

Behaviour Policy 2026

At Link Academy Trust, our vision is clear:

Flourishing schools for all at the heart of our communities.

Inspired by, *“Life in all its fullness” (John 10:10)*, we strive to create environments where every individual can thrive.

Our mission is underpinned by three core values that guide everything we do:

- **Belonging** – Every interaction matters; we nurture relationships and ensure everyone feels valued and included.
- **Curiosity** – We embrace ambition, creativity, and innovation to inspire lifelong learning.
- **Collaboration** – We foster an open culture of accountability and shared success, working together for the benefit of all.

These principles shape our approach to equality and diversity, ensuring that every policy, decision, and action reflects our commitment to inclusion and excellence.

Behaviour Policy 2026

The Link Academy Trust (the Trust) is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity, regulated by the Department for Education (DfE). All Members of the Board of Trustees of the exempt charity are also Directors of the company; the term 'Trustee' used in this Policy also means Director. This Policy applies to all academies within the Trust.

This policy is based on the Trust's vision **Flourishing schools for all at the heart of our communities.**

Inspired by, ***"Life in all its fullness" (John 10:10)***, we strive to create environments where every individual can thrive.

This Policy should be read in tandem with the Trust's Exclusion and Suspensions Policy as well as other relevant Trust policies, particularly the Special Educational Needs Policy, Anti-Bullying policy and the Equality & Diversity Policy. It adheres to the Equality Act of 2010, which means that we will not unlawfully discriminate against others because of their sex, race, disability, religion, beliefs or sexual orientation. This policy also sits within the framework of the Trust's overarching Statement of Intent for the Relational Approach that we have adopted in our schools.

'Relationships aren't built in a day; they are built daily' (Mark Finnis)

Each academy is an inclusive community and the Trust believes that it is essential to have a positive behaviour management strategy. We have a growing number of children with complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We treat everyone as an individual and aim to develop the whole person equipped to take their place in the modern world.

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The DfE requires that every school must publish a behaviour policy. It should be available on school websites and parents can also request a printed copy. This policy is developed in line with: [Behaviour in Schools](#): Advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE February 2024).

1. Aims of the Policy

1. To create a culture of flourishing and excellent conduct - for learning and for life
2. To ensure that all learners are treated fairly and shown respect
3. To promote good relational practice.
4. To help learners learn about, manage and regulate their own emotions and its impact on themselves and others
5. To build a community which values belonging, collaboration, curiosity and empathy for others
6. To promote community cohesion through improved relationships
7. To ensure that each and every child has the opportunity to flourish
8. To ensure that all feel safe and free from any type of bullying and intimidation.

Children should be encouraged to:

- be responsible for their own learning and conduct;
- show consideration for the welfare and rights of other children and adults;
- be aware that bullying is unacceptable.

Good behaviour in schools is central to a good education. Academies need to manage behaviour well so they can provide calm, safe and supportive environments which children and young people want to attend and where they can learn and flourish. Being taught how to manage emotions appropriately within the context they're in is vital for all pupils to succeed personally. Each academy within the Trust is committed to creating an environment where excellent conduct and strong relationships are at the heart of productive learning.

'Children don't follow rules, they follow relationships' (Mark Innis)

We do not tolerate any form of bullying. We expect everyone to treat others with kindness and respect and to care well for each other so that everyone can come to school without fear and feel safe in school. We encourage everyone to be vigilant and we will intervene promptly if there are any signs or reports of bullying. This also relates to the Prevent Duty which has further detail in our safeguarding policy.

Each academy in the Trust can develop its own system to support good conduct as long as they sit within the aims and principles of this policy and the intent in the Relational Approach. These will be posted on the individual school website. The relational approach strives to avoid a reward-based compliance and to involve children in a reflective discussion of their conduct and its impact.

2. What is expected for Pupils?

Positive learning behaviours are essential for effective teaching and learning to take place. Academy staff at all levels should help pupils to:

- respect the rights, values and beliefs of children and adults as individuals and raise self-esteem;
- foster and promote good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community;
- provide a well-ordered environment in which all are fully aware of the high expectations;
- offer equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognise the importance of different cultures and religions;
- encourage, praise and positively reinforce good relationships, behaviour and work;
- not accept any conduct involving bullying and harassment;
- care for and take a pride in the physical environment of the school;
- work as a together, supporting and encouraging one another.

Each class draws up a class agreement at the start of the year with more detailed expectations in line with our commitment to the Relational Approach. This will be referred to regularly in class and revised when appropriate throughout the year. This will be frequently referred to in class, especially when discussing any less acceptable behaviour.

Our aim is to reduce inappropriate behaviour by promoting good conduct. We will do this by:

- expecting, recognising, praising and rewarding
- modelling good behaviour
- celebrating successes with parents
- providing a challenging and stimulating curriculum designed to enable all to flourish
- encouraging children to reach the highest standards of personal achievement
- recognising and being aware of the needs of each individual child
- enabling children to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and actions
- ensuring that learning is well sequenced and matched to needs
- taking prompt, positive appropriate action to deal with inappropriate conduct
- working collaboratively with a shared philosophy and commonality of practice
- providing a positive ethos across the school
- applying consistently high expectations
- clear and consistent understanding and application of school expectations
- treating all children fairly, equitably and with unconditional positive regard
- providing children with the opportunity to reflect on and improve their conduct and how these affect other people
- use of relational support plans to build a secure sense of belonging and safety
- use of co-regulation plans so the staff team can provide reliability and predictability

3. What happens if pupils' behaviour is not as expected?

Our philosophy is based on the principle of reflection and growth. It also allows children to start from fresh each day. Children can learn that things sometimes go wrong but it can be repaired. In line with our relational approach, we can still be authoritative but in a non-threatening way, where (as adults) we are in control of our own emotions. We respond to inappropriate incidents by investigating and trying to understand the cause, sometimes this

can be because of an unmet special educational need. We act promptly to identify potential underlying barriers and agree a prevention and support plan with parents/carers and external agencies where appropriate. Every child will face challenges and at times experience strong emotions which block their access to learning and good social interaction. Children who experience strong emotions that lead to harmful or challenging behaviour will need skilful co-regulation to enable them to be calm and develop their capacity for regulation. This should be recorded and regularly updated in a co-regulation plan agreed with the parents and the staff team, including pupil voice. How we respond in a crisis should be coordinated, clear and communicated to ensure the safety of all students.

4. Mobile phones and online behaviour

All our academies have a policy that does not allow pupils to have mobile phones in school. On occasions where one is needed for the end of the day or for medical needs a plan will be thought through and put in place. Through our PSHE/RHSE and computing curriculum we regularly teach children about online safety and etiquette and that online bullying is not acceptable. Making it clear that even though the online space differs in many ways, the same standards of behaviour are expected online as apply offline, and that everyone should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity. In certain circumstances, pupils with a medical need may need access to their phone, this will be detailed in their health care plan.

5. Exclusions and Suspensions

All pupils are entitled to an education where they are protected from disruption and can learn in a calm, safe and supportive environment. Academy Heads can use suspension and permanent exclusion in response to serious incidents or in response to persistent poor conduct which has not improved following in-school actions and interventions; this will always be done in consultation with a peer, for an example, a discussion with another Academy Head.

The circumstances that may warrant a suspension or permanent exclusion in our academies are:

- Persistent disruptive behaviour
- Serious physical assault against a pupil
- Serious 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 an offensive weapon or prohibited item that has been prohibited by the academy's behaviour policy
- Bullying that does not stop despite regular support and intervention
- Racist abuse that does not stop despite regular support and intervention
- Abuse against sexual orientation or gender reassignment that does not stop despite regular support and intervention
- Abuse relating to disability.

Details on how our academies can use suspension or exclusion as part of managing unacceptable behaviour can be found in our Exclusions and Suspension Policy and this

policy and the procedures in it should be followed carefully before a decision is made to suspend or exclude.

6. Physical restraint and use of reasonable force

The use of force to restrain or control children is only used when it is the only safe option and would always comply with 'The Use of Reasonable Force in School' guidance (DfE 2012). Staff working directly with children receive periodic training in de-escalation techniques and basic principles of safe positive handling ('PIPS' training). Our focus is on prevention and de-escalation in order to avoid the need for any kind of physical force, which is used only when there is immediate risk of serious harm.

The Trust recognises that many children who display dangerous or extreme behaviour have experienced some kind of trauma and that restraint and physical force can re-traumatise. In order to maintain a safe learning environment for all children we do not tolerate dangerous and disruptive behaviour. However, we also seek to minimise the use of force and restraint. Where force or restraint has been necessary it will be recorded and reported to parents on the same day. On rare occasions, such disruptive behaviour may need to lead to a suspension or exclusion, as set out in the section above.

7. Anti-Bullying

We will use our behaviour policy effectively to promote good conduct so that there is an ethos where bullying is unacceptable. Learners will be encouraged to report bullying and when they do so they will be listened to and taken seriously. Every allegation of bullying will be investigated and followed up and any victim of bullying will be well-protected immediately and in the future. Through training, all staff will know that child on child abuse can take place and how to report this. Read our Anti-Bullying Policy for further details.

8. Misbehaviour outside of school including on school trips

Any trips and visits out of school must be planned to be as inclusive as possible. The decision not to take a child on a trip should be discussed by the AH with the parents and agreed by all. 'Schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside of the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable; the decision to sanction a pupil will be lawful if it is made on the school premises or elsewhere at a time when the pupil is under the control or charge of a member of staff of the school.' (DfE 2024). All principles in this policy also apply to children when offsite but when still the responsibility of academy staff. For example, this may be on an educational visit or a residential trip. We are not responsible for behaviour outside of the school day, for example for children travelling on school transport but any such behaviour reported to the school will be discussed with the child and their parents/carers and in the case of school transport may be reported to the Local Authority.

9. Searching, screening and confiscation

The DfE have published guidance that gives details on the powers headteachers have (see https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62d1643e8fa8f50bfefa55c/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf)

Academy Heads and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item or any other item that the academy rules identify as an item which may be searched for, this includes knives, alcohol and drugs (including vapes or tobacco). However, the Trust states that staff are not trained to carry out searches and therefore these are not authorised. If a child is not willing to comply with a request for a voluntary search, a parent will be contacted or in emergency situations involving imminent danger to others (e.g. suspected possession of a blade) the police may be called.

Prohibited items in our academies include:

- All forms of tobacco and non-prescribed drugs (including vapes)
- Mobile phones (if essential, to be handed into office)
- Any form of blade or other item brought in as an offensive weapon

10. Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees / Trust Executive Team / Local Advisory Committees

Trustees and the Trust Executive Team have overarching responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with this statement and that the Trust Board is fulfilling its role at academy level.

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring this behaviour policy's effectiveness and holding the Academy Heads to account for its implementation and application.

Academy Heads and School Leaders

Academy Heads and School Leaders are responsible for implementing and reviewing the effectiveness of the school's behaviour policy. They will:

- Ensure that the school environment encourages positive conduct and that children are taught how to behave appropriately.
- Support staff to deal effectively with poor conduct and take prompt and reasonable actions where necessary.
- Monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure any celebrations used are applied consistently and fairly with no discrimination.
- Ensure all staff including those new to the academy are trained in the Relational Approach, knowing when to seek support.

All staff

All staff in school have a shared responsibility for all pupils. All teachers, support staff and lunchtime supervisors are responsible for the modelling of good conduct, positive relationships and dealing with incidents around school. The expectation is that they:

- Treat all children fairly and with respect, they do not discriminate on any grounds.
- Raise children's self-esteem and develop their full potential.
- Provide a challenging, interesting and relevant curriculum that will engage children and support them to learn at an appropriate level for their needs.
- Create a safe and pleasant environment, physically and emotionally both in the classroom, shared school spaces and outside.
- Encourage children to reflect on their class agreements; any actions and recovery steps are applied clearly and consistently.
- Are a good role model with emotions, language and actions.
- Form a good relationship with parents so that all children can see that the key adults in their lives share a common aim.
- Recognise that each pupil is an individual.
- Are aware of each pupil's needs. Recognise that behaviour can be another form of communication and seek to identify, understand and support any individual needs which are not being met.
- Seek support and share any concerns or inappropriate behaviour with another member of staff which could be the class teacher, SENDCo or Academy Head.
- Record ongoing challenges on CPOMs.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers responsibilities are:

- To ensure they have a clear understanding of this policy – copies are available on the school website or on request from the school office.
- To make children aware of appropriate conduct in the school and support the implementation of this policy
- To encourage independence and self-discipline
- To try to foster good relationships with the school and to engage with school staff where requested
- To know the school vision, values and expectations.

11. Complaining

If you disagree with the way an incident has been dealt with, first talk to the Executive/Academy Head. If you're not satisfied, ask for a copy of the complaints procedure.

12. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the

- Exclusion and Suspension Policy
- Anti-Bullying with Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Positive handling policy
- SEND policy
- Risk assessment policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Prevent Policy

It also links to the Trust's Relational Approach statement of intent.

This Policy is reviewed on an annual cycle by the Standards & Curriculum Committee and approved by Board of Trustees.

Reviewed by S&C: 14th May 2024

Approved by Board of Trustees: 20th May 2024

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Next Review: Summer 2027