Burnside School Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Next Review Date: September 2027Behaviour Lead-Corinna Burnip

Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Kind

Welcome from the Behaviour Lead

Corinna Burnip

As the Behaviour Lead at Burnside School, my role is to oversee, monitor, and evaluate whole-school behaviour systems while delivering targeted support and high-quality professional development for all staff. In line with evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), establishing a cohesive, school-wide approach driven by strong leadership and ongoing staff training is essential in primary education. Effective behaviour leadership ensures that proactive practices, clear routines, and emotional regulation strategies are consistently embedded across every classroom. By monitoring trends and equipping staff with the tools and training they need, I work to maintain a calm, safe, and predictable environment where every child feels supported and empowered to succeed.

1. Introduction: Building a Positive Learning Community

At Burnside School, we recognise that behaviour is a skill that is taught, modelled, and learned. A supportive, calm, and predictable environment allows every child to feel secure, valued, and ready to learn.

In line with research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and up-to-date statutory standards, we know that strong relationships, clear routines, and proactive support are the foundation of good behaviour. Good behaviour does not happen by accident; it is developed through consistent, school-wide expectations, positive reinforcement, and explicit instruction. As staff, pupils, and families, we work in partnership to support emotional regulation, mutual respect, and positive choices.

This policy forms part of our broader 'behaviour and discipline' framework. It is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect best practices, statutory changes, and the evolving individual needs of all children within our school community.

2. Our Ethos & Core Values

Our behaviour policy is rooted in three core values that define our school culture and guide every child throughout their day:

- **Be Safe:** Protect yourself and others physically and emotionally. Express feelings safely, access de-escalation strategies, and seek support when needed.
- **Be Smart:** Make choices that support learning and growth. Persist through challenge, actively engage in lessons, and help create an environment where everyone can focus.

- **Be Kind:** Show empathy, respect, and consideration to everyone. Value difference, include others, and build positive relationships across the school community.

Teaching Behaviour Explicitly

At the start of every half term, and revisited continuously throughout the year, staff explicitly teach, model, and practice what **Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Kind** looks like in different contexts (e.g., in the hall, on the playground, during group work). We treat behavioural slip-ups as learning opportunities that require instruction and guidance, rather than just automatic consequences.

3. Core School-Wide Routines

Consistent routines reduce cognitive load for pupils and create a calm, predictable atmosphere.

- **The 'Hand Up' Signal (Attention):** When an adult raises a hand, all children stop talking, pause, raise their hand, and give their full attention to the adult, ready for the next instruction.
- **Calm Transitions:** Children move through hallways and transition to assemblies calmly and quietly to maintain safety and preserve learning time across the school.
- **Playtime to Classroom Readiness:** When the break-time bell rings, line up promptly and calmly. Transition into class focused, settled, and ready to learn.

4. Proactive Staff Practices, De-Escalation & Individualised Support

Staff employ evidence-based, individualised strategies to pre-empt misbehaviour, support emotional regulation, and maintain a positive classroom climate:

- **Know the Child:** Staff build strong, positive relationships with all pupils, understanding their individual triggers, strengths, neurodivergent profile, and specific regulation needs.
- **Proactive Prompts & Pre-corrections:** Teachers use quiet verbal prompts, non-verbal cues, visual schedules, and positive reminders before key transitions or challenging tasks to set children up for success.
- **Consistent Environmental Setup:** Classrooms are organised logically so children can independently access equipment without distraction or friction.
- **Personalised De-Escalation Strategies:** When a child experiences distress or dysregulation, staff employ tailored de-escalation techniques (e.g., verbal calming, changed tone/body language, reduced cognitive load, offering a choice, or providing access to a sensory tool) before misbehaviour escalates.

The 'Quiet Space' & 'Reflective Space'

In line with EEF recommendations on *Adapting the Environment to Individual Needs* and *Teaching Self-Regulation*, Burnside Primary provides two distinct spaces during break times designed to support pupils' emotional and sensory needs:

- **The Quiet Space (Playtime Option):** Unstructured, sensory-dense environments like busy playgrounds can overwhelm some pupils, straining their ability to self-regulate. We offer the 'Quiet Space' during break times as a structured, low-arousal environment where children can enjoy calm, quiet play opportunities in a predictable setting.
- **The Reflective Space (Break-Time Reset):** When classroom-level de-escalation strategies, such as a brief reset in a partner classroom, have not proven effective, pupils spend a portion of their playtime in the 'Reflective Space'. Grounded in EEF principles on restorative practice and de-escalation, this dedicated space provides a calm environment away from the classroom to process choices with a staff member, complete reflective dialogue, and ensure they are emotionally ready for a genuine fresh start in the next lesson.

5. Recognising Positive Behaviour

We focus heavily on acknowledging children who consistently meet expectations and those who make noticeable personal progress.

- **Secret Student System:** Each morning, a child's name is drawn at random and placed in a sealed envelope without revealing who it is. Throughout the day, the class is encouraged to focus on living out our core values, knowing anyone could be the 'Secret Student.' If the selected child successfully demonstrates our values throughout the day, their identity is revealed at the end of the day, and they receive a certificate or an age-and-stage appropriate privilege (such as "free time" or a special activity). If the student had a tricky day, their name is kept secret, and the class is given a fresh start the next morning.
- **Specific Praise:** Staff provide precise, immediate praise that names the specific positive behaviour demonstrated (e.g., *"Thank you for waiting so patiently, that showed real kindness"*).
- **Ethos Stickers & Recognition:** Issued regularly to celebrate pupils who model our core values:
    - **Be Safe Award:** For demonstrating self-regulation, looking out for peers, and making safe choices.
    - **Be Smart Award:** For high engagement, resilience in learning, independence, and strong focus.
    - **Be Kind Award:** For empathy, helpfulness, inclusion, and positive peer relationships.

6. Behaviour Stages, Consequences & De-escalation Framework

When misbehaviour or dysregulation occurs, staff respond calmly, consistently, and proportionally using updated language around logical consequences and sanctions. Responses aim to de-escalate, protect safety, teach missing self-regulation skills, and repair relationships.

Stage	Observed Behaviour	Staff Response & De-escalation Interventions	Consequences & Restorative Actions
STAGE 1	Low-level disruption: Calling out, off-task talking, slow transitions, minor unkindness, or distraction.	• Non-verbal reminder (proximity, eye contact, gesture). • Direct verbal pre-correction or private reminder referencing the core value. • Tactical ignoring where appropriate.	• Immediate praise once back on track. • In-the-moment adjustment.
STAGE 2	Repeated Stage 1 or persistent off-task choices: Continued non-compliance, unkind language, unsafe play.	• Private mini-discussion to reset expectations and offer individualised de-escalation. • Strategic seat adjustment within the classroom to support focus.	• Brief restorative check-in during break to reflect on choices and reconnect with staff.
STAGE 3	Persistent disruption or unsafe choices: Leaving learning space without permission, direct defiance, verbal aggression.	• Implementation of tailored sensory/de-escalation breaks. • Temporary reset/time-out in a designated partner classroom with clear work set.	• Move to the Reflective Space at playtime. • Structured restorative conversation focused on reflection and repair.

Stage	Observed Behaviour	Staff Response & De-escalation Interventions	Consequences & Restorative Actions
			• Parent/carer contacted by class teacher to discuss proactive next steps.
STAGE 4	Severe incident: Physical aggression, extreme disruption, severe safety breach, extreme verbal abuse, persistent bullying, or discriminatory behaviour.	• Immediate senior staff / SLT support. • Implementation of individual de-escalation/safety protocol. • Use of **restrictive interventions** (only if lawful, necessary, and proportionate).	• Formal internal reflection/isolation period. • SLT meeting with parents/carers. • Mandatory logging on Behaviour Watch. • Targeted Behaviour Support Plan / Individual Risk Assessment. • Educational restorative work on equality and empathy.

7. Use of Restrictive Interventions

As part of our commitment to safety, dignity, and individualised care, Burnside School adheres strictly to legal and statutory guidelines regarding the use of restrictive physical interventions and physical restraint.

If a child becomes severe in their dysregulation or behaviour, staff prioritize safety and emotional co-regulation. In the first instance, staff will clear the classroom of all other children to create a quiet, low-demand space and eliminate audience triggers. The class teacher or an adult well-known to the child will remain with them in the room, accompanied by a supporting member of the school team. Staff ensure they do not overcrowd the child, maintaining appropriate physical distance and giving them the clear physical and emotional space needed to calm down and safely self-regulate. Restrictive interventions are treated as an absolute last resort, to be avoided at all costs, and will only ever be considered when all other environmental adjustments and non-physical de-escalation strategies have been fully exhausted.

Principles of Restrictive Intervention

- **Absolute Last Resort:** Restrictive interventions are avoided at all costs and used **only** when all reasonable, non-physical de-escalation strategies have failed, or in extreme emergency situations where immediate intervention is required to prevent:
    - Imminent risk of serious injury to the child or others.
    - Serious damage to property that creates an immediate safety hazard.
    - Behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and safety across the school environment.
- **Proportionate and Reasonable:** Any force used must be the minimum force necessary for the shortest possible time, fully proportionate to the risk identified, and sensitive to the child's individual needs, medical requirements, developmental stage, and communication profile.
- **Individualised Approach:** For pupils with identified SEND, complex emotional needs, or known trauma, individualised **Positive Handling Plans (PHPs)** or **Individual Risk Assessments** are created in partnership with parents/carers and specialists. These detail specific known triggers, bespoke de-escalation strategies, and (where strictly necessary) pre-agreed, safe physical hold methods tailored to the child.
- **Recording and Post-Incident Care:**

    1. **Immediate De-brief & Medical Check:** Following any incident involving physical restraint, the pupil and staff involved are checked for physical injury and provided with emotional post-incident support.
    2. **Mandatory Logging:** The incident must be formally documented on *Behaviour Watch* (and the school's physical intervention log) within 24 hours.
    3. **Parental Notification:** Parents/carers will always be notified on the same day an intervention takes place.
    4. **Policy & Strategy Review:** Every incident prompts a review of the pupil's risk assessment and individual de-escalation strategies to prevent future occurrences.

8. Addressing Anti-Bullying, Discriminatory Behaviour & Family Engagement

Burnside Primary is an inclusive community where diversity is celebrated, and every pupil and staff member have the absolute right to feel safe, respected, and valued. We hold a zero-tolerance stance towards racism, homophobia, disablism, sexism, bullying, and any other form of prejudice-based behaviour, as these actions fundamentally contradict our core values of **Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Kind**.

When a discriminatory incident occurs, we take swift action that goes beyond disciplinary measures alone. Senior leaders will conduct structured restorative conversations with the pupil and invite their parents or carers into school for an open, collaborative discussion. These conversations serve to clearly explain why such behaviour is unacceptable, address the underlying cause, and ensure both the pupil and their family fully understand the impact of discriminatory actions on our wider school community.

9. Preventing & Tackling Bullying & Cyberbullying (KCSIE Alignment)

In line with statutory guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*, Burnside Primary recognises that bullying and cyberbullying are distinct from isolated behavioural incidents. Bullying is defined as targeted, repeated, and intentional behaviour—physical, verbal, relational, or online—that causes emotional or physical harm to another person, driven by an imbalance of power.

We maintain a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of bullying, acknowledging that it severely impacts a child's safety, mental health, well-being, and ability to learn.

Types of Bullying Covered:

- **Physical & Verbal Bullying:** Hitting, kicking, threats, name-calling, persistent teasing, extortion, or deliberate social exclusion.
- **Cyberbullying:** Online harassment, abusive messaging, sending unwanted images, exclusion from digital groups, or unauthorized sharing of personal content via social media, online gaming platforms, or messaging apps (whether occurring on or off school grounds).
- **Prejudice-Based Bullying:** Targeted bullying linked to protected characteristics, including race, disability, religion, gender, or sexual orientation (HBT bullying).

Reporting & Proactive Safeguarding Response:

- **Pupil Voice & Reporting:** Children are explicitly taught how to report concerns immediately through trusted adults, worry boxes, or designated digital safety channels.
- **Immediate Action & Investigation:** All reports of bullying or cyberbullying are treated with seriousness and investigated promptly by class teachers and senior staff.
- **Digital Incident Tracking:** Incidents and behavioural patterns are formally tracked using *Behaviour Watch* to monitor for repeat behaviours, vulnerable groups, or wider relational trends.
- **Targeted Support & Intervention:** We provide tailored restorative support for victims to rebuild safety and self-esteem, while delivering targeted

interventions, educational work, and clear sanctions for perpetrators to prevent reoffending.

- **Curriculum & Online Safety Integration:** Cyberbullying prevention is explicitly integrated across the curriculum and online safety modules, focusing on digital citizenship, respectful online behaviour, and personal privacy.
- **Family Involvement:** Parents and carers of both victim and perpetrator are engaged early to ensure a transparent, coordinated, and supportive approach between home and school.

10. Evidence-Based Restorative Reflection, Data Tracking & Policy Review (EEF Alignment)

Restorative Conversations

In line with the Education Endowment Foundation's framework for *Establish, Maintain, Restore*, Burnside Primary recognises that post-incident discussions are essential learning opportunities. Rather than relying solely on sanctions or physical interventions, structured reflection conversations allow pupils to understand the impact of their actions, repair relationships, and explicitly learn self-regulation skills. Research shows that restoring these connections after a boundary breach prevents repeat incidents, maintains a calm climate, and keeps pupils actively engaged in their learning community.

Data-Informed Systems & Regular Policy Review

In line with EEF guidance on using data to diagnose school needs and monitor strategy:

- All Stage 4 incidents, prejudice-based incidents, bullying, and **instances of restrictive physical intervention** are formally recorded on *Behaviour Watch*.
- Tracking these severe incidents digitally enables senior leaders to analyse whole-school trends, identify problematic times or locations during the school day, and address systemic environmental triggers.
- Objective data directly informs targeted professional development and staff training, ensuring our team is equipped with up-to-date de-escalation strategies and dynamic risk assessment tools.
- **Regular Policy Evaluation:** This policy, alongside our de-escalation and intervention protocols, is systematically reviewed and updated at least annually (or immediately following new statutory guidance) to ensure it consistently reflects the individual needs of all children in our school.