

Langham Oaks School Behaviour Policy

Our Vision

Safe, Secure, Successful, Belonging



March 2022 Review March 2023

Updated Nov 2022 to reflect DfE Guidance (Searching and Screening)

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1. Statement of Principles, Values, Aims and Objectives

1.1 At Langham Oaks School we aim to promote positive social, emotional and behavioural change in our pupils through a supportive and consistent approach based on the needs of our children and young people. Our positive behaviour management strategy is based on holistic, person-centered approaches to the development of our pupils.

1.2 Langham Oaks admits vulnerable pupils who experience significant barriers to learning due to a range of associated social, emotional and mental health needs which are sometimes co-existing with learning difficulties, ADHD/ADD or Autism Spectrum Conditions.

1.3 All of our pupils exhibit and display behaviours that act as barriers to learning and inclusion. An integral part of our holistic strategies is aim to overcome these barriers. Our approach provides a consistent, supportive and well-supervised environment where pupils feel safe and secure and reach their potential through positive relationships.

2. The Objectives of the policy

The objectives of this policy for Langham Oaks are:

- To set out clearly how our policy can be translated into effective practice
- To provide clear guidance and support to all staff
- For staff to provide leadership and positive role models to pupils
- To promote pro-social behaviour and to facilitate positive change for our pupils
- To set clear, planned and achievable goals for our pupils
- To expect the highest standards of educational attainment and achievement, through the development of acceptable standards of behaviour and conduct
- Pupils should be helped to understand and show respect, tolerance, empathy and understanding and to demonstrate through their daily actions, a clear understanding of what is right and wrong in a given situation
- To help pupils to work with the knowledge of their rights, and be encouraged to recognise and respond to their responsibilities
- To develop effective, home-school partnerships
- To foster consistency in the behaviour and conduct of pupils through effective understanding analysis and planning
- To reduce the risk or likelihood of bullying

This statement should be read alongside other SEAX Trust and Langham Oaks policies.

3. Principles and Values

The policy, practice and procedures aim to reflect and demonstrate the importance of the school's commitment to promoting the entitlement of pupils to the highest quality of education, care, health and therapy. The philosophy and ethos of the school reflects acceptance and respect for all members of the school community irrespective of their age, sex, religion, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender re-assignment or immigration status and includes a clear set of values that are seen to be important within the school and wider community. We have 4 core principles summarised in our strapline:

Safe, Secure, Successful, Belonging

Safe: All boys to feel safe in school at all times

Secure: All boys are secure in their relationships and their learning

Successful: All boys are experiencing success in many aspects of their lives

Belonging: All boys feel part of the Langham Oaks family

4. The Five Outcomes

We believe that the five outcomes are key to the all-round success of all our pupils and are embedded in everything that we do.



We believe in a holistic approach to the development of ALL pupils, to ensure they explore their strengths and weaknesses, both academically and socially, in a safe tolerant environment. A school where they can take risks and experience failure and success without fear of judgment or reprisal and build the resilience required for positive adult relationships and the world of work in the future.

5. Right place, right time, right thing

5.1 Expectations and behaviour policies underpin the values and ethos of all schools, BUT are often 'lost' on many of our pupils. So, we concentrate on a simple mantra that staff and pupils can focus on to be the very best they can be:

'Right time, right place, right thing'

They ALL know it, and it underpins the system we have tailored to recognise successes and personalise rewards for all areas of school and residential life at Langham Oaks.

Doing the right thing

'Doing the right thing' is a common understanding, which is to support everyone to thrive and enjoy success. So that everyone understands what we mean by this, we have summarised them into two categories.

5.2 Essential behaviours

- Speaking in a way that promotes emotional wellbeing;
- Acting in a way that maintains physical safety;
- Being in the right place at the right time;
- Completing tasks to the best possible standard;
- Engaging with activities aimed at personal development.

5.3 Desirable behaviours

- Using language and tone that is compassionate and empowering;
- Being tolerant and supportive to those who are challenging;
- Maintaining the school's routines and systems;
- Being creative and resourceful towards tasks and activities;
- Taking time to reflect upon and achieve personal goals.

6. Quality Care and Support

Langham Oaks adopts the following general approaches to reduce the likelihood of such anti-social behaviour occurring or developing:

- Teaching and learning that is consistently judged to be good or outstanding by Senior Staff and Trust Staff
- Teaching and learning that is interesting, sufficiently stimulating, relevant and differentiated to meet the needs, aptitudes, and abilities of the pupils
- Staff have an understanding of the underlying conditions which may affect behaviour including Autism Spectrum Conditions, ADHD, Mental Health and receptive language difficulties and adapt their teaching to meet these needs
- The opportunity to make meaningful choices

- Careful attention to physical, social, emotional and mental health needs
- Careful management of the environment, including the setting conditions and triggers for behaviours
- Warm and caring relationships with adults
- Structure, predictability, and consistency in daily routines
- Clear and explicit boundaries and rules within the learning environment
- Regular explanation of the rules and expectations
- Clear warnings to pupils that their behaviour is a cause of concern
- Recognition and consequences consistently and fairly applied in line with the policy and to the needs of pupils
- Positive Handling Plans to reduce the risk of crisis and harm

7. Pastoral Support

We pride ourselves on providing the highest quality of pastoral support to both pupils and families. Pastoral support in Langham Oaks takes different forms and is spearheaded by the Engagement for Learning team (EfL).

7.1 Our Engagement for Learning Team monitors the wellbeing of all boys from both a safeguarding and welfare perspective. Our support systems are underpinned by the tutor teams, admin staff, learning support assistants, teachers, outreach tutors, 1:1 tutors, therapists, residential staff and the safeguarding team.

7.2 Safeguarding: The EfL team lead the safeguarding of pupil's safety and wellbeing with the DSL and ADSL team, liaising with Social Services, Police and other agencies when it is appropriate. They aim to support all our families and ensure they have all they need both in school and in the community.

7.3 Engagement in learning: Teachers, support staff and the EfL team all work together with the senior leadership team to manage engagement, disaffection, and dysregulated behaviours throughout the school day. De-escalation and the agreed individualised behaviour management strategies for each pupil is practiced by all staff

8. Relationships

8.1 Our school prides itself on managing positive relationships with families and pupils to repair and restore previous negative experience in schools. In many cases, parents have identified that 'they got their life back', when their child came to Langham Oaks, and in some cases, they even felt secure enough to go back to work.

8.2 Good communication and honesty are at the core of our approach that ensures that when things go wrong, we are all working together with the child's best interests at the heart of our decisions. We always say to parents and carers, it can be a bumpy road at times, but if we all work together, we will get through it. Just talk to us and we will support you.

8.3 The principle reward and encouragement for any pupil is the positive attention and frequent expression of approval and support by the adults around them. The progress and development of pupils principally relies on the positive relationships they develop with significant adults in their lives and the quality feedback they are given by these adults in relation to this. Langham Oaks encourages pro-social behaviour through a mixture of high expectations, clear policy and an ethos which fosters discipline and mutual respect between pupils and staff.

9. Inclusive Practice

9.1 Promoting good relationships (The 6 Rs)

Many of the pupils that have been admitted to Langham Oaks have been victims of intolerant and punitive school sanction systems and behaviour management strategies that they have been unable to navigate their way through. This has led to negative experiences for pupils and their families who are tainted by the process and who are left feeling a lack of confidence in the system and the adults that support it. We believe this promotes a disconnect with learning and positive relationships with education professionals that needs to be addressed in the first instance, before we can all move forwards together. We pride ourselves in **REFRAMING** the lives of our families from this negative spiral.

Through careful admission and integration practice, we **REASURE** families that they are not the only ones who have found the education system difficult and unsupportive. We reassure pupils that they have talent, worth and a future.

Skilled staff at Langham Oaks **REASSESS** pupils over time to highlight the gaps in their learning that are so often missed in mainstream schools and hidden in a mist of challenging behaviours. This enables us to produce an informed and accurate profile so that all staff are aware of the individual strengths and weaknesses and where to adapt their learning.

Once pupils have more confidence in our staff and school systems, we are able to **RE-ENGAGE** pupils in learning, where they can access differentiated work suitable to their ability, sufficiently challenging and relevant to them.

Over time our pupils learn to learn and develop a renewed interest in learning that enables us to **RE-EDUCATE** them and value themselves as learners for the future. From the outset of Year 6, or at any point pupils join us, we are focused on 'moving on' successfully to post 16 education or mainstream education once individuals have been prepared and are **READY** for the next challenge they have been well prepared for.

9.2 Promoting positive behaviours

Creating an appropriate environment to meet pupils' needs provides the backdrop against which behaviour can improve and be maintained. However, there are techniques and procedures that further enhance the process that collectively we would describe as Positive Teaching.

This approach entails the systematic and consistent application of sound behavioural principles centered on the positive reinforcement of desired behaviours and encouraging all to be in the **right place** at the **right time** doing the **right thing**. Teachers use verbal praise of pupils for both work and behaviour as a basic technique. This may seem an obvious approach but research, and our own observations, have shown that as a profession we tend to lapse into negative reinforcement and focus on rule breaking rather than giving positive feedback to pupils who are behaving appropriately – most teachers will recognise this as “nagging”. Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) demonstrates that positive reinforcement needs to be applied carefully and the work of Luman (2008) shows that positive reinforcement is often misinterpreted by SEMH and ADHD pupils and needs to be applied carefully.

Verbal praise is reinforced by other rewards such as points and certificates. Points gained in lessons through positive attitudes to learning and appropriate behaviour build towards personalised rewards for learners and weekly assemblies promote learners' achievements with regard to their learning, attendance and behaviour.

9.3 Trauma Perceptive Practice

The school follows the **Essex TPP (Trauma Perceptive Practice)** approach to understanding behaviour and supporting well-being. This approach uses the values of Compassion, Kindness, Hope, Connection and Belonging to support pupils at Langham Oaks and is embedded in our school systems and practice. We continue to develop our practice in this area and have two trainers on the staff team.

‘There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they are falling in’ Desmond Tutu (1984)

Philosophy

Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) has been put together for educators to understand the impact of developmental trauma and chronic stress on a child's development, behaviour and learning. In doing so, educators will have more understanding for how trauma and chronic stress alters brain development, causing delays in skills development which in turn can result further downstream in unhelpful and/or harmful behaviours at school.

This approach is there to support educators shift from perhaps more traditional language to a trauma perceptive way of communicating which creates the necessary compassion and kindness instead of blame and shame.

Importantly we must remember that children and young people are more than what has happened to them; they are more than just their trauma.

Purpose

In order to develop educator's knowledge, explore attitudes, and develop the skills and habits required to effectively support vulnerable children and young people. It includes:

- Developing an understanding of how individuals, families and communities can be affected by the relationship between early life stress and trauma.
- Developing and using more helpful and supportive language when talking 'to' and 'about' children and young people's communicating behaviours.
- Identifying and incorporating new ways of responding helpfully to children and young people by:
 - Building consistent, positive and nurturing relationships with the child/young person.
 - Understanding children and young people's communicating behaviours and stress responses;
 - Providing targeted support and appropriate interventions when required.

Becoming Trauma Perceptive encourages us all to think and act more boldly, through our values, policies and practice. It is vital in helping us to effectively support children in our schools and beyond, whilst enabling us to create safe places where all can flourish, become resilient and learn.

What TPP is not

- It is not a 'quick fix' or a 'magic wand' for sorting out difficult children or children who may cause harm.
- It isn't a specialist support fix for specific mental health issues/illnesses.
- It isn't a checklist
- It will not label children.

10. Rewards

10.1 Central to our philosophy is to encourage, celebrate and reward the successes of pupils to boost their self-esteem, support engagement and generate a new interest in learning. We have adapted a reward system used in a number of outstanding SEMH special schools and personalised it for Langham Oaks.

The system is personalised for each individual pupil who can choose their own reward and work towards their goal by achieving their targets in learning.

10.2 'Penny a point' is a system that provides pupils with the opportunity to gain the equivalent monetary value in their Langham Oaks Bank Account (<http://www.langhamoaks.co.uk>) Pupils can attain 15 points per lesson, for 26 lessons per week, a total of 570 points per week. Added to this they can earn certificates for good work, acts of kindness, being pupil of the week which all carry a value of over 25 points.

We use the points for each pupil to monitor success, illustrate progress and reward pupils for all round improvement in all aspects of school life. Through this they learn that hard work and dedication leads to intrinsic reward, which help to prepare them for the world of work. They learn to budget, to plan, to manage their targets and learn to negotiate and recognise their own performance with all the staff that manage the points system.

10.3 Fabulous feedback Friday (commonly known as Friday assembly): Is the highlight of the week, with an upbeat celebration of the week's achievements. We share examples of good work, announce results of competitions, highlight pupils of the week, and unashamedly present the top 10 overall point scorers for the week and the term. We have learned that the boys are motivated by the competition, but we manage it for those that do not. This provides a platform to highlight positive behaviours, outstanding work and achievement by all the boys and is very well received.

11. Consequences

11.1 Tolerance

Langham Oaks understands the range of needs that many of our pupils face and the trauma they have experienced in their lives both in and outside of educational settings. We aim to provide an inclusive and tolerant environment where ALL behaviours and incidents are judged in the context of the individual, their needs, the antecedents and the consequences of their actions. Whilst we promote tolerance and a restorative approach we aim to 'mark' challenging and anti-social behaviours to ensure pupils are prepared for life after Langham Oaks and have the resilience to navigate the next step in their journey.

11.2 Consequences are conclusions derived through logic. Something that logically or naturally follows from an action. They are different to punishment.

- Consequences can follow sometime after an event, when the pupils are regulated and able to reflect upon their behaviour. In such circumstances, staff should inform the pupils that their behaviour is inappropriate and that it will be spoken about later using a restorative approach. Consequences will never involve taking away a previously earned privilege or any intervention time.
- Staff will avoid any consequences which lead to unnecessary shaming or humiliation of the pupils. We understand that such approaches are detrimental to the pupils' self-esteem and wellbeing and can result in increased inappropriate behaviour.
- The developmental age and specific needs of the pupils will be considered when deciding appropriate consequences. We recognise that a 'one size fits all' approach is not appropriate for our pupils. A plan, do and review approach will ensure pupils will not be given consequences that impede their future learning. This will be closely monitored.
- After a student completes lost learning or reflection time, it is important to repair and restore the staff-pupil relationship.
- Staff should catch them getting it right.

- Staff must reassure the pupils that the inappropriate behaviour has been dealt with and that all parties will move on and start afresh.
- In addition to the stages of consequences, where appropriate, pupils will be supported to reflect on their behaviour and be given an opportunity to make amends, for example they may be supported to make a sincere apology.

11.3 We split consequences into two types: Protective and Educational Consequences.

Examples of **Protective consequences**

- Increased staff ratio
- Limited access to outside space
- Escorted in social situations
- No availability of minibus/car
- Differentiated teaching space
- 1: 1 provision for a fixed period
- Exclusion

Examples of **Educational consequences** (consequences that facilitate new skills or new ways of thinking through discussion, debrief, activity or rehearsing).

- Completing tasks
- Therapy
- Restorative conversations / meetings
- Rehearsing
- Assisting with repairs
- Educational opportunities
- Research
- Conversation and exploration

12. Therapy

12.1 Langham Oaks employs an experienced Art therapist who helps provide additional advice and support to teaching staff and individual therapy for the boys. We also have a developed relationship with the University of Hertfordshire and Goldsmiths who place student therapists with us as part of their training, who also offer additional therapeutic support for the boys and families we serve.

12.2 Our Art therapist provides clinical supervision for all the therapy students with us. Langham Oaks is committed to supporting the development of therapy in the school and the community.

12.3 Therapeutic intervention is used effectively to address trauma and other underlying mental health difficulties that our boys suffer from. Whilst therapy is confidential, therapists can provide staff with a different perspective that develops

their understanding and shapes the strategies and practice used with individual boys.

13. Restorative approaches

At Langham Oaks we believe in a restorative approach as an effective way of resolving conflict. In short to **Reflect, Repair and Restore**.

This supports repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment.

The purpose of a restorative approach is to re-visit the experience by re-telling and exploring the story with a changed set of feelings. During the incident the pupil's behaviour may be influenced by anger, frustration disappointment etc. The purpose of reflect, repair and restore is to re-visit the experience with a pupil who is calm, relaxed and reflective.

A Restorative Discussion might look like this:

- Explore what happened? (tell the story)
- Explore what people were thinking and feeling at the time?
- Explore who has been affected and how?
- Explore how we can repair relationships?
- Summarise what we have learnt so we are able to respond differently next time?

14. Exclusions from school

At Langham Oaks we believe that exclusion is rarely a solution to a problem. On occasion we may issue a short temporary exclusion to enable school staff to facilitate a supportive, well planned and effective return to school. In some cases this gives us the time to discuss strategies with outside agencies or the local authority to provide additional support. In all cases of exclusion, decisions are made on a case by case basis and should take context of the pupil, their family and the safety of everyone around them.

14.1 Fixed term exclusions from school will only be used as a last resort and the decision to impose a fixed term exclusion will only be taken by the Headteacher, and only after very careful consideration. As an organisation we believe children should be in school and we prefer a restorative approach rather than punitive action.

However, there are times when pupils would benefit from not being in school while staff meet to plan a positive return with new strategies to resolve things that have gone wrong with the pupil and their parent/carers. At times outside agencies and additional support might be involved to support the process.

14.2 There are only two types of exclusion from a school which are lawful: permanent and fixed-period.

Only the headteacher, or acting headteacher, can exclude a pupil from school.

14.3 Our school is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as:

“...the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil.”

14.4 We are committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

A decision to exclude a pupil will be taken only:

In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school’s behaviour policy, **and** If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

15. Safe space

As part of other de-escalation strategies, we have some safe spaces in school in order to support young people in managing their behaviour. These are spaces specifically designed in order to create an environment where young people can go to in a time of heightened anxiety or distress. The emphasis of these spaces is to provide a safe place with low distraction/low stimulus in order to aid the recovery process and self-regulation.

When a pupil is using a space, they are always monitored and supported by a member of the staffing team. If a pupil wishes to have time alone in order to help them recover or self-reflect the staff will keep a discreet distance so that supervision can be maintained at all times. The pupil is never left completely alone at times of anxiety.

16. Outreach support

Langham Oaks aims to provide education provision for all the pupils we serve and as we develop, we always looking at different learning pathways to personalise the curriculum for ALL on roll. In some cases, pupils can struggle with on-site learning and require a bespoke offsite package to support their emotional well-being and readiness for reintegration into school life.

16.1 Outreach tuition: We have our own outreach tutor who visits families and provides 1:1 tuition to pupils in homes or in public spaces. In some cases, this can support a partial re-integration into school or can be in addition to other alternative programmes.

16.2 Alternative providers: Langham Oaks uses a number of registered quality assured alternative providers to deliver some of these packages. Some of these specialises in therapeutic programmes that are based on farms, others focus on more vocational programmes such as car mechanics.

16.3 REACH is a local organisation we work closely with to support our pupils both in and outside of school. They offer a bespoke outreach package that best suits the needs of the pupils who cannot access on-site learning at school, or who benefit from some 1:1 mentoring.

The approach adopted is embedded in a range of theoretical frameworks such as:

- Systemic Practice
- Attachment Regulation and Competency Framework (ARC)
- Solution Focused Model

They identify and use the right approach for the right situation to engage with staff and pupils respectively and collectively. The overarching framework is relationship based and they apply models flexibly to achieve the desired outcomes.

Programmes are designed promote resilience and offer tools for educational staff, pupils and their parents to respond to the changing needs of the pupil that would enhance their cognitive, social and emotional competence.

16.4 Health & Safety: The EfL team monitor and assess the safety of all staff and pupils on the school site. Any offsite activities, serious incidents or restrictive interventions are scrutinised and reviewed, de-briefed, and overseen by the EfL team.

16.5 Home school liaison: Our relationship with parents and carers is central to our success and have always been a strength of the school. Tutor teams make regular contact with home and feedback on both the positive and negative aspects of pupil's performance. Parent/carers should receive a weekly phone call to highlight successes and difficulties that their child has experienced during the week.

Parent/cares are encouraging to make regular contact with the school and their child's tutor team to support us in monitoring pupil's wellbeing both at home and at school.

17. Staff wellbeing

The pressures on staff that work in an SEMH environment are substantial. The challenges of a day where there are constant demands to manage dysregulated pupils who can be oppositional, anti-social and even require restrictive physical intervention is considerable. We recognise that the emotional impact on staff at times can be overwhelming and can impact on their ability to manage their workload in the short term. We aim to support staff and ensure they get a break after difficult incidents, are excused from meetings or deadlines are extended to help manage their mental health and wellbeing. We also have a wellbeing champion in the school who keeps staff in mind and liaises with the senior leadership teams and the Trust about the morale of staff and events and opportunities to promote staff wellbeing.

18. Restricted Physical Intervention

18.1 The context of restrictive intervention in an SEMH setting

The SEAX Trust and Senior leadership team at Langham Oaks school recognise that restrictive physical intervention (RPI) is one of the most challenging areas in education to manage. Any circumstances that require staff to place their hands on children and young people can compromise everyone involved unless these situations are managed professionally and there is effective training and planning in place. SEMH schools by their very nature have challenging incidents that can require RPI to keep everyone safe. Our capacity as a school to manage even the most violent behaviours with ease enables us to include children and young people that other educational institutions have been unable to support effectively and change those behaviours over time.

Despite the prominent levels of expertise that staff have to manage dysregulation and deescalate the children we work with, there are regular incidents where restrictive physical interventions are required to keep everyone safe. This is typical of a setting that supports children with recognised SEND that mainstream schools have been unable to manage. The Team Teach approach enables Langham Oaks to be fully inclusive and manage even the most challenging behaviours safely and with confidence. This provides a safe, happy and respectful environment where children can thrive, learn to manage their difficulties effectively and can focus on learning and enjoying school life. It also enables staff to manage challenging situations without the need for the exclusions or reduced timetables they have experienced before.

18.2 Team Teach at Langham Oaks

Langham Oaks has fully adopted the principles of Team Teach, an organisation that has supported children with social, emotional mental health difficulties since 1997 in the UK, Europe, and other countries throughout the world. Team Teach focus on 95% de-escalation and 5% positive handling (physical restraint).

Langham Oaks staff receive regular training from Team Teach and refreshers are run annually to ensure staff are up to date in their practice.

Team Teach refer to all aspects of behaviour management as positive handling and train staff all over the world in both intermediate and advanced techniques.

18.3 Team Teach Techniques

Staff are trained in approved Team Teach techniques that are specifically designed to protect children. All techniques have been risk assessed by Team Teach and The Institute of Conflict Management. There are no techniques that use pain compliance, and the minimum use of force is always paramount. Team Teach encourage (95%) Diversion, diffusion, and de-escalation and (5%) Positive Handling and can be classified into **6** areas:

18.4 De-escalation

In an SEMH provision staff are highly trained and experienced in the use of escalation techniques that are used very effectively throughout the day. This constitutes the majority of the positive handling work that staff do. It is built up having positive relationships and a developed understanding of each pupil's likes, dislikes, triggers, and preferred strategies.

Examples of de-escalation techniques might include:

Use of space, managing distance and height

Use of humour

Take up time

Changes to the environment and personnel
Planned positive distraction

Verbal and/or visual advice/support

Focusing on the behaviour we want to see, not the behaviour we don't

Use of de-escalation stance, facial expression and tone of voice

Use of a directing outstretched arm

Managing distance

Sideways stance

Relaxed hands

Agreed scripts

Good communication with the staff around

Prompts

Any form of touch or open hand technique. Physical force is being used but at the lowest level.

E.g. Walking towards a group with arms out shepherding them away from an incident or hazard.

Guides

Moving somebody in a direction but they have the ability and capacity to leave you.

E.g. Used to reduce risk or protect people.

Escorts

Physically holding a pupil in a way where they can't leave you. There is limited resistance and a level of compliance, but you are steering their exit and direction. E.g. You are moving a pupil away from another to avoid a fight.

Restrictive Physical Intervention

'Physical control with the positive application or force with the intent of overpowering the client'

E.g. A pupil has become unsafe, de-escalation has failed, and he has become violent towards staff and unable to follow instructions or self-calm. Staff have used techniques to restrict the pupil's movement until they are confident that it is safe to release without further risk.

Personal Safety

Incidents where staff are subjected to grabs to clothing, arms, necks and bites: Team Teach train staff in the use of techniques which in these instances may cause minimal discomfort to a pupil, whilst it is illegal to deliberately cause pain, it may be a by-product of the technique used in rare cases where this happens and remains lawful e.g. releasing a bite.

These types of incidents should always be reported immediately to SLT so that they can be scrutinised and investigated fully.

18.5 Special Educational and Mental Health Needs

The SEAX Trust and Langham Oaks School recognise that the complexity of young people's needs in SEMH schools today. Childhood trauma, Attachment or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder are now commonplace as well as a host of other mental health and learning difficulties. We are committed to ensuring that staff are well trained, information is shared, and all are aware of the strategies to promote a safe culture and reduce the need for restrictive interventions. There will be cases where pupils are known to respond negatively to positive handling, and this should be clear to all in the pupil's positive handling plan. However, in the event that the pupil becomes a danger to themselves or others the best interest principle should be applied, and the physical intervention would be appropriate. Due care and attention should then be given to the debrief and emotional consequences once de-escalation has been achieved.

18.6 The responsibilities of staff to keep children safe

It is important for all stakeholders to understand that no school in the UK can have a "hands off" policy as school staff have a 'duty of care' to all pupils and are required to physically intervene if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the child. (Use of Reasonable Force: DFE Spring 2013 p.4) Furthermore a failure of staff to act can in itself lead to a charge of negligence. In all cases of positive handling these interventions should use proportional, reasonable, and necessary force in accordance with the law and school policy. We understand that parents and carers can find this concerning and their views can be recorded in individual Positive Handling Plans.

However, this does not override the principles and procedures to keep children safe as outlined in the policy.

18.7 Proportionate, Reasonable and Necessary Force

Staff are well trained in the techniques they use in these very difficult situations. They are required to make a professional judgement using the principles outlined below and use what is considered lawful. The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

18.8 The Best Interest Principle

The Best Interest Principle where children are concerned; the welfare of the child should be the paramount consideration (Children Act 1989). Paramount in this context means it should be the first consideration and should take precedence over all other issues. For that reason, staff who act in good faith in the best interest of the child will always have the best defense if their actions are questioned. A focus on the best interest of the child also encourages more productive discussions and debriefs between staff and children as staff explain that their actions are motivated by a genuine concern for the child.

18.9 Dynamic Risk Assessment

Physical Interventions with children should only occur where a dynamic risk assessment has been completed and it is judged that it is in the best interest of the child that physical management is applied. This can occur when:

- De-escalation and verbal calming techniques have not resolved the situation.
- There is a developing risk of serious harm to individuals, including the child concerned.
- There is an imminent risk of significant damage to property.
- There is a potential criminal offence occurring.
- The behaviours exhibited are detrimental to the maintenance of good order and discipline in the school.

18.10 Reporting and Recording

Any restrictive physical interventions **MUST** be recorded accurately in the RPI book and My Concern before the end of the school day. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that parent/carers are informed, preferably before the child arrives home or is picked up. This reduces anxiety for all parties and ensures the facts are clear. Prompt and guides should only be recorded if staff deem it necessary. Escorts should be recorded on Arbor as part of a general incident report, but should not count on the schools' records as an RPI.

Accurate and thorough recording of incidents should take place as soon after an RPI as possible, although the effective management of the school and all the pupils is

paramount and takes priority. The actions of all parties should be accurately recorded as they took place, avoid generalising and no matter how unsavory language or comments made are, it is important to record everything that is said and done.

Staff should report any significant injuries on both My Concern and on the Essex Health & Safety Accident forms for staff and pupils. Senior staff should always be informed if there are any injuries incurred in an RPI and parents should be contacted on the day of the incident with an accurate description of the injury and the actions taken. Transparency is essential and a clear and honest summary, including anything that went wrong should be included.

Staff involved in a positive handling situation should always consider IF the pupil's Positive Handling Plan needs adjusting as a result of behaviours seen during the incident.

18.11 Minor Injuries

After a restrictive physical intervention each pupil is managed according to their individual needs. Staff always seek a positive resolution through a debrief/restorative conversation with a child during and after the incident. Pupils and staff should be checked for injuries after an incident so that parent/carers and senior staff can be informed.

Any injuries caused to pupils or staff during a physical intervention are fully investigated by SLT as well as other agencies should it be deemed necessary. All injuries are recorded.

It is important to understand that injuries to pupils or staff are not necessarily a sign of malpractice. Red marks on forearms from holding are not uncommon and accidents can happen despite the high level of training we provide. We recognise that young children despite their size can exude a great deal of force and can also bruise easily. All staff are trained in physical intervention in accordance with the policy and training expectations of the Team Teach organisation and the schedule that they recommend. All staff are aware of the statutory guidance and legal requirements regarding physical interventions and are required to manage situations professionally however difficult that may be.

18.12 Duty of Care

There is no requirement for parents/carers to give consent for physical intervention to take place and school cannot make agreements that physical interventions will not be used. Professionals at Langham Oaks are required to make a dynamic risk assessment at the time of the incident and follow through school protocol and the law regarding the use of reasonable force to best support the child. If parents/carers have concerns about a physical intervention or a particular incident they should contact the school and ask for a senior manager, who will advise them and look into any concerns. Since April 2007, school staff were awarded additional powers to use reasonable force in schools. These powers were granted under the Education and Inspectors Act 2006 to anyone who is given control and charge over pupils. They are legal rights, not

granted by the employer, and therefore cannot be withheld or removed by employers. These include preventing a child from putting themselves at risk of significant harm, committing a crime (or behaviour that would be a crime for anyone over the criminal age of responsibility), hurting somebody, damaging property or jeopardising good order and discipline (Education Inspections Act 2006). Reasonable force may also be used to search pupils without their consent if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has a banned item. (Searching 242 of the ASCL Act 2009).

18.13 Positive Touch

In many secondary schools today any form of physical contact is discouraged, due to fear of misconception or stories of abuse in schools. Langham Oaks is a special school and supports vulnerable and challenging pupils who are experiencing difficulties in their lives that can leave them feeling very distressed, angry or disorientated. In these circumstances it is natural for children to seek comfort from the adults they trust even at secondary age. If these adults feel they must never reach out to comfort a child at such a time, it would be deeply concerning, particularly in light of situations where the withholding of touch with a very distressed or dysregulated child can be damaging to a child's recovery and future development.

Staff should ensure they are clear on the boundaries of positive touch and use their professional judgement when it should be applied. This will depend on the context, the individual and the relationship they have with a pupil. In the event that a situation where positive touch is perceived as uncomfortable, inappropriate, too regular or sexual it should be reported to the DSL and SLT. An assessment will be made to ensure there is a safe plan in place for both the pupil and staff. This will be recorded on the pupils PHP (Positive Handling Plan).

18.14 The Definition of Therapeutic Touch

The appropriate therapeutic use of touch is defined by situations in which abstinence (i.e. not to touch the child) would actually be inhumane, unkind and potentially psychologically or neurobiologically damaging. There is strong, empirically backed evidence that the use of touch in the comforting of a child who is in an acute state of distress is very beneficial. Not to reach out to the child in such circumstances, could also be re-traumatising.

Abstinence (i.e. not touching a child) in the face of intense grief reactions, can lead to a child shifting into a state of hyper-arousal, in which toxic levels of stress chemicals are released in both body and brain. The damaging long-term effects of this have been extensively researched worldwide and are well documented. In many states of distress, touch can often be the only means of maintaining a connection with the child when he or she can no longer hear or make therapeutic use of the adult's words or soothing tone/eye contact and therefore is in danger of dissociating (severe defence), with all the well documented detrimental effects that this can bring.

18.15 Risk Assessment

Every pupil at Langham Oaks will have a Positive Handling Plan which is designed to support them and aid staff in their day-to-day management of children. These are written in consultation with the class team and pupil and cover such areas as their hobbies, interests, likes/dislikes, peer associations and so on. It will include de-escalation techniques and most effective and appropriate forms of physical intervention. The RA should be reviewed termly (or more regularly as circumstances/incidents dictate) by staff. It is an extremely useful document which can help to build a trusting and caring relationship as it enables staff to fully engage with the life experiences of the child, the difficulties he may be facing and the triggers which lead to poor behaviour.

18.16 Checklist

Aide memoire for staff before, during and after a positive handling incident:-

1. Have de-escalation techniques been tried in accordance with the pupil's positive handling plan and failed to resolve the situation.
2. Complete a dynamic risk assessment
3. TCUP – (Think clearly under pressure)
4. Consider your duty of care
5. Consider the Best Interests Principle
6. Consider the likely outcomes of a physical intervention?
7. Communicate clearly and swiftly with colleagues around you
8. Ensure you have the right support around you.
9. Be confident and robust in your technique to ensure the pupil and everyone is safe
10. Use proportional, reasonable and necessary force
11. Check on breathing and skin pallor throughout the restraint
12. Do not release until you and colleagues around you are sure all is safe to do so
13. Move to release in gradual and graded steps to ensure all are safe
14. Use scripts to explain the need for actions, calm the pupil and establish de-escalation
15. Once holds are released ensure you remain aware of the possibility of the need to re-engage.
16. Ensure the pupil has time to recover have a glass of water and have time out if required
17. Check for any injuries to pupil or staff.
18. Report any injuries to a pupil to senior staff immediately.
19. Record the incident in positive handling records / My Concern and any injuries appropriately.
20. Inform senior staff and arrange for parent/carers/social workers to be contacted
21. Debrief with staff and pupil when appropriate
22. Record the debrief
23. Ensure you (staff) have time out if you have the need

19. Supporting Information

19.1 Extract from DfE Circular 10/98

Section 550A (Education Act 1996) allows teachers, and other persons who are authorised by the Headteacher to have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility)
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property)
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining the good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere

The provision applies when a teacher, or other authorised person, is on the school premises, and when he or she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere e.g. on a field trip or other authorised out of school activity.

19.2 School Policies

- Child Protection Policy (Safeguarding)
- Inclusion Policy
- Equality Objectives Policy

19.3 Other Sources of Support and Guidance:

- *The SEAX Trust*
- *Essex county Council*
- *Essex Educational Psychology Service*
- *BILD (British Institute of Learning Difficulties) Good Practice Guide*
- *Joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance on Education Staff and Child Protection: Staffing facing an allegation of abuse. Guidelines on practice and procedure (September 2002)*

19.4 Relevant Legislation and Guidance

- *The Use of Reasonable Force - July 2013*
- *Reducing the need for restrictive intervention - June 2019*
- *DfEE Circular 10/98 - Section 550a, Education Act - 1996*
- *Guidance for Restrictive Physical Interventions, Department of Health, July 2002*
- *Criminal Law Act 1966*
- *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*
- *Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000*
- *Offences Against the Person Act 1861*
- *The Children and Young Persons Act 1933*
- *Health & Safety at Work Act 1974*
- *Violence at Work 2003*
- *Manual Handling Regulations 1992*
- *The Children Act 1989 / National Minimum Standards*
- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified 1991)*
- *Human Rights Act 1998 Disability Rights Act 2001*
- *The Children Act 2004*
- *Mental Health Act 2007 Part 2 made amendments to The Mental Capacity Act 2005(MCA) by the introduction of deprivation of liberty safeguards(MCA Dols)*
- *Section 93 Education & Inspection Act 2006*
- *Section 45 Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006*
- *National Minimum Standards 2022 (England – Residential Special Schools and Children’s Homes)*
- *The Children’s Act 1989*
- *Education Act 2011*
- *Education and Inspection Act 2006 Section 90 and 91*
- *The Education Act 2002, Section 175*
- *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989*
- *Equality Act 2010*
- *The Human Rights Act (1998)*
- *Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff Working with Children and Adults who Display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorders July 2002*
- *DfE Advice for Headteachers and School Staff; Behaviour & Discipline in Schools (2016)*
- *DfE ‘Working together to safeguard children’ 2015 and*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education’ 2022*
- *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools DfE November 2018*
- *Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022*

20. Searching and Screening

Confiscation, searches, screening

Searching, screening and confiscation is conducted in line with the DfE's [latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).

20.1 Screening

Security screening (Safety checking on entry to the building) can help provide reassurance to pupils, staff and parents that the school is taking measures to create a calm, safe and supportive environment. Schools' statutory power to make rules on pupil behaviour and their duties as employers in relation to the safety of staff, pupils and visitors enables them to impose a requirement that pupils undergo screening.

- › As a requirement of entry pupils will periodically be required to undergo non-contact:
 - Screening with a handheld metal detector of both themselves and their property (bags, coats etc)
 - Screening with passive detection dog of both themselves and their property (bags, coats etc)
- › To support pupils with SEND, the school will regularly remind pupils and parents/carers of this policy so that pupils can be prepared for adjustments and changes to their daily routines
- › Where a pupil refuses to undergo screening, this will be referred to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to risk assess and respond to the breach of the school behaviour policy (This may result in a pupil being denied entry to the site).

20.2 Prohibited items and items harmful or detrimental to school discipline

The Department for Education (DfE) specify that the following items are prohibited on school sites. **Under NO Circumstance** should pupils bring any of these items on to the school site.

- 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). [This includes laser pens]
- an article specified in regulations:
 - tobacco and cigarette papers;

- fireworks; and
- pornographic images found in a pupil's possession as a result of a search will be confiscated.

The school also 'bans' the following items from being brought onto the school site

- Electronic cigarettes / vapes (The school treats these items in the same way as cigarettes).
- Matches/Lighters and other fire lighting items.
- Solvents and aerosols (such as spray paints).
- Age restricted material including 'PEGI & BBFC' digital media.
- Speakers/amplified sound and video devices.
- Any item which could cause damage to the school site or persons.
- Items of high value (including jewelry/cash) where the presence of such items effects the good order of the school.

In addition to the above pupils and parents/careers should be aware of the school mobile phone policy, procedures and consequences.

20.3 Searching a pupil

Searches will only be carried out by a member of staff who has been authorised to do so by the headteacher, or by the headteacher themselves. (Currently the headteacher has authorised all members SLT to conduct searches and will authorise other staff on an 'as required' basis.

Subject to the exception below, the authorised member of staff carrying out the search will be of the same sex as the pupil, and there will be another member of staff present as a witness to the search.

An authorised member of staff of a different sex to the pupil can carry out a search without another member of staff as a witness if:

- The authorised 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 the 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 an authorised 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 added to the safeguarding system (MyConcern).

If the authorised member of staff considers a search to be necessary, but is not required urgently, they will seek the advice of the headteacher, designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) or pastoral member of staff who may have more

information about the pupil. During this time the pupil will be supervised and kept away from other pupils.

A search can be carried out if the authorised member of staff has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item or any item identified in the school rules for which a search can be made, or if the pupil has agreed.

An appropriate location for the search will be found. Where possible, this will be away from other pupils. The search will 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.

Before carrying out a search the authorised member of staff will:

- › Assess whether there is an urgent need for a search
- › Assess whether not doing the search would put other pupils or staff at risk
- › Consider whether the search would pose a safeguarding risk to the pupil
- › Explain to the pupil why they are being searched
- › Explain to the pupil what a search entails – e.g. I will ask you to turn out your pockets and remove your scarf
- › Explain how and where the search will be carried out
- › Give the pupil the opportunity to ask questions
- › Seek the pupil's co-operation

If the pupil refuses to agree to a search, the member of staff can give an appropriate behaviour sanction.

If they still refuse to co-operate, the member of staff will contact the senior member of staff, to try and determine why the pupil is refusing to comply.

The authorised member of staff will then decide whether to use reasonable force to search the pupil. This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration whether conducting the search will prevent the pupil harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder.

The authorised member of staff can use reasonable force to search for any prohibited items identified in section 3 of the DfE guidance, but not to search for items that are only identified in the school rules.

The authorised member of staff may use a metal detector to assist with the search.

An authorised member of staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers.

Outer clothing includes:

- › Any item of clothing that is not worn immediately over a garment that is being worn wholly next to the skin or being worn as underwear (e.g. a jumper or jacket being worn over a t-shirt)
- › Hats, scarves, gloves, shoes, boots

20.4 Searching pupils' possessions

Possessions means any items that the pupil has or appears to have control of, including:

- › Desks
- › Lockers
- › Bags

A pupil's possessions can be searched for any item if the pupil agrees to the search. If the pupil does not agree to the search, staff can still carry out a search for prohibited items (listed in section 3) and items identified in the school rules.

An authorised member of staff can search a pupil's possessions when the pupil and another member of staff are present.

If there is a serious risk of harm if the search is not conducted immediately, or it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff, the search can be carried out by a single authorised member of staff.

20.5 Informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The staff member who carried out the search should inform the DSL without delay:

- › Of any incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of a prohibited item as listed in section 3
- › If they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk

All searches for prohibited items (listed in section 3), including incidents where no items were found, will be recorded in the school's safeguarding system (MyConcern).

20.6 Informing parents and carers

Parents and carers will always be informed of any search for a prohibited item (listed in section 3). A member of staff will tell the parents and/or carers as soon as is reasonably practicable:

- › What happened
- › What was found, if anything
- › What has been confiscated, if anything
- › What action the school has taken, including any sanctions that have been applied to their child

20.7 Support after a search

Irrespective of whether any items are found as the result of any search, the school will consider whether the pupil may be suffering or likely to suffer harm and whether any specific support is needed (due to the reasons for the search, the search itself, or the outcome of the search).

If this is the case, staff will follow the school's safeguarding policy and speak to the DSL. The DSL will consider if pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

20.8 Other searches (Inc Police)

The authorised member of staff's power to search outlined above does not enable them to conduct a 'MTS' (More Through Search), for example by requiring a student to remove more than outer clothing. MTS's on school premises shall only be carried out by police officers in accordance with the [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 \(PACE\) Code C](#).

Before calling the police into school, staff will assess and balance the risk of a potential MTS's on the pupil's mental and physical wellbeing and the risk of not recovering the suspected item.

Staff will consider whether introducing the potential for a strip search through police involvement is absolutely necessary, and will always ensure that other appropriate, less invasive approaches have been exhausted first.

Once the police are on school premises, the decision on whether to conduct a MTS lies solely with them. The school will advocate for the safety and wellbeing of the pupil(s) involved. Staff retain a duty of care to the pupil involved and should advocate for pupil wellbeing at all times.

Further detailed guidance is contained in the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

20.9 Confiscation

During a search staff can confiscate any item that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting:

poses a risk to staff or pupils;

is prohibited, or identified in the school rules for which a search can be made

is evidence in relation to an offence.

In line with Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022 and the guidance issued by the Secretary of State

Should any of the following items be confiscated;

- 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).

- an article specified in regulations:
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks; and
- pornographic images found in a pupil's possession.

They will NOT be returned to the pupil and will, either, be passed to the Police or securely disposed of.

20.10 Information to support student understanding

The following information posters, to assist the students understanding of the searching and screening procedures are displayed prominently in the building.



When you come into School you may be checked to ensure you don't have any banned items.



Metal Detector

Staff will move a wand over you and your bags, it will buzz if it detects any metal.

- The Staff and Search wand wont touch you.
- You might need to take your coat / hat / gloves off but nothing else needs to be removed.



Detector Dogs

The dog will move around near you and indicate if it detects particular items.

- The Staff and Dog wont touch you.
- You wont be able to touch the dog as its working.

If you want to know more speak to any member of staff.



Searching

Checking that you don't have items on you that you are not allowed

Some times staff might need to search you to make sure you don't have any items on you that you are not allowed to bring on site.



If you have any questions during a search please ask them.

Searching

Staff may need to search you because of something detected during screening, something we have heard or something we have seen in person (Including on CCTV).

- If we need to search you will be asked to come into the 'admin area', away from other students.
- We will let you know what we are looking for and why we think you may have it.
- Two members of staff will be with you (They will be the same sex as you)
- We will ask you to remove coats, hats, gloves so these can be searched (We wont ask you to remove any items of clothes which touch your skin).
- We might use a metal detector or ask you to turn your pockets inside out.
- We will record that you have been searched in MyConcern and if anything was found. We will let your parents/careers know that a search has been carried out.

If you want to know more speak to any member of staff.