

## **BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

**September 2025**

**An overview of the approach used at Breckenbrough to help students manage and improve their behaviour so that they can become productive, effective, and happy members of society.**

### **1. Context**

- a. Many of the students who attend Breckenbrough bring with them a history of learned behaviours, some of which are confrontational, oppositional, and aggressive, others of which are avoidant, anxious, and fearful.
- b. Due to prior experiences, they frequently distrust adults, particularly teachers, and others in positions of authority.
- c. In previous placements, nearly all of our students have had great difficulty to respond to traditional forms of school discipline, in particular the use of punishment. Many mainstream policies and approaches are based on behaviour conditioning, which is rarely successful for our students.
- d. In addition to this, many of our students are diagnosed with psychological and neurological conditions, such as Autism, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, Tourette's syndrome, Pathological Demand Avoidance, General Anxiety Disorder, and Sensory Processing Disorder.
- e. They are in the main, of average or higher cognitive ability but may have specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, semantic pragmatic disorder, slow processing, or executive functioning issues.
- f. They are frequently prone to high anxiety and a range of sensory processing difficulties.

### **2. Our Approach**

- a. All staff at Breckenbrough recognise that traditional and neurotypical approaches to academic and social education are not effective or appropriate with our students.
- b. All staff have a high level of understanding of the difficulties that the students face on a daily basis and work with the students in a tolerant and forgiving way.
- c. Staff work extremely hard to develop a high level of trust with each student, in order to enable the development of strategies and skills to overcome their personal difficulties.
- d. Staff, at all times, act as significant adult role models, modeling the positive behaviours and skills that we hope the students will acquire, develop, and master.
- e. Staff recognise that decreasing the distressed behaviours that many of our student's exhibit will take time and patience to achieve, and that during this time each student will have to overcome significant challenges.
- f. The school can provide a range of placement options to provide the most effective response to an individual student's difficulties.

- g. We use conflict resolution and restorative practice to respond to incidents and promote self-awareness to reduce challenging behaviours and provide positive social growth.
- h. We take an individual approach to rewards, which recognise and acknowledge positive responses and reinforce positive outcomes. There is a value placed upon intrinsic reward rather than external or material rewards, with the celebration of achievements (however big or small) serving as the reward.
- i. We aim to provide a nurturing, low anxiety, and low sensory environment to help and support each student achieve regulation.
- j. We seek to understand the 'whole student' and work in a holistic way to support the mental, social, emotional, and behavioural growth of all students.
- k. We provide a variety of therapeutic input to meet the needs of each and every student.
- l. Students have a keyworker to help guide them through the process of achieving regulation and positive outcomes.
- m. Via the keyworker, we provide effective communication within school and between parents, professionals, and local authorities.
- n. We will be consistent in implementing and updating a Student Support Plan and reflect upon the effectiveness of our practice during a debrief if one is required.
- o. Every student has an individual safeguarding plan to support both the student and the staff team in managing their specific needs throughout the school day.

### 3. **The Students**

- a. We focus on students who have not been able to manage the routines and systems of mainstream education and as a result have suffered learning and developmental deficits.
- b. The most successful students at Breckenbrough develop a strong desire to learn, develop and recognise that working in partnership with the whole staff team is the most effective way of achieving this. This is crucial to the success of a placement and is usually referred to as 'working with us' or 'buy in'.
- c. Of the three stress responses, our students are most likely to exhibit 'flight' or 'freeze.' However, physicality can occur on occasions when a student reaches crisis point and we aim to work effectively and compassionately when such incidences occur.
- d. We are unlikely to offer places to students who are socially deviant, involved in drug or alcohol abuse or have a history of youth offending, as our model and approach is not effective in meeting need or safeguarding them within the school community.

### 4. **How our approach works**

- a. ***Restorative Practice and Conflict Resolution***

- i. Restorative practice can be defined by its fundamental principle, namely that when one person has harmed another, the most useful response is to try to repair the harm done. A restorative approach is also often used when damage is caused to the fabric of the building, as this can harm the school community.
- ii. Restorative practice at Breckenbrough aims to reduce bullying and victimisation, manage conflict positively and improve the behavioural responses of students over time. Research and evidence support restorative practice in schools as a particularly promising approach to improving behaviour, attendance, and engagement.
- iii. Restorative practice enables students affected by bullying or other serious behavioural incidents to communicate and agree on how the harm caused by their actions or done to them is to be repaired. When implemented well, perpetrators learn to understand the consequences of their behaviour and take responsibility for repairing the harm. When this happens victims usually experience the perpetrator's commitment to reparation that means their fear of re-victimisation is reduced and they are more readily able to put the incident behind them.
- iv. Restorative practice at Breckenbrough can involve holding 'conferences' between the perpetrator and the victim with a mediator and informal restorative approaches by staff. Conferences can be used for the most serious incidents of bullying or victimisation to reduce the use of exclusions or, when exclusions cannot be avoided, to support the successful reintegration of the excluded student. Staff can also use restorative approaches more informally in dealing with other issues.
- v. Restorative practice is a time-consuming approach and does not always provide the 'instant justice' that some of our students require. This can result in students feeling that their concerns have not been listened to or that no actions have been taken. In such instances, work needs to take place between the school and home to develop the students' understanding of the process involved in resolving any harm that may have been caused to them.

b. ***Conflict resolution, an example of restorative practice.***

- i. This is a simple approach to resolving difficulties between students and between students and staff, through mediation and negotiation. It will be normally led by each student's keyworker but can be led by any member of staff in a position to support a positive outcome.
- ii. It requires recognition from both parties that our individual behaviours have an impact on others and a willingness to want to do something about it.
- iii. In its simplest form it has three stages:
  - 1. ***Stage One: Self Check***
    - a. Each person must ask themselves if they are ready and willing to solve the problem or issue.
    - b. If one, or both, feel too angry or upset to deal with the conflict, then they will be given time to calm down and reflect.
    - c. Each party will be ready when they can follow these simple rules
      - i. No arguing or fighting

ii. Be honest

iii. Listen without interrupting

2. **Stage Two: Honest Communication**

a. Each person must listen actively to the other.

b. Each must recognise that each will likely have a different perspective or view about what happened. This is perfectly normal and acceptable.

c. Each should not argue about what happened or apportion blame. Conflict resolution is about listening, understanding, and finding solutions to the problem.

3. **Step Three: Find a solution and/or resolution**

a. Each person must consider what each can do to improve the situation.

b. Many possible solutions may be discussed until a compromise or agreement is reached. This is the most common outcome of a conflict resolution situation.

c. In certain circumstances, a plan of action may be drawn up to clearly show what each person will do to resolve the conflict.

d. This plan must be agreed and (where appropriate) signed by both parties.

c. **Other forms of restorative practice**

**Putting it right**

1. This involves the student agreeing to some form of reparation for the impact that their behaviour has had. This is particularly useful in responding to behaviours which have caused damage to the fabric of the school or somebody's property.

2. An example of how it might be used:

a. A student damages school furniture.

i. Through mediation the student understands the impact of their behaviour.

ii. They agree they will work towards putting it right.

iii. They undertake community service in repairing the damage.

iv. The student is praised for his actions and the resolution is shared with staff and peers.

d. **Positive rewards**

Operating a consistent rewards policy in school is ineffective due to the differing perceptions of our students and their need for justice and fairness. As such, we adopt bespoke schemes whereby following our expectations, students can earn a variety of rewards, which may be specific to each individual student.

e. **Role modelling**

- i. All staff are required to act as positive adult role models, modelling the behaviours we wish the students to adopt.
- ii. Examples of modelling behaviours are active listening, talking in calm voices, not attributing blame, showing tolerance and forgiveness, taking turns, never being patronising, and not using sarcasm.

f. **Physical intervention**

- i. As a school with an overarching 'hands off' policy, all staff at Breckenbrough work hard to avoid physical intervention as a means of managing behaviours.
- ii. Staff will employ a range of non-invasive interventions to seek to de-escalate a situation. These may include verbal de-escalation, distraction, humour, space, silence and solitude or a combination of these. The relationship between the staff member and the student can be critical in the success of non-invasive interventions.
- iii. An open-door policy is deployed in support of the 'flight' response our students can experience when in crisis.
- iv. Staff are trained to use a simple non-intrusive form of physical intervention via Securicare, but this must only be employed when all alternative strategies to de-escalate a situation have been exhausted and only when absolutely necessary; typically, when a student is putting themselves or other students and/or staff, at risk of danger or harm.
- v. If a recognised Securicare physical intervention technique is used then the hold must be released as soon as is safe to do so.
- vi. Immediately after (or very soon after) a physical intervention has been deployed, the physical intervention log on Schoolpod must be completed by staff involved in deploying the techniques used during the intervention.
- vii. At an appropriate time after the intervention, there will be a debrief by staff involved to reflect on the incident and the way it was handled and to apply lessons learnt to Student Support Plans, individual safeguarding plans and future interventions. The outcomes of this debrief must be recorded on the physical intervention log.
- viii. As per the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools, when a physical intervention has taken place, the student must be given the opportunity to talk to an adult not involved in the incident within 24 hours of the intervention having taken place. This adult would usually be the student's keyworker.
- ix. A resolution meeting may be required with the student involved in order to repair any damage caused to relationships with either staff or peers.

g. **Keyworker**

- i. This is a key feature in the personal development of each student. The keyworker:

1. Monitors holistic progress through the Quality of Life framework and puts in place opportunities for acquiring and practicing independent living skills and the development of strategies to overcome identified problems and other issues, as and when they occur.
2. Ensures each person working with each student is fully aware of the students' background and specific needs, is working towards agreed targets and outcomes and monitors the effectiveness and impact of this work.
3. Liaises with parents to keep them informed about their student's progress and development.
4. Works with parents through the Quality of Life framework in identifying key areas for development and setting objectives for the student to work towards.

## 5. **Serious incidents**

A serious incident is defined as one in which:

1. There has been any actual or potential risk of harm to either staff or students, including themselves.
2. An incident involved any restriction of movement and/or significant physical contact with a student
3. There was a significant level of danger that threatened the safety of staff or students, including themselves.
4. There has been significant damage to school property or the fabric of the building. Each member of staff must use their professional discretion to determine what denotes significant.

### a. ***Managing serious incidents***

- i. Staff are trained to respond to difficult situations and behaviour calmly and to use de-escalation techniques, where possible, to avoid serious incidents.
- ii. If a serious incident occurs, staff work collectively to manage the situation whilst reducing the impact on other students.
- iii. The school recognises that physical intervention may have to be used to manage a serious incident, but this is only used as a last resort or when a student is placing themselves or others in danger or causing harm to themselves or others.
- iv. Immediately after (or very soon after) a serious incident has occurred, the serious incident log on Schoolpod must be completed by staff involved in managing and witnessing the incident.
- v. As soon as possible after the incident there will be a debrief by staff involved to reflect on the incident and the way it was handled and to apply lessons learnt to Student Support Plans, individual safeguarding plans and future interventions. The outcomes of this debrief must be recorded on the serious incident log.
- vi. A resolution meeting may be required with the student involved in order to repair any damage caused to relationships with either staff or peers.

### b. ***The school's response to serious incidents***

i. With the exception of setting off the fire alarm, the school does not have a blanket policy of consequences. Instead, the staff team work with students to overcome their difficulties and respond in a fair and developmental manner, rather than a judgmental approach. However, in certain circumstances, a fixed-term exclusion may be the fair and appropriate response.

## **6. Exclusions (termed as ‘Suspensions’ by the DfE)**

i. Whilst the school always tries to bring about a positive conclusion after a serious incident, there are times when the Senior Leadership Team reach the decision that an exclusion from school is the only remaining course of action. Exclusion from school is not a decision taken lightly, as we are firmly aware of the potential impact this can have upon the student, many of whom will have suffered from exclusion in previous placements. We are also aware that exclusions rarely bring about a positive change in behaviour but are necessary when such behaviour has a detrimental impact upon other students or staff or on the school community. Any decision that results in an exclusion is only carried out after consultation and discussion with all parties involved in the incident, including those affected by what has occurred.

ii. An exclusion could be issued in the following circumstances:

a. **Setting off the fire alarm:** This is a serious issue at Breckenbrough, as it causes a major disturbance to the emotional well-being of other students, increasing anxiety levels and potentially triggering other challenging behaviours, including causing physical discomfort for those with hyper-sensitive auditory processing. The deliberate setting off of the fire alarm always leads to an immediate one day fixed-term exclusion from school and it is a measure of our student’s desire to be part of the school community that the fire alarm is rarely purposefully triggered.

b. **Harm to students or staff:** For serious incidents which involve harm to students or staff, an exclusion may be necessary to support the victim of such behaviour. Consultation and discussion is an essential part of the process in making such a decision.

c. **Safeguarding:** If there are safeguarding issues associated with a young person, a range of consequences may ensue, from the involvement of social care and the police, to a period of exclusion if measures cannot be implemented to keep the student safe.

d. **Time out periods:** There are times when a formal exclusion is not considered appropriate or necessary but a short cooling-off period away from school would help to calm an otherwise difficult situation and prevent any further escalation. Time-out periods can be instigated by the school, by parents or the actual student, with a decision being made when all parties have been consulted.

iii. During a period of exclusion, support is offered from the school. This includes providing schoolwork, outreach work from key staff and home visits. In some circumstances, home visits from senior staff and/or the school psychologist can be undertaken to help the students to reflect on the behaviour, consider how things can change and to support in working towards reintegration into the school environment. It must be noted, a period of exclusion may be extended pending the need for involvement from an external professional agency. However, it is always the priority of the school to reintegrate the student as swiftly and safely as possible.

iv. After a period of exclusion, a reintegration meeting takes place within school (or within the home in certain circumstances) attended by senior staff, parents, and the student. The reintegration meeting supports the Quaker ethos of reflection, forgiveness and conflict resolution and is a crucial aspect of the student returning to the school environment and making a fresh start.

v. Ending a placement: This is a rare consequence and only comes about following a series of multi-agency meetings and/or interim reviews with both the student’s Local Authority and with parents/carers. A decision to end a placement is not taken lightly and is only taken if the school feels that it has exhausted all strategies and resources to support the student to continue to access our ethos and approach, and as a consequence, believes that the student’s needs would be met in an alternative placement with a different approach. In such cases, the school will work closely with the LA and parents to bring about a managed move and will try and provide as much support to achieve this as is possible.

## 7. Risk Reduction and Management

At Breckenbrough we seek to create an environment in which all students are safe and secure. In order to support this, we use a number of profiling tools that seek to identify the risk-taking behaviours of students and provide supportive strategies to remove or reduce the risks associated with them.

a. **Risk Profile:** This provides a score based on the level of risk associated with the behaviour against the probability of the behaviour occurring. This is an initial profiling tool.

b. **Individual Student Safeguarding Plan:** This document operates on a similar basis to a risk assessment and provides information on triggers, behaviour profiles and lists actions taken to reduce risk.

c. **Student Support Plan:** Every student has a Student Support Plan that provides a context for all behaviours, highlights potential areas of risk-taking and/or challenging behaviour and illustrates the current practical strategies and approaches in place to support a student. These plans also include the post-incident recovery, which is an essential part of the process in supporting a student through to a resolution of what has taken place.

## 8. Student Voice

We listen and respond to students' needs and regularly review the support approaches that we employ for a student. We always seek to include the input of students in the management of their own behaviours. Student Support Plans are ‘live documents’ throughout a student’s time at Breckenbrough and can be included and updated in Keyworker sessions, during review meetings, during post incident debriefs and at many other stages that may present themselves. There are also opportunities for more formal feedback through the School Council, Unit Meetings, and Student Surveys.

Reviewing Schedule		
Date	Name	Date of Ratification and by whom
Reviewed and amended by SB Sept 2022	Simon Bannister – Headteacher	N/A
Reviewed May 2025	Simon Bannister – Headteacher	N/A
Review date in September 2027		