



Behaviour Policy 2025

Aims and Values:

We aim to promote positive social, emotional and behavioural change in our students through a supportive and consistent approach throughout the school day based on the needs of each individual student. The behaviour management strategies are based on holistic approaches and the belief that all people have the capacity for growth, no matter what their ages or life experiences.

Hope Tree School is a small independent school catering for the needs of students who have a primary diagnosis of Autism. We recognise that communication, social interaction and positive behaviour management are key aspects of providing education to students with Autism.

We have a positive and inclusive approach to managing behaviour that is built on recognising that all behaviours are a form of communication. We all have responsibility for trying to understand what is being communicated and where appropriate give students opportunities to communicate in ways that promote the safety and welfare of themselves, others, the school community and wider society.

The policy, practice and procedures aim to reflect and demonstrate the importance of the school's commitment to promoting the entitlement of students to the highest quality of education and therapeutic support. The philosophy and ethos of the school reflects acceptance and respect for all children and young people irrespective of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender reassignment or disability.

The following sets of values are seen as important within the school and wider community:

- To value each other and our community.
- To listen to each other and ask for help when we need it.
- The promotion of mutual respect, acceptance, trust and honesty.
- To develop and encourage self-confidence, self-worth, self-discipline and ultimately independence.
- To proactively manage and de-escalate behaviours (both internalising and externalising) which may cause harm to the student or others around them.
- To implement holistic, integrative and consistent approaches which promote positive behaviour and develop students' understanding of themselves and their relationships with others.
- To manage behaviour fairly and effectively and encourage young people to achieve their potential.

- To establish, and consistently apply, clear and obvious boundaries, to ensure students' safety, security and wellbeing.
- To work in partnership with all members of the school community.
- To apply rules fairly alongside ensuring that any outcomes take account of the needs and abilities of the student.

Objectives:

- To set out clearly how principles and values can be translated into everyday actions.
- To provide guidance and support to all staff.
- For staff to provide positive role models to students.
- To make positive change for our students and set them clear and achievable goals.
- Students should be assisted to develop skills of tolerance, empathy and understanding of others.
- To help students to work with the knowledge of their rights, and be encouraged to recognise and respond to their responsibilities.
- To develop and implement, co-ordinated and cohesive practices and procedures between home and school.

Legislative Framework:

In developing the behaviour policy we have regard to education standards and the following legislation and guidance: -

- Education and Inspection Act 2011
- Education (Independent School Standards) April 2019
- EU Conventions of the Rights of the Child 1989
- Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- DFE Guidance of Behaviour and Discipline (2016)

The environment:

The principal function of Hope Tree School is to provide a safe, secure and caring environment where expectations and achievements are high and students are able to realise their full potential in all areas of their development. These include:

- Academic
- Physical
- Emotional
- Social
- Moral
- Key Life skills

Within the school environment it is essential to create a balanced environment where students feel safe and secure and are given regular opportunities to choose and practice behaviours which allow them to make progress in all areas and develop key

life skills for the future.

We aim to promote politeness, courtesy and respect between all areas of the school community (adults and students).

Whilst the principles and procedures contained within this policy document will be applied equally to all students, each student is an individual and may be at different stages of intellectual, physical, social, emotional and moral development. The school's reward/outcomes programme will take into account the individual needs of every student.

The main emphasis at Hope Tree School is not on making and enforcing rules but rather on creating an ethos of respect and consideration for others and an environment where people help and support each other.

Where rules are in place, they are designed to promote a positive teaching and learning experience and to ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of students and staff or are in relation to consideration for themselves and others.

Staff will intervene and remind students of potential outcomes and give choices where a student's behaviour is likely to disrupt a positive teaching and learning environment, the health and safety of themselves or others or where the principles of showing consideration for others is being compromised in a way that impacts on learning.

The school primarily seeks to create a warm and caring environment where students are able to trust the adults within the school community and develop key skills in self regulation and behavioural choices to enable them to take their place in society as adults.

Well-planned teaching and learning should encourage behavioural choices consistent with expectations, facilitate achievement and raise the self-esteem of all students.

Relationships:

The principal reward and encouragement for any student is the positive attention and frequent expression of approval and support by the adults around them. The progress and development of students principally relies on the positive relationships they develop with significant adults in their lives.

Students will often test and challenge relationships, therefore, the adults responsible for them require the ability to sensitively, consistently and confidently manage the adult/student relationship.

Empathy, trust and consistency are all important in building relationships and influencing students in making good choices about their life and development.

Equally important is the expectations adults have of students, which should be regularly explained and reinforced, in relation to behaviour, learning, and personal and social development.

Whole School Approach:

Hope Tree School recognises the specific needs of students with Autism. These include, difficulties with social skills, difficulties in relation to sensory differences and difficulties managing strong emotions. In order to support the management of these difficulties Hope Tree School will adopt the following approaches to pre-empt often common occurrences:

- Provide consistent approaches to communication.
- Provide the opportunity to make meaningful choices.
- Pay careful attention to physical and emotional needs.
- Provide experiences and activities which are appropriately stimulating.
- Carefully manage the environment to reduce triggers for certain behaviours.
- Establish warm and caring relationships between students and staff.
- Provide predictability and consistency in daily routines.

When unwanted/unexpected behaviour occurs, staff working with the student must consider physical needs, sensory needs and communication needs when deciding their response.

Strategies to pre-empt potential unwanted/unhelpful behaviour:

- Provide an environment that offers students frequent opportunities to choose.
- Plan teaching activities which are appropriate for the students' abilities and interests.
- Use clear, direct, unambiguous language to advise students of what they should do, rather than what they should not.
- Use written/visual aids to ensure the student understands what is being asked of them.
- Use visual timetables to help students understand and prepare for changes and transitions in their day.
- Provide each student with a range of communication strategies to express their needs, wants and frustrations in an acceptable way.
- Plan carefully to avoid boredom and frustration.
- Always consider environmental factors, e.g. classroom layout, seating arrangements, ecological variables (e.g. lack of sleep) before assuming the student is intentionally behaving in a way which might compromise learning opportunities.

Rights and responsibilities:

Students:

<u>Rights</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
• To be treated with respect • To be safe • To access educational opportunities • To make mistakes • To be listened to	• To behave respectfully to others • To attend school regularly • To engage in the learning process • To allow others to learn • To accept responsibility for mistakes • To allow others to make mistakes • To share opinions in a kind and considerate manner • To listen to others

Staff:

<u>Rights</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
• To be treated with respect • To be supported by peers and managers • To be listened to • To share opinions • To be treated courteously by all members of the school community • To be made fully aware of the school's systems, policies and expectations • To receive appropriate training to increase skills in promoting positive behaviour	• To be welcoming and inclusive • To create a consistent and predictable approach • To maintain, encourage and promote positive behaviour, self regulation and kindness • To support the development of self esteem • To ask for support when needed • To offer support to colleagues when needed • To listen to others • To share opinions in a kind and considerate manner • To model courteous behaviour • To recognise and acknowledge positive behaviour in others • To try new approaches

Parents/carers:

<u>Rights</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
● To be treated with respect ● To be kept informed about their child's progress ● To be listened to ● To have access to information on the school's approach to behaviour and attendance ● To have concerns taken seriously	● To behave respectfully ● To talk to staff if they have concerns about their child's learning or wellbeing ● To listen to others ● To share concerns in a reasonable manner

Rewards:

Meaningful relationships with students can foster self-esteem and self-worth. Meaningful praise, encouragement and the giving of tangible rewards, provided by an adult to a student with whom they have a positive relationship amplifies both the integrity of the exchange and the value the reward can have through the internalisation of positive self regard.

Hope Tree School employs a spectrum of rewards both informal and formal to accommodate the motivational differentials and drives of the students. The potency of meaningful praise as a key motivator for change provides the foundation of the reward system. We actively promote a climate wherein verbal and non-verbal praise feature constantly as the norm throughout the school day. Rewards used at school include:

Informal rewards:

- Non verbal praise (e.g. thumbs up, a smile or other encouraging gesture)
- Specific verbal affirmations or comment in relation to the schools 'Key Skills' programme
- Tangible rewards in relation to the schools 'Key Skills' programme.
- Peer praise
- Praise from parent/carers
- Individual/group 'choosing time'
- Student achievement boards

Formal rewards:

- Certificates to celebrate academic or key skills progress
- Postcards home to parents
- Opportunities to participate in the school's responsibility programme
- Weekly reward programme
- School trips

Response to unwanted/unhelpful behaviour:

Where possible all staff will use praise, rewards and choices to support students behaviour in the first instance. Where a student remains unable to manage their behaviour staff will implement a series of responses as a reminder to the student that there are often consequences to the choices that any student can make.

This approach also allows for students to observe staff managing more difficult situations and allows learning to take place in the wider school community. These responses can sometimes be labelled as consequences or sanctions.

Consequences/outcomes (or sometimes called sanctions) should only be used where there is a strong likelihood of positive outcome (i.e. the identified behaviour is likely to reduce or resolve).

When anticipating or applying consequences/outcomes staff are expected to:

- Avoid early escalation to more significant consequences/outcomes
- Reserve the more significant consequences/outcomes for the most serious or persistent unwanted behaviour
- Avoid whole group consequences/outcomes
- Focus on the behaviour the student is displaying, not the student
- Take account of the individual circumstances and context of the unwanted behaviour
- Make sure all consequences/outcomes are monitored for effectiveness

All incidences of unwanted or unhelpful behaviour should be viewed as 'opportunities for learning'. This includes for both students and staff. Following more serious or critical incidents all staff are expected to facilitate a more formal debriefing with the student(s) concerned. This can involve talking through the incident, looking at the triggering factors, generating ideas about alternative choices in the future and agreements about the restoration of relationships.

Informal responses:

These are generally those applied by the class teacher as part of their everyday strategies for promoting positive behaviour and maintaining a climate conducive to effective learning.

- Non verbal cues (e.g. thumbs down, facial expression or discouraging gesture)
- Withdrawal of attention
- A reminder of expectations
- A reminder of the potential outcome if a particular behaviour continues
- Provide opportunities for a sensory/concentration break

Formal responses:

- Offer opportunity to have a break outside of the classroom
- Head of Pastoral Care to observe the unwanted behaviour and

advise

- Discussion with Head of Learning about behaviour of concern
- Implementation of a Behaviour Support Plan
- Communication with parents/carers about behaviour of concern
- Withdrawal from participation in a planned activity/outing where health and safety concerns deem the activity presents a risk to the student or a staff member

All data in relation to formal responses to specific unwanted behaviour will be monitored by the Head of Learning to ensure quality and consistency of responses given in addition to the impact and effectiveness of responses to students' behaviour.

Pastoral Support:

Students have access throughout the school day to pastoral support via the pastoral support team, who will provide out of class support. The pastoral support team can provide:

- A safe space to relax and recover following stress or difficulty
- An alternative to the classroom (for use when significantly distressed)
- Additional support in return to the classroom
- Post-incident debriefing (under advice from Head of Pastoral Care)

Communication with parents and carers:

- Parents/carers will be informed on the same day should their child be involved in a serious incident at school
- If a student's behaviour significantly deteriorate parents/carers will be invited to the school to attend a meeting to support a solution finding process

Exclusions:

At Hope Tree School we aim to operate a non-exclusion policy. We will always work with a student to find the best solution based on each child's individual circumstances. In circumstances where the school demonstrates that it is not able to meet the student's needs a meeting will be held with the family and/or local authority where the child has an EHCP.

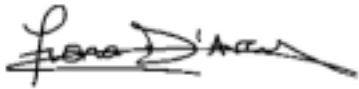
At this meeting the student's needs will be discussed alongside the need for an alternative placement that is better able to meet the needs of the student.

In exceptional circumstances where continuing to attend school places the student or other members of the school community at risk of significant harm the school will follow all the statutory guidance set out in the Exclusions Policy and work with the family and local authority to determine next steps.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. Sandf".

Head of Learning

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Dina".

Head of Pastoral Care

Date: October 2025

Review Date: October 2026