



MARY ELLIOT ACADEMY

Behaviour & Relationships Policy

Version: **1**

Ratified by the Local Governing Body

Signed by the LGB: **21.01.2026**

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1. Rationale

At Mary Elliot Academy, behaviour is understood as a form of communication that often reflects unmet needs. Many of our learners experience difficulties with communication, emotional regulation, and social understanding. We therefore view behaviour not as a problem to manage, but as an opportunity to teach, support, and strengthen relationships.

Our approach is informed by developing trauma-informed practice: we recognise that safety, trust, and connection are prerequisites for learning. We are committed to understanding each learner's experiences and supporting them to regulate, communicate, and succeed.

The Academy aims to:

- Provide a safe, predictable, and caring environment where every learner can thrive.
- Promote positive relationships as the foundation for effective learning.
- Equip staff with the skills and confidence to respond calmly, consistently, and compassionately to behaviour.
- Collaborate with families and external professionals to ensure holistic, person-centred support.

Research demonstrates that person-centred and relationship-based planning improves wellbeing, choice, and participation (Holburn et al., 2004; Robertson et al., 2006). Our tiered behaviour support model embodies this principle, ensuring that every learner's voice is valued and their individual needs are understood and met.

2. Principles and Ethos

Positive, trusting relationships are central to all we do. Our ethos is built on respect, understanding, and dignity, recognising that everyone in our community—students, parents, carers, and staff—contributes to a culture of safety and belonging.

At Mary Elliot Academy, we:

- Believe that learning is enhanced through positive relationships and emotional security.
- Promote kindness, fairness, and mutual respect in all interactions.
- Value individuality and celebrate progress in all its forms.
- Encourage collaboration between home, school, and wider agencies.

- Commit to trauma-informed and restorative approaches that prioritise connection and repair over punishment.

We believe that a calm, predictable environment supports regulation and provides the structure in which learners can take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them.

3. Aims and Expectations

Mary Elliot Academy seeks to ensure that:

- Everyone feels physically and emotionally safe within the Academy.
- Everyone is valued, respected, and treated fairly.
- Positive behaviour and achievement are recognised and celebrated.
- Learners are supported to develop self-regulation, resilience, and social understanding.
- All students access a learning environment that meets their individual needs.
- Parents and carers are genuine partners in supporting behaviour and wellbeing.
- Staff work collaboratively, reflectively, and consistently to understand and respond to behaviour.
- Where appropriate, external agencies are engaged to provide additional expertise and support.

Behaviour support is integral to the curriculum. It teaches the social and emotional skills learners need to succeed beyond school and ensures that every student leaves Mary Elliot Academy equipped with the key skills for independence, confidence, and lifelong learning.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Local Governing Body

- Ensure that a legally compliant Behaviour and Relationships Policy is in place and implemented.
- Review its effectiveness annually through data, reports, and feedback.

Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

- Oversee the consistent implementation and evaluation of this policy.
- Report regularly to Governors on behavioural trends and outcomes.

- Ensure staff are appropriately trained and supported.
- Promote a whole-school culture that values relational and trauma-informed practice.

Behaviour Lead (SLT)

- Lead and monitor the strategic implementation of this policy across the Academy.
- Ensure Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) are developed, reviewed, and quality-assured.
- Provide coaching and guidance to staff and ensure data analysis informs practice.
- Liaise with the Attendance Lead to address behaviour-related absence.

Positive Behaviour Lead

- Support day-to-day implementation of the policy and coordinate the behaviour support team.
- Lead on individualised support, including Positive Handling Plans and risk assessments.
- Deliver staff training and facilitate reflective practice following incidents.
- Meet weekly with the Behaviour Lead to review data and outcomes.

Teachers and Class Teams

- Implement the policy consistently within classrooms.
- Understand the individual needs and communication profiles of students.
- Develop and review Wellbeing Passports and BSPs in partnership with parents and professionals.
- Use relational and proactive strategies to support regulation and learning.

All Staff

- Model positive, respectful behaviour and professional conduct at all times.
- Treat students and colleagues with dignity and fairness.
- Challenge and report discriminatory, derogatory, or unkind behaviour through CPOMS.

- Maintain a clean, safe environment and promote pride in the school community.
- Reflect on their own practice and relationships as part of continuous improvement.

5. Standards of Behaviour

Staff, volunteers, and visitors are expected to model the behaviour they wish to see. Professionalism, empathy, and consistency underpin our approach. Behaviour expectations are communicated clearly and applied fairly, taking account of each learner's special educational needs, disabilities, and vulnerabilities.

We recognise our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for students with SEN and disabilities. Individualised support is provided through our **Tiered Behaviour Support Offer**, ensuring equity and inclusion.

Behaviour is viewed as communication. Staff are supported to interpret and respond to the *function* of behaviour, which may relate to:

- Access to desired activities or objects.
- Seeking social attention or connection.
- Avoidance of demands or environments.
- Sensory regulation.
- Pain, discomfort, or emotional distress.

We prioritise proactive support, de-escalation, and reinforcement of positive behaviour. Praise, encouragement, and natural consequences are used to promote responsibility and mutual respect.

Mary Elliot Academy is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that behaviour support is consistent across settings and aligned with each learner's individual needs.

6. Team Teach

Mary Elliot Academy staff receive regular Team Teach training, a nationally accredited, BILD ACT-certified approach compliant with the Restraint Reduction Network Training Standards.

Team Teach emphasises a 95 % focus on de-escalation, with physical intervention used **only as a last resort** to keep everyone safe.

Training principles:

- **Respectful:** preserving dignity and choice.

- **Supportive:** prioritising emotional and physical wellbeing.
- **Practical:** equipping staff with safe, evidence-based techniques.
- **Mindful:** promoting reflection and learning after every incident.

Where physical intervention is necessary to prevent harm, it must:

- Be reasonable, proportionate, and in the child's best interests.
- Be consistent with the student's Behaviour Support Plan (BSP).
- Be recorded on CPOMS within 24 hours and reviewed promptly.

Following any use of physical intervention, staff and students participate in a reflective debrief to learn from the incident and reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

7. Prevention and De-escalation

The Academy prioritises proactive, preventative approaches that minimise the need for restrictive practices. Staff aim to identify early signs of dysregulation and respond calmly, ensuring that learners feel safe, understood, and supported.

“De-escalation is the process of calming a situation in which a student is becoming upset, frustrated or angry, preventing escalation by providing timely and effective support.” — Team Teach

Primary Prevention

Outlined within each BSP, this includes:

- Avoiding known triggers and stressors.
- Creating opportunities for communication, choice, and success.
- Adjusting the environment to meet sensory and physical needs.
- Providing predictability through routines and clear expectations.
- Ensuring sufficient staffing levels and trained personnel.

Secondary Prevention

Used when early signs of distress appear:

- Redirecting to a preferred or calming activity.
- Offering reassurance, reduced demands, or a change of adult.
- Encouraging self-regulation and coping strategies.

Reactive Strategies (Crisis Phase)

Applied only when behaviour presents a significant risk to the student or others. These may include protective physical interventions, withdrawal, or relocation to a low-stimulation space. The guiding principle is “safety, dignity, and least restriction.”

All incidents are followed by review, reflection, and where required, updates to BSPs or risk assessments.

8. Reactive Procedures and Reasonable Force

Occasionally, despite preventative measures, behaviour may present serious risk. In such cases, staff may use reasonable force, in line with:

- Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (Department for Education, 2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)

Use of force must always:

- Be the minimum necessary for the shortest possible time.
- Be in response to immediate risk of harm.
- Never be used as punishment or to enforce compliance.
- Avoid pain, breathing restriction, and vulnerable body areas.
- Be recorded and reported to the Behaviour Lead or Positive Behaviour Lead immediately.

Each incident prompts a review of the BSP to identify additional preventative strategies.

9. Tiered Behaviour Support Offer

Mary Elliot Academy operates a **three-tiered model** of behaviour support that ensures every learner receives proportionate, evidence-based help.

Tier 1 – Universal Support (for all learners)

- Pathway-specific expectations and visual supports.
- Wellbeing Passports outlining communication needs, preferences, and triggers.
- Personalised reinforcement systems and proactive classroom strategies.
- Consistent relational routines that promote safety and belonging.

Tier 2 – Targeted Support (for identified learners)

- Individual BSPs developed with staff, parents, and the Behaviour Team.
- Direct observation and coaching from the Positive Behaviour Lead.
- Positive Handling Plans if physical intervention may be required.
- Regular review of data and adjustments to provision.

Tier 3 – Specialist Support (for complex or high-risk needs)

- Risk Assessment Management Plans developed collaboratively.
- External functional behaviour assessment when causes are unclear.
- Multi-agency collaboration with CAMHS, Social Care, and specialist professionals.

This tiered framework ensures that support is individualised, consistent, and reviewed termly or after any significant incident.

10. Post-Incident Support

Mary Elliot Academy recognises that incidents can be distressing for both students and staff. Emotional recovery and reflection are essential.

For learners:

- Access to a calm, familiar space.
- Support to engage in “recovery phase” activities outlined in their BSP.
- Guided reflection using appropriate communication methods.

For staff:

- Immediate debrief with the Positive Behaviour Lead or senior staff.
- Completion of a **Post-Incident Report** identifying effective strategies and areas for adjustment.
- Follow-up wellbeing support if required.

Post-incident reflection promotes learning, restores relationships, and informs continuous improvement.

11. Recording and Monitoring

Effective recording enables accountability, learning, and safeguarding.

- All behaviour incidents are recorded on **CPOMS** within 24 hours.
- Data is analysed regularly by the Behaviour Lead and SLT to identify trends and evaluate impact.

- Evidence includes ABC (Antecedent–Behaviour–Consequence) forms, partial-interval records, and observational data.
- Success is measured through:
 - Improved access to learning and quality of life.
 - Reduction in frequency, duration, and intensity of incidents.
 - Reduction in restrictive practices.

Findings inform staff training, environmental adaptations, and policy review.

12. Staff Professional Development

High-quality, ongoing training underpins effective behaviour support.

All staff receive:

- Induction in Mary Elliot Academy's Behaviour and Relationships Policy.
- Regular Team Teach training (de-escalation and safe physical intervention).
- Ongoing CPD on communication, emotional regulation, trauma-informed practice, and reflective approaches.
- Coaching and mentoring from Behaviour Leads as required.

Staff development is monitored annually to ensure competence and consistency across the Academy.

13. Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

While Mary Elliot Academy seeks to avoid exclusions wherever possible, the Headteacher may consider them only when:

- There are serious or persistent breaches of the Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

The Headteacher may impose fixed-term suspensions (up to 45 days per academic year) or, in exceptional circumstances, a permanent exclusion.

All decisions follow the DfE Guidance: Suspension and Permanent Exclusion (2024). The Academy will always consider contributing factors such as SEND, mental-health needs, or safeguarding issues, and will work with families and agencies to reduce the risk of exclusion.

14. Child-on-Child Abuse

Mary Elliot Academy recognises that children and young people can abuse their peers. Such abuse may include bullying, physical assault, sexual harassment, upskirting, initiation or hazing, and the sharing of indecent images.

The Academy will:

- Treat all reports seriously and respond in line with **KCSIE (2024)**.
- Ensure students and staff understand that **abuse is never tolerated or minimised**.
- Record all incidents on CPOMS and involve safeguarding staff immediately.
- Provide appropriate education, supervision, and restorative support.

Where learners lack understanding of the implications of their actions, interventions are tailored through **Positive Behaviour Plans** and staff guidance to promote learning, empathy, and safety.

15. Legal and Policy Frameworks

This policy aligns with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Children Act 1989**
- **Human Rights Act 1998**
- **Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2008**
- **Mental Health Act 1983 / 2007**
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 / 1999**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)**
- **Use of Reasonable Force (2023)**
- **Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance (2024)**

Best-practice references include:

Royal College of Psychiatrists, BPS & RCSLT (2007); Harris et al. (2008); Bild (2014); Department of Health (2014, 2015); Skills for Care & Skills for Health (2014); NICE (2015).

Linked Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Code of Conduct

16. Appendix 1

Wellbeing Passport

The form is titled "My Wellbeing Passport" in a central purple circle. It consists of several colored boxes for information:

- Blue box (top left):** How I communicate:
- Light blue box (middle left):** How you can help me to communicate:
- Orange box (bottom left):** How you can help me understand/Support Strategies:
- Cyan box (bottom left):** My rewards for learning:
- Pink box (top middle):** Split into "I like..." and "I don't like..."
- Purple box (top right):** Medical, sensory and physical needs:
- Light green box (middle right):** This is what makes me sad/distressed/anxious:
- Light green box (bottom right):** This is how I show I am distressed/anxious:
- Light green box (bottom right):** How you can help me when I am distressed/anxious:
- Pink box (bottom middle):** Split into "Help me transition around school by..." and "Help me transition to new environments/settings by...".
- Purple oval (bottom middle):** Name: and Class:

17. Appendix 2

Positive Behaviour Plan



Behaviour Support Plan

Pupil name:		Date of original plan:	
Class:		Diagnosis / Medical Conditions:	
Teacher completing plan:		Date Reviewed:	
<p>Primary Phase <i>The 'Primary' phase is where the pupil is feeling mostly calm and relaxed and can engage positively with you in a meaningful way. The aim is to try to support the pupil to stay in this phase as much as possible. This phase is when the pupil is most able to learn useful skills to help them get what they want and need</i></p>	<p>Secondary Phase <i>The 'Secondary' phase is where the pupil may be starting to feel anxious or distressed and there is a chance that they may escalate their behaviour. Here we need to take swift action to support the person to return to the Green Proactive phase as quickly as possible, to prevent an escalation to the crisis phase (Level 3). These early warning signs provide the opportunity to intervene before the behaviour escalates to a full-blown incident of challenging behaviour</i></p>	<p>Crisis Phase <i>The 'Crisis' phase is where challenging behaviour occurs and we need to do something quickly to achieve safe and rapid control over the situation to prevent unnecessary distress and injury</i></p>	<p>Recovery Phase <i>The recovery phase is where the pupil is calming down and getting them back to the Primary phase. We still need to be careful here as there is a risk of behaviour escalating again.</i></p>



No	Behaviour of concern:	Possible Triggers:	Early Warning Signs and sensory strategies:	Proactive- Strategies used to reduce behaviour:	Reactive - Supportive strategies to support behaviour:	Physical Intervention If Required:	Recovery Phase
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that every person who will be working with the individual read and signs this document.

I confirm that I have read, understood and will follow the plan above for:

Name	Role	Date	Signature
	Class Teacher		
	Behaviour lead		
	Parents		

18. Appendix 3

Risk Assessment Management Plan

Risk Assessment & Management Plan						
Name						
Date of RA:		Assessor:				
Hazard/Behaviour	Opinion Known	Deliberate Accidental Involuntary	Seriousness Of Outcome A	Probability Of Hazard B	Severity Risk Score	Risk Rating (Colour chart below)
	O/K	D/A/I	1/2/3/4	1/2/3/4	A x B	
Harm to Self	K	D	3	4	12	
Harm to Peers	K	D	3	3	6	
Harm to Staff	K	D	4	4	16	
Damage to property	K	D	3	3	9	
Harm from Disruption	K	D	4	4	16	
Physical Assault	K	D	4	4	16	
Unpredictability	K	D	4	4	16	

Seriousness	
4	Foreseeable outcome is loss of life or permanent disability, emotional trauma requiring psychological support/treatment, critical property damage, destroys school climate for learning
3	Foreseeable outcome is hospitalisation, significant distress, extensive damage, significantly impacts of climate for learning
2	Foreseeable outcome is harm requiring first aid, distress or minor damage, affects progress of self and others
1	Foreseeable outcome is upset or disruption, affects progress of self
Probability	
4	The Risk of Harm is persistent and constant
3	The 'Risk of Harm' is more likely than not to occur again
2	The 'Risk of Harm' has occurred within the last half term
1	There is evidence of historical risk, but the behaviour has been dormant for over a term and no identified triggers remain

Risk Rating Colour Coding		
	1-2	Universal Risk Management, specific plan not required
	3-5	Consider control measures, plan carefully
	6-11	Risk Manage, specific control measures required
	12-16	Unacceptable Risk

Name:	Class:	Date:	Review Date:
Potential Triggers -	Key Themes -		SEND / Diagnosis / Social / Welfare Info -
What we want to see -	Strategies to maintain (universal for all)		
First signs that things are not going well -	Strategies to support (specific to student)		
Where this behaviour leads next	Strategies needed (developed for student)		
What we are trying to avoid	Interventions potentially necessary (contingency considerations)		
Signature of Positive Behaviour Lead	Date	Signature of Parent	Date

19. Appendix 4

Tiered Behaviour Support



At Mary Elliot Academy, we believe that behaviour is a form of communication of unmet needs. Many students will display dysregulation and behaviour that challenges as a result of their communication needs and lack of social skills or understanding.

We recognise that students will not be able to access education unless they are able to communicate and regulate their emotions. Mary Elliot Academy is dedicated to providing an environment that supports students' holistic needs and provides appropriate strategies and resources for learners to access and improve their and their families quality of life.

Our tiered approach to behaviour support, aims to provide personalised approach and respects students voice. It offers a collaborative pathway to ensure students holistic needs are met.

Universal

Support available to all students, strategies to help them self soothe, maintain a regulated state and engage in activities. Personalised approaches implemented by class staff.

- Pathway Specific Learning Environment Expectations.
- Pathway Specific curriculum to meet students needs
- Communication policy/strategies
- Wellbeing Passports

Targeted

Students receive targeted behaviour support due to levels of behaviour impacting the students quality of life. This is done via personalised interventions identified in collaboration with the class team, Positive Behaviour Lead and Behaviour Team.

- Environmental interventions and specific skill teaching
- Individualised Positive Behaviour Plan
- Positive Behaviour Lead/team support to discuss behaviour strategies
- Direct Observations from PBL/BT
- Data collection from behaviour incident records

Specialist

Students receive specialist support if the targeted level of support has not improved the students quality of life. Students who require specialist interventions are reviewed and where necessary referred to external behaviour support as well as additional internal school support.

- External Behaviour Assessments
- Risk Assessment Management Plan
- Multi Agency Collaboration
- Observations/Support from external partners and in school behaviour support

20. Changes

Description	Date	Page	Section
New policy replaced the previous Behaviour Policy			