

HILLSIDE EDUCATION

Behaviour & Safety Policy

Policy Governance

Field	Details
Policy owner	Hillside Education
Responsible lead	Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Approved by	Proprietor / Governing Body
Date approved	To be confirmed
Review date	To be confirmed
Review cycle	Annually, or sooner following statutory or organisational change
Applies to	All staff, pupils, parents/carers and visitors
Policy area	Independent special school behaviour, safety, safeguarding, SEND and SEMH relational practice
Linked policies	Safeguarding & Child Protection; Screening, Searching & Confiscation; Anti-Bullying; Attendance; Online Safety; Curriculum & SEMH Support; Suspension & Exclusion Procedure; Staff Behaviour Handbook; DSL Operational Handbook

1. Policy purpose and statutory basis

Hillside Education is an independent special school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. The school is committed to providing a safe, calm, structured, therapeutic and relational environment in which pupils are protected, respected and supported to regulate, learn and make positive choices.

Behaviour is understood through a **trauma-informed, neurodevelopmental and safeguarding lens**, recognising:

- adversity and trauma histories
- SEMH and SEND profiles

- communication differences and neurodiversity
- state regulation (Polyvagal Theory)
- relational safety and attachment needs
- contextual safeguarding risks

The school's approach is both **therapeutic and boundaried**: adults provide co-regulation, predictable routines, personalised support and relational repair while maintaining non-negotiable expectations for safety, dignity and respect.

This policy sets out Hillside Education's approach to:

- behaviour and safety
- relational practice
- expectations for pupils and adults
- staged responses to behaviour
- recording and monitoring via **HubMIS**
- safeguarding escalation and DSL oversight

This policy is informed by:

- DfE Behaviour in Schools guidance
- Mobile Phones in Schools statutory guidance
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current in-force version)
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance
- Use of Reasonable Force guidance
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years
- EHCP statutory requirements
- Independent School Standards Regulations 2014
- Trauma-informed and SEMH practice guidance
- Contextual safeguarding principles

1.1 Linked policies

This policy must be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Screening, Searching & Confiscation Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Curriculum & SEMH Support Policy
- Suspension & Exclusion Procedure
- Staff Behaviour Handbook
- DSL Operational Handbook

2. Behaviour and safety culture

Hillside Education operates a **trauma-informed, relational and safeguarding-led culture**.

We believe:

- **Behaviour is communication**
- Unsafe behaviour must be addressed calmly and consistently
- Adults create safety through tone, language and presence
- Boundaries protect pupils
- Safety overrides convenience
- Every pupil can reset
- Every pupil returns to learning wherever safely possible

Because pupils attend Hillside due to SEMH and associated needs, staff must interpret behaviour through a **specialist SEND and safeguarding lens**. Behaviour may reflect unmet need, distress, trauma response, communication difficulty, anxiety, sensory overload, attachment need, environmental trigger or a gap in taught skills.

The school's approach is therefore:

- **Therapeutic** - co-regulation, attuned communication, relational repair
- **Boundaried** - clear, calm, non-negotiable safety rules

Relational safety is supported through the **hapū structure**, which provides:

- predictable adult relationships
- daily attuned contact
- consistent relational anchors
- safe, structured belonging

2.1 What Hillside Education should feel like

- calm and orderly
- predictable and structured
- respectful and relational
- safe and supervised

2.2 What pupils should experience

- “Adults are calm here.”
- “Adults are fair here.”
- “I can reset here.”

2.3 Core cultural principles

- **Safety first**—physical, emotional and relational
- **Consistency**—routines, language, boundaries
- **Relationships**—daily connection, trust, repair
- **Boundaries**—clear, calm, non-negotiable safety rules
- **Early intervention**—act early, not late
- **Repair and return**—every pupil returns to learning wherever safely possible

3. SEND, equality and reasonable adjustments

Hillside recognises that behaviour may be linked to:

- SEND and disability
- trauma history
- communication needs
- SEMH profile

- medical needs
- protected characteristics

Staff must consider whether a behaviour response requires:

- reasonable adjustment
- additional support
- safeguarding action
- review of provision

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- adapted communication
- additional processing time
- reduced sensory demand
- planned regulation support
- personalised scripts
- visual prompts
- modified transitions
- individual risk assessments
- behaviour support plans
- involvement of parents/carers and external professionals

Adjustments do not remove expectations of safety and respect; they ensure expectations are taught and supported in ways that are fair, lawful, proportionate and accessible.

Behaviour planning must be aligned with:

- SEMH needs
- EHCP outcomes
- risk assessments
- placement plans
- therapeutic support
- external professional advice

Where patterns of dysregulation, distress, withdrawal, aggression, self-injury, absconding or risk-taking are identified, leaders must review whether provision, environment, timetable, curriculum access, staffing, sensory needs or therapeutic input require adaptation.

4. Pupil expectations

Pupils at Hillside Education are expected to:

4.1 Make safe choices

Protect themselves and others; speak to staff if something feels wrong.

4.2 Stay in control

Handle situations calmly; take space or ask for support when needed.

4.3 Show respect

Speak and act respectfully; respect people, space and differences.

4.4 Follow guidance

Listen to staff and follow instructions; staff guidance is there to keep everyone safe.

4.5 Take responsibility

Be honest; repair harm where needed; learn from mistakes and move forward.

Pupils are **supported** to meet these expectations through:

- co-regulation
- relational practice
- Shared Language Framework
- hapū relational support

Pupil-friendly summary: Make safe choices. Show respect. Build your future.

5. Adult behaviour expectations

All Hillside staff must:

5.1 Be calm and regulated

- neutral tone
- slow speech
- low voice

- avoid emotional reactions

5.2 Be consistent

- apply routines the same way
- use Shared Language Framework
- follow the staged response model

5.3 Be relational

- greet pupils
- notice changes in mood
- intervene early
- repair after incidents

5.4 Hold boundaries

- stop unsafe behaviour immediately
- do not negotiate safety
- avoid public confrontation

5.5 Use professional language

Expected phrases include:

- “Good to see you.”
- “Let’s reset.”
- “I can’t let that happen.”
- “We’ll work it out together.”

Prohibited language includes:

- “What is wrong with you?”
- “You always do this.”
- “Sort yourself out.”
- sarcasm, shaming, public humiliation
- shouting (unless for immediate safety)

Where behaviour indicates **safeguarding risk**, staff must:

- consult the DSL
- record concerns on **HubMIS**
- follow safeguarding procedures

6. Shared Language Framework

All staff use the following **4-step model**:

1. **Acknowledge** “I can see something’s not right.”
2. **State expectation** “We need to keep this safe.”
3. **Give direction** “Come outside with me.”
4. **Offer support** “I’ll help you fix this.”

This framework:

- reduces escalation
- avoids shame
- maintains relational safety
- supports co-regulation
- aligns with trauma-informed practice and Polyvagal Theory

It is used consistently across Hillside and is embedded in:

- Behaviour Response Model
- Staff Behaviour Handbook
- DSL Operational Handbook

7. Behaviour response model

Regulate → Direct → Contain → Repair → Return

Calm, relational, non-confrontational language throughout.

Stage 1 – Notice and redirect (10–30 seconds)

Purpose: Early, gentle redirection before behaviour escalates.

Trigger:

- off-task
- low-level disruption

- withdrawal / hesitation

Action:

- move closer (proximity)
- use name
- offer a simple, achievable direction
- walk away to reduce pressure

Scripts:

- “Let’s get started — I’ll check back in a minute.”
- “Join me here — just begin with this bit.”
- “Come back to the task — you can do this.”

Stage 2 – Support and remove barrier (1–2 minutes)

Purpose: Understand what’s getting in the way and reduce cognitive load.

Trigger:

- continued non-engagement
- signs of struggle
- hesitation or overwhelm

Action:

- lower demand slightly
- offer structured help
- keep tone soft and steady

Scripts:

- “Looks like something’s getting in the way — what do you need?”
- “Let’s do the first part together.”
- “Start with this small bit — I’ll stay with you.”

Stage 3 – Clear direction (boundary stage)

Purpose: Hold a calm boundary without confrontation.

Trigger:

- repeated refusal
- disruption affecting others
- early escalation

Action:

- give one clear direction
- keep tone low and neutral
- avoid argument or repeated instructions

Scripts:

- “We need to move now — come with me.”
- “It’s time to step out for a moment.”
- “Let’s change space — walk with me.”

Where behaviour at Stage 3 suggests **safeguarding risk**, staff must:

- consider contextual safeguarding indicators
- consult the DSL
- record on **HubMIS**

Stage 4 – Remove and reset (containment)

Purpose: Reduce audience, create safety, and support regulation.

Trigger:

- refusal continues
- escalation increases
- safety or learning compromised

Action:

- stand side-on
- give space
- move pupil to a quieter area
- call for support early if needed

Scripts:

- “Let’s step out so we can sort this safely.”
- “Come with me — we’ll take a moment.”
- “We’re moving to a quieter space now.”

All **Stage 4 incidents** must be:

- supervised
- recorded on **HubMIS**
- reviewed by a senior leader

Stage 4A – Regulation

Purpose: Allow the pupil to calm without pressure.

Action:

- minimal talk
- calm presence
- offer space
- avoid questions

Scripts:

- “Take a minute — I’m here when you’re ready.”
- “We’ll talk once things feel calmer.”
- “Just breathe — there’s no rush.”

Stage 5 – Restore and repair

Purpose: Restore dignity, rebuild trust, and prepare for return.

Structure:

- **Acknowledge:** “That felt like a lot back there.”
- **Hear pupil:** “Help me understand what was going on for you.”
- **Identify impact** (non-blaming): “It got in the way of learning, so we need to put it right.”
- **Re-establish rule:** “We keep things safe and stay with the work.”
- **Set expectation:** “We’re heading back in now — start with this part.”

Scripts:

- “Things got difficult — talk me through it.”
- “What was the hardest moment for you?”
- “Okay — we can move forward now.”
- “Here’s what we’ll do next.”

Stage 6 – Return to learning

Purpose: Reintegration with dignity and support.

Rule: Pupils return to learning the same session wherever possible.

Scripts:

- “You’re ready — let’s go back in.”
- “Start with this part — I’ll check in shortly.”
- “We’re moving forward now — you’ve got this.”

All significant incidents and **return-to-learning work** must be recorded on **HubMIS**, including:

- incident summary
- regulation support
- repair conversation
- reintegration outcome
- any positive choices made

8. Consequences and follow-up

Consequences at Hillside are:

- proportionate
- predictable
- linked to safety
- relational and restorative

They may include:

- repair conversations

- increased supervision
- temporary removal from a space
- parental contact
- targeted support
- behaviour plan adjustments

8.1 Removal from learning spaces

Removal may be used where necessary to:

- maintain safety
- prevent significant disruption
- allow regulation
- support restorative return

Removal must be:

- proportionate
- time-limited
- supervised
- recorded on the **Removal from Learning Record** and **HubMIS**

Records must include:

- reason for removal
- stage used
- regulation space
- supervision
- safeguarding considerations
- parent communication
- return-to-learning summary
- staff reflection

8.2 Suspension, exclusion, off-site direction and managed moves

These are managed under the **Suspension & Exclusion Procedure** and must:

- be lawful, reasonable and fair
- consider safeguarding, SEND, disability and equality
- be recorded on **HubMIS** and relevant systems
- include reintegration planning where applicable

8.3 Restrictive intervention, reasonable force and seclusion

Restrictive intervention or reasonable force:

- used only as a last resort to prevent serious harm or significant safety risk
- only by trained staff
- for the shortest possible time

Any such incident must:

- be recorded on **HubMIS**
- be reviewed by the DSL and senior leaders
- include parent notification where required
- inform risk assessment updates

Sanctions are never:

- humiliating
- public
- punitive without purpose

Positive behaviour, regulation attempts and safe choices must also be **recorded on HubMIS**, to:

- recognise progress
- inform support planning
- evidence impact

9. Safeguarding and contextual risk

Behaviour is always understood within a **safeguarding context**. Staff must consider:

- exploitation indicators
- peer dynamics

- coercion or intimidation
- online risks
- community-based harm
- contextual safeguarding factors

Any behaviour suggesting risk must be:

- reported to the DSL immediately
- recorded on **HubMIS**
- considered within safeguarding chronologies

9.1 Child-on-child abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment

Such behaviour is never acceptable and must not be dismissed as banter, humour or part of growing up.

Any concern or disclosure must:

- be reported to the DSL immediately
- be recorded on **HubMIS**
- be managed under the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Victims must be:

- supported
- taken seriously
- kept safe

Responses to alleged perpetrators must:

- consider safeguarding needs
- manage risk proportionately
- include education and intervention where appropriate

9.2 Online behaviour and mobile phones

Online behaviour is managed in line with the **Online Safety Policy** and **Screening, Searching & Confiscation Policy**.

Online bullying, harassment, abuse, intimidation, discriminatory language, harmful content, recording without permission or using technology to cause harm will be treated as both behaviour and safeguarding concerns and recorded on **HubMIS**.

10. Recording, monitoring and data (HubMIS)

HubMIS is the school's primary system for recording:

- behaviour incidents
- safeguarding concerns
- contextual safeguarding indicators
- positive behaviour and regulation attempts

All significant behaviour incidents must be recorded:

- factually
- clearly
- promptly
- free from speculation

Records must include:

- what was seen/heard
- what prompted action
- pupil's words where possible
- actions taken
- parent communication
- safeguarding considerations
- positive choices and regulation attempts

Hillside monitors HubMIS data to identify:

- patterns of behaviour and repeated concerns
- use of removal from learning spaces
- suspensions, exclusions, off-site direction or managed moves
- safeguarding indicators and child-on-child abuse concerns
- bullying and discriminatory incidents

- SEND, disability, equality and disproportionality trends
- staff consistency and use of agreed relational language
- impact of interventions, support plans and reasonable adjustments

Termly reports are provided to the Proprietor Board, identifying:

- key trends
- actions taken
- impact of interventions
- safeguarding patterns
- equality considerations
- SEMH and SEND themes
- restrictive intervention data where applicable
- placement stability
- multi-agency actions
- training and policy review needs

11. Staff training and competence

All staff receive training in:

- trauma-informed practice
- relational practice
- co-regulation and de-escalation
- Shared Language Framework
- staged behaviour response model
- safeguarding and contextual risk
- Screening, Searching & Confiscation procedures
- HubMIS recording and chronology standards

Staff working in this SEMH setting must receive role-appropriate training in:

- SEMH needs and SEND duties
- attachment-aware practice

- risk assessment
- positive handling (where relevant)
- restorative practice
- implementation of individual support plans

Leaders model practice daily and provide coaching, supervision and feedback.

12. Parent and carer partnership

Parents/carers are expected to:

- support Hillside expectations
- attend meetings
- communicate concerns
- reinforce boundaries at home
- work with agencies where needed

Hillside will:

- communicate behaviour concerns and positive progress
- share HubMIS-informed patterns where appropriate
- work collaboratively with parents/carers, local authorities, social workers, virtual schools, health professionals and therapists

13. Links to other policies

This policy links directly to:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Screening, Searching & Confiscation
- Attendance
- Curriculum & SEMH Support
- Online Safety
- Suspension & Exclusion Procedure
- Staff Behaviour Handbook

- DSL Operational Handbook

ISS compliance

ISS Standard	How This Policy Meets the Standard
Part 2 – Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development (SMSC)	Promotes respect, inclusion, emotional literacy, regulation, positive relationships and restorative practice.
Part 3, Paragraph 7 – Safeguarding & Welfare	Provides clear safeguarding-led behaviour systems, DSL oversight, contextual safeguarding responses, and safe management of risk.
Part 3, Paragraph 9 – Behaviour Policy	Sets out expectations, staged responses, consequences, recording, monitoring, and leadership oversight.
Part 3, Paragraph 10 – Anti-Bullying Strategy	Embeds preventative culture, early intervention, relational practice, and clear responses to bullying and child-on-child harm.
Part 3, Paragraph 11 – Health & Safety	Ensures safe supervision, safe responses to unsafe behaviour, and clear procedures for removal, containment and risk reduction.
Part 3, Paragraph 14 – Supervision of Pupils	Provides structured routines, safe movement, supervision expectations, and staff behaviour standards.
Part 6 – Provision of Information	Ensures parents/carers receive timely communication about behaviour concerns, incidents, and reintegration.
Part 8 – Leadership & Management	Demonstrates effective oversight, monitoring, training, data analysis, and safeguarding-led decision-making.