

# Springside School

## Behaviour Policy (Barriers to Learning Policy)



March 2026

## 1. Introduction

This policy reflects the principles of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, particularly:

- **Article 12** – the right for children to express their views and have them taken seriously
- **Article 13** – the right to freedom of expression
- **Article 16** – the right to privacy and protection of reputation

At Springside School, we recognise that learners must be supported to express their feelings, needs and views safely. Staff should always respond in ways that preserve dignity, safety and respect.

At Springside, we see behaviour as a **barrier to learning**. Our role is not simply to manage behaviour in the moment, but to help learners understand themselves, develop emotional literacy and build safer, more independent ways to communicate and respond.

We believe that all learners should be valued equally and treated with courtesy and respect. We also believe that developing emotional literacy, self-regulation and independence is central to preparing learners for adult life.

As a special school, we recognise that many of our learners' needs, conditions and experiences directly affect how they communicate, regulate and behave. Expectations must therefore be high, but realistic, and responses must be consistent, supportive and individualised.

We believe that all behaviour is a form of communication. Our aim is to help learners develop communication that is increasingly safe, appropriate and effective. This work is most effective when school and families work closely together.

Parents/carers play an important role in reinforcing agreed strategies, sharing concerns and celebrating progress.

We take incidents of bullying, prejudice, racism, homophobia, sexism and inequality seriously and will investigate and respond appropriately.

## 2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- create an environment in which learners feel safe, valued and ready to learn
- support learners to develop emotional literacy and self-regulation
- promote positive behaviour and reduce barriers to learning

- support learners to become as independent as possible
- ensure consistent approaches across school
- work in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals
- ensure behaviour support reflects the individual needs of each learner

### 3. Core Principles

At Springside School:

- behaviour is understood as a barrier to learning
- all behaviour is seen as communication
- relationships are at the heart of effective behaviour support
- learners are supported to understand emotions and manage them more independently
- consequences should support learning and repair, not punish
- staff should be calm, consistent and reflective
- behaviour support should help prepare learners for life beyond school

This is why we do **lessons, not just activities**, and why every opportunity for learners to do more for themselves matters.

### 4. How We Support Learners

We support learners by:

- modelling the language and actions associated with different emotions
- helping learners recognise emotions in themselves and others
- teaching strategies for regulation and safer responses
- encouraging learners to be as independent as possible
- using agreed approaches that can be replicated at home and in the community
- maintaining high but realistic expectations
- celebrating effort, progress and achievement
- identifying barriers to learning and addressing them directly
- supporting learners to repair relationships and reflect after incidents

Where needed, school will refer learners for additional interventions to support progress.

### 5. Working with Families

Parents/carers are key partners in supporting behaviour. School works with families by:

- sharing expectations and agreed approaches
- involving parents/carers in planning and reviewing support
- keeping families informed of significant concerns or incidents
- celebrating progress and achievements
- promoting consistency between home and school wherever possible

### 6. Planning for Behaviour Support

## Barriers to Learning Plans

Most learners will have a **Barriers to Learning Plan**. This identifies:

- how the learner communicates through behaviour
- likely triggers
- how the learner may be feeling
- what support and strategies are helpful
- what adults should do consistently

These plans focus on long-term support and the development of increasingly independent strategies for the learner.

## SMART Plans

Where a learner presents a foreseeable risk to themselves or others, or where reasonable force may be required, they should also have a **SMART Plan**.

**Positive Handling Plans are now known as SMART Plans.**

From September 2025, these plans are written using **Behaviour Smart**. SMART Plans help staff plan proactive support, de-escalation, reactive strategies and risk reduction. They are reviewed following incidents and updated as needed.

## Personal Learning Plans

Where appropriate, key barriers to learning should also be reflected in the learner's **Personal Learning Plan (PLP)** so that staff are actively teaching the skills needed to reduce these barriers over time.

For example, if transitions are difficult for a learner, the school should identify why, plan support strategies and ensure this is reflected both in their behaviour support planning and their learning targets.

## 7. Implementation in School

All staff are expected to have a good understanding of the learners they work with and to follow agreed plans consistently.

This includes:

- knowing relevant behaviour support plans
- using agreed strategies and scripts
- maintaining calm and consistent approaches
- supporting learners across different areas of school
- sharing information with colleagues appropriately
- recording incidents and concerns accurately

Staff develop this understanding through induction, working alongside experienced colleagues, formal CPD and day-to-day reflective practice.

Communication Passports also support this work by helping staff understand how learners communicate and learn best.

## **8. Recognition, Praise and Achievement**

School procedures are based on the belief that learners want to be successful.

Positive behaviour is encouraged through:

- praise
- class-based systems of recognition
- celebration of achievement
- weekly certificates and assemblies
- special events
- termly progress meetings with parents/carers

We want learners to feel proud of themselves and their progress.

## **9. Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Behaviour support is assessed and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Class teachers and class teams are responsible for ensuring that relevant **Barriers to Learning Plans** and **SMART Plans** are up to date and reflect current needs, risks and strategies.

Plans should be reviewed:

- as needs change
- following significant incidents
- at least termly
- alongside parent/carer discussions where appropriate

Where a learner has hurt themselves or others, or where staff believe behaviour indicates the need for further support, incidents should be recorded on **Behaviour Smart**.

Where reasonable force is used, staff must also follow the procedures set out in the **Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy**.

This area requires professional judgement. We do not want staff spending unnecessary time on paperwork at the expense of looking after learners. However, recording supports learners, informs planning, keeps families informed and protects staff.

When recording significant incidents, staff should:

- record the incident on Behaviour Smart as soon as possible
- ensure relevant colleagues are alerted

- add or amend information where needed so the record is accurate
- review whether the learner’s plan remains effective
- inform a member of SLT where required
- ensure parent/carer communication is completed in line with school procedures

If staff are unable to access Behaviour Smart, they must seek support as soon as possible and ensure records are reviewed and updated once access is restored.

### 10. Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Intervention

In rare circumstances, where there is a risk of harm to the learner or others, staff may need to use reasonable force or other restrictive interventions as a last resort.

The school’s procedures for restraint, seclusion and the use of reasonable force are set out in the **Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy**.

Staff must follow that policy, including the relevant recording and reporting procedures.

### 11. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring takes place through:

- PLPs
- Barriers to Learning Plans
- SMART Plans
- incident patterns and reporting
- class planning discussions
- input from the Leadership Team and Barriers to Learning team
- involvement from external professionals where required

Monitoring helps the school identify:

- whether support is effective
- whether plans need updating
- whether further intervention is needed
- any patterns, themes or training needs

### 12. Violence and Aggression at Work (HSE)

We cannot remove all risk. Staff recognise that working in a special school means learners’ understanding, needs and conditions can affect this.

The school’s risk reduction measures include:

	Measure	Responsibility
Policies	Barriers to Learning Policy	

	(Behaviour Policy)	Mark Hitchen (Barriers to learning lead and DSL) Melody Fierro (Headteacher and DDSL)
	Use of Reasonable Force Policy (Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy)	
	Other relevant policies as identified in the above policies.	
<b>CPD/ Training</b>	Induction	Leadership Team
	Rolling programme of CPD as relevant to the individual member of staff	Leadership Team
	Positive Behaviour Training (Team Teach Training)	Delivered by in-house tutors
<b>Organisational</b>	Learners are grouped according to need.	Leadership Team
	Lessons to be engaging, tailored to the needs and interests of learners.	Class Teacher in conjunction with class team
<b>Documentation</b>	Communication Passports Intimate Care Plans Moving and Handling PEEPs Barriers to Learning Plans (Risk assessment) Positive Handling (SMART) Plans (Risk assessment) Personal Learning Plans	Class Teacher in conjunction with class team

This list is not exhaustive. The school's ethos is to identify and manage barriers to learning and support learners to regulate safely and as independently as possible.

### 13. Further Information

This policy should be read alongside other relevant school policies, including:

- Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy
- Health and Safety
- SEN
- Equal Opportunities
- Complaints and Allegations
- Safe Working Practice
- Safeguarding

This policy is consistent with the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements and safe working practice expectations for staff.

### 14. Key References

- **Behaviour in Schools**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025**
- **Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (DfE, 2026)**

- **Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention**
- **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years**
- **Violence and aggression at work (HSE)**