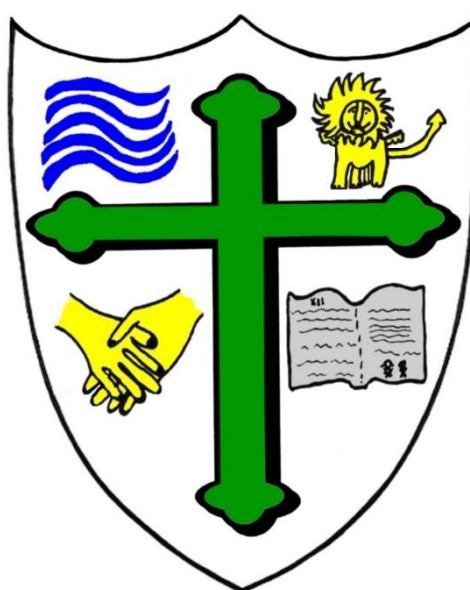


Highcliffe St Mark Primary & Fledglings Pre-School



Relationships and Behaviour Policy

Reviewed (date)	March 2026
Reviewed by (name)	Claire Barker
Approved by Governors (if applicable)	March 2026
Review due (date)	March 2027

Relationships and Behaviour Policy

Introduction

Learning how to behave appropriately is a lifelong skill and one which often takes time to master. An adult's role is to help them to master these skills and to learn how to manage their feelings in positive ways. Our core Christian values of respect, courage and compassion are woven in our behaviours, our responses and our relationships with others. We aim to remember the messages in Matthew 7:12 "treat others as you would want them to treat you". We embrace and respect our differences and celebrate everyone's inherent, unique worth.

We believe that happy children behave well and aim to create an environment in which children feel safe and can learn, grow and achieve. At Highcliffe St Mark Primary and Fledglings Pre-School we believe that the most important aspect in nurturing happy children who feel valued, safe and secure is the sense of connection and trust with our staff. Strong relationships between staff and children are vital and so our staff are approachable, compassionate and calm. In our school we have high expectations of ourselves and of others.

Aims

- To provide a clear, fair and consistent approach to behaviour.
- To ensure that all children and adults have a sense of belonging; feeling safe, secure and valued.
- To provide a safe, happy, friendly and respectful environment which encourages each individual to achieve their own potential through a desire to be their best self.
- To enable staff to support children to positively and independently manage their feelings, self-regulation and therefore to behave well.
- To maintain a calm and purposeful school atmosphere.
- To foster, nurture and value strong and healthy relationships.
- For children to take responsibility for their own actions and make informed choices.
- To ensure that our children are intrinsically motivated to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.

Ready, Respectful, Safe

Ready, respectful, safe is our simple and consistent reference point which everyone adopts when talking about behaviour in our school. We use this to both praise and to pause and reflect on our behaviour choices. These are the core behaviours which we expect of everyone, every day in every situation.

We do not believe in lists of rules for our children to know and to follow. Instead, we expect them to behave in ways which are respectful of other children, adults and the environment in the knowledge that their behaviour choices will positively or adversely impact on others. We expect our children to look out for each other and to care about their school. We ask them to be courageous advocates and to stand up for themselves, their peers, their school and our wider community; being courageous when someone behaves in a way which threatens our right to a safe, secure and happy school experience. We expect them to be *ready, respectful* and *safe*.

All staff, everyday

1. Meet and greet positively.
2. Refer to our core Christian values of respect, compassion and courage through all interactions.
3. Model positive behaviours and build relationships.
4. Have unconditional regard for every child in every situation.
5. Plan lessons that engage, challenge and meet the needs of all children.
6. Support children to recognise their feelings through emotion coaching.
7. Be calm and give 'take up time' when responding to difficulties.
8. Anticipate when children will find learning, or a situation challenging and provide support to be successful and included.
9. Follow up every time, retain ownership and engage in reflective dialogue with children.
10. Notice and redirect children so that they are always making good choices.
11. Seek support in order to make a positive change when difficulties arise in supporting an individual or group of children.

Phase leaders

Phase leaders stand alongside staff to support, guide, model and show a unified consistency to the children. To do this, phase leaders will:

- be a visible presence around the school especially at transitional times.
- support staff in returning children to learning by sitting in on restorative discussions.
- regularly celebrate staff and children whose efforts go above and beyond expectations.
- ensure staff's needs are identified and targeted through training support.
- support the induction of new staff and children into their phase so that they know and understand the expectations within this policy.
- use behaviour data to target and assess support interventions.
- guide staff to supporting children with more complex or consistently challenging behaviours.

Senior Leaders

Senior leaders guide policy and stand alongside all staff to support, guide, model and show a unified consistency to the children and our wider community. To do this, senior leaders will:

- be a visible presence around the school especially at transitional times.
- support staff in returning children to learning by sitting in on restorative discussions.
- regularly celebrate all staff, leaders and children whose efforts go above and beyond expectations.
- create opportunities to enable staff to share good practice.
- guide staff in supporting children with more complex or consistently challenging behaviours.
- use behaviour data to target and assess school wide behaviour policy and practice.
- plan and ensure delivery of regular training to staff to support positive behaviour management in line with the school's policy and ethos including coordinating the induction of new staff and children so that they know and understand the policy and expected practice and behaviours.
- support staff and regularly review the provision for children who fall beyond the range of written policies.

Responding When Things Go Well

The use of meaningful praise in developing a positive atmosphere in the classroom cannot be underestimated. At Highcliffe St Mark we recognise that this is key to developing positive relationships with all. We expect all members of the community to behave well but we also recognise those who make an effort to surpass our expectations. These people are recognised for inspiring others to make an effort, too. We thank them for the efforts they make through our rewards and in giving them additional positions of trust. We also recognise good progress as a result of effortful engagement in learning.

The ways in which we recognise effort:

- Instant praise and recognition if demonstrating our core Christian values
- House points for effort in learning and behaviour with a half termly “house party” for the House team with the most points
- Opportunities to share learning with the phase and senior leaders
- Postcards home for a personal recognition from the class teacher
- Weekly Celebration Assembly with star awards linked to our Learning Heroes or noticeable contribution in class
- Half termly Head Teacher Awards linked to our core values or for exceptional focus
- Cups awarded at the end of each term for consistently going above and beyond over time

There are opportunities for children to take on responsibility and represent their peers. These positions are allocated to interested children who have demonstrated that they deserve to hold an additional position of trust. We recognise that these roles make visible role models to others and as such, should be held responsibly by those they are awarded to.

Roles include:

- House Captains
- Children’s Champions
- Bronze Ambassadors (sports and play leaders)
- Eco Captains and Reps
- Newspaper Editors
- Buddy Bees (playtime friends)
- Anti-bullying Champions
- Digital Leaders
- Sports teams

In addition, we aim to celebrate each individual child in our school. To recognise their worth and get to know their individual personality, interests and future aspirations through our VIP scheme.

Responding When Things Go Wrong

We understand that occasionally children will get it wrong and make a mistake in their behaviour choices. When children display unsafe behaviour, there are several layers of consequences in place to encourage them to manage their behaviour in a positive way. We use *Restorative Approaches* and *Natural Consequences*.

The Restorative Approach

Our school uses restorative approaches to encourage everyone to take responsibility for their behaviours. This policy is not primarily concerned with rule enforcement. It is a tool used to promote good relationships, so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone learn.

Restorative approaches are based on four key features:

- RESPECT – for everyone by listening to other opinions and learning to value them.
- RESPONSIBILITY - taking responsibility for your own actions.
- REPAIR – developing the skills within our school community so that its individual members have the necessary skills to identify solutions that repair harm and ensure behaviours are not repeated.
- RE-INTEGRATION - working through a structured, supportive process that aims to solve the problem and allows young people to remain in mainstream education.

Adults will follow a series of steps which are focused on small but certain consequences and a restorative ending. Adults should act quickly at the onset of difficulty to avoid escalation:

Steps		Actions
1	Reminder	A reminder of <i>ready, respectful, safe</i> delivered privately where possible. Repeat reminders if reasonable adjustments are necessary. Take the initiative to keep things at this stage.
2	Caution	A clear verbal caution delivered privately where possible, making the child aware of their behaviour and clearly outlining the consequences if they continue. Use the phrase, "Think carefully about your next step".
3	Last Chance	Speak to the child privately and give them a final opportunity to engage. Offer a positive choice to do so and refer to previous examples of good behaviour. At this step the child should be told that they need to stay in class for 2 minutes (missing next playtime/lunchtime/our time as appropriate). This is non-negotiable, cannot be earned back, reduced or substituted.
4	Time out	Time out might be a short time just outside the room, at the side of the playground, hall or field depending on where the class is at the time. It is a few minutes to calm down, breathe, look at the situation from a different perspective and compose themselves. Adults should be mindful of the child's safety and the child should not be left unattended.
5	Repair	This might be a quick chat at breaktime or a more formal meeting between adult, phase/senior leader and the child. It might involve parents if the problem is reoccurring.

Low level issues – the Restorative Conference (to be used in friendship breakups, disputes over games, running in school and not responding to reasonable adult requests for example)

- Move to a quiet, calm space in school with the child.
- Listen carefully to the child and expect the same in response from the child when you are talking.
- Only one person talks at a time.
- No interrupting.
- Be respectful of other.
- Listen carefully to each other.
- Confidentiality - explain that this is between the people involved but be aware of any matters i.e. Child Protection. If something is disclosed appropriate measures are to be taken in order to follow the school's child protection policy (in these circumstances DO NOT promise confidentiality).
- If children do not meet expectations or are still /become angry, then pause the conversation until they are calm enough to continue and be receptive.

The Questions should be asked of all parties involved: victim, perpetrator/s and any bystanders.

In EYFS and Key Stage 1

- What's happened?
- Who has been hurt and in what way?
- What needs to happen now in order to put things right and ensure this never happens again?

In Key Stage 2

- What's happened?
- How did you feel? How do you feel now?
- Who has been affected?
- What needs to happen now to fix this?

Involving Parents/Carers

Once the incident has been resolved in school a decision about involving parents needs to be made. We aim to empower our children to restore their relationships in school with support. We will therefore not always inform parents when we have had to support children with their relationships.

Feedback to parents of all parties involved will be given when a child has been hurt. It should always be made clear to the parent that the situation was dealt with in a restorative manner and that the situation has been resolved and how the resolution was reached. Incidents where a child is hurt will be recorded on Myconcern and parents will be informed that a record has been made.

If incidents are sustained or reoccur, parents will be invited to become part of a Restorative Conference. With the aim being to plan actions to repair the relationships. Any actions planned should be reasonable, meaningful and related to the incidents and will be chosen and agreed between all participants involved. A record will be kept, and a copy shared with parents of these meetings.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

Anti-Bullying Policy; Child Protection Policy; Communication Policy; Mobile Phone agreement and the DfE guidance document: [Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools)

Appendix 1 - Unsafe Behaviour Scripts

Occasionally, children can become so angry or upset that their behaviour is unsafe. In these instances, adults will need to respond quickly. The following outlines how we will respond in different circumstances.

Level	Staff involved	Behaviour choice
Level 1 Natural Consequences	(staff involved – all staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrupting of the learning of other pupils and distracting the teacher or other pupils. • Calling out and answering back. • Disrespecting equipment during learning times. • Not being calm or quiet in corridors or classrooms.
Level 1 – Restorative Conversation All staff will consistently use the following sentence stems to make explicit the expectations of children who are beginning to show unsafe behaviour. “I am expecting you to……. (not talk when I am talking, etc)” “It was the expectation about…. (walking safely round school) that means pupils aren’t safe”. “You need to stop this behaviour; I’m going to help you. What do you need to do differently to be safe?”		
Level 2 This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A conversation with parent/carers 	Classroom teacher and/or support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent, on-going disrupting of the learning of other pupils and distracting the teacher or other pupils • Frequent interruptions to teaching. • Refusing to follow the teacher’s instructions and not starting work. • Frequent calling out, answering staff back- these behaviour choices disrupt learning as teaching is interrupted. • Constantly fiddling with equipment, being inattentive, constantly talking when teaching is taking place and distracting other pupils from listening • Pupils who are choosing to be ‘off task’ and disrupt pupils who want to work • Uncooperative behaviour (e.g. arguing, dominating other, rudeness) which prevents pupils from working together • Verbal or physical aggression to pupils • Verbal or physical aggression to staff • Derogatory comments to other pupils (including racist, homophobic comments and inappropriate sexualised language,

		including sexual 'jokes' or taunting, which are considered to be 'banter'
Level 2 – Restorative Conversation This level makes explicit the expectation followed by the natural consequence , if the unsafe behaviour continues. "I am expecting you to complete this learning. We know what you are capable of. This is how we can help you. We are going to finish this together. " "I am expecting kind hands at all times. When children don't use kind hands they need to sit/ play separately from others so everyone can be kept safe " "I am expecting you not to spit. When someone spits, I need to keep them inside so everyone else can be kept safe, spitting is not safe. I will need to talk with parents about this. "		
Level 3 Will include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A meeting with parent/carers • A Relationships and Behaviour Support Plan (RBSP) • Time out of class (internal suspension) see Appendix 2 for more information on our policy for suspending and excluding children 	Senior leader SENDCo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over a period of time, a range of strategies have had insufficient impact on improving behaviour choices • Aggressive attitude or behaviour towards pupils or staff • Persistent refusal to work or co-operate with staff – disrupts the learning of others (as in level 2) • Challenging or being disrespectful to staff • Persistent derogatory comments (including racist or homophobic comments and inappropriate sexualised language, including sexual 'jokes' or taunting, which are considered to be 'banter')
Level 3 – Restorative Conversation As in level 2, implement natural consequence and invite parents/carers in for a Restorative Conference.		
Level 4 Will include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A meeting with the Headteacher and parent/carers • A Relationships and Behaviour Support Plan (RBSP) • Risk Assessment or Positive Handling Plan Child would be considered 'at risk' of Fixed Term Suspension (excluded from the school building)	Headteacher, SENDCo and sometimes Governor (if required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent serious incidents, identified in Level 3 behaviour, with little / no improvement in positive behaviour choices • Child on child abuse • Physical sexualised behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature • Online sexual harassment, which may include consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos • Three 'internal suspensions' (child removed from the classroom) over a period of a week.

Please see Appendix 2-
Suspension and Exclusion
further guidance.

Level 4 – Restorative Conversation

If behaviour was repeated again

“I can see you are still finding it hard to.../ not to.... I am not going to give up on you, I can help you?”

Bullying is not tolerated at Highcliffe St Mark Primary and Fledglings Pre-School School and Fledglings Pre-School; we respond quickly and seriously to bullying and allegations of bullying.

Refer to our Anti-Bullying Policy for further guidance.

Level 5

Serious behaviour choices which could result in a fixed term suspension. Please see Appendix 2 -Suspension and further guidance. The Headteacher has the discretion for a Permanent Exclusion.

Headteacher,
SENDCo
Governor

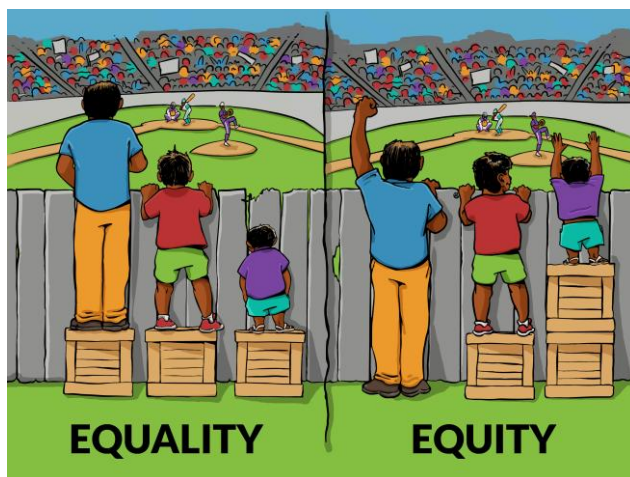
- Sexual violence
- Physical assault against a pupil
- Physical assault against an adult
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a pupil
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult
- Use, or threat of use, of a weapon or other item which could cause injury if used inappropriately
- Bullying
- Racist abuse
- Abuse against sexual orientation or gender reassignment
- Abuse relating to disability

It is important to note that incidents from the list above would not automatically result in suspension. When deciding whether to suspend a child, the Headteacher will carefully consider the circumstances which led to the behaviour occurring before reaching a decision to suspend.

The Headteacher will then ensure that a full investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident is carried out to ensure that measures can be put into place to minimise the potential for a

recurrence. The outcome of this investigation will be shared with all parties involved including parents of any victims and perpetrators.

At HSM we support children who demonstrate persistent and complex social and emotional needs to build positive relationships and develop successful regulation strategies. See **Appendix 3** for a visual guide to our pathway to supporting children demonstrating such complex needs.



At Highcliffe St Mark Primary and Fledglings Pre-School we strongly believe that ‘all behaviour is communication’ and we ask ourselves ‘what is the child trying to communicate?’

We realise that some children will require more support to develop relationships and learn strategies to be able to understand and regulate their emotions. Types of support may be different for each child and so may look different in each individual case.

Some children may need extra support on an ad-hoc basis for example if there has been an unforeseen circumstance (such as a bereavement, or family breakdown) that has affected a child’s wellbeing.

A child may be identified by a class teacher as needing extra emotional support and a cause for concern form will be completed for that child. This may result in a child receiving extra support from our pastoral team, ELSA, or joining group pastoral sessions. A multi-agency approach may be an appropriate next step for these children and the school’s SENDCo will coordinate support from Local Authority and NHS professionals to inform planning and approach. This would always be done in conjunction and with permission of parents/carers.

Children who need extra support may have a Relationship and Behaviour Support Plan. These child centred plans will be written and reviewed by the child’s class teacher and SENDCo. They will be reviewed at the end of each half term with the child, the child’s parents and a member of the SLT but can be adapted any time.

To support children to be able to understand their emotions and be able to self-regulate, we use Emotion Coaching which supports the child to recognise the feelings that are driving the behaviour.

How do we ‘do’ Emotion Coaching?

- **Recognise, validate and label the feelings;** adults mindfully co-regulate, respond and engage.

- **Set limits;** adults first co-regulate, then teaching to support children to be able to self-regulate.
- **Problem-solving with the child:** when the child is calm and relaxed, age-and-stage-appropriate exploring of alternate responses to the feelings, scaffolding of rational thinking, and adults empower the child to believe in their own ability to self-regulate.

Appendix 2- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion

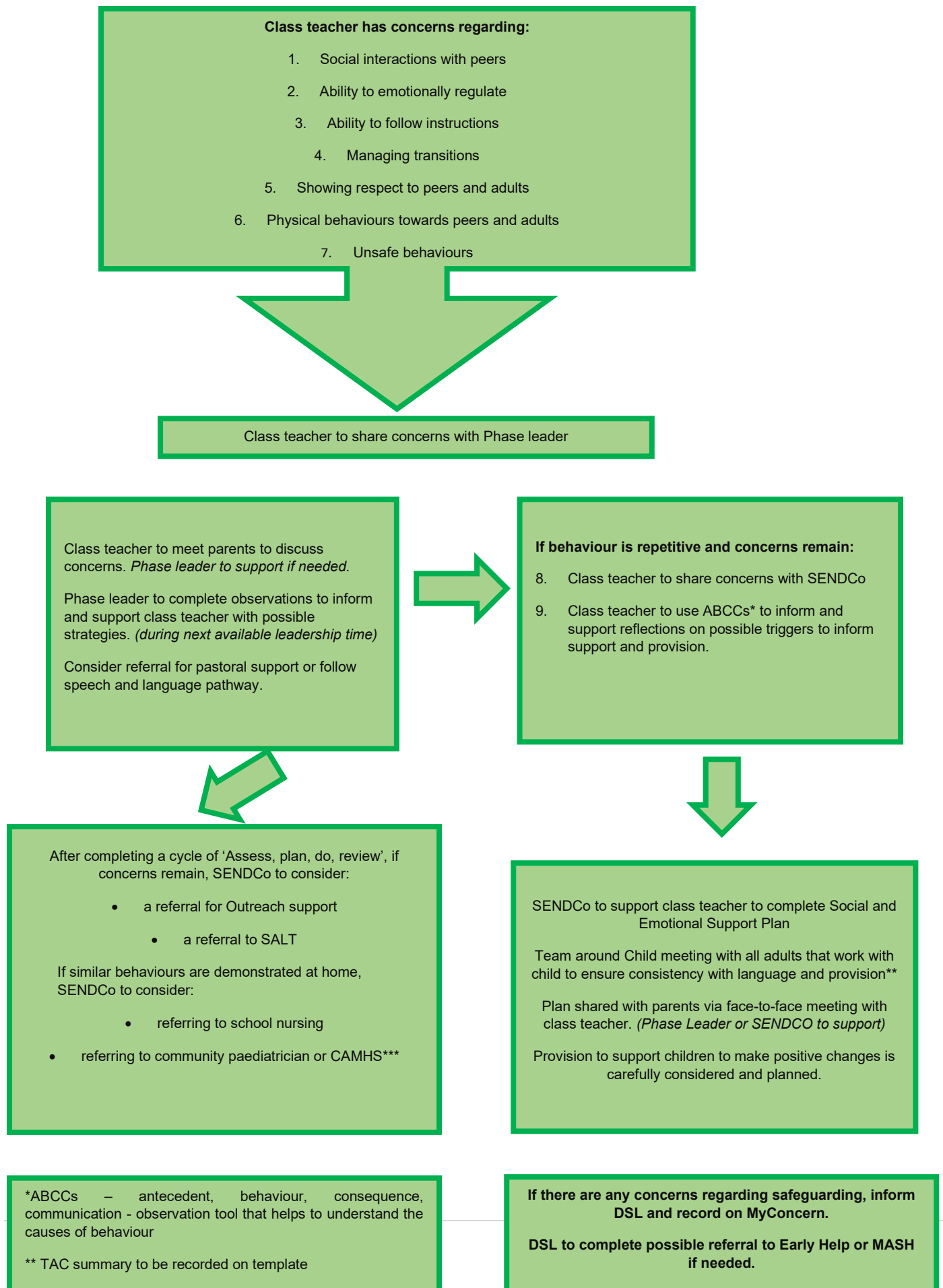
At Highcliffe St Mark Primary and Fledglings Pre-School School we respond to behaviour difficulties with compassion and understanding. We aim to prevent escalation of challenging behaviours through being prepared, by noticing what triggers challenging behaviour and removing these barriers wherever possible. However, sometimes this has not been possible, and we recognise that we need to take decisive action to keep children safe. In these circumstances it might be deemed appropriate to give a child some time away from school in order for us to make reasonable adjustments to our provision which will minimise the potential for the behaviour to reoccur. Our response and the situations in which this would occur are detailed below:

Behaviour	Involving parents	Action to be taken
A child has become emotionally dysregulated which might have resulted in children or adults being hurt. Adult intervention has resulted in the child regulating their emotions and they have calmed.	Parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity.	An adult will accompany the child to a quiet space to complete some learning. We need to <i>suspend</i> normal expectations whilst the child's emotional response subsides. They will spend some time out of class to ensure they are ready, respectful and safe to return to class. The time spent will be dependent on how the child presents and adults will have a restorative conference with the child prior to them returning to class. NB: we should aim for the child to return to class before the end of the session e.g. before lunch or hometime in order to repair ready for the next session/day.
A child's behaviour has escalated in school to such an extent that they are emotionally dysregulated which might have resulted in children or adults being hurt and we are unable to find an approach to calm them.	Parents will be called, the situation explained, and we will ask them to come into school to support us in regulating their child.	If, with the parent's support, the child calms, we will suspend expectations to secure sustained emotional regulation. The child will spend some time out of class. The time spent will be dependent on how the child presents and adults will have a restorative conference with the child prior to them returning to class. NB: we should aim for the child to return to class before the end of the session e.g. before lunch or hometime in order to repair ready for the next session/day. If, with parent support, we are unable to regulate the child's behaviour a fixed term suspension would be appropriate and communicated with the parent (see next note for actions to be taken in this instance).
Behaviour has escalated and emotional dysregulation has led to unsafe behaviours which, despite our best efforts, school staff have been unable to control. Children or adults may have been hurt. The child remains highly emotional and a risk assessment by senior leaders deems it inappropriate for the child to remain in school as a	Parents called and asked to take the child home. A formal fixed term suspension will be given to the child.	During the period of the suspension senior leaders and parents will agree a plan to address any identified triggers for the behaviour and to make reasonable adjustments to allow the child to return to school successfully. Reported on child's records, reported to LA and Governors and formal letter sent to parents.

measure to ensure the safety of children and adults.		
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These occasions are extremely rare in our school. In all instances we will refer to DfE advice to schools as detailed in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2> when making a decision. The decision to suspend rests with the Headteacher or, in their absence, an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

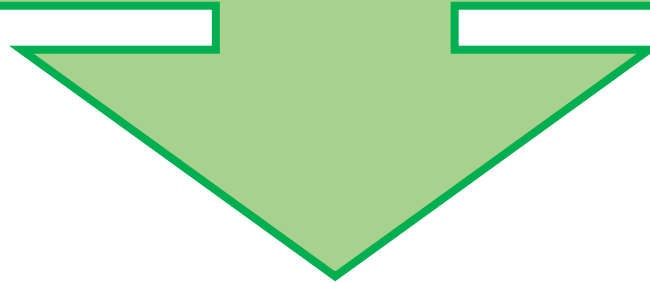
Appendix 3 – Behaviour, social and emotional concerns pathway



If parents have concerns regarding:

10. Transitions to/from school
11. Social interactions with peers
12. Ability to emotionally regulate
13. Ability to follow instructions
14. Managing transitions
15. Physical behaviours towards peers and adults
16. Unsafe behaviours

Parents to share concerns with the class teacher or directly with the SENDCo.



SENDCo will liaise with class teacher/Phase Leader to discuss concerns. A meeting can be arranged to discuss concerns with parents.

Following advice, if concerns remain, the following actions may be suggested:

- Support from pastoral team
- a referral to school nursing to offer support and advice for a range of concerns including: diet, sleep and behaviour
- a referral for parenting workshops

If the concerns are shared with class team, the pathway above will be completed.

If there are any concerns regarding safeguarding, the DSL will be informed.

DSL to complete possible referral to Early Help or MASH if needed.

Appendix 4 – Searching and Confiscation

Sometimes in schools there is occasion when staff believe that a child or children may have brought items into school which are dangerous or have the potential to be dangerous to the child or others. On these occasions we would refer to the latest DfE guidance [Searching, Screening and Confiscation \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) July 2022. Using searching, screening and confiscation powers appropriately is an important way to ensure pupil and staff welfare is protected and helps schools establish an environment where everyone is safe.

The list of prohibited items is:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:
 - to commit an offence, or
 - to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil).
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- vapes, e-cigarettes or items relating to vaping
- fireworks
- pornographic images on a mobile device or other form

Under common law, school staff can search a pupil for any prohibited item, if the pupil agrees (the ability to consent may be influenced by the child's age or other factors.) The member of staff should ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted so that their agreement is informed.

School staff should be aware that being in possession of a prohibited item – especially knives, weapons, illegal drugs or stolen items – may mean that the pupil is involved, or at risk of being involved, in anti-social or criminal behaviour including gang involvement, and in some cases may be involved in child criminal exploitation. A search may play a vital role in identifying pupils who may benefit from early help or a referral to the local authority children's social care services.

Headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, when they suspect the pupil has certain prohibited items. The items that can be searched for under this power are knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items.

School staff can seize any banned or prohibited item found as a result of a search or which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

When exercising their powers, we will consider the age and needs of pupils being searched or screened. This includes the individual needs or learning difficulties of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and making reasonable adjustments that may be required where a pupil has a disability.

Who Can Conduct a Search

Only the headteacher, or a member of staff authorised by the headteacher, can carry out a search. The headteacher can authorise individual members of staff to search for specific items, or all items set out in the school's behaviour policy. For example, a member of staff may be authorised to search for stolen property and alcohol but not for weapons or drugs. If a member of staff refuses to conduct a search, the Headteacher will not require the member of staff to do this.

All searches should be referred to the Headteacher before the search begins.

The headteacher will oversee the school's practice of searching to ensure that a culture of safe, proportionate and appropriate searching is maintained, which safeguards the welfare of all pupils and staff with support from the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

The headteacher will ensure that enough staff are appropriately trained in how to lawfully and safely search a pupil who is not co-operating, so that these trained staff can support and advise other members of staff if this situation arises.

The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be informed of any searching incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of a prohibited item. The staff member should also involve the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) without delay if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk.

If the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) finds evidence that any child is at risk of harm, they will make a referral to children's social care services immediately (as set out in part 1 of Keeping children safe in education). The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should then consider the circumstances of the pupil who has been searched to assess the incident against potential wider safeguarding concerns.

Before Searching

A search can be considered if the member of staff has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item as listed in Appendix 4 of the Relationships and Behaviour Policy, or if the pupil has agreed.

The authorised member of staff should assess how urgent the need for a search is and should consider the risk to other pupils and staff. The member of staff must then report the need to search to the Headteacher for authorisation and to begin the recording of the decision-making process.

Once the search has been authorised, the member of staff conducting the search should explain to the pupil why they are being searched, how and where the search is going to take place and give them the opportunity to ask any questions. The authorised member of staff should always seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search. If the pupil is not willing to co-operate with the search, the member of staff should consider why this is. Reasons might include that they:

- are in possession of a prohibited item
- do not understand the instruction
- are unaware of what a search may involve or
- have had a previous distressing experience of being searched.

If a pupil continues to refuse to co-operate, the member of staff should ensure that they are responding consistently and fairly. If the member of staff still considers a search to be necessary, but is not required urgently, they should seek the advice of the headteacher, designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) or pastoral member of staff who may have more information about the pupil. The senior leader will contact the child's parents in order to support with the search. During this time the pupil should be supervised and kept away from other pupils.

Very rarely there it may be considered that there is risk of immediate harm to the child suspected of possessing a prohibited item or to others. In this instance the member of staff involved should assess whether it is appropriate to use reasonable force to conduct the search. A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for any prohibited items but not to search for items which are identified only by the school (in our school this would only be vapes, e-cigarettes or vaping paraphernalia). The decision to use reasonable force should be made on a case-by-case basis. The member of staff should consider whether conducting the search will prevent the pupil harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder. It should be noted that the use of reasonable force will differ depending on whether the member of staff is searching possessions or the pupil themselves.

During A Search

Where

An appropriate location for the search should be found. Where possible, this should be away from other pupils. The search must only take place on the school premises or where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil, for example on a school trip.

Who

The law states the member of staff conducting the search must be of the same sex as the pupil being searched. There must be another member of staff present as a witness to the search. There is a limited exception to this rule. This is that a member of staff can search a pupil of the opposite sex and/or without a witness present only:

- if the member of staff carrying out the search reasonably believes there is risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not carried out as a matter of urgency and
- in the time available, it is not reasonably practicable for the search to be carried out by a member of staff who is same sex as the pupil or it is not reasonably practicable for the search to be carried out in the presence of another member of staff.

When a member of staff conducts a search without a witness, they should immediately report this to another member of staff and ensure a record of the search is kept.

The Extent of The Search

A member of staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers. The person conducting the search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing. 'Outer clothing' means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear, as well as hats, shoes, boots or scarves.

'Possessions' means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control - this includes desks, lockers and bags.

A member of staff can search lockers and desks or other personal spaces at the school for any item provided the pupil agrees. Schools can make it a condition of having the locker or space that the pupil agrees to have these searched. If the pupil withdraws their agreement to search, a search may be conducted both for the prohibited items.

A pupil's possessions can only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

After A Search

Whether or not any items have been found because of any search, we will consider whether the reasons for the search, the search itself, or the outcome of the search give cause to suspect that the pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer harm, and/or whether any specific support is needed. Where this may be the case, school staff should follow the school's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as set out in Part 1 of Keeping children safe in education. They will consider if pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate. If any prohibited items are found during the search, the member of staff should follow the guidance set out below on confiscation.

If a pupil is found to be in possession of a prohibited item, then the staff member should alert the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and level 4 of the school's relationships and behaviour policy should be followed to ensure consistency of approach.

Recording Searches

Any search by a member of staff for a prohibited item should be recorded on MyConcern, including whether or not an item is found. This will allow the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) to identify possible risks and initiate a safeguarding response if required.

The record of each search should include:

- the date, time and location of the search
- who conducted the search and any other adults or pupils present
- what was being searched for
- the reason for searching
- what items, if any, were found
- what follow-up action was taken because of the search.

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor search records. In doing so they will consider whether the searches fall disproportionately on any groups of pupils. In such cases where searching is falling disproportionately on any group or groups, they will consider whether any actions should be taken to prevent this.

Informing Parents

We aim to build and maintain positive relationships with our parents. Parents should always be informed of any search for a prohibited item that has taken place, and the outcome of the search as soon as is practicable. A member of staff should inform the parents of what, if anything, has been confiscated and the resulting action the school has taken.

Any complaints about searching, screening or confiscation should be dealt with through the normal school complaints procedure which can be found in our Complaints Policy.

Confiscation

An authorised staff member carrying out a search can confiscate any item that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting:

- poses a risk to staff or pupils
- is a prohibited item
- is evidence in relation to an offence
- the item is likely to disrupt learning or the calm, safe and supportive environment of the school.

Controlled drugs must be delivered to the police as soon as possible unless there is a good reason not to do so. In these cases, the member of staff must safely dispose of the drugs. In determining whether there is a good reason to dispose of controlled drugs, the member of staff must have regard to the following guidance in issued by the Secretary of State: The member of staff should consider all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to determine whether they can safely dispose of the controlled drug. When staff are unsure as to the legal status of a substance and have reason to believe it may be a controlled drug, they should treat it as such. If the member of staff is in doubt about the safe disposal of controlled drugs, they should deliver them to the police.

Other substances which are not believed to be controlled should also be delivered to the police, or disposed of as above, if the member of staff believes they could be harmful.

Where a person conducting a search finds **alcohol, tobacco, cigarette papers, vapes or vaping equipment, e-cigarettes or fireworks**, they may retain or dispose of them as they think appropriate but should not return them to the pupil.

If a member of staff finds a **pornographic image**, they may dispose of the image unless they have reasonable grounds to suspect that its possession constitutes a specified offence (i.e. it is extreme or an indecent image of a child) in which case it must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. Members of staff should never intentionally view any indecent image of a child (also sometimes known as nude or semi-nude images). Staff must never copy, print, share, store or save such images.

Where a member of staff finds **stolen items**, these must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. However, if there is good reason to do so, the member of staff may also return the item to the owner or retain or dispose of it if returning them to their owner is not practicable. In determining whether there is a good reason to return the stolen item to its owner or retain or dispose of the item, the member of staff must have regard to the following guidance issued by the Secretary of State: The member of staff should take into account all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to determine whether they can safely dispose of the seized article. In considering the relevant circumstances, the member of staff should consider the following:

- the value of the item - it would not be reasonable or desirable to involve the police in dealing with low value items such as pencil cases, though school staff may judge it appropriate to contact the police if the items are valuable
- whether retaining or returning the item to the owner may place any person at risk of harm
- whether the item can be disposed of safely.

Any **weapons or items which are evidence of a suspected offence** must be passed to the police as soon as possible. Items that have been (or are likely to be) used to commit an offence or to **cause personal injury or damage** to property should be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable, returned to the owner, retained or disposed of.

In deciding what to do with such an item, the member of staff must have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State: The member of staff should consider all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to determine whether the item should be delivered to the police, retained, returned to the owner or disposed of. In considering all relevant circumstances the member of staff should consider:

- whether it is safe to dispose of the item
- whether the item is likely to continue to disrupt learning or the calm, safe and supportive environment of the school
- whether and when it is safe to return the item.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data which relate to an offence, or which may cause harm to another person. This includes, but is not limited to, indecent images of children, pornography, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence relating to suspected criminal behaviour.

As with all prohibited items, staff should first consider the appropriate safeguarding response if they find images, data or files on an electronic device that they reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk.

Staff may examine any data or files on an electronic device they have confiscated because of a search, as defined if there is good reason to do so. If the member of staff conducting the search suspects they may find an indecent image of a child (sometimes known as nude or semi-nude images), the member of staff should never intentionally view the image, and must never copy, print, share, store or save such images. When an incident might involve an indecent image of a child and/or video, the member of staff should confiscate the device, avoid looking at the device

and refer the incident to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as the most appropriate person to advise on the school's response.

If a member of staff finds any image, data or file that they suspect might constitute a specified offence, then they must be delivered to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable. In exceptional circumstances members of staff may dispose of the image or data if there is a good reason to do so. In determining a 'good reason' to examine or erase the data or files, the member of staff must have regard to the following guidance issued by the Secretary of State: In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to examine the data or files, the member of staff should reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device has been, or could be used, to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence. In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to erase any data or files from the device, the member of staff should consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In those instances, the data or files should not be deleted, and the device must be handed to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. If the data or files are not suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence, a member of staff may delete the data or files if the continued existence of the data or file is likely to continue to cause harm to any person and the pupil and/or the parent refuses to delete the data or files themselves.

The law protects members of staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss of, or damage to, any item they have confiscated, provided they acted lawfully.

VERSION	DATE	REVIEWER	COMMENT
1	March 2023	CB	First draft to FGB – changes made as suggested by FGB
2	September 2024	CB	No changes – first published
3	March 2024	CB	Changes to suspensions and exclusions following lessons learned from parental complaint
4	April 2024	CB	Added appendix on Searching and confiscation and small changes linked to new DfE guidance doc. Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff Feb 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
5	March 2025	CB	No changes
6	March 2026	CB	Addition of Fledglings Pre-school – further adjustments still to be made to ensure appropriate approaches for Fledglings. This work will take place between now and the end of the year.