



# **Woodland Pathways**

## **Behaviour, Self Esteem & Positive Relationship Policy**

**Date created or revised: 0925  
Date of next review: 0926**

## 1. Purpose and Ethos

Woodland Pathways is committed to providing a **safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment** where all young people are supported to develop:

- Positive behaviour
- Strong self-esteem
- Healthy, respectful relationships

We recognise that many young people accessing alternative provision present with **Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs** and may have experienced disruption, trauma, or barriers to engagement.

Our approach is:

- **Relational** – relationships are central to change
- **Trauma-informed** – behaviour is understood as communication
- **Restorative** – repairing harm and building accountability

We actively promote an **anti-bullying culture** and maintain **open, ongoing communication with commissioning schools, Local Authorities, and families**, recognising this as essential to successful outcomes

This policy sets out how we promote **safe, respectful, and positive relationships** across all provision.

Our approach is built on the principle that:

**Behaviour is a form of communication and relationships are the foundation for change.**

We are committed to ensuring all learners:

- Feel **safe, valued, and understood**
- Experience **consistent, relational practice**
- Are supported to **develop self-regulation and accountability**

This policy reflects expectations from:

- Norfolk & Suffolk Local Authorities (Alternative Provision & EHCP frameworks)
- Safeguarding and child protection statutory guidance
- Trauma-informed and relational practice models

## 2. Core Principles

Our approach is underpinned by:

- Every young person has the right to **dignity, safety, and respect**
- **Behaviour is communication**, not simply choice
- **Positive relationships are central** to behaviour and wellbeing
- **Consistency and fairness create safety**
- **Support—not punishment—leads to sustainable change**
- All members of the community share **rights and responsibilities**

### 2.1 Relational Practice

We prioritise **connection before correction**, recognising that strong relationships underpin engagement and progress.

### 2.2 Trauma-Informed Approach

Behaviour is understood in context. Many learners may have experienced:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Educational disruption
- Emotional or social barriers

Staff respond with **curiosity, not judgement**.

### 2.3 High Expectations with Flexibility

We maintain:

- Clear and consistent expectations
- Individual adaptations based on need (EHCP / SEMH / risk assessments)

### 2.4 Safeguarding First

Any behaviour that raises concern is treated through a **safeguarding lens first**, not purely as discipline.

## 3. Behaviour Expectations (Community Agreements)

All learners, staff, and visitors are expected to:

- Show **respect, kindness, and dignity**
- Maintain **safe behaviour** (physically, emotionally, and online)
- Respect **boundaries, property, and environment**

- Engage positively and seek support when needed
- Take responsibility for actions and repair harm

#### **4. Understanding Behaviour**

We recognise that behaviour may communicate:

- Unmet needs
- Emotional dysregulation
- Anxiety, trauma, or sensory overload

Staff will consider:

- What is the behaviour communicating?
- What support is needed?
- How can we maintain safety while preserving dignity?

#### **5. Promoting Positive Behaviour**

We actively promote positive behaviour through:

- Strong, consistent relationships
- Predictable routines and structure
- Clear boundaries and expectations
- Recognition and reinforcement of positive choices
- Opportunities for reflection and growth

#### **6. Rights and Responsibilities**

All members of the community have the right to:

- Feel safe
- Be respected
- Learn without disruption
- Be heard and valued
- Access and enjoy the environment

All members have a responsibility to:

- Act in ways that keep others safe
- Show respect in words and actions
- Support the learning of others
- Value different views and experiences
- Care for the environment and resources

## **7. Promoting Positive Behaviour**

We promote positive behaviour through:

- Strong, consistent relationships
- Predictable routines and clear expectations
- Calm, structured environments
- Recognition and celebration of progress
- Learner voice and involvement in expectations
- Opportunities for responsibility, reflection, and growth

## **8. Supporting Self-Esteem and Confidence**

We support self-esteem through:

- Strengths-based approaches
- Meaningful opportunities for success
- Managed risk and challenge
- Positive reinforcement and feedback
- Reflection on progress and achievements
- Partnership working with families and commissioners

## **9. Responding to Behaviour**

### 9.1 Graduated Response Model

#### *Stage 1: Regulation & De-escalation*

- Calm, non-confrontational approach
- Active listening and validation
- Offering space or regulation strategies

#### *Stage 2: Restorative Approach*

- Reflection conversations
- Repairing relationships
- Restorative questioning:
  - What happened?
  - Who was affected?
  - What needs to happen next?

#### *Stage 3: Targeted Support*

- Adjustments to provision

- Review of risk assessments / support plans
- Engagement with school, LA, or professionals

#### *Stage 4: Escalation*

- Temporary restrictions or adjustments
- Emergency response (if safety risk)
- Placement review with commissioners

## **10. Types of Behaviour**

### 10.1 Low-Level / Minor Concerns

Examples include:

- Not following instructions
- Disengagement
- Inappropriate language
- Minor conflict

Response:

- De-escalation
- Restorative conversation
- Reinforcement of expectations

### 10.2 Serious Concerns

Examples include:

- Aggression or violence
- Bullying (including peer-on-peer abuse)
- Sexualised behaviour
- Substance misuse
- Criminal activity

Response:

- Immediate safeguarding action
- DSL involvement
- Recording and reporting to commissioners (same day where required)

## **11. Safeguarding and Behaviour**

All serious behaviour is treated as a **potential safeguarding concern**.

This includes:

- Peer-on-peer abuse
- Sexual harassment or violence
- Exploitation risks
- Harm to self or others

Actions:

- Immediate and accurate recording
- DSL notification
- Information sharing with commissioning party on the same day
- Multi-agency working where required

## **12. Physical Intervention**

- **Restrictive physical intervention is not used**
- Only **minimal, proportionate contact** may be used to:
  - Prevent harm
  - Guide to safety

All incidents must be:

- A last resort
- Clearly recorded
- Reviewed by safeguarding lead

## **13. Relationships as a Protective Factor**

We recognise that:

**Positive relationships are the primary driver of behavioural change.**

Staff will:

- Build trust through consistency and authenticity
- Model respectful behaviour
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Support learners to develop healthy relationships

## **14. Roles and Responsibilities**

### Staff

- Apply the policy consistently
- Maintain calm, professional responses
- Record and report concerns
- Engage in reflective practice

### Leadership / DSL

- Oversee safeguarding responses
- Monitor behaviour trends
- Liaise with commissioners
- Ensure staff training and compliance

### Learners

- Engage with expectations
- Participate in restorative processes
- Take responsibility for actions

### Parents/Carers & Commissioners

- Work in partnership
- Support consistency across settings
- Attend reviews where required

## **15. Behaviour Support Plans**

### Where required:

- Individual plans are developed collaboratively with:
  - Learner
  - School / LA
  - Parents/carers
  - External professionals

### Plans include:

- Triggers and needs
- Strategies and adjustments
- Risk management
- Desired outcomes

## 16. Recording and Monitoring

We maintain accurate records of:

- Behaviour incidents
- Safeguarding concerns
- Patterns and triggers
- Used to inform planning and intervention

These inform and improve:

- Risk assessments
- Support planning
- Placement reviews, support evidence for commissioners

## 17. Partnership: Alternative Provision & Commissioning Party Expectations (Norfolk & Suffolk)

We work in partnership with:

- Schools and commissioning Local Authorities
- Parents and carers
- External professionals

We ensure:

- Regular communication
- Shared strategies
- Transparent reporting

This policy meets commissioner expectations by ensuring:

- Clear safeguarding escalation pathways
- Transparent communication with schools/LA
- Evidence-based behaviour support strategies
- Individualised planning linked to EHCP outcomes
- Robust recording and accountability

Where risk escalates:

- Provision may be **reviewed or paused**
- Decisions are made **in partnership with commissioners**

## **18. Suspension / Placement Review**

As an alternative provision:

- We **do not issue exclusions**
- Where safety is compromised:
  - Placement may be temporarily paused
  - Emergency review meetings are convened
  - LA/school retain statutory responsibility
  - Next steps are agreed collaboratively

## **19. Staff Training**

All staff receive training in:

- Trauma-informed practice
- De-escalation strategies
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Restorative practice
- Professional boundaries and lone working

## **20. Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed:

- Annually
- Following serious incidents
- In response to LA / Ofsted / legislative changes

## **21. Key Statement**

We do not “manage behaviour” — we **build relationships, develop understanding, and create environments where positive behaviour can thrive.**

### **Woodland Pathways**

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