



**Relationships, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and
Belonging Policy**
2026/2027

Policy issue and updates

<i>Pages</i>	<i>Issue No.</i>	<i>Date</i>
Whole Document – new format and template used. Pilot use	1	May 2026
Formal review and sign off	2	August 2026

The following policy has been approved by the Divisional CEO and Governing Board of Directors.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis unless circumstances arise requiring the policy to be reviewed earlier.

Approved by Divisional CEO: August 2026

Board signatory: 

Planned review: August 2027

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1. Introduction

This policy sets out how Progress Arc supports students' behaviour, relationships and emotional regulation, and how the school prevents and responds to bullying. It applies to every student on every pathway, every adult who works at a Progress Arc, and every context in which students are under the school's care.

The students on roll at Progress Arc have, almost without exception, experienced disrupted prior education, significant Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), social-emotional and mental-health need, and identified or undiagnosed special educational needs and disabilities. Many have been excluded from previous settings. The strategies they bring with them are survival strategies that kept them safe in their previous environments. Our job is not to punish those strategies. It is to teach new ones, in a relational environment that feels safe enough for the student to try them.

This policy is therefore trauma-informed, relational and restorative. It is built on the premise that all behaviour is communication of an unmet need, that connection comes before correction, that regulation comes before reasoning, and that repair sits at the heart of every response.

Behaviour is communication. We listen, we connect, we repair.

2. Scope and Application

This policy applies to:

- All students on roll at any Progress Arc, including students on the Build, Grow, Launch and Reintegration pathways and students placed on a commissioned AP arrangement.
- All adults employed, contracted or volunteering at Progress Arc teachers, teaching assistants, pastoral mentors, therapeutic staff, vocational leads, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCo, SLT, supply staff and visitors.
- All settings: the school site, off-site alternative provision, work experience placements, school transport, educational visits, online learning and any other context in which a

student is under the school's care.

- Behaviour outside school that affects the welfare or learning of students or staff (including online behaviour, behaviour on transport and behaviour in the community), where the school's authority to act applies under section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

3. Statutory and Evidence Base

Instrument	Relevance
Education and Inspections Act 2006 (ss.88-94)	The statutory power to discipline. The 2025 amendments through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 strengthen this framework.
Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, s.36	From 29 June 2026, the statutory duty for schools to have regard to the DfE mobile phones guidance. Section 14 of this policy is written against this duty.
DfE Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff (February 2024)	The framework guidance for any behaviour policy. Establishes initial intervention strategies, removal from classroom, recording and the requirement to consider SEND and trauma when applying the policy.
DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance (August 2024)	Replaces the term "fixed term exclusion" with "suspension". Requires explicit consideration of SEND and protected characteristics - including the impact of early childhood trauma - before any suspension or exclusion.
DfE Restrictive Interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (December 2025)	Statutory recording and reporting duties from 1 April 2026. Defines reasonable force, restraint and seclusion. Requires a Restrictive Interventions Policy distinct from but aligned with the behaviour policy. Prohibits restraint as punishment, restraint to enforce compliance, prone restraint, restraint affecting breathing or circulation, and pressure on neck, mouth or abdomen.
Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2025	From 1 April 2026, every significant incident of use of force and every incident of seclusion must be recorded and reported to parents/carers. Section 16 of this policy is written against this duty.

DfE Mobile Phones in Schools - strengthened guidance (2025; statutory from June 2026)	All schools to operate as mobile-phone-free environments by default - including lessons, transitions, breaks and lunchtimes. Smart watches and similar devices included. Section 14 of this policy is written against this guidance.
DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation - advice for schools (July 2022, as updated)	Statutory powers to search and confiscate. Section 15 of this policy is written against this guidance. Strip searches are not conducted in school.
Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025	Statutory safeguarding framework. Sections 12, 13, 14, 16 and 17 of this policy connect directly to KCSIE duties.
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023, as updated)	Multi-agency framework. Underpins the response to child-on-child abuse, contextual safeguarding and missing children.
Instrument	Relevance
Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3) and SEND Code of Practice (0– 25)	Duty to identify, assess and meet special educational needs. Reasonable adjustments are anticipated in this policy, not retrofitted.
Equality Act 2010	Duty to make reasonable adjustments. Disabilities - including those manifesting in distressed behaviour and the impact of early childhood trauma - must be considered before any sanction. Pre-2024 DfE guidance now treats application of the behaviour policy without adjustment as potentially discriminatory.
Human Rights Act 1998	Articles 3 (no degrading treatment), 5 (liberty), 8 (private life) and 14 (non-discrimination) apply to every restrictive intervention. The DfE December 2025 guidance now requires explicit reference to this in restrictive interventions policy.
The Care Act 2014 (where 16–18 transition is in scope)	PfA transition into adult services for relevant students.
DfE: Reasonable force, restraint & restrictive practices in alternative provision and special schools (March 2024 research report)	Identifies the over-use of restraint in AP/SEND settings and the need for trauma-informed, prevention-led practice. Informs Section 16.
Restraint Reduction Network (RRN) Training Standards	The accreditation framework against which the school commissions restraint-related training. Team Teach Level 2 is the accredited programme used.
The Lundy Model of Child Participation (Lundy, 2007)	Student voice and participation framework used across Progress Arc policies. Students are partners in behaviour decisions, not subjects of them.

Dr Bruce Perry - Neurosequential Model; Dr Karen Treisman - trauma- informed schools; Louise Bombèr - attachment-aware schools; Paul Dix - When the Adults Change	The evidence base for relational, regulation-first, restorative practice across an AP/SEND setting. Informs Sections 4-11.
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4. Our Stance - Behaviour Is Communication

Progress Arc holds that all behaviour is communication of an unmet need. Distressed behaviour is not a moral failing on the part of the student, and it is not a deliberate inconvenience to staff. It is information about what the student is experiencing and what they need next.

Our language reflects this stance. We use the language of relationship, regulation, repair and reintegration. We do not use the language of “offending”, “punitive measures”, “negative reinforcement” or “payment for damage caused”. Repair is relational, not transactional.

- Behaviour is communication. Every response begins with curiosity, not judgement.
- Relationships come first. A student will not regulate, learn or repair with an adult they do not trust.
- Regulation before reasoning. We do not deliver consequences, conversations, conditions or contracts to a student who is dysregulated.
- Repair, not retribution. When something goes wrong, the work is to repair - the relationship, the harm, the trust - not to punish.
- Students with the most need do not need less of what the school offers; they need more. Reasonable adjustments are anticipated.
- Consistency of adults, not uniformity of response. Students need adults who behave the same way every day. They do not need the same response applied to every student - that would be unfair, not equal.
- Student voice and parent/carer voice shape behaviour planning, IBSPs, restorative conversations and reintegration.
- Restrictive interventions are a last resort, never a first one, and never a punishment.
- Safeguarding overrides everything. If a behaviour response and a safeguarding response conflict, safeguarding leads.

5. Principles

The following principles underpin every decision made in relation to behaviour, relationships, belonging and emotional regulation at Progress Schools. They apply to every member of staff, every student and every aspect of school life.

5.1 Our Principles

- Every child deserves to belong. Every student has the right to feel safe, valued, respected and included within our school community, regardless of their background, need or previous educational experience.
- Behaviour is communication. We seek to understand the need behind behaviour before determining the most appropriate response. Curiosity, compassion and professional judgement underpin our practice.
- Relationships are the foundation of learning. Positive, trusting relationships between students and adults are the strongest protective factor in promoting engagement, wellbeing and lasting behaviour change.
- High expectations and high support go together. We maintain consistently high expectations for behaviour, attendance, effort and respect while recognising that some students require additional support, reasonable adjustments and graduated intervention to achieve them.
- Regulation comes before learning. Students cannot consistently access learning or make positive decisions when they are overwhelmed or dysregulated. We prioritise emotional regulation and psychological safety before reflection, problem-solving or consequence.
- Consistency is demonstrated through values, not identical responses. Fairness does not always mean treating every student the same. Adults respond consistently through shared values, predictable routines and professional judgement, taking account of individual need, SEND, trauma and safeguarding.
- Restoration is more powerful than punishment. Where relationships are damaged, our priority is to repair harm, rebuild trust and support students to learn from their experiences so they can successfully reintegrate into the school community.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Where behaviour raises safeguarding concerns, safeguarding considerations will always take precedence over behaviour management and disciplinary responses.
- Student voice matters. Students are active participants in shaping behaviour support, individual plans, restorative conversations and wider school improvement. We work with students, families and professionals to achieve the best outcomes.
- Adults are the model. Every member of staff is responsible for modelling calmness, respect, professionalism, empathy and emotional regulation. We expect adults to demonstrate the behaviours and relationships we seek to develop in our students.

5.2 What this means in practice

These principles require adults to:

- respond consistently and proportionately;
- maintain high expectations while making reasonable adjustments where required;
- use restorative and trauma-informed approaches alongside clear boundaries;
- recognise and celebrate success more often than they correct mistakes;
- work collaboratively with families and external professionals; and
- continually reflect on the impact of their own practice to ensure every student experiences dignity, belonging and the opportunity to succeed.

6. Trauma-Informed Practice - Our Framework

Progress Arc operates as a trauma-informed organisation.

6.1 The four trauma-informed principles we work to

Principle	What it means in practice
Safety	Physical, emotional and relational safety is established first, before anything else is asked of the student. This includes predictable routines, sensory-aware environments, trusted key adults and felt safety, not just absence of threat.
Connection	Relationship is the intervention. Every student has a named key adult and is connected, daily, by an adult who knows them. Connection comes before correction.
Regulation	Students are taught to recognise and regulate their own state, supported by co-regulating adults. Zones of Regulation (Section 7) is our shared language. The student's window of tolerance is the planning unit, not the timetable slot.
Repair	When something goes wrong, the work is repair. Restorative conversation, restitution where the student chooses to make it, and re-entry into the learning community. Not exile.

6.2 What this looks like across the day

- Meet-and-greet at the door by a known adult; a regulation check-in before any learning task.
- Predictable routines, visual schedules and clear transitions.
- Movement breaks built into the day, not earned through good behaviour.

- A regulation space available, not used as a sanction a place the student can choose.
- Adult language that names the feeling, names the strategy and offers a choice “I can see you're in the Yellow Zone. Let's take a walk, or use the regulation corner.”
- Restorative repair after every significant incident, never as a sanction, always as the rebuild.
- Students with EHC plans have IBSPs co-produced with the student, family and SENCo.

7. Zones of Regulation - How We Talk About Feelings

Progress Arc uses the Zones of Regulation framework as the shared language for emotional state across all schools. The Zones give students including students who do not yet have the words for what they feel, and students who cannot read a visual, colour-coded way to recognise their state and to choose a strategy.

BLUE ZONE Tired • Sad • Sick • Slow	GREEN ZONE Calm • Ready • Focused	YELLOW ZONE Worried • Frustrated • Wobbly	RED ZONE Angry • Out-of-control • Unsafe
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Zone	What the student may be feeling	What adults do	What students may choose to do
Blue	Tired, sad, sick, slow, withdrawn, low energy.	Gentle, low-stimulation approach. Offer warmth. Reduce demand. Check basic needs (food, sleep, illness). Sit alongside.	Quiet space, drink, snack, gentle movement, breathing exercise, talk to key adult.
Green	Calm, focused, ready to learn, alert.	Reinforce; celebrate; learn alongside the student. This is the optimum state for learning.	Engage with learning; help peers; lead a task.
Yellow	Worried, frustrated, silly, wobbly, fast-energy, anxious, beginning to lose control.	Name the Zone. Reduce demand. Offer a regulation choice. Stay near, do not crowd.	Movement break, regulation corner, fidget tool, mindfulness card, ask for the key adult, drink of water, sensory walk.

Red	Angry, terrified, overwhelmed, out-of-control, unable to think clearly. Fight, flight, freeze or fawn.	Safety first - student, peers and staff. Calm, low voice. Few words. Offer space. Do not engage in debate, demand reasoning or deliver consequences. Adults move into the supporting protocol (Section 10).	Move to safe space; trusted adult; sensory tools; outside; later when calm restorative conversation.
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8. Our School Values and Expectations

Our seven values are the shared language for what we celebrate. Each value has a short, student-facing name that adults use out loud and that appears on every poster, certificate and reward card. The student-facing names are deliberately plain and action-based, so students who cannot read can still hear, say and remember them.

Value	What we call it with students	What it looks like
Brazenly People First	Look Out For Others	Treating others fairly; standing up for someone; thinking about others before yourself.
Proudly Passionate	Try Your Best	Working hard; finishing what you start; doing things with pride.
Endlessly Kind	Be Kind	Helping a friend; looking after our space; showing you care without being asked.
Robustly Resilient	Bounce Back	Getting back up after a tough moment; trying again; taking feedback and using it.
Fearlessly Authentic	Be You	Showing what you like and believe in; being honest about who you are; standing up for yourself respectfully.
Creative Collaborators	Team Up	Working with others; celebrating someone else's win; helping a team get there together.
Confident Gamechangers	Have a Go	Trying something new; taking a sensible risk; doing something you would not have done last term.

9. Positive Recognition – Points and Rewards Systems

Recognition at Progress Arc is built around daily points cards. We encourage all students to follow the expectations outlined in their daily points cards:

- Arrive on time
- Use appropriate language
- Show respect to staff, peers and in the environment
- Engage in learning



Progress Arc Name Date

My progress points

Earn points each lesson

	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6
Arrived on time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Used appropriate language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Showed respect to staff, peers, environment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Engaged in learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Building our values every day...
Respect | Resilience Passion & Pride | Kindness

Total /24

9.1 How students earn points

Each day, pupils can earn up to 24 behaviour points, with an additional point awarded for returning their completed points card at the end of the day. These points are totaled across the week and used to determine eligibility for Rewards Friday afternoon.

Students within Progress Futures provision participate in the school's points card system. As part of the provision's reward structure, students may also be awarded a £5 Love2Shop voucher in recognition of sustained positive behaviour.

Pupils may be awarded "Proud of You" tickets in recognition of positive behaviour, in line with our school values and exemplary attitudes towards learning. These tickets can be exchanged for a reward from the reward box, which may include age-appropriate items such as stationery, stickers, fidget toys, sweets, and other small prizes.

Where pupils demonstrate behaviours that reflect the school's core values, staff will recognise and celebrate these achievements through the award of a "Proud of You" ticket. In addition, pupils will receive a positive behaviour point on Arbor, linked directly to the relevant school value. This ensures that positive behaviours and attitudes are consistently acknowledged and celebrated both within school and through the school's reward system.

The "Proud of you" ticket system is linked to the Headteacher's awards, which are presented termly. Pupils who consistently demonstrate the school's core values through their actions, attitudes, and contributions to the school community may be selected to receive a Headteacher's Award in recognition of their achievements and positive conduct.

The purpose of this reward system is to celebrate pupils' successes, encourage positive choices, and promote a supportive and motivating learning environment.

9.2 Weekly awards - every Friday

Each Friday, each student will be placed in a category of Bronze, Silver or Gold dependent on their total points for the week.

<u>Tier</u>	<u>Points Range</u>	<u>Rewards Examples</u>
Gold	95-125	Off-site activities (e.g. bowling, laser tag, Haigh Hall, arcade trips)
Silver	30-95	On-site and semi-offsite (e.g. baking, hikes, movies, trampolining)
Bronze	0-30	Pupils will be supported and expected to catch up on missed learning

9.3 Annual Awards

At the end of each academic year, the school holds an annual celebration. The annual awards are:

- **The Value Awards.** One student for each of our seven values: Fearlessly Authentic, Robustly Resilient, Endlessly Kind, Proudly Passionate, Brazenly People First, Confident Gamechanger, Creative Collaborator. These are nominated by staff and students.
- **Star of the Year.** The Headteacher's overall award. One student.
- **Most Progress Award.** The student who has grown the most this year academically, socially, emotionally, or in attendance. This is the award nobody else can compete for; it is about the student's distance travelled, not the finish line.
- **Student Council Member of the Year.** Awarded to a student council member who has best represented their peers across the year. Voted by the council itself.
- **Voice Champion Award.** Awarded to a student who has used their voice well to raise an issue, to speak up for others, to ask hard questions.
- **Subject Awards.** One per subject for effort or growth, not the highest grade

9.4 Recognition that is not points

Some of the most powerful recognition is not on Arbor. Adults are encouraged to use:

- Phone calls home
- "I noticed..." statements (verbal, specific, evidence based)
- Whole school celebration of small wins (e.g. the student who came in today after a long absence)

10. Responding to Distressed and Dysregulated Behaviour the PACE-and-Repair Cycle

10.1 When a student is dysregulated, our response runs through a clear, trained cycle. Every adult is trained in this. The cycle is built on the PACE approach (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy Dan Hughes), connection-before-correction (Bombèr), restorative practice (Hopkins, Thorsborne) and trauma- informed regulation (Treisman, Perry). The five-step cycle

Step	What the adult does	What we do NOT do
1. Notice and name	Notice the Zone the student is in. Name what you see "I can see you're finding this hard right now." Move close, low voice, few words.	Demand eye contact. Raise voice. Use sarcasm. Stand over the student.
2. Co-regulate	Match your tone to the student's nervous system, not their behaviour. Offer regulation choices (sensory tools, movement, space, key adult, water, fresh air). Stay alongside.	Lecture. Reason. Argue back. Apply consequences. Threaten loss of reward.
3. Wait for return to Green	Give time. Regulation can take 20–40 minutes after a Red Zone moment sometimes longer.	Demand an immediate apology. Insist on a conversation while the student is still dysregulated. "Hurry up" a return to learning.
4. Restorative conversation	When the student is back in Green, sit alongside and have the restorative conversation (Section 11). Listen. Take their account seriously. Identify the unmet need. Plan together what to do differently next time	Use the conversation as a punishment. Read out a list of failings. Demand a confession. Put the student on the spot in front of peers.

5. Repair and reintegrate	Support the student to do whatever repair they choose apology, contribution, mend, message. Then reintegrate fully into the learning community.	Hold the incident against the student. Continue to bring it up. Exclude the student from a reward or trip because of an incident already repaired.
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10.2 Why we do not use “emotion coaching” as our headline term

Emotion coaching (Gottman; Rose et al.) is a valuable approach and our adults use elements of it. We have chosen, however, not to make it the headline term for our practice. Our framing is trauma-informed regulation plus restorative practice, because:

- Many of our students' behaviours are not primarily emotional they are neurobiological survival responses (fight/flight/freeze/fawn) that emotion-coaching scripts alone do not address.
- Emotion coaching can be misread by staff as a five-step script applied to every moment. Our cohort needs adults trained in regulation, attachment and trauma response the broader frame.
- Restorative practice what comes after regulation is the part most often missed in emotion-coaching-only models. We name it explicitly so it is not skipped.

Where emotion-coaching language helps (naming, validating, problem-solving with the student), our adults use it. It sits inside the wider trauma-informed framework.

10.3 Behaviours that need an immediate safeguarding response

Some behaviours are not first a behaviour issue they are first a safeguarding issue, and are handled through the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and KCSIE 2026.

- Disclosures of harm, abuse or exploitation.
- Self-injurious behaviour or suicidal ideation.
- Sexual violence, sexual harassment or child-on-child sexual behaviour (Section 13).
- Significant change in presentation withdrawn, dirty, hungry, frightened.
- Possession of weapons, drugs or significant cash (Section 15).
- Disclosure or signs of County Lines, CCE, CSE or radicalisation (Prevent).

In every case the Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed the same day, the student's voice is recorded in their own words, and behaviour responses are paused until safeguarding actions are agreed.

11. Restorative Practice - The Restorative Conversation

Restorative practice is not a script we apply when things go wrong; it is the way we work. We use restorative conversations after every significant incident, and as a routine repair after any small rupture. The conversation is structured around the five restorative questions short, predictable, non-shaming that all adults are trained to use.

11.1 The five restorative questions

	Question (asked of the student)	What it does
1	What happened?	Allows the student to give their account first, in their own words, without interruption. Adult listens.
2	What were you thinking or feeling at the time?	Surfaces the unmet need, the trigger, the survival strategy. Acknowledges that behaviour was communication.
3	Who has been affected by what happened?	Builds empathy. Identifies the people and the environment to repair. Avoids the abstract "the school".
4	What do you need to put it right?	Student-led. The student chooses what repair looks like. Adult supports but does not impose.
5	What can we do differently next time?	Forward-looking. Identifies the new strategy. Updates the IBSP if needed.

11.2 When the restorative conversation happens

Only when the student is back in the Green Zone. This may be later the same day; it may be the next day. The conversation is never forced while the student is still dysregulated, never delivered as a punishment, and never conducted in front of peers.

11.3 Restorative repair what the student might choose

The student chooses how to repair, with adult support. Choices may include:

- Apologising to the person affected face-to-face, in writing.
- Helping to mend or replace what was damaged alongside a member of staff, not as a labour penalty.

- Contributing to the school community in a way that fits the harm for example, helping to set up for an assembly if the student disrupted one.
- Making something like a card, a drawing, a video for the person affected.
- Choosing to do nothing now and revisit the conversation tomorrow. Sometimes the student is not yet ready, and forcing repair makes it meaningless.

11.4 When the restorative conversation happens

Only when the student is back in the Green Zone. This may be later the same day; it may be the next day. The conversation is never forced while the student is still dysregulated, never delivered as a punishment, and never conducted in front of peers.

11.5 Restorative practice with peer's circle time and group repair

Where an incident has affected a group, the school uses a restorative circle a structured group conversation facilitated by a trained adult. The five questions are extended to all participants. Every voice is heard once, in turn. The circle ends with an agreement about what changes.

12. Anti-Bullying

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Progress Arc. We define bullying as deliberate, repeated behaviour intended to hurt another person, where there is an imbalance of power. We hold the responsibility to prevent it, the responsibility to notice it, the responsibility to respond to it, and the responsibility to repair afterwards.

12.1 Forms of bullying we recognise

- Physical - hitting, kicking, pushing, deliberate damage to belongings.
- Verbal - name-calling, mocking, threats, abusive language.
- Indirect / relational - exclusion from a group, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships.
- Cyberbullying - via phones, messaging apps, gaming platforms, social media; including upskirting and the sharing of indecent images.
- Prejudice-based bullying - based on race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, SEND, looked-after status or socio-economic background.

- Sexual bullying - including sexual harassment, sexual coercion and sharing of sexual images (cross-references Section 13).

12.2 Prevention

- Whole-school culture - relational, restorative and inclusive. The seven values name the behaviours we celebrate.
- Curriculum coverage - PSHE, RSHE (2025 statutory guidance from September 2026), online safety, SMSC, anti-bullying weeks.
- Adult supervision of unstructured times - break, lunch, transitions, transport by trained staff.
- Student voice - the termly survey (Student Voice Policy) asks every student whether they feel safe and whether anyone is unkind to them.
- Clear, accessible reporting - students can tell any adult, write in the worry box, or speak through their key adult.

12.3 When bullying is reported or suspected - our response

1. The adult who hears the reports this on CPOMS - including the student's own words.
2. The is escalated to the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead the same day.
3. The student who has been bullied is offered: a private conversation with an adult of their choice; reassurance; a safety plan for the immediate term; key-adult check-in daily; a parent/carer conversation.
4. The student who has bullied is met (when in Green Zone) for a restorative conversation. The work is to understand why, identify the unmet need, repair the harm and change what happens next.
5. Parents/carers of both students are informed.
6. Where the bullying is prejudice-based or involves protected characteristics, it is logged separately and reported to the Proprietor termly.
7. Where the bullying involves sexual behaviour, criminal behaviour or significant harm, the safeguarding process leads (Section 13; KCSIE 2026).
8. Where bullying does not stop after restorative work, the IBSP is updated, additional support is added, and only as a last resort suspension may be considered under Section 18.

12.4 Cyberbullying outside school

The school's authority to act under section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 includes behaviour that affects the welfare of students or staff, even when that behaviour happens outside school. Cyberbullying that affects a student at our school is treated as bullying for the purposes of this policy, regardless of where or when the messages were sent.

13. Child-on-Child Abuse, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

KCSIE 2026 is clear: schools must assume that child-on-child abuse happens and is happening at our school, and must be vigilant. We do not say "it doesn't happen here". We say "it happens everywhere what is our system for noticing and responding?"

13.1 Forms we are alert to

- Bullying (including cyberbullying) - see Section 12.
- Physical abuse - hitting, kicking, shaking, hair-pulling, biting, restraint by a peer.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment - including online forms.
- Sharing of nude or semi-nude images ("sexting") - by, of or among children.
- Upskirting.
- Initiation or hazing rituals.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- Coercive control in peer relationships.

13.2 Our response

1. Any disclosure or concern goes to the Designated Safeguarding Lead the same day. The student who has disclosed is believed.
2. The student's voice is recorded verbatim, in their own words, by the receiving adult.
3. The DSL applies the KCSIE 2026 framework: consider whether to refer to children's social care; consider whether to refer to police; consider whether the school can

manage the immediate risk; consider whether parental notification could put the child at greater risk.

4. Sanctions are not imposed on the alleged victim. Adjustments are made to timetable, to seating, to break supervision to protect both students while investigation takes place.
5. Where sexual violence is reported, the school does not investigate it itself. Police and social care lead. The school's job is to support, record and safeguard.
6. Where allegations are not substantiated, sensitive support continues for both students including the alleged perpetrator, whose behaviour may indicate a need.

14. Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

Progress Arc operates as a mobile-phone-free environment by default for every student, throughout the entire school day, including lessons, transitions, breaks and lunchtime. This aligns with the DfE strengthened mobile phones guidance (2025) and with section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, which gives the guidance the force of law from 29 June 2026.

14.1 What is covered

"Mobile phone" in this policy includes:

- Smartphones and feature phones.
- Smart watches and other wearables with messaging, internet or camera functions.
- Tablets brought from home (unless prescribed in an EHC plan).
- Personal Bluetooth earphones used during the school day.
- Any other device with the functionality of a mobile phone (messaging, photography, internet).

14.2 Arrival and storage

1. Students place their phone and any other covered device in a named, lockable storage pouch / locker at the start of the day, supervised by a member of staff.
2. Students retrieve their device at the end of the school day.
3. Devices are not used at break, at lunch, on transitions or on school transport during the school day.

4. Devices are not used during off-site activities, work experience or educational visits unless specifically agreed in advance for a defined educational purpose.

14.3 Exceptions

Reasonable adjustments are made in the following circumstances, with the agreement of the Headteacher and the SENCo, and recorded on the student's profile:

- Medical need - e.g. continuous glucose monitor where the phone is the receiver, recorded in a medical care plan.
- EHC plan provision - where a device is specified as part of the student's communication or learning support.
- Young carers - where the student holds caring responsibility for a family member and needs to be reachable. Arrangements are agreed in writing with the family.
- Reintegration students - where the home school operates differently and a phased approach is needed; agreed with the commissioner.

In each case the exception is the specific device function needed, not unrestricted phone use.

15. Searching, Screening and Confiscation

This section follows the DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance (as updated). Searching is a serious step taken only when necessary to safeguard the student or others, never as a routine disciplinary tool.

15.1 What can be searched for without consent

The Headteacher and authorised staff have the statutory power to search a student or their possessions without consent where they have reasonable grounds to suspect possession of:

- Knives or weapons.
- Alcohol.
- Illegal drugs.
- Stolen items.
- Tobacco, cigarette papers, vapes and e-cigarettes.
- Fireworks.
- Pornographic images.

- Any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.
- Any item banned by the school rules and identified in this policy as searchable including mobile phones used in breach of Section 14.

15.2 How searches are conducted

- Always by two adults, one of whom is the same sex as the student where possible.
- In a private room, never in front of peers.
- Outer clothing only. Pockets, bags, coats. Strip searches are not conducted in school. If a strip search is needed, it is conducted by police, in compliance with PACE Code C, with an appropriate adult present and after parental notification (unless safeguarding overrides).
- The student's voice is heard before, during and after including the right to say what they have and to volunteer it.
- Where the student is identified as having SEND, communication needs or as a victim of trauma, additional safeguards are in place: a known adult, advance warning where safe, and a longer time frame.
- Every search is recorded including the rationale, the adults present, what was found, and the student's account.

15.3 Wand screening for students with a history of weapon-carrying

As agreed in consultation with parents and carers, all students are subject to screening on arrival, which may include the use of a hand-held wand, in line with the school's commitment to maintaining a safe environment.

In addition, where a student has been admitted with a documented history of weapon-carrying, or where an existing student has been involved in an incident involving weapons outside school, the Headteacher may approve a time-limited, risk-assessed enhanced screening protocol on entry. This is conducted in line with the school's *Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy*:

- Screening is conducted respectfully and in a consistent manner for all students.
- Enhanced screening measures are applied proportionately based on assessed risk.
- Screening is conducted by two trained adults and, where appropriate, in a private setting.

- Any enhanced protocol is time-limited and reviewed weekly by the Headteacher.
- All screening activity is recorded; parents/carers are informed; and student voice is captured.
- Enhanced measures are discontinued as soon as risk is reduced; only the Headteacher can authorise discontinuation.

Refusal to be screened is treated as a behaviour event, not a justification for immediate use of force. The adult will de-escalate, the Headteacher will be called, and the safeguarding response will be led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

15.4 What we do if a weapon is found

1. The student is supported away from peers; immediate physical safety is established.
2. The item is secured by a member of SLT.
3. The police are informed.
4. Parents/carers are informed.
5. Safeguarding lead is informed; a safeguarding referral is made if appropriate (contextual safeguarding, CCE, gang involvement).
6. The student's voice is recorded why was the weapon brought in? Safety, fear, coercion?
7. Suspension is considered (Section 18); permanent exclusion is considered only as a last resort and never automatically.

16. Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions

This section is written against the DfE Restrictive Interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools guidance (December 2025) and the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2025, both of which come into statutory force on 1 April 2026.

Restrictive interventions are a last resort. They are never used as a punishment, never used to enforce compliance, never used to maintain good order, and never used in place of a relational or de-escalation approach. The whole school approach is to prevent the need for any restrictive intervention through trauma-informed practice, environmental design, regulation

support and relationship.

Our Restraint Procedure is set out within our standalone Physical Intervention Policy.

17. Absconding and Missing from Education

Absconding is a safeguarding event before it is a behaviour event. A student who leaves the school site without permission is, until they are accounted for, a child missing from education or care. KCSIE 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children frame our response.

17.1 Risk assessment before anything else

Every student's profile records their absconding risk level and any personal risk indicators. Risk indicators include:

- History of absconding.
- Known mental health risk (self-harm, suicidal ideation).
- Contextual safeguarding concerns (CCE, CSE, County Lines, gang affiliation, exploitation).
- Children's social care plan in place (Child in Need, Child Protection, Looked-After).
- History of going missing from home.
- Age and capacity to be alone in the community.
- Sensory or communication need that may affect safety.
- Awareness of road traffic, water, weather risks.

17.2 Immediate response when a student absconds

1. The adult who notices alerts the Headteacher and the DSL immediately.
2. A check of the building and grounds is conducted by named staff. Two adults search; one adult coordinates from the office.
3. The Headteacher reviews the student's risk card. If the student is high-risk, 999 is called without delay not 101.
4. Parents/carers are called immediately. The conversation is logged.
5. Where it is safe to do so, a member of staff follows the student from a distance never blocking, never restraining outside the school site to keep the student in sight and offer return. Staff do not chase, grab or detain a student in a public space.
6. If the student cannot be located and risk is not immediate, police are informed

on 101 as a missing child.

7. If the student is later confirmed safe, the police are stood down through the same channel.
8. If the student has not returned by the end of the school day, the missing child procedure escalates: parents/carers, police, social care (if Looked-After or CP), LA, EHCP team.

17.3 Why we do not chase

Pursuit can escalate a student's flight response, push them into traffic, into deeper risk environments, or into confrontation. Staff are trained that the priority is to keep eyes on the student where safe and to alert police if needed not to physically prevent absconding outside the gate. Physically preventing a student from leaving a public space without a safeguarding rationale may also constitute false imprisonment under common law and breach the Human Rights Act.

17.4 Return

When the student returns whether they walk back, are brought back by family, or by police the response runs through the trauma-informed cycle:

1. Safety first. Are they hurt? Cold? Hungry? Frightened?
2. Regulation second. The student is in their key adult's care. No consequences in this moment.
3. Restorative third. When the student is in Green, what happened, what was needed, what would help next time.
4. Safeguarding throughout. Where was the student? With whom? Has anything happened? The DSL leads.
5. IBSP review. What changes in the plan to reduce the likelihood and the risk next time.

17.5 Repeat absconders

Repeated absconding is information. It tells us something is not working. The response is a deeper IBSP, more therapeutic support, a curriculum or pathway review, a safeguarding multi-agency meeting never a sanction escalation that pushes the student further from school.

18. Suspension and Permanent Exclusion

This section follows the DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance (August 2024). The terms in this section are statutory: “suspension” replaces “fixed term exclusion”. “Exclusion” means permanent exclusion. Only the Headteacher (or, in their absence, the most senior member of staff acting in their place) can suspend or permanently exclude.

18.1 Our default position

Suspension and exclusion are last-resort measures in an AP/SEND setting. Many of our students have already been excluded from previous schools that experience contributed to the unmet needs they bring with them. We do not repeat the pattern lightly. Every alternative is considered first: IBSP review, additional therapeutic input, timetable adjustment, pathway change, multi-agency meeting, managed reintegration, restorative repair.

18.2 What can justify a suspension

The legal threshold is high. The DfE 2024 guidance permits suspension only where the behaviour is a serious breach (or persistent breaches) of the school's behaviour policy AND allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others. Both conditions must be met.

In an AP/SEND setting, with our cohort and our trauma-informed framework, suspension is a last-resort response to behaviour that meets all three of the following conditions:

1. The behaviour itself is genuinely serious there is real risk of harm to people, not just disruption.
2. The school has tried, in good faith and on the record, the alternatives IBSP review, additional support, therapeutic input, restorative repair, timetable adjustment, pathway review.
3. The risk cannot be safely managed by another adjustment in the next school day.

Examples of behaviour that may justify a suspension where all three conditions are met:

Behaviour	Why it may justify suspension
A targeted physical assault on another student or member of staff that causes injury, where the perpetrator was in the Green Zone and had access to support.	Serious risk of harm; the act was not a dysregulated response but a chosen action with intent.
Serious sexual misconduct sexual violence, coercion, sharing of indecent images investigated and substantiated.	Safeguarding-led response under KCSIE 2026. Suspension protects the victim while investigation proceeds.
Bringing a weapon onto the school site with intent to threaten or use it.	Immediate, serious safety risk. Section 15 applies in parallel.
Supplying drugs to other students.	Safeguarding-led response; criminal risk to peers.
Persistent, targeted bullying that has been the subject of multiple restorative conversations and has not changed.	After the relational and restorative pathway has been worked through, ongoing harm to the affected student must be stopped.
Serious damage to the school property or others' property where there was intent and where restorative repair has not changed the pattern.	Pattern of harm to the community after intervention; not a one-off Red Zone moment.
A behaviour that places the student themselves in serious and immediate physical danger that the school is no longer able to manage safely on site.	Safeguarding response; the suspension is to enable a multi- agency safety plan, not a punishment.

18.3 What can never justify a suspension

The following behaviours and circumstances can never, on their own, justify a suspension. Many of them are the behaviours our students most often present with that is exactly why they must not become routes to exclusion.

Circumstance	Why a suspension is never the right response
Behaviour that is a manifestation of the student's disability, SEND or neurodivergence.	Equality Act 2010 applying the behaviour policy without adjustment to a disability-linked behaviour is potentially disability discrimination. Examples: autistic dysregulation, PDA refusal, ADHD impulsivity, Tourette's, communication-

Circumstance	Why a suspension is never the right response
	Need-driven behaviour.
Behaviour during dysregulation in the Yellow or Red Zone, where staff had not de-escalated.	Our policy is explicit (Section 7) that consequences are not delivered to dysregulated students. A suspension following a Red Zone moment that staff did not de-escalate is a failure of provision, not a behaviour event.
Behaviour where the reasonable adjustments specified in the EHC plan or IBSP were not in place at the time.	The adjustment failed, not the student. The response is to review the plan, not to suspend.
Sensory overload, autistic shutdown, dissociation, panic attack, or mental health crisis.	These are health events, not behaviour events. The response is safeguarding, mental-health support and possibly medical attention never suspension.
Self-injurious behaviour or suicidal ideation.	A safeguarding response under KCSIE 2026, led by the DSL. Suspending a student in mental-health crisis is unsafe and unlawful.
A student's response to being bullied, harassed, exploited or assaulted including hitting back, freezing, fawning or running.	Victims are never sanctioned for their response to harm. The safeguarding investigation leads.
A student's disclosure of harm, abuse or exploitation even where the disclosure includes language or behaviour that would otherwise breach expectations.	Disclosures are safeguarding events. The student is supported, never punished for what they have shared.
Behaviour caused by unmet basic needs hunger, exhaustion, illness, sensory overwhelm, lack of medication.	The school's job is to meet the need. Suspending a student for being hungry is unconscionable.

Persistent lateness or attendance issues.	Attendance is a safeguarding and pastoral matter. Suspending a student for not being in school is irrational and counterproductive DfE 2024 guidance explicitly cautions against it.
Dress, uniform or appearance issues.	These are not behaviour events in our setting and never trigger suspension.
Swearing, shouting, name-calling or arguing during dysregulation.	Words spoken in the Red Zone are not chosen they are survival. Restorative work follows; suspension does not.
Refusal to comply with a single adult instruction.	Non-compliance is information. It is the start of a conversation, not the end of one.
A student's first significant incident, where intervention and adjustment have not yet been tried.	The school must have tried in good faith before suspension is considered. A first incident is the start of a support plan, not a sanction.

Circumstance	Why a suspension is never the right response
Behaviour the school is already aware of, predicted and planned for through the IBSP, that then occurred as expected.	If the IBSP anticipated the behaviour, the response is to follow the IBSP, not to suspend for it.
Behaviour reported by another adult who does not work in our setting (for example, on transport, in the community, by a member of the public) without first investigating and applying our own framework.	External reports are investigated through the safeguarding and behaviour processes. They are not direct triggers.

18.4 Before any suspension - the Headteacher's mandatory considerations

Before a decision to suspend is taken, the Headteacher must satisfy themselves of every one of the following. This is the written record that accompanies any suspension decision and is shared with the Proprietor, the LA SEND team where relevant, and any subsequent review panel.

1. Is this behaviour a serious breach, AND would the student remaining seriously harm education or welfare? Both must be met.
2. Has the behaviour been considered against the "cannot suspend for" list (Section 18.3)?
3. What is the student's SEND profile, EHC plan provision, mental health status and known trauma history?
4. Were the reasonable adjustments specified in the EHC plan and IBSP in place at the time? If not, why not?
5. Could the behaviour be a manifestation of the student's disability or neurodivergence? If yes, the response is provision review under the Equality Act, not suspension.
6. Was the student in the Green Zone, or were they dysregulated? Did staff de-escalate appropriately?
7. Did the student understand the expectation in a way appropriate to their communication need?
8. Were the triggers known and managed?
9. What did the adults around the student do that may have escalated the situation?
10. What alternative responses have been tried IBSP update, therapeutic input, timetable adjustment, pathway review, multi-agency meeting, restorative repair?

11. Is the student Looked-After, on a Child Protection or Child in Need plan, or in kinship care? If so, the Virtual School Head and social worker are consulted before the decision is taken.
12. Can the safety risk be managed by another adjustment in the next school day?
13. What is the predicted impact of suspension on the student, their family and their placement? If the answers to these questions do not collectively support suspension, suspension is not used.

18.5 The suspension process

1. The Headteacher's decision is communicated to parents/carers by phone the same day, with written confirmation within 24 hours.
2. Where the student is Looked-After, the social worker and the Virtual School Head are informed without delay.
3. Where the student has an EHC plan, the LA SEND team is informed.
4. The Proprietor is informed and the statutory notification requirements are met.
5. The student's voice is gathered before the return meeting in their own words and modality.
6. Work is set for the suspension period. For suspensions of more than 5 days, full-time alternative provision is arranged from day 6 (per the 2024 guidance).
7. Return is via a reintegration meeting with the student, the family, the SENCo and the Headteacher. The IBSP is updated. A restorative conversation takes place.

18.6 Permanent exclusion

Permanent exclusion is exceptional in our setting. It is considered only where:

- In response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the behaviour policy; AND
- Allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others; AND
- All reasonable adjustments and alternatives have been exhausted; AND
- Every item in Section 18.3 (the "cannot suspend for" list) has been considered and ruled out as the explanation for the behaviour.

Before any decision to permanently exclude, the Headteacher consults senior colleagues, including the SENCo, the DSL, the LA SEND team (where the student has an EHC plan), the Virtual School Head (for Looked-After students), and the social worker (where the student is open to social care). The Equality Act and SEND duties are explicitly considered and recorded in writing. The Proprietor is not involved in advising on the initial exclusion decision to maintain impartiality in any subsequent review.

The Proprietor considers the exclusion through the statutory review process within 15 school days. Parents/carers have the right to make representations and to request an independent review panel. The student's voice is heard.

For the first 6 days of any permanent exclusion, the school provides suitable full-time work. From day 6, the local authority is responsible for arranging full-time alternative provision.

18.7 Managed Moves / Off-Site Direction

The school may consider a Managed Move (to be referred to as *Off-Site Direction* in line with current terminology) as an alternative to permanent exclusion where it is in the best interests of the student and the wider school community.

An off-site direction is used as a supportive, planned intervention to improve behaviour and engagement, with the intention of either reintegration or transition to a more suitable placement.

- Off-site direction will only be considered following a careful assessment of the student's needs, risks, and prior interventions.
- This approach is voluntary and requires informed agreement from parents/carers and the receiving provision.
- The student's voice will be sought and recorded as part of the decision-making process.
- A clear plan will be established, including expected outcomes, review points, and reintegration or transition arrangements.

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Due to contractual obligations, the school will not initiate or agree to any off-site direction without prior consultation and agreement from the commissioning team. This ensures that placement decisions are appropriate, funded correctly, and in line with wider local authority arrangements.

All off-site directions will be time-limited, regularly reviewed, and monitored by senior leaders, with safeguarding oversight from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

19. SEND, Reasonable Adjustments and the Equality Act

Every student at Progress Arc either has, or is suspected to have, special educational needs and/or a disability. SEND is the context of this policy, not an exception within it. Reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 are anticipated, designed in and recorded.

Application of the behaviour policy without adjustment for SEND, EHC plan provision, mental health or known trauma history may constitute disability discrimination. Before any sanction the Headteacher considers:

- Was the behaviour a manifestation of the student's disability or SEND?
- Were the adjustments specified in the EHC plan / IBSP in place at the time?
- Did the student understand the expectation in a way appropriate to their communication need?
- Were the triggers known and managed?
- What did the adults around the student do that may have escalated the situation?

Where the answers indicate that the school could have done more, the response shifts from sanction to provision review.

20. Roles & Accountabilities

20.1 The School Behaviour Lead

Each Progress Arc has a named School Behaviour Lead a member of SLT, deputy headteacher or senior pastoral lead who is accountable to the Headteacher for the day-to-day operation of this policy.

The School Behaviour Lead is responsible for:

- Leading trauma-informed practice across the school.
- Maintaining IBSPs in collaboration with the SENCo.
- Coordinating restorative practice.
- Holding the Restrictive Intervention log and presenting it weekly to the Headteacher.
- Coordinating with the school's PRICE trainers on refresher training, post-incident debriefs and the prevention plan.

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- Quality-assuring the points system, the rewards catalogue and weekly awards.
 - Liaising with the DSL on all behaviour-safeguarding overlaps.

20.2 PRICE Instructors

Each Progress Arc has named PRICE instructor qualified to deliver PRICE PBS model (RRN accredited) training to school staff. The trainer is the school's expert reference point on positive handling, de-escalation restrictive intervention and prevention.

The PRICE instructors are responsible for:

- Delivering PRICE training to all staff within probation, and annual refreshers thereafter.
- Leading post-incident debriefs with staff after any significant use of force or seclusion (within 48 hours, per Section 16.7).
- Advising the Headteacher and School Behaviour Lead on prevention strategies, IBSPs and individual risk profiles.
- Reviewing the Restrictive Intervention log alongside the School Behaviour Lead, looking for patterns, triggers and learning.
- Keeping their own accreditation current and attending PRICE update training.
- Coaching colleagues in de-escalation and trauma-informed practice on a day-to-day basis