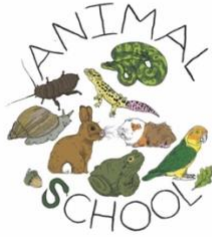


Animal School Behaviour Management Policy



1. Policy Statement

At Animal School we believe that **positive relationships** are the foundation of emotional growth, learning, and wellbeing. Our Behaviour and Relationships Policy reflects our therapeutic, inclusive, and person-centred ethos.

We support students to develop self-awareness, empathy, and responsibility through consistent boundaries, meaningful relationships, and restorative practices—not through punishment or exclusion. Behaviour is seen as a form of communication, and all responses are grounded in understanding, compassion, and safety.

2. Aims of This Policy

- To create a safe, respectful, and emotionally secure environment for all.
 - To build trusting, supportive relationships between students and staff.
 - To help students develop emotional regulation and pro-social behaviours.
 - To ensure all staff respond to behaviour in a consistent and therapeutic way.
 - To promote a culture of mutual respect, kindness, and accountability.
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3. Our Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour

We understand that many students have experienced trauma, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), or challenges with emotional regulation. Our approach includes:

- **Understanding behaviour as communication**
- **Using co-regulation** before expecting self-regulation
- **Clear boundaries and expectations**, explained with empathy
- **Predictable routines** to help students feel safe
- **Repair and restore** rather than blame and punish

We strive to create an environment where students feel they **belong**, not just behave.

4. Expectations of Behaviour

We promote a simple, shared set of expectations that are positively framed and consistent across the farm:

“At Animal School we:”

- Are **kind** to people and animals
- Are **respectful** of others' feelings, space, and property
- **Listen** to adults and each other
- **Try our best**, even when things feel hard
- **Take responsibility** for our actions
- **Look after ourselves**, our animals, and our environment

These are explained and reinforced through daily interactions, visual reminders, and reflective conversations.

5. Building Positive Relationships

Strong relationships are central to our provision. We:

- Greet students warmly each day
- Use relational language and a calm tone
- Spend informal time with students to build trust
- Recognise effort and emotional progress, not just “good behaviour”
- Avoid shouting, public shaming, or punitive systems

Each student is known, seen, and valued for who they are—not judged solely by their behaviour.

6. Recognising and Reinforcing Positive Behaviour

We focus on noticing, naming, and nurturing positive behaviour through:

- Verbal praise and encouragement
- Personalised rewards (e.g. time with a favourite animal, extra responsibility)
- Celebrating small steps of progress
- Sharing successes with families

Staff are encouraged to “catch students doing well” and celebrate their growth.

7. Responding to Challenging Behaviour

We respond to dysregulation or unsafe behaviour with empathy, safety, and consistency. Strategies include:

a. De-escalation Techniques

- Calm tone, open posture
- Giving space and time to regulate
- Offering choices and a way out
- Redirecting attention or offering movement breaks

b. Safe Space or Time Out (not punishment)

- Students may be offered a calm, supervised space to regulate
- Adults remain nearby and available to co-regulate if needed

c. Reflective Conversations

Once calm is restored, staff support the student to:

- Reflect on what happened
- Understand the feelings behind the behaviour
- Consider impact on others
- Identify what could be done differently next time
- Rebuild relationships if needed (restorative practice)

8. Consistency and Boundaries

We recognise that consistency provides emotional security. All staff:

- Use agreed language and routines
- Share behaviour concerns clearly and respectfully
- Follow up behaviour incidents consistently

We do not use shaming, humiliation, threats, or punitive isolation under any circumstances.

9. Support Plans and Personalised Strategies

Some students may need additional support with emotional regulation or behaviour. In these cases, we work with the student, their family, and any external professionals to create a **Personalised Support Plan**, which may include:

- Triggers and early warning signs
- Preferred de-escalation techniques
- Grounding strategies
- Agreed consequences or restorative steps
- Strategies for re-engagement

These are reviewed regularly and updated as the student progresses.

10. Bullying and Peer Conflict

Any bullying behaviour is taken seriously and addressed through our **Anti-Bullying Policy**. Low-level conflict is supported through:

- Mediation by a trusted adult
- Restorative conversations
- Reparation tasks if appropriate
- Ongoing monitoring and support

We aim to teach students the **skills to manage conflict**, not just control the outcomes.

11. Physical Intervention and Exclusion

Physical intervention is only used:

- As a **last resort**
- When a child or others are at **immediate risk of harm**
- In line with our **Physical Intervention and Positive Handling Policy**

All staff involved in physical intervention are trained in accredited methods. Any incident is recorded, reviewed, and shared with parents/carers.

11.1 Restrictive Physical Interventions / Restraints

- Physical restraint is **only ever used as a last resort** when a student poses an immediate risk of harm to themselves, others, or animals.
- Staff are **trained in safe intervention techniques** and follow best-practice guidelines to minimise harm.
- Any use of restraint is **proportionate, reasonable, and recorded immediately**, including the circumstances, duration, and staff involved.
- Parents/carers are informed if a restraint has been necessary, and the incident is reviewed to prevent future occurrences.
- Restraint is **never used for punishment** or to enforce compliance with instructions.

11.2. Sanctions

- Sanctions are **educational and restorative**, aimed at helping students understand the impact of their behaviour and supporting positive choices.
- Examples of acceptable sanctions may include:
 - Temporary removal from a particular activity.
 - Reflection time with staff to discuss the behaviour.
 - Reparation tasks, such as helping with animal care under supervision.
- Sanctions must be **proportionate, consistent, and clearly explained** to the student.
- Corporal punishment is **never used**.

11.3. Use of Exclusion

- Exclusion (temporary or permanent) is considered **only in extreme cases** when a student's behaviour presents a serious ongoing risk.
 - Temporary exclusions are used as a **last resort** and are accompanied by a reintegration plan to support the student's return.
 - All exclusions are **documented** and communicated to parents/carers, with appropriate external reporting if required.
 - Decisions are made **in line with safeguarding guidance**, prioritising the safety of all students, staff, and animals.
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12. Monitoring and Record Keeping

All behaviour incidents are:

- Logged on the Behaviour or Safeguarding system
- Reviewed weekly by the Manager/DSL for patterns or concerns
- Shared with families where appropriate

Serious or persistent concerns may trigger:

- Multi-agency meetings (e.g. EHCP reviews, early help)
 - Adjustments to the student's provision
 - Additional mental health or therapeutic input
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13. Staff Training and Support

All staff receive training in:

- Trauma-informed approaches
- Attachment and emotional development
- Behaviour de-escalation and regulation techniques
- Restorative practice

Regular team discussions and supervision help staff reflect, stay consistent, and care for their own emotional wellbeing.

14. Working with Families

We work **in partnership** with families to support behaviour and emotional development. This includes:

- Regular communication and updates
 - Shared strategies and planning
 - Involving parents/carers in support plans
 - Celebrating progress together
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15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually** or following any significant incident or change to national guidance.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lindsay', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lindsay Cross

Manager

31/07/2025