed moves will only go ahead with the voluntary agreement of all parties involved, including the parents and the admission authority of the new school.

Each school will ensure that detailed records are kept of any decision to initiate a managed move, including evidence that appropriate initial intervention has been carried out. The school will participate in information sharing with the pupil's new school, including sending data on prior and current attainment, academic potential and any risk management strategies. The school will also cooperate with the pupil's new school to create an effective integration strategy.

Parents who have concerns that a managed move is being forced on them or who are unhappy with a managed move will be referred to the Complaints Policy and Procedure.

### **3.11 Physical Intervention**

Given the overriding need to keep the students and staff safe, the Headteacher, or representative(s), will utilise their powers to search or use reasonable force to keep individuals from harming, or further harming, themselves or others, **damaging school property in order to maintain good order and discipline each the school.**

Situations in which reasonable force may be used (including removing disruptive students from classrooms or preventing them from leaving) will be included in the policy **documentation of each school and must be in line with the Trust Physical Intervention Policy.** This should include an overview of the action that would be taken when removing a child from a classroom and any subsequent reintegration processes.

**The school should outline how appropriate staff will be trained in the use of physical intervention within the policy, which should also be clear on their stance around making physical intervention with students. The safety of both students and staff is of paramount importance.**

Any incidents which involve the physical restraint of pupils will be recorded on the school's Serious Incident Log using the Trust supplied template.

### **3.12 Powers of Search and Confiscation**

Each school's Behaviour Policy should make clear the authority to search students for prohibited items and to confiscate where necessary. The Trust Board would expect the Headteacher to inform the CEO, either by email or telephone, as soon as possible when items prohibited by law; weapons, knives and illegal drugs, stolen items, fireworks, pornographic images, any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage property are brought onto the school premises.

Schools should ensure the Searching and screening of students is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Before screening or conducting a search of a student, all schools are expected to consider their obligations under the European Convention of Human Rights. Under article 8, students have a right to respect for their private life. In the context of these rights and obligations, this means that students have the right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy.

When exercising the right to search, each school must consider the age and needs of the student being searched or screened. This includes individual needs or learning difficulties of pupils with a SEND and making reasonable adjustments that may be required.

Only the Headteacher, or a member of staff authorised by the Headteacher, can carry out a search. A witness must always be present and this must be a permanent member of staff of the school. The Headteacher must ensure that a sufficient number of staff are appropriately in how to lawfully and safely search a pupil; especially in circumstances where the student may not be cooperating.

The member of staff conducting the search must be the same gender as the student; unless it is deemed that the child is at risk of serious immediate harm.

The schools Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed of any searching incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect the child was in possession of a prohibited item or if a safeguarding concern has presented during the search.

Any intervention deemed necessary from the Police, including strip searches must be carried out in line with the guidance set out in the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Staff should be confident that all other appropriate and less invasive approaches have been exhausted before involving the Police. If a search does take place then every reasonable effort should be made to inform parents or carers ahead the search taking place. At least two other people must be present with the child throughout the search, one of which must be an appropriate adult. The Headteacher still retains the duty of care for the student and should always advocate for their wellbeing.

Any search for a prohibited item, or one carried out by the Police, must be recorded on the school's safeguarding recording system (CPOMS), including details of the outcomes of the search. Parents/carers should also be informed about any search for a prohibited item and must be told the outcome of the search, including any sanctions to be applied.

### **3.13 Staff Training**

It is expected that all new staff will be inducted clearly into the school's behaviour culture to ensure they understand its rules and routines and how best to support all students to participate in creating the culture of the school. Staff must be provided with bespoke training, where necessary, on the needs of students at the school to enable behaviour to be managed consistently.

The SLT will consider any appropriate training which is required for staff to meet their duties and functions in accordance with this policy, including on understanding matters which may affect a student's behaviour, e.g. SEND and mental health needs.

Members of staff who have, or are aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading behaviour or supporting student wellbeing will be supported to undertake any relevant training or qualifications.

The SLT and the headteacher will review staff training needs annually, and in response to any serious or persistent behaviour issues disrupting the running of the school.

The Trust Board also expects that key staff are adequately trained on the proper use of restraint. Additionally, staff should have access to behaviour management training and any CPD as well as any relevant / required support.

All staff must be made aware of how potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, including abuse and neglect, can impact on a student's mental health, behaviour, and education. Where vulnerable students or groups are identified, provision must be made to support and promote their positive mental health.

### **3.14 Data Collection and Behaviour Evaluation**

Each school will collect data from the following sources:

- Behaviour incident data, including on removal from the classroom
- Attendance, permanent exclusion and suspension data
- Use of pupil support units, off-site directions and managed moves
- Incidents of searching, screening and confiscation
- Anonymous surveys for staff, pupils, governors, and other stakeholders on their perceptions and experiences of the school behaviour culture

The data will be monitored and objectively analysed termly by the headteacher and the SLT. Attempts will be made to identify possible factors contributing to the behaviour, any system problems or inadequacies with existing support. The data will also be analysed considering the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 to inform school policies and practice.

### **3.15 Behaviour Curriculum**

Positive behaviour will be taught to all students as part of each school's behaviour curriculum, in order to enable them to understand what behaviour is expected and encouraged and what is unacceptable. Positive reinforcement will be used by staff where expectations are met to acknowledge good behaviour and encourage repetition. The behaviour curriculum will focus on defining positive behaviour and making it clear what this looks like, including the key habits and routines required by the school, e.g. lining up quietly outside the classroom before a lesson. Each school's approach to this must be set out in the school's individual behaviour and exclusions policy.

## **4. Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with DfE Statutory guidance. At every review, it will be approved by the Trust Board.

## **5. Equality Impact Assessment**

The Trust will carry out an Equality Impact Assessment in order to ensure that policies, procedures and practices cater for individuals who share protected characteristics in relation to the Equality Act 2010. The purpose of these assessments is to ensure that policies, procedures and practices within the organisation are fair to all. If unfairness is highlighted, the assessment will also seek to show how this can be changed and, where it can't be changed, how it can be improved.

The Trust will monitor the impact of the policy to assess whether there is evidence of a detrimental impact on anyone with a protected characteristic as a result of the application of this policy. The assessment will include consideration of adaptations or changes which can be made to address any issues identified.