

VOYAGE LEARNING CAMPUS



RELATIONSHIPS AND BEHAVIOUR POLICY

This policy has been adopted by the Management Committee on:	
Date adopted:	8 th December 2022
Signed:	
Next review due:	December 2023

1. Statement of Principles

At the VLC we work to enable all of our young people to achieve more than they believe is possible. We help them develop the skills needed to make informed choices to lead active, fulfilling lives. We are committed to creating a safe nurturing, holistic learning environment which supports students to thrive personally and academically.

At the Voyage Learning Campus we believe that:

- Behaviour is a means of communication and something to be listened to;
- 'Poor' behaviour is never personal but a sign of an unmet need or difficulty coping;
- Relationships are the best way to support behaviour and de-escalation is key to managing any incidents;
- Students are developing and mistakes are part of their learning process: all of our young people are at different stages of the developmental process;
- All adults are responsible for supporting students with their behaviour: it is a team effort, not left to teachers or senior leaders;
- We believe that every young person is redeemable and as such consequences should be responsive to the behaviour. Students should be supported to understand their behaviour and make amends as part of a restorative approach: the focus should be on repairing the student's relationship with peers, adults and the school so they can flourish in their community.

2. Aims of the policy:

This policy aims to:

- Define our expectations for positive behaviour across the school
- Provide a consistent framework for adults supporting the behaviour in and out of the classroom acknowledging and responding to the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences.
- Outline our methods of acknowledging and celebrating positive behaviours and nurture positive relationships.
- Outline strategies used to de-escalate and support students in meeting our expectations

3. Legislation and statutory requirements:

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

- Behaviour and discipline in schools
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school
- The Equality Act 2010
- Use of reasonable force in schools
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice.

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils
- Sections 88-94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which require schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate pupils' property
- DfE guidance explaining that maintained schools should publish their behaviour policy online

4. Expectations for positive behaviour:

i. Our expectations are for students to be:

- Ready
- Respectful
- Safe

5. Encouraging Positive Behaviours

We give **first attention to best conduct**, acknowledging when students meet expectations. Staff can use a range of strategies to acknowledge positive behaviours

- In class praise – appropriate to the student (not all will want public praise)
- Written praise and positive feedback in books
- Recognition wall in the classroom
- Share with other staff e.g. key tutors, senior leaders
- Contact home – texts, phone calls, postcards
- Certificates/displays/celebrations/ reward assemblies
- Immediate/tangible rewards

All positive behaviour will be recorded on CPOMs and communicated with parents/carers to reinforce positive behaviours and relationships.

6. Framework for managing behaviour that is not ready, respectful or safe

Our approach is to de-escalate, with the adult remaining **calm, consistent and in control**. At times it may be appropriate for another adult to support ,for example if the child would benefit from a change of face or that the adult responding to the behaviour needs to regulate themselves. This is viewed as a positive thing and supports a whole team approach to support the child.

Staff will take a stepped approach to managing behaviour, providing students with take up time at each stage.

- Reminder of rule
- State expected behaviour to give the student a chance to do the right thing
- Provide students with a choice:
 - Meet expectation
 - Time out of the class
 - Calm down – move to an area for a more extended period (an adult will supervise)
- State consequence- payback time to:
 - Complete work missed
 - Ensure restorative approaches are adhered to.

It is rare that we suspend students, however if suspension is used then a safeguarding approach is adopted. This ensures that students are supported to understand the reasons behind the suspension and are given the tools to address the issue and a clean slate is given on return to school.

In some instances, students may be very dysregulated and consequently, challenging to manage. This is likely to be distressing for the young person. In these instances, adults will:

- Use a PACE approach, demonstrating curiosity about the behaviour
- Avoid confrontation by maintaining a calm approach: allowing the child to feel safe and contain their emotions.
- Acknowledge the fact that the student is in difficulty and validate their feelings
- Use distraction , if appropriate to refocus on a positive behaviour/provide an activity/offer food or drink

- Stay calm and keep a low/quiet voice, swap places with another member of staff if needed
- Keep talk to a minimum
- Encourage the student to stop and take deep breaths: providing them space and support to regulate themselves.
- Support the student to regulate their emotions and manage their behaviour – indicate this verbally and physically

If the student cannot regulate, use these strategies:

- Allow students to remove themselves from the situation
- Remove from the scene– direct students to go to designated ‘safe space’ area and a key tutor with whom they feel safe
- Allow student to go outside for fresh air
- Provide some food/drink as a comfort or distraction

If the student presents a health and safety risk:

- Ensure student and staff safety by removing others from the situation – provide space for all
- Consider whether containment is necessary (see physical restraint below)
- Allow a safe exit
- Allow the students time to reflect and support them to understand why health and safety is an important element of a happy and successful future.

During the De-Escalation Period:

Adults will:

- Encourage the student to bring down the physiological symptoms – breathing, mirroring, talking calmly, talking, reassurance
- Avoid being judgmental
- Ask the student what they need and respond, if appropriate
- Not conduct an investigation
- Allow the student to work on their own, if appropriate
- Provide the student with some control so they do not feel trapped
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Long-Term:

Adults will:

- Understand the situation from all perspectives – talk to staff and students involved
- Consider what consequences are most appropriate to support staff and students
- Consider whether it is appropriate to hold a restorative meeting
- Consider changing any working practices/procedures that contributed to the situation
- Consistently maintain the view that every child is redeemable and nurture positive relationships

Following a significant incident, support will be offered to staff by senior leaders – for example, time out, opportunity to discuss, agree next steps together.

At times, it may be appropriate to exclude a student for a fixed period. This will always be a last resort and only used to ensure the health and safety of all and not as a “punishment”. Time will be taken with the student and their family to ensure that they understand why this was done and how we will support them to return to school.

On rare occasions, it may be necessary to permanently exclude a student. This would only be as a result of extreme safeguarding issues, where it is felt the student’s needs can no longer safely be met at VLC.

7. Positive Handling

In some circumstances, staff may use reasonable force to positively handle a student to prevent them:

- Hurting themselves or others

Incidents of positive handling must:

- **Always be used as a last resort**
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded and reported to parents/carers

More information is provided in our positive touch policy.

8. Prohibited items

The following items are banned:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers – no smoking is allowed on, or outside, any of the school sites (this also includes vapes, puff bars and other similar items)
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article a staff member reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)

Any prohibited items found in students' possession will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to pupils. Searching and screening pupils is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.