Behaviour Policy

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1. Purpose and principles

Edison Pace School promotes safety, dignity, belonging, positive relationships and ambitious learning for every pupil. Our approach is trauma-informed, relational and needs-led, with clear expectations, predictable routines and reasonable adjustments. Behaviour is understood in context, but harmful conduct is addressed consistently and proportionately. We teach and model the skills pupils need to regulate, communicate, repair relationships and participate successfully. Our ethos is: Be the Difference; See the Child; Change the Story.

This policy applies to all pupils, including those with education, health and care plans (EHCPs), looked-after children (LAC), previously looked-after children and pupils supported by social workers. We will not discriminate because of disability or any other protected characteristic. We consider the Equality Act 2010, safeguarding responsibilities and the individual pupil's assessed needs when deciding a response.

This policy is intended to meet the Independent School Standards, including the requirement to set out sanctions and keep a record of sanctions for serious misbehaviour. It must be read with the safeguarding, anti-bullying, attendance, physical intervention, searching, complaints, educational visits and medication policies.

2. Expectations and positive culture

- Adults model calm, respectful language, co-regulation and restorative practice; no shouting, humiliation or discriminatory language.
- Pupils are explicitly taught safety, respect, communication, boundaries, participation and repair through accessible language, visuals and rehearsal.
- Staff use personalised support plans, EHCPs, PEPs where relevant, communication profiles, sensory strategies and identified regulation spaces.
- Praise, reward points, certificates and other agreed recognition celebrate effort and progress; earned rewards are not retrospectively removed as punishment.
- Families and pupils contribute to behaviour planning in ways appropriate to age, communication and capacity.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Proprietor/governors:** approve and review the policy; scrutinise serious incidents, restrictive interventions, suspensions, exclusions and disproportionate outcomes.
- **Headteacher:** accountable for consistent implementation, serious disciplinary decisions, multi-agency escalation and formal suspension/exclusion decisions.
- **Heads of School:** oversee daily practice, staff training, individual plans, incident quality assurance and reintegration.
- **DSL/DDSLs:** lead safeguarding responses, advise on risk and external notifications, review patterns and ensure allegations and child-on-child abuse are addressed.
- **SENDCo (Designated Teacher for LAC):** advise on EHCP provision, adjustments, PEPs, placement stability and appropriate professional consultation.
- **All staff:** prevent escalation, use least restrictive responses, record promptly and accurately, follow plans and report safeguarding concerns.
- **Parents/carers and pupils:** are supported to understand expectations and participate in reviews; responsibility is adapted to pupils' age and needs.

4. Preventing and responding to distress

Staff first consider unmet needs, communication, trauma triggers, sensory factors, health, medication, relationships, environmental demands and whether EHCP provision or reasonable adjustments are working.

Strategies include positive framing, visual prompts, planned choices, change of adult or environment, distraction, movement and supported regulation. Safety takes priority; staff seek DSL support when behaviour may indicate abuse, exploitation or other harm.

Consequences and sanctions

Our default is educational, restorative and non-punitive. Natural and logical consequences must be connected to the incident, explained clearly, and not shame the pupil.

Where a disciplinary sanction is necessary, leaders assess seriousness, risk, intent and understanding, disability-related factors, prior support and proportionality. Potential responses include restorative work, supervised changes to activity, time-limited restrictions justified by safety, and exceptionally, formal suspension or permanent exclusion. We do not use detention, withdrawal of already-earned rewards, reduced timetables as sanctions, or punishment imposed at home for school incidents.

Serious misconduct, decisions, rationale, adjustments and sanctions are recorded in CPOMS and reviewed by leaders. An action taken for immediate safety is distinguished from a disciplinary sanction.

5. Restrictive physical intervention

De-escalation is the first response. Any use of reasonable force or other restrictive intervention must have a lawful basis, be necessary and proportionate to the immediate circumstances, and be the least restrictive effective option for the shortest possible time. Training in Team Teach informs safe practice but does not itself authorise a particular intervention. Force must never be used as punishment or merely for convenience.

Staff consider the pupil's age, disability, trauma history, medical risks and support plan. Emergency action may be necessary where an individual plan could not anticipate the situation. Seclusion, painful techniques and interventions that compromise breathing are not permitted. Protective equipment or beanbags are not automatically non-restrictive: their actual use determines the classification and required safeguards.

Every restrictive intervention is recorded promptly with antecedents, risk, rationale, staff involved, type and duration, pupil account, injuries, first aid, follow-up and review. Parents/carers are informed in accordance with applicable legal requirements and school procedure; for LAC, the social worker and other professionals are informed where required. Leaders monitor frequency, disproportionality and emerging patterns. Staff and pupils receive timely, accessible debriefs. The school will follow the applicable DfE guidance and statutory recording/reporting requirements in force at the time.

6. Searching, confiscation and classroom removal

Searching, screening and confiscation follow current DfE guidance, legal powers and safeguarding procedures. Only authorised staff undertake searches within the applicable legal framework; reasons, consent where relevant, witnesses, outcomes and notifications are

documented. Items supporting disability or regulation are not removed unless justified by a specific safety concern.

A pupil may be supported to leave the classroom for regulation or, exceptionally, removed for safety. Staff distinguish voluntary regulation breaks from directed removal. The pupil remains appropriately supervised, has access to education and is returned promptly when safe. The reason, duration, learning impact and reintegration plan are recorded. Enforced seclusion is prohibited.

7. Suspensions and permanent exclusions

Legal position and authority

Edison Pace is an independent school. The statutory exclusion review framework for maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units does not automatically apply. Decisions must comply with the Independent School Standards, Equality Act 2010, safeguarding duties, this published policy, school terms and relevant placement contracts.

The Headteacher ordinarily makes formal suspension and permanent exclusion decisions. Any delegated authority during absence must be expressly authorised by the proprietor and documented. No pupil is informally excluded, sent home as a behaviour sanction without formal recording, or placed on a reduced timetable as an alternative to suspension.

Decision-making safeguards

- Establish the facts fairly, considering evidence, the pupil's account in an accessible format, the seriousness of the incident and immediate safety.
- Consider whether disability, unmet SEND provision, communication barriers, trauma, safeguarding concerns or discrimination contributed, and whether reasonable adjustments or additional support are required.
- Review previous incidents and interventions, alternatives to suspension, impact on the pupil and others, and the risks to educational or care placement stability.
- Record the decision, evidence, rationale, duration and arrangements for education, welfare and return. Suspension is exceptional and ordinarily no longer than five school days under the school's own policy, not a statutory five-day limit.
- Notify parents or persons with parental responsibility promptly in writing, including reasons, dates, educational arrangements and the school's review/complaints route; notify the placing authority and other professionals as required.

Additional safeguards for looked-after and previously looked-after children — statutory guidance

The school will support the responsible local authority in meeting its duties under the Children Act 1989 and relevant statutory guidance, including DfE Promoting the Education of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children (2018) and Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations, Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (2021). The DfE Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children guidance (2018) informs the school's practice, recognising that its statutory designated-teacher requirements do not apply in the same way to independent schools. These documents primarily impose duties on local authorities or specified schools; Edison Pace will cooperate with responsible professionals and apply their relevant principles as good practice.

For a looked-after child, the school will seek early involvement of the social worker, Designated Teacher, Virtual School (VS), relevant carer and placing local authority whenever suspension is contemplated, ideally before a decision where safety permits. The pupil's PEP, EHCP, care arrangements, placement stability and available multi-agency alternatives will be reviewed. The VS is consulted to support educational stability; consultation is not a veto over a lawful school decision.

If an urgent serious incident prevents advance consultation, the Headteacher may act to safeguard pupils and staff, documenting why prior consultation was impracticable and contacting relevant professionals without avoidable delay. Written notification must distinguish the child's carer from the person or authority holding parental responsibility. Where suspension or exclusion may threaten the care placement or requires a care-plan review, the school will promptly alert the social worker and request involvement of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) through children's services as appropriate. A timely multi-agency reintegration and support review will be arranged, with PEP, care-plan and/or EHCP review considered as appropriate.

Previously looked-after pupils receive comparable consideration of attachment and trauma needs, with parents/guardians and relevant professionals involved where lawful and appropriate. For pupils with an allocated social worker, the social worker is consulted and informed as appropriate even if the pupil is not looked after.

During suspension and reintegration

The school will provide appropriate work and liaise with parents/carers and the placing authority about safeguarding and educational continuity. A reintegration meeting should normally take place promptly and should not itself become a barrier to the pupil returning at the end of suspension. Leaders update the behaviour support and risk plans and check whether an urgent EHCP review, PEP review, therapeutic input or other provision is required.

Permanent exclusion and challenge

Permanent exclusion is a last resort for exceptional serious circumstances or sustained serious risk where reasonable alternatives have been exhausted. Before a final decision, the Headteacher will, wherever practicable, consult the placing authority and SENCo and, for LAC, the social worker and VS; consider EHCP obligations and educational continuity; and seek proprietor oversight. The school will issue written reasons, effective date, supporting information and its review/complaints route. A parent/carer may request a review by a proprietor/governor representative not involved in the original decision, subject to the school's complaints arrangements and applicable contractual rights. The school will cooperate with the responsible authority regarding suitable ongoing education and statutory duties; it will not promise the statutory maintained-school independent review panel where that framework does not apply.

8. Multi-local-authority communication

For each pupil, the school maintains a secure record of the placing/commissioning authority, home authority where different, SEND caseworker, social worker, VS where applicable, persons with parental responsibility, emergency contacts and agreed contractual reporting requirements. Staff use the minimum necessary personal information and approved secure channels.

- Serious incidents: same-day internal DSL/leadership assessment; external notifications where safeguarding, commissioning or placement agreements require them.
- LAC suspension considered: seek advance social worker/VS/placing authority consultation where practicable; record contacts and advice.
- Formal suspension or exclusion: prompt written notifications to relevant parties and placing authority in line with law and contract; no assumption that all authorities use identical forms or thresholds.
- Repeated incidents, restrictive interventions or placement instability: convene an appropriate multi-agency review and consider EHCP/PEP review.
- Where an incident may involve crime or significant harm: follow safeguarding procedures, preserve evidence and contact police or children's services when appropriate.

9. Bullying, abuse, online incidents and criminal concerns

Bullying, discriminatory behaviour, sexual violence or harassment, child-on-child abuse and harmful online conduct are never dismissed as banter. Staff respond proportionately, safeguard all affected pupils, notify the DSL immediately when a safeguarding concern arises and follow the relevant school policies and current Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance. Alleged criminal conduct is assessed with the DSL; police and children's services are contacted where appropriate. School enquiries must not compromise police investigations.

10. Monitoring, complaints and review

CPOMS records incidents, serious sanctions, removals, restrictive interventions, safeguarding concerns, decisions, notifications, pupil voice and restorative follow-up. Leaders review patterns at least half-termly, including by site, pupil need, LAC status and placing authority where lawful and proportionate. The proprietor receives anonymised or appropriately restricted oversight of trends and exceptional decisions. Staff training and reflective supervision are reviewed in response to findings.

Complaints and challenges are handled under the published Complaints and Compliments Policy, without limiting statutory rights or applicable contractual remedies. This policy is reviewed annually and earlier if law, DfE guidance, practice or commissioning arrangements change.

Appendix A. Suspension decision and notification checklist

- Record incident facts, pupil voice, immediate risk, safeguarding assessment and evidence.
- Check EHCP, behaviour/risk plans, disability-related factors, adjustments, PEP and prior interventions.
- For LAC: consult social worker, Designated Teacher, VS, carer and placing LA in advance where practicable; record any urgent exception.
- Record alternatives considered, Headteacher authority, proportionality, duration and educational/welfare arrangements.
- Issue written notice to those with parental responsibility and other relevant recipients; record secure delivery and contractual LA notifications.

- Plan timely reintegration, update support plans, consider EHCP/PEP review, and monitor impact.

Appendix B. Principal reference framework

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended), particularly Part 3, paragraphs 9 and 10; Equality Act 2010; Education Act 1996; Children Act 1989 and Children and Families Act 2014 where applicable; SEND Code of Practice; current Keeping Children Safe in Education; DfE Behaviour in Schools; DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation; DfE restrictive interventions guidance and associated recording/reporting requirements; and DfE suspension/permanent exclusion guidance as good-practice reference where its statutory scope does not cover independent schools. Check current versions before formal approval. Specific children-in-care references: DfE Promoting the Education of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children (2018); DfE The Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children (2018); Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations, Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (2021); and Independent Reviewing Officers' Handbook (2010).

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