



FIRST STEPS TOGETHER

SKILLS FOR LIFE

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Behaviour and Communication Policy

As a school we celebrate differences and support each other so that everyone can reach their full potential regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The 2010 Equality Act makes it an offence to discriminate against a person due to the 9 protected characteristic(s). At First Steps Together no form of discrimination is tolerated, and our pupils show respect for those who share the protected characteristics.

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The 9 Protected Characteristics are actively promoted in school through:

- Our school ethos statements, SIP, and SEF
- Our school core values
- Our school behaviour policy
- Conscious role modelling by all adults in the school community
- Active engagement and communication with parents and carers
- Assemblies
- British Values themes for a day, week/term
- Discussion within curriculum subjects, taking a cross-curricular approach
- Promoting articulation by building appropriate language and a coherent vocabulary
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) sessions
- RSE lessons, LGBT discussions and Protected Characteristic talks
- Sporting, Art and Cultural Events
- Pupil Voice
- Educational visits
- Real-life learning outside the classroom
- Guest speakers
- Developing links with local, national and international communities
- Extra-curricular activities charity work and work within the local community

This policy is to be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE)

Policy Statement

The purpose of First Steps Together is to meet the diverse social, emotional and educational needs of pupils who are struggling to engage in mainstream education.

The school is committed to fulfilling its purpose by working in close partnership with parents, carers, schools and outside agencies.

This policy recognises that distressed or challenging behaviour is often a means of communication and centre staff therefore aim to:

- create and support learning environments which encourage and foster good behaviour
- raise individual standards of achievement
- promote self-discipline and positive relationships
- develop aspiring, confident, independent and resilient young people
- prepare young people for a successful transition to the next phase in education, training or employment

In order to achieve these aims, staff will provide pupils experiencing difficulties with their behaviour the support they need to gain control over their ability to communicate effectively and safely.

This policy considers the Equality Act (2010) which highlights actions and behaviours which are unlawful such as: direct / indirect discrimination, failing to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils or staff, harassment related to a protected characteristic or victimisation. It also considers statutory guidance: Behaviour and Discipline 2016; Education Act 2002 and Education and Inspections Act 2006.

At First Steps Together we believe that all behaviour is communication. Our aim is to try to understand the function of the behaviour and be curious and innovative in finding solutions to support our young people.

Behaviour and Relationships Approach

Our behaviour approach allows staff to engage and positively challenge behaviour in a non-confrontational and de-escalating style. All our staff are trained in **Team Teach** and we pride ourselves on the immense number of skills our staff possess when supporting learners with their behaviour.

Rights and Responsibilities

First Steps Together has a system of rights and responsibilities, for all students and staff.

For all staff and pupils to work in a safe and effective learning environment, everyone at FST has responsibilities to protect everyone else's rights, and to ensure that these rights and responsibilities are communicated effectively.

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
The right to be physically and emotionally safe	To keep myself and others safe
The right to be heard	To make myself heard in an appropriate way
The right to make choices and to contribute to decision making	To be respectful in willing to listen to advice and to consider the points of view of others
The right to learn	To be present and ready to learn
The right to a school environment that is free of sexual harassment, racial discrimination, and discrimination of any sort on the grounds of size, age, disability, culture, religion or sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, paternity, and gender identity.	To uphold and promote the Equality Act (2010)
The right to be treated with respect and dignity	To treat all pupils and staff with respect

Rewards and Responses

Most pupils at FST need support to motivate them in their learning. Staff at FST aim to achieve an appropriate balance of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators and will use positive reinforcement of preferred behaviours to develop our positive behaviour culture.

Intrinsic Motivation

Pupils respond positively to three elements (Davis, 1993):

- A well-organised lesson.
- A staff member who is enthusiastic about the material and about teaching.
- A staff member who shows he or she cares about the pupils and their learning.

Extrinsic Motivation

We recognise the value of rewards as an extrinsic motivator for pupils in their learning and to encourage positive behaviours and develop our positive behaviour culture across the school. Our rewards system, Critter Coin, is a key tool in supporting our positive behaviour culture. This has been developed to allow students who meet our minimum classroom expectations of being ready, respectful and safe for each lesson to be rewarded with Critter Coins. Class teachers and mentors share what this looks like within each subject area and students share with staff what ready, respectful, and safe would look like for their own individual needs. Additional coins are rewarded for other areas including going beyond and positive engagement in work. Students are also acknowledged and rewarded for positive behaviours outside the classroom such as for showing kindness, attending extracurricular activities and punctuality.

Responses

Our policy is not prescriptive in its detail, and we recognise that effective implementation will rely heavily on the professional judgement of staff (teams) and the needs of individual pupils.

Staff are trained to de-escalate situations of conflict, using Positive Handling Training strategies.

Our behaviour expectations are clear, consistent and communicated effectively promoting conduct conducive to learning. Whilst we make every effort to ensure positive behaviour is always maintained, we recognise that on some occasions, where behaviour falls short of our expectations, we may need to implement more robust strategies, to minimise the detrimental effect on others and ensure students are dealt with fairly and consistently.

The following behaviour strategies and systems are in place to support these efforts:

Classroom Management

Level 1. CHOICE

We encourage all students to take responsibility for their behaviour and will use a range of strategies to

promote self-regulation and positive behaviour. These include but are not limited to:

- Non - verbal communication (eye contact, hand signal etc)
- Pause in communication
- Verbal Reminder
- Use of physical proximity

Recorded on classroom conduct board.

Level 2. CHANCE

Where initial efforts to encourage self-regulation have not been successful, staff will endeavour to minimise.

any further impact of negative behaviour through a range of additional strategies, including but not limited to:

- Verbal warning - this should be explicit and precise
- Reminder of the expectation with regards to producing high quality work
- Reminder of the impact a poor attitude to learning has on others

Recorded on classroom conduct board.

Level 3. CONSEQUENCE

Where behaviour continues to disrupt the learning of themselves and others a final opportunity for students

to modify their behaviour will be offered. Strategies include but are not limited to:

- Final verbal warning – again this should be explicit and precise
- Removal of planner as a final indicator that a consequence will now follow
- Change of location within the classroom or learning space
- Students on a final warning may receive a verbal reprimand from senior staff who are visiting lessons

Recorded on classroom conduct board.

Level 4. REMOVE

Where a student continues to display behaviour which falls below our expectations and/or repeatedly fails

to comply with the interventions put in place by staff they will be removed from the classroom / learning space. This will involve a student being:

- Sent to another classroom within the school
- Removed to another classroom under the supervision of senior staff
- Removed to an appropriate area whilst a decision is taken on next steps.

Recorded on IRIS.

Physical Intervention

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

All staff at First Steps Together are trained to de-escalate behaviours which put any user of the school at risk, however, in some circumstances the use of force is unavoidable. Any action to control a pupil's movement must be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary.

The best interests of that pupil are the paramount consideration.

- (i) The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- (ii) Force is usually used either to control or to restrain a pupil. This can cover a range of responses such as prompts, guides, break away techniques and restraint.
- (iii) 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed to reach a desired outcome.
- (iv) Restraint is defined by Positive Handling Training as the positive application of force by staff, to overcome rigorous resistance, completely directing, deciding, and controlling a person's free movement.
- (v) Staff at FST always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil, and all stakeholders recognise that there may be side effects of physical contact, such as scratches and bruises.

Who can use reasonable force?

- (i) All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
- (ii) This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the head teacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.
- (iii) Where there is a foreseeable risk that the use of force may be necessary such pupils will require risk assessment.
- (iv) Staff at FST receive the appropriate Positive Handling Training, and habitually undertake dynamic risk assessments.

When can reasonable force be used?

The use of reasonable force guidance (July 2013) states that

- (i) Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- (ii) In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- (iii) The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

Staff at FST can use reasonable force to:

- remove disruptive pupils from the classroom where they have repeatedly refused to follow an instruction to do so, and their behaviours are preventing others' right to learn;
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight.
- prevent damage to property.

Before staff at First Steps Together decide to use force, they will conduct a dynamic risk assessment. This means that staff will weigh up the situation on the spot, considering all the risk factors, and make a professional judgement.

Staff cannot:

- use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Physical contact

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary, giving due regard to the pupil's feelings and sensitivities, such as:

- Giving first aid;
- Comforting a distressed pupil;
- Praising or congratulating a pupil.

Team Teach

The management of First Steps Together are responsible for the training of staff. All staff complete Team Teach Training and are authorised to use Physical Intervention.

Once staff have successfully completed a Team Teach course, refresher training will take place when appropriate.

Power to search pupils without consent

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances, to conduct a search for the following “prohibited items”:

- knives and weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia;
- stolen items;
- vapes, cigarettes, tobacco, cigarette papers, lighters or matches;
- fireworks;
- pornographic images;
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Any decision to search or use force to search for above items must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary, and in the best interests of that young person. Refusal to be searched without giving appropriate reason may result in the student being returned home and an unauthorised absence recorded due to the student failing to adhere to our screening procedures. If the situation presents critical risk the best course of action may be to phone the police.

FST follow the DFE guidance - Searching, screening and confiscation – advice for schools July 2022

Force cannot be used to search for other items banned under the school rules. Post Incident recording, support and learning are completed.

As soon as is reasonably possible after an incident, staff will record the incident details on IRIS. Where an incident has resulted in student or staff injury this must also be recorded on IRIS.

When both the staff member and pupil involved are calm, post incident learning and support will take place between them. This should include (if appropriate) a discussion about strategies that the pupil could use in the future.