

Behaviour and Inclusion at Testbourne School



Whilst reading this document you may wish to refer to the school's Behaviour for Learning policy, our 'Behaviour for Learning and Anti-Bullying Charter' booklet and our Mental Health strategy document 'You can't stop the waves...but you can learn to surf'. All are available on our school website. You may also wish to refer to the Department of Education (DfE) guidance on Behaviour in Schools, the latest version of which is available on their website.

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Introduction

“The school is a calm and purposeful environment. Pupils feel safe and most behave very well. They are respectful of each other and have warm relationships with staff. Pupils’ voices are heard. They make a strong contribution to the school’s focus on creating a culture of equality. Pupils are understanding of and value diversity. They are not concerned about bullying and know that discrimination is never tolerated.”
Ofsted, November 2023

Our mission at Testbourne is to model, develop and teach our students to help them become **independent, resilient, and responsible** adults. Our inclusion approaches are an important part of this mission.

In recent years there has been a shift in the educational landscape, and this has become more pronounced post-pandemic. We have responded to many of the issues, such as rising levels of school absence and concerns about mental health. For example, two years ago we published our rationale document on Mental Health, ‘You can’t stop the waves...but you can learn to surf.’ We continue to adapt our approaches and engage with the latest research and guidance in these areas.

Current research and thinking recognises the importance of a strong behaviour culture in schools. This is founded on clear expectations, rules and routines, and the understanding that no child is exempt from taking responsibility for their actions. Consequence, and appropriate support, are important parts of that culture. We do a great disservice to our young people if we do not instil in them that society has rules and cultural norms that need to be followed and practised. Failure to do so in adult life could lead to criminal behaviour which would rightly be met with legal consequence. The latest guidance from the Department of Education (February 2024) sets out the framework for all schools.

Recently, we published our ‘Behaviour for Learning and Anti-Bullying Charter’ document which has now been republished considering recent changes to our processes and support. This provides the detail of what we do and why we do it.

Over the last two years, we have introduced more reflective approaches to behaviour management with its focus on building positive, trusting relationships, and ensuring that consequence leads to learning and not punishment for its own ends. The work of Paul Dix, a renowned specialist in behaviour in schools, heavily influences our thinking.

This booklet explains how we have evolved our practice to support children who are dysregulated. Children will continue to be recognised for positive behaviours in the same ways as before. You can find out more about this in our behaviour for learning policy and our Behaviour for Learning and Antibullying Charter booklet that can both be found on our website.

Evolving our inclusive education model – where did we start?

We have always been committed to ensuring an inclusive education for all our students and, therefore, we decided that it was necessary to review our existing processes. To achieve this, we needed to know more, and so, over the course of the 2023-2024 academic year, Senior leaders undertook the following:

- School visits – we looked at a range of inclusive models across several secondary school settings, both inside and outside of the county. This also included looking at specialist provision schools and pupil referral units.
- We engaged in discussions with experts in inclusion.
- We had discussions with experts in SEND education.
- We researched widely using books, research papers, webinars, and other resources.

In drawing our learning together, we recognised three important points:

- The inclusion educational landscape is complex with many contributing factors and layers.
- An inclusive or trauma informed approach to education does not mean that there are never any consequences or that expectations are lowered.
- Learning must be prioritised. Children come to school to learn. We must enable them to attend lessons and engage in learning.
- We need to plan our resource based on what the school can afford as a low-funded secondary school.
- We must help children develop resilience, learning to self-regulate and overcome challenges.

Evolving our inclusive education model – what has the research told us?

“Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum that develops their understanding of the world around them. High expectations are set for what they can achieve. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The individual needs of these pupils are known and met.” Ofsted, November 2023

The research literature is extensive, and it would not be possible to outline it all here, but we would like to highlight some key learning. We have provided some selective reading at the end of this booklet.

Inclusive education requires an understanding of trauma-informed approaches and the neuroscience of the adolescent brain. This is a well-documented area, and it is important to stress that these approaches do not mean that consequence for poor behaviour does not form an important part of helping children understand boundaries. The reality is that a dysregulated child is often unable to deal with situations. For this reason, we need to refine our models to help students understand and process their emotions. By doing so, they can self-regulate more effectively and be able to process their actions, take responsibility for them, and understand why a consequence may be needed.

Research areas that inform our practice include:


- The neuroscience of stress and dysregulation.
- Brain development and trauma informed approaches
- ‘Flipping our lid’ and the use of the Hand Model of the Brain.
- De-escalation skills and avoiding conflict cycles.
- Self-regulation and executive function (the mental processes that help us set and carry out goals).
- Emotion Coaching

Through a combination of ongoing staff development and review of our practice and procedures, we continue to embed these ideas into appropriate practical action within our mainstream education setting.

Evolving our inclusive education model – Key changes

In summary we made the following changes to our practice from September 2024.

1. We removed the reflection room as a consequence because, for a small number of children, it was not having a positive effect on modifying their behaviour and was a very expensive resource. Reflection room consequences were a source of conflict for these children.
2. We implemented a “Return to Learning” process. Children who are dysregulated are taken to Return to Learning where they are given resources and guidance to help quickly regulate themselves. This allows for take-up time and a “change of face” and allows children to return to their lessons once they are regulated. In most cases, a teacher issues a consequence for any disruption that may have occurred. This process is also for children who are not where they should be – i.e. those truanting lessons. Please note that Return to Learning is **not** a consequence. It is a room, staff and facility to help children to regulate, understand where things have gone wrong and how to remedy them as well as understand and accept the minor consequence that may arise from disruption or other negative behaviours in the lesson or around school. Children who are successful in getting to a regulated state will return to their lessons or break or lunch. Our experience is that this can be achieved in under 10 minutes for most children. The aim is to help children prevent getting caught in escalating consequences without compromising on our expectations.
3. We moved the SEND Hub and renamed it the Support Hub, and it now provides a wider range of support. This is a larger room as the number of children who need support has significantly increased since the inception of the original SEND Hub. Children need to be calm and regulated to be in the Support Hub. If they are dysregulated, they are taken to “Return to Learning” to regulate and then return to the Support Hub or their lessons as appropriate. This preserves the Support Hub as a calm and quiet facility for all children with a range of needs, especially those that can be dysregulated by others. The Support Hub helps children with anxiety, for example, access school because it will be a calm and regulated environment.
4. We re-branded Extended After-School Reflection as Senior Leadership Detention to ensure that students are clear about the significance of the consequence. Senior Leadership Detention runs for 2 hours after school on a



Friday and is used when a standard After School Reflection has been truanted, a student has failed due to expectations not being met or in circumstances that Senior Leaders believe warrant a more significant consequence than one hour after school but not a significant enough circumstance to warrant suspension.

Evolving our inclusive education model – Overall Approach


During lesson time, all children are expected to be in one of five places.

- In class.
- The Support Hub with permission and as part of a planned strategy– see below for further information.
- Return to Learning - see below for further information.
- A pre-arranged meeting with an adult.
- Reflection with a member of staff - see below for further information.

No student is allowed to wander the school site during lesson time unaccompanied. This is truancy from lessons and undermines our culture and expectations as well as making it extremely challenging to safeguard students.

When a student disrupts the learning of others, refuses to follow the reasonable instructions of staff (including relocation to another classroom) or breaches other aspects of our Behaviour for Learning policy then:

1. Wherever possible the first step will be to de-escalate the situation in the moment and return the student to class. The class teacher will set an appropriate consequence in follow-up. This will usually be an After School Reflection (ASR).
2. The member of staff will remind the student of our expectations and that refusal will result in an On Call request. If the student continues to refuse, then On Call will be requested.
3. On Call staff will restate the expectation and aim to de-escalate the situation. If the student complies then they will be returned to lesson, or relocated to another classroom, and the teacher will set a consequence. If this cannot be achieved, then the On Call staff will escort the student to the 'Return to Learning' room.
4. The 'Return to Learning' room is not a consequence but is designed to give children the facility and resources to regulate themselves, to understand the situation, and to return them to learning as soon as possible. This is a way of providing take-up time and 'change of face' without escalation. The 'Return to Learning' section below will outline what happens next.
5. If the student is regulated, they will be returned to lessons and the class teacher will set an appropriate consequence in follow-up. This will usually be an After School Reflection.
6. If the student refuses to go to the 'Return to Learning' room, then the likely outcome will be Out of Circulation (see later) or suspension. Return to learning is not a consequence and children are not required to remain there at break or



lunch or for any longer than necessary so there is no reason to refuse to go with the On Call member of staff.

7. If a student is unable to regulate or refuses to leave 'Return to Learning', the likely outcome will be Out of Circulation or suspension. This is to ensure that the resource of 'Return to Learning' does not get overwhelmed. In our experience, children can regulate themselves within 5-10 minutes in most circumstances.
8. The process above applies to any student who is dysregulated when working in the Support Hub.

Evolving our inclusive education model – The Support Hub

Our Hub has been renamed 'The Support Hub' and has relocated to larger accommodation

- This space is used for **calm, quiet** and **regulated** students only.
- No student is allowed access without prior arrangement as part of planned support. It is important that children access their lessons whenever possible as this is where they get the specialist teaching they need.
- Freedom to use the Support Hub at break and lunch remains but there is an expectation that it is a quiet and calm space. This will help children to decompress and regulate at regular intervals throughout the day without missing out on learning.
- Students who are dysregulated also dysregulate other children, some of whom are very vulnerable. This means that if a student is dysregulated in the Support Hub they are taken to our 'Return to Learning' room. If they are then able to regulate themselves, they can then return to the Support Hub (see below for further information) or may go to lessons if that is appropriate.
- We hope the improved calm, quiet and larger space may help other children who have avoided the Hub at times because it can be a little chaotic. They should feel confident that they can access the Hub at break and lunch and during lessons as part of a pre-arranged support plan.
- This calm and quiet space helps children with anxiety and other conditions that find attendance at school difficult to access the Support Hub. This will help them increase their attendance and confidence.

Evolving our inclusive education model – The ‘Return to Learning’ room

‘Return to Learning’ is a facility to enable students to de-escalate and regulate without escalation of consequence or personnel involved. If a child is dysregulated, they are taken to ‘Return to Learning’. ‘Return to Learning’ is staffed largely by our learning support team and all staff are having ongoing training in de-escalation strategies and trauma-informed practice.

Return to learning is not meant to be a consequence for behaviour. Being taken to ‘Return to Learning’ does not mean you have to stay there for the day or that you miss break or lunch. Instead, it is a place to achieve regulation so that learning can continue. A child taken to Return to Learning will not stay for long.

Wider support is aimed at helping children to calm themselves and self-regulate over the long term.

In the ‘Return to Learning’ room:

- A student is able to briefly access equipment and resources that may help them to regulate. This includes everything from fidget toys to weighted blankets.
- When the child is calm, a member of staff will talk to them about what has occurred, helping them to process information and understand what needs to happen next, including any consequence that may be applied due to the primary behaviours that occurred if this is required.
- If attendance at ‘Return to Learning’ is successful, the likely outcome is that the child will return to lessons and will be issued an After School Reflection set by the appropriate member of staff. This may be the subject teacher if dysregulation occurred during a lesson.
- Should a child not be able to regulate themselves, or should they continue to refuse to engage with staff, the outcome is likely to be Out of Circulation or suspension.

In our experience, in the right environment, children regulate themselves quite quickly and can be rapidly helped to understand the situation. This usually takes 5-10 minutes.

Students cannot electively take themselves to ‘Return to Learning’. They must be taken to Return to Learning by On Call or Support Hub staff who will take them in person and give handover information to the appropriate adults.

Evolving our inclusive education model – Reflection with a member of staff (aka Out of Circulation)

A small proportion of students have needed the consequence of Reflection Room at times. Unfortunately, for a small proportion of those requiring the Reflection Room, it was no longer modifying their behaviours and having a positive effect. For that reason, from September 2024, we ceased using Reflection Room as part of our range of consequences. Now:

- For some students, where reflection out of lessons may be of benefit as an alternative to suspension, they are likely to comply with the expectations of reflection, and reflection may modify future behaviours, it may be arranged for them to be supervised individually by a member of staff. This is no longer in a designated room and the student will likely follow that member of staff for the day, or work where they are directed.
- Reflection will typically be for 1 day but may vary for more significant incidents and on a case-by-case basis.
- If a student does not comply with the member of staff supervising their Reflection, then they will initially be referred to the 'Return to Learning' room to help them get back on track. If this is unsuccessful then the likely outcome will be suspension.
- Please note that Reflection may not automatically be used instead of suspension. A child who is extremely disruptive or who frequently refuses to follow instructions of staff cannot complete Reflection in this manner as they are likely to disrupt learning around the school. For those children, the likely consequence will be suspension for incidents of this level.



Evolving our inclusive education model – Senior Leadership Detention

These are supervised by members of the Senior Leadership Team.

- They are 2-hours in length and on a Friday from 15.10.
- Truancy from this consequence demonstrates a student's defiance of the most senior colleagues in the school. They will be given a second opportunity to attend.
- If the second opportunity is truanted, then the likely consequence for this will be suspension.
- Senior leaders may set a Senior Leadership Detention in lieu of other more significant consequences should, in their professional judgement, it be deemed appropriate.

Evolving our inclusive education model – truancy, wandering the school site and persistent issues

Truancy and wandering the site.

It is unusual to see children out of lessons at Testbourne. A very small number of children, however, sometimes truant their lessons and wander around the site, sometimes collecting friends along the way.

No student is allowed to wander the school site during lesson time unaccompanied. This is truancy from lessons and undermines our culture and expectations as well as making it extremely challenging to safeguard students.

Should a student be wandering or truanting:

- Students will be taken by On Call/circulating staff to the 'Return to Learning' room to regulate them.
- If this is successful, then they will be returned to lessons or the Support Hub if this is more appropriate (if the professional judgement of staff is that they would be better served learning in the Support Hub for a period of time e.g. if dealing with personal trauma).
- If a student refuses to go to the 'Return to Learning' room, or they run off from staff, then the likely outcome will be suspension. As explained above, 'Return to Learning' is not a consequence so there is no reason for a student to refuse to go there.
- If at any point a student is unsuccessful again in the classroom, or the Support Hub, or wandering the site, then a further attempt will be made to regulate in the 'Return to Learning' room. If this is unsuccessful then the likely outcome will be suspension.

We will work with students to identify the reasons for truancy and overcome any issues with particular lessons should they exist.

Multiple incidents

Where a student is frequently dysregulated then staff will make all reasonable efforts to regulate them using the 'Return to Learning' room. If this is unsuccessful then professional decisions will be made about whether to use Reflection with a member of staff or suspension. This is because we must always be mindful of the amount of disruption to learning a child may be causing because we are required to maintain a safe, orderly, calm and productive environment for all children.



Other aspects of our behaviour and inclusion strategies remain unchanged

We have limited resources, but we will still seek to support children through a range of strategies and interventions if their behaviour is of concern.

In-class strategies remain the same. Where students are disrupting learning in lessons, they will be redirected by the member of staff. Should they continue to disrupt, they are issued with a yellow card as a visual reminder of expectations. Should disruption further continue, a red card is issued, and the student must relocate to the department on-call room.

We may still operate twilight, staggered day provision and direction off-site, as identified in our behaviour policy, if we think these will be beneficial in preventing further escalation for a child and providing a circuit breaker as needed. These provisions are used sparingly and for a very small number of children.

Conclusion

This is an evolving way of working for us and so, therefore, it may not always be possible to map out every scenario that can arise. That said, this booklet outlines the general principles that underpin what we are wanting to achieve. We hope to provide children who are dysregulated with space, resource, and assistance to regulate themselves to help prevent them from escalation to the most significant consequences and therefore reduce the number of times they are suspended and further alienated from school. Over time, we will hope to develop children's self-regulation skills so that they need the facility of 'Return to Learning' less frequently.

We hope that you find this insight into the research and how it has informed our practice and processes helpful. You can find some references below if you are interested in finding out more.

Selective Reading

The following is a non-exhaustive list of some of the research that influences our work on inclusive education.

1. The work of Paul Dix: [HOME | WhenTheAdultsChange](#)
2. Work at the Key Education Centre (Gosport and Havant) [Attachment and Trauma Informed Practice at the Key Education Centre](#)
3. Brain Development and Trauma: [Developmental-Trauma-Close-Up-Revised-Jan-2020.pdf \(beaconhouse.org.uk\)](#)
4. Executive Functioning in the Classroom: [EEF | Self-Regulation and Executive Function \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)
5. 'Flipping the Lid' Hand Brain Model: [Hand Model of the Brain - Why we "flip our lid". \(startnowcornwall.org.uk\)](#)
6. The Conflict Cycle: [Handout-The-Conflict-Cycle-E7.pdf \(togetherthevoice.org\)](#)
7. Emotion Coaching: [Educational Psychology Service Hub - Emotion Coaching \(google.com\)](#)