

Never look down on anybody unless you are helping him up. Jesse Jackson

Barley Lane School

Hard work, humility, kindness

Promoting good behaviour 2017-18

The complex and mercurial nature of our young people and the shifting chemistry of their relationships with each other and the sometime turbulence of their lives and the latent quality of unknown and emerging risks in their nature and in their lives make the notion of “dynamic risk assessment” critical to keeping everybody safe and this is described our generic risk assessment.

This is a practicable and reasonable response to the reasonable anticipation that risk will be an ever moving target and to have nearly seventy individualised risk assessments not only bureaucratic but unworkable as staff would be overloaded with information and unable to act safely and decisively.

Amidst then that multiplicity of guidance around managing behaviour in a school set up to specialize in just that what follows is key; for staff and for parents and professionals who wish to explore the behaviour management here. A further document focussing on matters of child protection and safeguarding in all their diversity is available of the school’s website.

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Behaviour management

Team-working, reflection, consultation and planning are all essential when tackling complex and challenging behaviour; risks will be dynamically assessed and safety privileged at all times.

Respect and compassion for the children and young people and each other will ensure the dignity and safety are privileged.

Our example as positive role models is vital and we must demonstrate the measured, decent and compassionate authority we believe will keep us all safe.

We must demonstrate to the youngsters in our care that reason, fairness and respect offer us the best solution to conflict and dispute. The challenging behaviour of our pupils will be managed in the following core and key ways:

- effective teaching, well planned and delivered and the equivalent in best learning support practice;
- safe and positive relationship building through opportunities for success and achievement and their celebration and the building of both self-esteem and self-control in the student.;
- the application of clear, fair and consistent restorative discipline delivered impartially, courteously and calmly - disciplinary action is only effective in the context of trust, goodwill and fairness; we must never be bullish, aggressive or antagonistic.
- staff are directed to step back, consider, consult and seek support if a disciplinary issue is serious, complex and our good judgment and best practice at risk;
- a willingness to stand quietly firm and pursue what is fair and reasonable when students resort to escalation and confrontation even aggression.
- staff will always use third party intervention and support in these circumstances to avoid escalation and to protect the health and safety of all members of the school community; our work demands we make a dynamic risk assessment before holding a child.

Holding children

If the positive routes of high quality teaching and care, intelligent behaviour management and positive reinforcement have been exhausted proceed as follows.

- Use the third party approach, pause, reflect, consider and plan options with those colleagues.
- Always seek to diffuse never to escalate but assert calmly and fairly what is right and responsible and safe: children deserve fair, clear and consistent outcomes for inappropriate behaviour.
- Always seek win-win outcomes where fair-play and dignity are preserved for everyone. If the student's behaviour remains strident, demeaning, unsafe and unreasonable staff have a duty to protect health and safety, maintain good order and discipline and to preserve the dignity and rights of all members of the school community; most powerfully the right to feel safe and the right to learn.
- **A physical intervention can be necessary and justified if the above are seriously threatened and staff have acted in good faith if the positive routes of high quality teaching and care, intelligent behaviour management and positive reinforcement have been exhausted.**
- We should be clear in our thinking and decision making with any intervention within our PRICE training clearly thought through (dynamic risk assessment happens under pressure and in stressful situations but we can still seek and achieve clarity and good judgment) and justified.
- In the maintenance of good order and discipline we must be particularly clear in our thinking. Students known or who emerge as youngsters who repeatedly escalate, physically challenge, confront or avoid doing what is best for them and their peers or are known or judged to be aggressive towards others will be identified and risks assessed and planned for.
- Staff will plan their possible intervention to uphold what is fair and stop the fabric of justice and fairness that contributes to good order and discipline being damaged and undermined.

The key message to our team is...

Before you hold a child: for their wellbeing and protection and your own ask yourself some questions...

- Is your reasoning clear and credible and are your reasoning and motives sound?
- Is there a greater good? A risk of greater harm if you don't?
- Will they hold up to scrutiny? Is there another way? There nearly always is and will be...de-escalation is everything.

Most powerfully and critically is there securely...**a higher good** to be secured, **a greater harm** to be prevented?

- What do you know about this child (what has happened...)? What don't you know (what could happen...)?
- It is simple enough some youngsters are too powerful and aggressive and escalatory to hold safely?
- What about the risks of misrepresentation and malicious allegation?
- What will be the impact on the child, you, your colleagues and the wider school community?
- Will it make matters worse? Will your actions electrify and damage others?
- Who is around to help and support? How capable and experienced are they?

In any final analysis and or scrutiny were you acting to protect the child, other children and or the wider community of children and young people?

Behaviour management: the need for proactive autonomous staff

A key difference in our school that distinguishes us from mainstream is our expectation that **all staff will seek to become empathetic figures of genuine authority and respect in the school.**

The use of skilled teaching and behaviour management, praise, positive reinforcement and reward are all heavily promoted and encouraged. Informally also across school life this message is a constant one.

The purpose of this document is to also privilege the need to apply restorative consequences for challenging and inappropriate behaviour and the necessity for staff to take ownership of issues and lead interventions. Experienced staff are there to support and facilitate. Staff should be seeking to access less and less support incrementally as their own authority is consequently enhanced by their determination to act independently and autonomously. The school needs a critical mass of staff who have achieved a significant level of authority that in turn delivers the whole school community stability that is always vulnerable to the latent and risky sub-culture that is a result of placing many complex and risky and mercurial students in one place.

Senior and experienced staff are expected to be and are generous in offering support but in return expect the initiative, decision-making and intervention in disciplinary work to shift steadily from them to their junior colleagues as they mature and grow in confidence.

It is unacceptable therefore that any MOS whatever their respective position on the continuum of experience, assertiveness and effectiveness allow behaviours to be ignored or passed on inertly to senior colleagues. In short:

- All behaviours outside our core values of kindness and humility and hard-work must always be challenged by all staff and graded intervention from supportive guidance and advice to restorative justice that can sometimes mean punitive action must result: without this the school community cannot be a just, stable and safe place.
- There is a dynamic and shifting balance of a) support/facilitation and b) independence/autonomy that begins heavily weighted with a) but shifts to b) over time as staff move from inexperienced and vulnerable to experienced, independent and assertive but the team-working never stops.
- This progress and development is rarely smooth and uneventful and can experience sharp reverses and unexpectedly sharp improvements: it is a dynamic and shifting by its nature.
- Experienced staff must always be generous in support but explicit in demanding an appropriate and maturing level of ownership and independence from less experienced colleagues.
- Less experienced staff must own and manage issues but then seek an appropriate and safe level of support in delivering discipline; one that both keeps them and the children secure but moves them steadily to greater independence and authority.
- Folk will therefore be moving along their own development path at different speeds and facing a variety of setbacks and improvements. Staff will need stoicism, determination, vigour and resilience on this journey to genuine compassionate authority and influence.

Boundaries and outcomes

The young people in our care can be impulsive, emotional and challenging. They can find the classroom particularly difficult. Reward and consequence are necessarily exaggerated in an SEMH setting so positive behaviours are promoted vigorously and negative behaviours supported but never fudged and directly challenged with clear and fair restorative outcomes in place. We all crave fairness and justice and a sense of balance; and if things go wrong what's good in us being remembered and celebrated.

It is essential in a school like ours that positive behaviour is recognised and rewarded and inappropriate or negative behaviour fairly challenged and reasonable consequence applied. This is preparation for life beyond school where society operates in the same way.

The school believes reward is a more powerful influence than punishment but reward can only be meaningful and valuable when there are fair limits on, and consequences for, poor behaviour. If sanctions are necessary they will only be effective if they are delivered by adults who are measured and respectful in applying them and those same adults are consistently generous in recognising good behaviour.

- The school day is divided into three chunks of double periods each punctuated by an opportunity to access a series of activities. Points are collected and accumulate offering privileged and preferential access to rewards and activities.
- The school uses available classrooms and a variety of smaller comfortable but simple spaces for brief periods of respite and reflection and sometimes where anger can be safely expressed before the successful return of students to class
- In reality some students react positively others are defiant and so there is a room dedicated to those who resort to confrontation and abuse to protect those who respect and use reflection and recovery spaces well.
- The school always privileges the safe supervision and support of students and where this is secure and staffing allows breaks and lunchtimes can offer an opportunity for lost learning to be recovered or inappropriate behaviour to be addressed. Afternoon activities and tutor time can also be used to reflect on and put right and repair relationships, learning and behaviour.
- Often teachers will give their own time and work flexibly to for example revisit a lesson so good behaviour and learning are promoted.
- Staff will be and are dogged in seeking a just and restorative outcome and this can be tough where youngsters escalate and throughout the focus is on supporting the young person to develop the greater self-awareness and self-control that appears in so many of their EHCPs: key too is developing an emerging and embedding sense of "win-win" outcomes and the ability to compromise and move on...fresh starts.
- If needed we will persist beyond the school day and the school assumes parental support in this without 24 hour notice because in our experience issues are best dealt with promptly so youngsters can then move on.
- More serious or persistent disciplinary issues are addressed with parents who can return their children in person so a face to face meeting can explore the issue and seek to resolve it positively and supportively.
- The school is willing to and may resort to physical intervention in order to protect what is reasonable and fair and will reflect and plan for this.
- Students who persistently challenge this mechanism could jeopardise their place in school. The school cannot function without a minimum level of acceptance and compliance.
- Students who attempt to use confrontation, escalation and aggression to "bully" their way out of fair accountability and consequence or those who abscond could face periods of exclusion but the school works to achieve zero exclusion.

- The school's senior team will monitor decision-making and the use of sanctions to make sure fairness operates for the children and challenge and intervene if necessary to reduce or remove a sanction.
- Critically there must a strong sense and spirit of putting things right of repairing and recovering a "restorative" approach where the children and young people can reflect and learn how to behave.
- The school will acknowledge if its decision-making has been faulty and investigate potential injustices if children and parents or staff feel this is necessary
- The school will always seek to work in partnership with parents and carers but equally is willing to assert what it judges to be fair and reasonable in the face of parental opposition

In this way we can deal fairly and promptly with the day to day difficulties and move youngsters on quickly to a fresh beginning. This mechanism is designed to deal with the day to day disciplinary matters that arise in school. More serious negative behaviours could lead to exclusion as described in our discipline policy

In the context of our school the following would be regarded as serious breaches of discipline and could result in fixed term exclusion:

- actions or behaviour that seriously compromise the health and safety, wellbeing and happiness of any member of, or visitor to the school community;
- actions or behaviour that persistently and seriously compromise and damage the maintenance of good order and discipline and the learning of others;
- actions or behaviour that persistently and seriously compromise and damage the dignity and authority of staff and the learning of others;
- any illegal activity including the use of illegal substances;
- Persistent or serious bullying that impacts significantly on the security, wellbeing and happiness of other children.

Escalation to permanent exclusion is a reasonable and necessary outcome where the damage and hurt to the wellbeing and safety of others have been so serious as to be judged irrecoverable or it is reasonable to assert there is no practicable way to ameliorate and make safe those risks to others most powerfully the children and young people but this could still include any member of or visitor to our community.

Staff applying sanctions and consequences

The need for "sanctions" is powerfully diminished by excellent practice both in and out of the classroom. Hard-work, good relationships, positivity and praise encourage good behaviours in the students. Please remember the following opportunities to promote good behaviour.

- Praise and reward relentlessly; privately, publicly, informally and formally. Never miss an opportunity to reinforce good behaviour and authentic achievement.
- Your plenary in each lesson must contain strong reference to behaving reasonably and working hard and usefully and the core theme of recovery
- There should be evidence of public reward and praise in assemblies and other whole school settings.

- Beyond the privileges offered by our points system there should be evidence of local incentives and rewards in classes and tutor groups to promote and celebrate good behaviour.
- Parents should be made aware by staff formally and frequently informally of student successes:
- Staff should habitually use the points system to influence their decision-making about access to activities: those who behave appropriately deserve advantages.
- “Prodigal sons” deserve a suitably biblical approach with marked recognition and celebration of their achievements and improvements but the other “sons” deserve quiet recognition for persistently doing the right thing too.
- Please be continually self-evaluative and suitably prepared so the need for discipline and consequence is rooted in the student’s complex and genuine needs and/or challenging behaviour **not because of an ill-prepared lesson or clumsy behaviour management.**
- Please do not apply sanctions when responsibility lies with you (nothing is more destructive to the adult-student relationship) but learn from such incidences and seek to avoid repetition. You need to win the confidence and trust of your students so when you do apply sanctions they accept and respect them because they accept and respect you and trust your judgment.
- Although such judgements are tough to call please try to distinguish between inappropriate behaviours rooted in the genuine difficulties the child has faced and continues to wrestle with and wilful naughty behaviour. Both deserve boundaries and fair response and outcomes but the former demands flexibility and scrupulous fairness and support the latter will require the fair and consistent application of consequences. For example a student with a known anger management issue deserves greater flexibility than a youngster calculatedly using anger to disadvantage or unsettle others.
- Be prepared in our setting to go many extra miles for the children and apply the consequences regardless of hours or duties and be there when the critical post-intervention reflection and healing goes on.
- Do not feel the need to rush to judgements and decisions give yourself and the child time to consider and reflect. Deliver outcomes fairly and calmly and be mindful of the good behaviour management practice shared formally and informally.
- We do not run on a rule book but on reasoned judgements by the adults about what is fair and reasonable and “kind”. This hinges on mutual respect but the adults are in the end the disinterested referees who must win trust and respect by their good judgement, show a willingness to make unpopular decisions but equally demonstrate their obvious determination to be scrupulously fair; they decide.

In this context and climate and applying these values staff should be aware of the following structures and support mechanisms in place to support them and the students in managing behaviour fairly and consistently when they are clearly necessary. The following represent a graded response to the application of sanctions.

- Seek support from senior and experienced staff promptly as issues emerge to secure appropriate behaviour and outcomes at an early stage; do not rush to sanction give lots of dignified routes to redemption including recognising and acknowledging previously positive behaviour and therefore a willingness to offer some “slack”. A most successful strategy used by staff is the “wait and see approach” where previous successes are remembered and the next lesson or activity offers the student a chance to show goodwill and make real an apology; to restore and make good what has been damaged.

- Use a light touch and present “sanctions” as healing opportunities to deal with issues fairly and promptly.
- You can use whole school meetings and subsequent gatherings to address unresolved or more serious issues because these are led by experienced and senior colleagues who are there to support you and the students. Be careful to present these as a fair and prompt and balanced way to address issues. Discuss the issue with student and senior staff, apply a fair consequence and move on.
- Do not panic if the child is obstructive or escalates matters further. Accept this and determine to pursue the matter quietly and fairly. Each school day offers the same opportunities for a student to face the reasonable consequences of his behaviour. Don’t be rushed to confrontation and escalation. Give him time to comply. Give yourself time to reflect and plan.
- Sustained refusal should ideally lead to the completion of a serious incident form (in practice a conversation does it) to alert senior staff to this lack of fairness on the part of the student; they can then act alongside you and the parents to plan a potentially lengthy intervention when staffing levels are strong and beyond that discuss other possible responses.
- Behaviours that in the MOS’ judgement are “serious” should be recorded and shared with SMT and a collective response with families agreed. It is in these situations that calm, reflection and consultation are essential.

Staffing levels

In a busy, eventful and sometimes hugely demanding setting we need structure around staffing levels so we can both plan conventionally our supervision but also react to the shifting reality of staffing and the needs and demands of the students on a daily basis.

We must look deeper than just numbers and ratios but consider the experience, status, presence and proven ability of staff and the specific and particular context of all supervision of children.

The head-teacher leads in this area but can delegate his overview and responsibility to senior colleagues.

- Classes must be supported by at least one LSA and in deciding who goes where we must consider the experience, status, presence and proven ability of staff and the nature of the group they are to be assigned to and the current state of that group given the mercurial nature of the children and young people and the consequent shifting chemistry between them.
- Support staffing across the wider school should provide at least 1 and if possible 2 walkabout staff with at least one a senior and experienced practitioner. (this assumes all lessons are covered so any movement of teaching staff from walkabout duties to class teaching must be closely monitored as slack is needed to provide safe and adequate support)
- Breaks and lunch times require a minimum of 6 staff to provide safe supervision allowing both sufficient useful activities and some floating supervision

Support from walkabout staff

The young people in our care are often impulsive, emotional and challenging. They find the classroom particularly difficult. Teaching staff benefit from the presence of “Walkabout”; experienced colleagues there to support both students and staff who seek to deliver the best outcome and prevent further escalation. In order for this support system and partnership to be effective staff must adopt the following good habits.

Staff seeking support

Please be continually self-evaluative and suitably prepared so the need for support is rooted in the student’s complex and genuine needs not because of an ill-prepared lesson or clumsy behaviour management. Please do seek assistance even when responsibility lies with you but learn from such incidences and seek to avoid repetition. You need to win the confidence and trust of supporting colleagues who see your solid practice and know when you request help it is necessary and appropriate.

If we assume then the need for support is legitimate or necessary please observe the following

- Anticipate difficulty and call promptly and calmly for a preventative intervention. Work alongside support staff to agree your response. If you need and call for support you must respect the views of staff supporting and must not instruct them or demand certain responses as they must consider the needs of the wider school
- React promptly, decisively and clearly to the need for instant support in a crisis or potential crisis.
- If children need to leave class that should be planned with and accompanied by support staff. Students should not be sent unaccompanied
- Available classroom spaces and the quiet reflection areas are the only places where children should be removed to: it is comfortable and suitable for them to continue their work.
- The safe-room is a place for youngsters who have exited class and cannot access reflection and recovery spaces safely or usefully and to do so would undermine staff and students seeking to resolve issues safely. The safe-room therefore is likely to be a place where holding takes place and will be comfortable but minimalist and will have CCTV capability
- You should seek to reintegrate children as quickly as possible and offer them a prompt route to redemption and always celebrate their return to class.
- If the child fails to return or complete work in the designated quiet areas this becomes a disciplinary and pastoral manner you must take responsibility for but in practice getting youngsters back to class is the best outcome.

Staff offering support

- Be proactive in moving about the school, being visible and a calming and reassuring presence. Please never treat walkabout as an opportunity to tackle other tasks and be in other places. The expectation is you will patrol proactively when not directly engaged in supporting.

- Be prepared to lead and influence decision-making but always be driven by what is safest; there is a pressure to return children to class promptly but not if it will escalate or reinforce problems. Your priority is a safe school with problems diminishing.
- Once in your control the child's particular responsibility to you is to stay safely preferably in any available classroom or the recovery and reflection area, or another suitable safe place agreed and stated by you. If he fails to do this it becomes a disciplinary, pastoral matter for you. Whilst you can encourage him to return and/or to tackle his work in the quiet area that remains the responsibility of the teacher.

Available levels of support for staff

In a testing and busy SEMH environment it is important there is clarity about how to access support and what support the school can reasonably provide. The school is committed to a climate in which staff are robust and professional and independent in their approach

Staff can expect and currently benefit from:

1. Informal frequent and habitual access to senior colleagues on an ongoing basis
2. Performance management closely linked to school improvement and personal goals
3. Structured and planned support with behavioural/pastoral issues via the walkabout and catch-up systems and the end of day and end of week detention/resolution meetings with children and senior staff
4. Structured support with teaching via the observation feedback system and the weekly problem solving / best practice sessions.
5. Access to subject/curriculum support via LA and school links
6. A minimum of three time-tabled preparation periods
7. Opportunities to negotiate time off timetable to address major development/improvement tasks
8. Occasional INSET days left open to pursue individual professional agendas
9. Funding made available to provide or enable pertinent training
10. Funding made available to access suitable and high quality resources and materials
11. Flexibility and support over personal and domestic issues to support morale

The school expects:

1. Openness and clarity and balance about the need for and nature of support
2. Acceptance and ownership of PM goals and a genuine commitment to address them
3. Intelligent use of pastoral support systems so a balance is found between necessary support and necessary independence and ownership of student behaviour
4. Openness and an acceptance of the need for rigour in ensuring high standards are achieved and a willingness to embrace identified areas for development
5. Initiative and ownership in identifying areas for development and seeking specialist support and acting on it autonomously
6. Preparation time is managed well and used productively: such time can be argued for rationally and both agrees targets and delivers them
7. Such opportunities are valued and not taken for granted and if not exploited equivalent time is found elsewhere
8. Training impacts positively on student outcomes and is pertinent to SIP
9. Resource requests are sensibly, plausibly argued and costed
10. Necessary paperwork: lesson planning, incident reporting are completed diligently and meaningfully
11. Any such request is presented honestly and fully and such concessions are valued and returned when needed as an act of goodwill and teamwork.

Managing possible fixed-term exclusion: working supportively with parents and carers

Firstly we must work hard and creatively and flexibly to prevent and avoid it because it can generate risk to wellbeing and safety and if it is applied we must be confident it can be done safely and supportively and carers and parents are able to supervise their children without punitive economic consequence.

FTE is still sometimes a necessary and appropriate sanction; a suitable response to issues that impact upon the health and safety, wellbeing and happiness of all members of the school community.

It is not applied to punish the excluded student but to support and give justice to those hurt by behaviour and give a strong message to the wider school community.

We need to establish a way of working with families that enables us to do so r co-operatively and supportively.

- We share known facts of any incident with a potential for FTE with parents quickly but with the caveat that complex cases may necessarily require further and careful investigation. Parents should therefore be promptly told one way or the other.
- In most cases (this may not always be possible) the staff members most closely engaged with and who witnessed any incident should speak with the families of students involved so events are promptly, reliably and fully understood
- The views of parents and children on events and our possible collective response must be explored, taken seriously and a consensus sought.
- Parents should trust staff and not subject them to informal cross examination or question the accuracy or truth of their accounts.
- If parents have a genuine concern about staff integrity they should raise this with the head-teacher and a meeting should take place because any doubt about the truth or authenticity of staff reporting to and sharing with parents is most serious and should be investigated
- The school must take into account the domestic reality for families and be flexible about timings and timescales seeking to apply the shortest and fairest period of exclusion.
- Parents, particularly when dangerous violence, recklessness or criminality are involved, ultimately must accept that the school has the right to exclude unopposed and without appeal for up to five days.
- The school should use this power wisely and strive at all times to agree a period of exclusion that is brief and regarded as fair by all parties including the victim and his family also.
- If matters become contentious and agreement cannot be reached and in fact there is dispute and upset it is essential that a meeting is set up and any decision deferred until that face to face meeting can take place. We invariably understand each other better when we speak person to person, face to face. That meeting should seek to achieve agreement and consensus.
- In the absence of agreement the head-teacher will decide the outcome as she has the authority to do so. It may be that this will cause short term friction and contention but we hope over the longer term firstly such intervention will be rare and secondly over time such decisions will come to be regarded as necessary and reasonable.

Drug and substance misuse

The school takes a pragmatic view given young people naturally resist being lectured and even attempts to supportively inform are sometimes perceived negatively and this coupled with the natural risk taking and rebellion that often characterises adolescence and these sometimes exaggerated in our students. Teenagers will do risky things we know that and we want to support and challenge them and protect their health and wellbeing.

It is our job as teachers and parents to support and guide and protect the children and the school can seek to inform skilfully but in reality both experience and precedents evidence that there will be periodic episodes of use and attempts to access alcohol and drugs whilst in our care both on-site and in the local community and the key questions for us are what can we do to inhibit and actively discourage this and what do we do when it happens?

- Like good parents keep a dialogue, a conversation going about the health risks one that avoids lecturing but seeks to skilfully and persistently highlight the risks and does so by explicitly stating our care and concern for them; we must avoid being didactic and hectoring or the message is ignored.
- Pragmatically and rigorously keep the use of tobacco to an absolute minimum (with zero our goal) and always off-site and in public spaces where the furtive and secretive process of taking anything more risky and illegal much harder.
- Periodically remind students that that they risk criminal prosecution and that whoever shares drugs is in law regarded a supplier.
- A visit from the local police and their drug sniffing dog both fascinating and a potential deterrent as is the occasional “drop in” visit by local police officers.
- Inform the Police and bring them on-site where on balance of probabilities students may be in possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia.
- If we suspect something always challenge students directly and politely and write to parents when there is reasonable suspicion (this in practice is often the reality as the student drug user, typically Cannabis, is skilled and secretive) of drug or substance use and there is a model letter that emphasises a constructive and supportive approach but one that makes clear the risks and what could be at stake.

“We have advised the young people that they risk criminal prosecution and that whoever supplied it is in law regarded a drug dealer. Any student sharing and providing drugs would risks permanent exclusion. Any developing habit with Cannabis can lead to long term psychological problems so there is the critical matter of health and wellbeing.”

- In practice young people are invariably pragmatic and if we make them feel sufficiently scrutinized, uncomfortable and at risk of exposure they will step back however this highlights the risk of...doing nothing as this has this opposite effect and leaves them feeling more comfortable and secure and they will persist and increase in their activities; so we must make a skilled and calculated fuss and leave them feeling exposed.
- Serious, repeated and or blatant and on balance of probabilities proven use and distribution of drugs is likely to lead to police intervention and then potential criminal prosecution and the possibility of lengthy fixed term exclusion and ultimately the loss of a place in school; that said we will in the spirit of forgiveness and fresh starts always look for ways to recover and protect a young person’s place in school.

Managing the risk of violence in school safely

We must protect each other's health and safety. The entire school community cannot and is not expected to tolerate dangerous or persistent violence in any form from adults and children alike.

We do distinguish between different levels of aggressive and violent behaviour.

- We can manage spontaneous outbursts and losses of control particularly with younger students but repeated violent and explosive episodes become harder to manage safely as youngsters physically mature.
- Unprovoked and planned assaults are never acceptable. We believe there is a significant difference between two youngsters falling out and exchanging blows in anger and a premeditated assault.
- The school has always reacted promptly and strongly to assaults on staff: particularly when they have behaved wholly reasonably and fairly; the school would eventually cease to function if students did not regard such behaviour as entirely unacceptable and taboo.
- We will always consider each case on individually. Health and safety, the safe and secure running of the school and the happiness and security of all of the children and the wider school community will inform our decisions.

We must also address the possibility of aggressive or violent behaviour from visitors to the school. In these circumstances we need to consider the following

- Do not attempt to manage difficult, belligerent or potentially violent people; remain calm and neutral withdraw and inform the police promptly. Call upon colleagues immediately for support. Use your walkie-talkie.
- It is reasonable to politely ask people to leave the school site but if you believe this may be dangerously provocative or inflammatory you may decide not to.
- Protect as far as is reasonable and practicable the students in your care: removing them from potential danger or difficulty and calling immediately for support from colleagues.
- Calm withdrawal, the prompt seeking of support and calling the police offer us the quickest route to safety.
- There is no expectation that staff should manage anyone outside the community of children and colleagues. If a dynamic and on the job risk assessment and instinct and judgement suggest a calm, sensible and assertive intervention could bring a speedy and happy resolution then they may choose to act but always mindful of their health and safety responsibilities to themselves and the youngsters in their care.

Searching youngsters and confiscating items

Every school's student community always contains a minority of students who will attempt to bring on site inappropriate and unsuitable, even unsafe, substances and items.

The school rarely searches instead relying on their co-operation to hand over risky and or inappropriate items.

If risks mean we must and we can safely, swiftly and decisively intervene and search for and confiscate any item or substance that presents an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of the school community, students, staff, neighbours and visitors then we will without their co-operation

If a lack of co-operation prevents us quickly making things safe and it adds to risk through stridency and aggression the police will be involved.

Searches should then be rare because in our setting they are risky and motivated only by the determination to keep everyone safe; a search may be prove necessary in the following circumstances and in the following ways.

- Firstly we are not addressing things like mobile phones and other gadgets here nor tobacco as these can be dealt with without the potentially risky and escalatory business of searches but through working with children and parents and using reward and sanction and vigilance; they do not present an immediate risk of serious harm...
- That said sophisticated mobile phone technology means it may be necessary in some circumstances where the risk of harm greater to search and confiscate phones; for example cyber bullying is happening "live" or children and young people are accessing and sharing extreme sites that present an immediate risk of psychological harm and these distinct from accessing music or texting that are nuisance factors and not allowed but not worthy of a risky and potentially escalatory search and confiscation.
- Senior staff must be both informed and involved and the likely risks and outcomes of any intervention fully but speedily reflected on and explored and planned for (dynamic risk assessment) and the value of a short, sharp informed conversation that leads to decisive intervention is clear if risk of harm high.
- There should be no forcible searches and confiscation unless there is a burning health and safety issue for example staff believe the child might be about to ingest a drug or act out violently with a weapon and in these cases the police should be called to support even if staff judge they have the confidence and skill set to get a quick safe win.
- Please consider prior to any potential search or any escalation to police intervention if there is reasonable suspicion but compliance from the child cannot be achieved then parents can be informed and the child taken off-site and an FTE applied **but if the initial risk is serious and or made worse by the student's behaviour or there is an element of illegality/criminality the police should be involved immediately.**

- For example a child with no history of risky or violent behaviour carrying a small Swiss Army Knife he won't hand over but can be safely returned home then we have that option but a child with a lock knife and a more aggressive and risky history leaves no wriggle room; in all but the most pressing and immediately high risk situations staff and children must have some space to resolve matters peaceably and staff some discretion and thinking space and wriggle room to make the safest most pragmatic decision.
- If then, on balance of probabilities, staff reasonably suspect that an illegal or inappropriate and risky and damaging substance or item has been brought on-site or a phone/gadget is being riskily misused and there is a pressing and genuine threat to the welfare, wellbeing and health and safety of the school community for example alcohol, drugs, a knife or improvised weapon, accessing and or sharing pornography or extreme violence then searching and confiscation are reasonable and proportionate however...
- The search may be reasonable but it should still normally proceed only after the youngster has had an opportunity to be reasoned with and given the opportunity to voluntarily handover the risky substance or item **but this reasonable and stepped approach can and should be immediately usurped and the police called urgently if for example it involved a weapon or a drug or staff suspect phones are being used in abusing or grooming.**
- Any intervention whatever its outcome must be documented on a serious incident form

Working with the Police Service

There are occasions as above when it will be necessary to seek the support of the police:

To remove or respond suitably to any person within or beyond the school community who presents a serious threat to the safety and security of the school's extended community and this sadly may include parents.

- To recover safely students who have absconded or are missing (please see guidelines on absconding)
- To address high risk and potentially illegal/criminal student behaviours for example the use of drugs or extreme destructiveness and violence, being in possession of a weapon.
- To support us in keeping children safe for example a restraint to prevent harm to another child, is becoming too protracted and risky and distressing for student and staff.
- To remove from site excluded students refusing to comply with that exclusion
- To work alongside Social Care in addressing emerging child protection cases

We must apply our experience, knowledge and common sense to our work and make sensible judgements in any other unforeseen circumstance or event that may require intervention or support from the police.

Parents will be informed promptly if their son is likely to be subject to police intervention and given the opportunity to be on-site and accompany and support their child. In the absence of a parent the school should seek to support the student.

Once the police are involved the school places its trust in their judgment and professionalism in tackling issues appropriately but remains a critical friend.

Child protection: managing student risk in our setting* :the biggest risks to health and safety in our school are rooted in the complexity and challenge of the student body (peer on peer) and our own inevitable frailties as people and our most important and pressing health and safety work is done to keep them safe

*The complex and mercurial nature of our young people and the shifting chemistry of their relationships with each other and the sometime turbulence of their lives and the latent quality of unknown and emerging risks in their nature and in their lives make the notion of “dynamic risk assessment” critical to keeping everybody safe. This is a practicable and reasonable response to the anticipation that risk will be an ever moving target and to have nearly seventy individualised risk assessments not only bureaucratic but unworkable as staff would be overloaded with information and unable to act safely and decisively.

Student Risk	Managing that risk safely
<p>The student body by its nature as “stated” SEMH contains and presents a whole range of known and unknown (latent risk) and also emerging and shifting risks because being multiply and diversely risky is a core and common feature of the children and young people in our care</p> <p>There is also a risky “chemistry” in their interactions and relationships centrally with each other and all those they encounter from teachers through visiting professionals to delivery drivers and the neighbours....</p> <p>These risks shift and slide, rise and fall constantly in all the children as so many factors home and school can and do impact upon them</p> <p>Such potential for risk and difficulty can seem overwhelming and unmanageable; how can we, how should we respond?</p>	<p>Culture and ethos: bringing the right values and attitudes to our work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and apply the notion of personal responsibility for maintaining one’s own and the health and safety of others. • Understand too that we can only do what is reasonable and practicable about things we can reasonably anticipate. • A culture of no blame and one also where risk and its management are spoken of freely and frequently is essential • The application of dynamic risk assessment is critical; we are ever alert to emerging risk and take reasonable steps to manage; this key in that context of personal responsibility • Particular to our own school culture is the benchmarking against what we would want for our own children that is the highest levels of care and vigilance and protecting against becoming institutionalised and desensitized. • A culture of praise, affirmation, compassion and forgiveness that promotes good and therefore less risky behaviours in the children and young people. <p>Rhythm and routine: making sure the framework and prompts for sharing risk and reflecting and acting are in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The daily accessing of the dedicated safeguarding email account as risks emerge and our responses set out... • The daily ritual of our morning briefing sessions in Simon’s room on the bell each morning Tue-Thu for the critical briefing and Mondays and Fridays for our more developed operational reflection and planning and the sharing of best practice respectively where every day the set agenda triggers sharing and discussion and plans for the safety and wellbeing of the children and the immediate operational risks and challenges plus any emerging burning issues. • We will ask every day what do we need to do reliably well, better and or differently to keep the children safe. • Whilst logistically more awkward because of staff working patterns we can and do regroup at the end of the day to share, reflect and plan and will continue to do so. • We have all accessed e-mail, text and mobile messages to share also and the conventional boundaries of the working day should not restrict our sharing and in practice we all often share significant insights, anxieties or practical operational information after the school day and then coalesce them at the following morning’s briefing <p>A way of working: once the day begins the dynamic and shifting and surprising nature of our work needs thinking about and constant intelligent tweaking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the working day begins we must be rigorous in our professional housekeeping and if the conventional work-place deals with emerging trip hazards then we must be alive to who steps off a taxi in a risky frame of mind intent on dispute or how events and consequent tensions and risks unfold as the day progresses and so our working day begins and continues as the children are the risk. • The “walkabout” system is critical with staff offering not just practical help but a reference point for sharing with the nominated in-charge a member of the SLT there specifically to provide the capacity to absorb, think about and act on emerging risk and difficulty from small operational tweaks to more significant interventions. • Related to this is the massive significance always of putting children and their supervision first, no trips to make tea no brief stop-overs at the staff room as it is exactly in these nooks and crannies of staff frailty and absence that the BESD student does most mischief and harm and is most at risk. • Being prompt, punctual and visible; where we should be, when we should be, all these are essential to safety in our setting as are simple practical things like having a charged walkie-talkie on the right frequency, a school mobile that is similarly charged and a brain switched to super vigilance mode that expresses and shares emerging risk freely • If the daily morning briefings with their set agenda and prompts for risk awareness and management provide structured talking and sharing and action then once the day starts our established, ongoing and multiple and diverse professional conversations are critical and it is in habitually, obsessively and in time instinctively sharing with each other every significant nuance of the children’s behaviours, state of mind and physical movements that we keep everybody safe.