

ACT School Behaviour Policy

Commitment

At ACT Schools, we believe that positive relationships, clear expectations and consistent boundaries create the conditions in which pupils feel safe, valued and able to engage successfully in education.

Our whole-school approach is 'Positives First', underpinned by a trauma-informed culture. We actively seek opportunities to recognise effort, engagement, progress, resilience, positive contribution and positive choices. We want pupils to experience success and to know that the positive things they do are noticed, recognised and valued. Building on what is going well is central to developing confidence, engagement and positive relationships with education.

This approach supports the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024, including the requirement for an effectively implemented written behaviour policy which encourages and rewards good behaviour and establishes appropriate responses where behaviour falls below expectations.

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication. A pupil's behaviour and presentation may be influenced by their experiences, emotions, relationships, additional learning needs, environment and ability to regulate. Staff are therefore expected to remain professionally curious and seek to understand what may be contributing to behaviour rather than making assumptions about a pupil's intentions.

Our approach is informed by the Trauma-Informed Wales Framework and wider Welsh Government guidance relating to emotional and mental wellbeing. Being trauma-informed does not mean lowering expectations, accepting unsafe behaviour or removing accountability. It means considering what may have happened to or be affecting a pupil, reducing unnecessary triggers, avoiding responses that may escalate distress and providing relational, restorative and resilience-building support.

ACT Schools maintains high expectations alongside clear, predictable and consistent boundaries. Every pupil has the right to feel safe, every pupil has the right to learn, and every member of the school community has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Behaviour that compromises safety, learning or the wellbeing of others will therefore be addressed.

Our approach balances understanding, support and accountability. We recognise that there may be a reason behind a behaviour while also supporting pupils, according to their individual needs and level of understanding, to recognise the impact of their actions. Where boundaries are crossed, staff will respond calmly and consistently, supporting regulation before providing appropriate opportunities for reflection, repair and successful re-engagement.

Consequences may form part of this response. Where required, they will be proportionate, purposeful and appropriate, with the intention of reinforcing boundaries, maintaining safety and supporting pupils to learn from what has happened. Consequences will not be used simply to punish a pupil for behaviour that has already occurred.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we recognise that fair and equitable practice does not always mean providing every pupil with the same response. Pupils may require different levels of support, reasonable adjustments or individualised strategies to successfully meet expectations. Our response will therefore take account of individual need while maintaining the fundamental boundaries required to protect safety, wellbeing and learning.

For pupils with additional learning needs, our approach is further informed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021. Behaviour should be considered within the context of a pupil's identified needs, communication, regulation, Individual Development Plan (IDP) where applicable, and the support required to enable successful participation in education.

Our Positive First approach is underpinned by trauma-informed, relational and restorative practice and reflects the five principles of the Trauma-Informed Wales Framework: a universal approach that does no harm; relationship-focused; person-centred; resilience and strength-focused; and inclusive.

Our practice also reflects the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Pupil voice is actively encouraged, and pupils should be provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to decisions affecting them, appropriate to their age, understanding and individual needs.

Our aim is not simply to manage behaviour in the moment. We want pupils to develop the skills to recognise their emotions, regulate their responses, understand the impact of their behaviour, repair relationships and make increasingly positive choices.

ACT Schools seeks to create a culture in which pupils are noticed for what they do well, supported when they find things difficult, held appropriately accountable when boundaries are crossed, and always provided with opportunities to repair, re-engage and move forward positively.

Purpose

The purpose of the ACT Schools Behaviour Policy is to provide a clear, consistent, inclusive and fair framework for promoting positive behaviour and engagement and responding effectively when behaviour falls below expectations.

The policy establishes the principles and expectations that underpin behaviour practice across ACT Schools and supports the school in meeting its relevant legal, safeguarding, equality, additional learning needs and regulatory responsibilities.

Detailed operational guidance for staff, including Positive Pathways, the graduated response, classroom strategies, re-engagement, restorative practice, individualised behaviour support and responses to serious or persistent behaviour, is contained within the school's Behaviour Management Guidance.

The policy aims to:

- establish clear, predictable expectations and boundaries across ACT Schools;
- embed a Positive First approach, where staff actively seek opportunities to recognise positive behaviour, engagement, effort and individual progress;
- ensure behaviour practice is underpinned by a trauma-informed culture and an understanding of behaviour as communication;

- provide a consistent framework for responding when behaviour falls below expectations;
- ensure responses are proportionate, purposeful and consider individual needs and circumstances;
- ensure reasonable adjustments are considered and implemented where required;
- balance understanding and support with appropriate boundaries and accountability;
- provide repeated opportunities for pupils to regulate, repair and successfully re-engage;
- promote fresh starts so that one incident does not unnecessarily define the remainder of a pupil's lesson or school day;
- identify patterns of behaviour early so that appropriate support and intervention can be considered;
- promote meaningful pupil voice and partnership working with parents/carers and relevant professionals;
- safeguard pupils and protect the safety, dignity, wellbeing and learning of the whole school community; and
- ensure internal exclusion, exclusion and restrictive responses are used appropriately, proportionately and in accordance with relevant procedures and guidance.

Through this policy, ACT Schools aims to ensure that behaviour is approached consistently, fairly and purposefully, while maintaining a strong focus on relationships, inclusion, engagement and helping pupils develop the skills they need to successfully participate in education.

Scope

This Behaviour Policy applies to all pupils and staff across ACT Schools and establishes the consistent principles expected when promoting, supporting and responding to behaviour.

The policy applies throughout the school day, including lessons, transitions, social times and break periods. It also applies during educational visits, off-site activities, work-related learning and other activities organised by or on behalf of the school. Where appropriate, the policy may also apply to behaviour outside school where that behaviour has an impact on the safety, wellbeing or education of pupils or the wider school community.

Behaviour management operates alongside the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. Where behaviour or information disclosed during an incident raises a safeguarding concern, staff must follow the school's safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding concerns must not be treated solely as behavioural matters.

All staff are expected to follow the principles within this policy and the associated Behaviour Management Guidance. Consistency means applying shared expectations, principles and boundaries; it does not necessarily mean providing an identical response to every pupil.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, staff must consider whether a pupil's disability or other protected characteristic is relevant to the support or response required and whether reasonable adjustments are necessary. For pupils with additional learning needs, relevant IDPs and person-centred information must also be considered when planning and delivering appropriate behaviour support.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Management Guidance, Positive Pathways Framework, Individual Support Plans (ISPs), Positive Behaviour Plans, Safety and Risk Reduction Plans, IDPs where applicable, and relevant safeguarding, equality, health and safety, anti-bullying, searching and confiscation, restrictive practice and exclusion procedures.

Where behaviour outside of the school environment has a direct impact upon safeguarding, relationships, safety or

the effective operation of the school, appropriate action and support may also be considered.

Behaviour Management Principles

Positive First Approach

Staff will actively look for opportunities to recognise success, including engagement, effort, improvement, positive contribution and personal progress.

Positive recognition is not reserved for pupils who consistently meet expectations. Pupils have different starting points and needs, and every pupil should be actively supported to identify achievable opportunities for success.

A difficult incident should not define the remainder of a lesson or day. Pupils should be given opportunities to regulate, repair, re-engage and experience a fresh start.

Trauma-Informed Culture

ACT Schools recognises that behaviour may be influenced by previous experiences, trauma, additional learning needs, emotional wellbeing, relationships, environmental factors and difficulties with regulation.

Staff should respond with curiosity rather than judgement, considering what may be contributing to the behaviour and what support may enable the pupil to succeed.

Trauma-informed practice does not remove accountability. Clear expectations and boundaries remain important in creating safety and predictability for all pupils.

Relationships, Regulation and De-escalation

Positive and consistent relationships are central to effective behaviour management. Where appropriate, staff should support regulation and co-regulation before expecting reflection or restorative work.

Staff should use calm communication, processing time, appropriate choices, environmental adjustments and agreed individual strategies to reduce escalation. Unnecessary confrontation, public shaming and power struggles should be avoided.

Inclusion, Equity and Reasonable Adjustment

Behaviour will be managed fairly, inclusively and without discrimination.

Fairness does not always mean treating every pupil in the same way. Staff should consider ALN, disability, individual circumstances, identified triggers, communication needs, support plans and reasonable adjustments when deciding how best to respond.

Individualisation does not remove shared expectations regarding safety, dignity, respect and engagement with education.

Restorative Practice, Pupil Voice and Re-engagement

Where difficulties occur, pupils should be supported to understand what has happened, recognise the impact of their behaviour, repair relationships where appropriate and successfully return to learning.

Pupil voice should inform this process and the wider support provided. Staff should consider what the pupil believes contributed to the incident and what may help them manage similar situations successfully in the future.

Safety and Accountability

Supportive and trauma-informed practice must operate alongside clear boundaries and accountability.

Where behaviour presents an immediate or significant risk, staff and management are not required to progress through every stage of the graduated response before taking appropriate action. Safeguarding and the safety and wellbeing of the school community remain paramount.

How We Manage Behaviour

ACT Schools uses a graduated response to behaviour, with support increasing according to the pupil's presentation, needs and level of risk.

The graduated response is not intended to be a rigid sequence. Pupils should be supported to re-engage at the earliest appropriate opportunity, and where a pupil successfully re-engages, this should be positively recognised.

A typical response may include:

- Calm reminder and redirection
- Processing or regulation time
- Change of face or additional classroom/YLM support
- Pastoral intervention
- Deputy Head/Management support
- Headteacher involvement where significant decisions or exclusion may need to be considered

Serious incidents or behaviours presenting significant or immediate risk may require management intervention without progressing through each preceding stage.

Positive Pathways

Positive Pathways is ACT Schools' points-based recognition and engagement framework.

It is designed to recognise positive behaviour, engagement, effort, improvement, achievement and contribution. Points are a recognition and recording mechanism and are not, in themselves, a consequence.

Pupils should continue to have opportunities to gain positive points following difficulties. Negative behaviour earlier in a lesson or day does not prevent subsequent positive recognition.

Positive Pathways should be applied fairly and inclusively, taking account of individual starting points and needs.

Pastoral Support and Intervention

The Pastoral Team provides additional support where classroom strategies and Youth Learning Mentor support have not enabled successful re-engagement.

Pastoral intervention may include regulation support, movement breaks, time-out, supportive conversation, wellbeing intervention and planned or responsive individual support.

The purpose of pastoral intervention is to address barriers, support regulation and enable the pupil to return to education, rather than simply removing the pupil from learning.

Individual Support Plans

Every pupil will have an Individual Support Plan (ISP) that places pupil voice at the centre of understanding and responding to their individual needs.

ISPs identify strengths, interests and aspirations alongside behaviours and their possible meaning, triggers and early indicators, regulation strategies, preferred approaches and consistent staff responses.

ISPs are working documents and should be developed collaboratively with pupils, staff and parents/carers where appropriate and reviewed as needs change.

Positive Behaviour Support Plans

Where difficulties continue despite universal and additional support, a Positive Behaviour Support Plan may be introduced.

Positive Behaviour Support Plans form a graduated pathway through Plans 1–3. Movement through the pathway should be based upon evidence and review rather than simply the passage of time.

Plan 1 – Targeted Support

Plan 1 identifies the behaviours of concern, barriers or triggers, strategies and support required, expectations and measurable targets.

It should be developed collaboratively with the pupil, relevant staff and parents/carers.

Where progress is limited, the review should consider what else needs to change or what additional support is required before progressing further.

Plan 2 – Enhanced Support

Where Plan 1 has been implemented and reviewed but difficulties continue, the pupil may progress to Plan 2.

Support may include increased pastoral or wellbeing intervention, closer monitoring, changes to strategies or provision and involvement from relevant professionals.

The effectiveness of existing support and reasonable adjustments should be reviewed before further escalation.

Plan 3 – Intensive Support

Plan 3 represents the highest level of formal behaviour support within the school's graduated pathway.

This may include intensive monitoring, clear and measurable targets, enhanced pastoral and management oversight, close parent/carer partnership and specialist, Local Authority or multi-agency involvement where appropriate.

Following Plan 3

Where Plan 3 has been fully implemented and reviewed, but clear and sustained evidence demonstrates that the support, interventions and reasonable adjustments provided are not enabling the pupil to safely and successfully access the current provision, a formal review should take place.

At this stage, and following consultation with the pupil, parents/carers, Local Authority and relevant professionals as appropriate, a change of placement may be considered where the evidence indicates that the pupil's needs cannot be appropriately met within the current provision.

A change of placement is not an automatic consequence of reaching Plan 3. Decisions should be needs-led, evidence-based and consider the support already provided and whether further reasonable or alternative measures could enable the placement to remain successful.

Re-engagement Room and Internal Exclusion

The Re-engagement Room provides a structured environment in which pupils can continue their education where remaining within their usual learning environment is temporarily not appropriate.

Its purpose is to support regulation, reflection, continued learning and successful reintegration.

Use of the Re-engagement Room should be purposeful and proportionate and should not become an informal or indefinite alternative to a pupil's usual provision.

Where its use constitutes a formal internal exclusion, this must be authorised by Management, appropriately recorded and followed by consideration of reintegration and any additional support required.

Exclusion

ACT Schools recognises the significant impact exclusion can have upon pupils and therefore seeks to use exclusion as a last resort, where appropriate.

Before exclusion is considered, the school will ordinarily consider the pupil's individual circumstances, support already provided, reasonable adjustments, graduated interventions and whether alternative measures can safely and appropriately address the behaviour.

However, a serious single incident or behaviour presenting an immediate or significant risk may justify exclusion without every stage of the graduated response having first been exhausted.

Decisions will be proportionate, evidence-based and made regarding safeguarding, equality, ALN and the safety, dignity and wellbeing of the school community.

Responsibilities

Creating a safe, positive and respectful school environment is a shared responsibility. All members of the school community have a role in promoting positive behaviour, building relationships and supporting pupils to engage successfully in education.

The Headteacher holds overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for authorising exclusions.

The Management Team

The Management Team is responsible for promoting and modelling a consistent Positive First approach and ensuring that this Behaviour Policy and associated Behaviour Management Guidance are understood and effectively implemented.

The Management Team will support staff through appropriate training, guidance, coaching and professional development. Behaviour patterns and Positive Pathways information will be monitored to identify emerging concerns, support needs, inconsistencies or areas where practice may need to develop.

The Management Team is responsible for ensuring that reasonable adjustments and individualised approaches are considered where appropriate and that ISPs, Positive Behaviour Plans and Safety and Risk Reduction Plans are

developed and reviewed when required. Relevant IDPs should also inform approaches for pupils with identified additional learning needs.

Serious behaviour, safeguarding concerns and significant risks must be appropriately escalated and managed. Decisions regarding internal exclusion, exclusion or other significant interventions must be appropriate, proportionate and consistent with relevant school procedures and guidance. Exclusion will remain a last resort where appropriate alternatives and support have been considered, except where the seriousness or safety implications of an incident require a more immediate response.

The Management Team will promote restorative practice, successful reintegration and opportunities for pupils to repair relationships and move forward following incidents. Pupil voice, parent/carer partnership and collaboration with local authorities and other relevant professionals will be encouraged where appropriate.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for building positive, respectful and professional relationships with pupils and creating welcoming, predictable environments that support safety, belonging and engagement.

Staff should actively seek opportunities to recognise positive behaviour, effort, engagement and individual progress and use Positive Pathways fairly and consistently. Clear, achievable expectations and appropriate professional boundaries should be maintained.

When behaviour becomes challenging, staff should respond calmly and without judgement, remaining professionally curious about what the behaviour may be communicating while maintaining appropriate expectations and accountability. Staff should consider how their language, interactions and responses may affect a pupil and seek to reduce unnecessary triggers or escalation.

Appropriate regulation, co-regulation, de-escalation and relational strategies should be used in accordance with the Behaviour Management Guidance. Staff should follow the school's graduated response and provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to re-engage where it is safe and appropriate to do so. We encourage and model restorative conversations between staff and pupils.

Staff must know and follow relevant ISPs, Positive Behaviour Plans, IDPs, Safety and Risk Reduction Plans and agreed reasonable adjustments. Serious behaviour, safeguarding concerns or behaviour presenting significant risk must be escalated appropriately.

Positive and negative behaviour should be recorded accurately and consistently through the school's agreed systems. Emerging patterns or concerns should be shared with relevant colleagues so that appropriate support can be considered at the earliest opportunity.

Staff should recognise that one incident does not define a pupil or their whole day. Pupils should be supported to reflect, repair and successfully re-engage, with further opportunities to experience success.

Where restrictive practice or physical intervention is required, staff must act in accordance with their training, relevant school procedures and the Welsh Government Reducing Restrictive Practices Framework. Restrictive practice must never be used as punishment and should only be used where necessary and proportionate to the risk presented.

Pupils

Pupils will be supported and encouraged, according to their individual needs and level of understanding, to treat themselves, others and the school environment with respect; follow reasonable instructions and expectations; engage positively with their education; recognise their strengths and achievements and seek support when they are struggling.

Pupils will be supported to use agreed strategies to regulate where they are able to do so, understand how their behaviour may affect themselves and others, take appropriate responsibility for their actions and participate in reflection or restorative conversations where appropriate.

Following difficulties, pupils will be supported to repair relationships or harm where necessary and successfully re-engage. Each lesson and each day should provide further opportunities for positive choices and success.

Pupil voice is an important part of our approach. Consistent with the principles of the UNCRC and person-centred practice, pupils will be provided with appropriate opportunities to contribute their views about their experiences and the support and approaches that help them succeed.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to work in partnership with ACT Schools by supporting school expectations, sharing relevant information that may help staff understand and support their child and working collaboratively with the school when concerns arise.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to contribute to ISPs, Positive Behaviour Plans, person-centred planning, meetings and reviews where appropriate. Partnership working should support pupils to understand expectations, develop appropriate responsibility and identify strategies that enable successful engagement.

Parents and carers are also encouraged to recognise and celebrate positive progress and achievements alongside the school and contribute feedback to support continued person-centred improvement.

A Shared Approach

While responsibilities may differ, creating a positive behaviour culture is everyone's responsibility. Staff will provide pupils with positive relationships, clear expectations, appropriate support, reasonable adjustments where required and predictable boundaries. Pupils will be supported to recognise their strengths, access support, make positive choices, take appropriate responsibility and repair harm where necessary.

Positive First does not mean positive only. Trauma-informed practice does not remove boundaries, consequences or accountability. It enables staff to consider what may be influencing behaviour and how best to respond while maintaining the clear and proportionate boundaries required to protect safety, dignity, wellbeing and learning.

Communication and Storage

This policy will be communicated to all staff through induction, training, professional development and regular policy updates. This supports the requirement within the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024 for the school's behaviour arrangements to be effectively implemented in practice.

Pupils will be supported to understand school expectations and the Positive First approach through day-to-day interactions, classroom practice, Individual Support Plans, restorative conversations and opportunities for pupil voice.

Parents and carers will be able to access the current Behaviour Policy through the school website. Relevant individual communications and updates may also be provided through Arbor, and printed copies of the policy will be available upon request.

The current policy will be stored electronically within the ACT Schools policy library on Calon and made available to relevant staff and stakeholders.

Behaviour information will be recorded, stored and shared appropriately in accordance with relevant organisational, safeguarding and data protection requirements.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be formally reviewed annually, or sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance, regulatory requirements, organisational practice or the needs of ACT Schools require this.

ACT Schools recognises that effective behaviour practice requires monitoring not only whether a policy exists, but how consistently and effectively it is implemented in practice.

The Deputy Head responsible for Behaviour and Engagement will oversee the monitoring of behaviour patterns and trends and work with the Management Team, pastoral staff, teaching staff, Youth Learning Mentors, ALNCo and other relevant colleagues to identify areas requiring additional support, intervention or development.

Monitoring will consider information from Positive Pathways and Arbor alongside patterns relating to behaviour incidents, positive recognition, point deductions, re-engagement, internal exclusion, exclusion, restrictive practice, individualised behaviour support and other relevant interventions.

Patterns relating to individual pupils, groups, protected characteristics, particular environments, activities or times of day may also be considered where this helps the school identify barriers, inequalities, support needs or opportunities to improve practice.

Behaviour information will always be considered within the individual context of the pupil and will not be used in isolation to make assumptions about intent, need or progress.

Monitoring will consider whether behaviour approaches are being applied fairly, consistently and without unlawful discrimination, including whether appropriate reasonable adjustments are being made. Where patterns indicate that an approach is ineffective, disproportionate or potentially contributing to repeated dysregulation, disengagement or exclusion, the pupil's support and/or wider school practice will be reviewed.

Pupil voice, parent/carer feedback, staff feedback and professional observations will also contribute to the review process. Findings may inform individual pupil support, staff coaching and training, policy development, equality and inclusion practice, safeguarding arrangements, quality improvement activity and wider school development.

The overall purpose of review and monitoring is to ensure that ACT Schools continues to provide a Positive First, trauma-informed and inclusive approach that promotes success while maintaining clear expectations, appropriate accountability and the safety, dignity and wellbeing of the whole school community.

Associated Guidance, Frameworks and Supporting Documents

This policy is supported by a range of operational guidance, frameworks and person-centred tools which assist staff in implementing the school's Positive First approach and trauma-informed culture consistently in practice.

Supporting documents include:

- ACT Schools Behaviour Management Staff Handbook and Guidance
- Graduated Response to Behaviour
- Trauma-Informed Language and Response Guidance
- Positive Pathways Framework
- Individual Support Plan (ISP) Template
- Positive Behaviour Support Plan Framework and Templates (Plans 1–3)

These documents provide further operational detail and practical guidance and should be used alongside this policy as applicable. Supporting documents may be developed and updated in response to pupil need, emerging practice, staff feedback and changes to school procedures without requiring amendment to the overarching principles of this Behaviour Policy.

Document/Policy Change Request

Any changes to the policy and procedure will be overseen by the Deputy Head of Behaviour and Engagement, working with the Head of Continuous Improvement.

Document/Policy Reviewing and Approving

This policy will be reviewed yearly by the Deputy Head of Behaviour and Engagement, working with the Head of Continuous Improvement.

