Behaviour Management Policy

Ethos Statement

TAO Independent School believes that all behaviour is a form of communication. Our Behaviour Management Policy is grounded in trauma-informed practice, restorative justice, and a commitment to positive relationships.

Principles

This policy ensures a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment that meets the needs of all students, particularly those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

The policy links directly with the Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (DfE, updated February 2024), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, The Equality Act 2010 and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Designated Roles & Responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team Responsibilities

- Ensure policy compliance with statutory guidance and best practice.
- Provide ongoing training and supervision to staff.
- Ensure behaviour interventions are non-punitive and trauma informed.
- Monitor the impact of behaviour management strategies.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs & DDSLs)

- DSL: the Headteacher (headteacher@taoeducationgroup.co.uk), in line with the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- DDSL: the SENDCo (SENDCo@taoeducationgroup.co.uk).
- Proprietor: Daniel Giblin (07737188117), holding strategic and governance oversight of, and accountability for, safeguarding and behaviour across TAO.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring behaviour concerns linked to safeguarding are managed appropriately.
- Liaising with external agencies (e.g., CAMHS, social services).

- Ensuring that behaviour incidents that raise safeguarding concerns are reported.

In line with KCSIE 2026, all behaviour incidents that raise safeguarding concerns (including online harm, peer-on-peer abuse, or inappropriate use of technology) are escalated to the DSL.

In line with KCSIE 2026, child-on-child abuse also explicitly includes harassment and violence as standalone categories. Any concern that a pupil is carrying, using, or intends to use a weapon must be reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL immediately for risk assessment.

This policy should be read alongside the TAO Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct to ensure a joined-up safeguarding approach.

Behaviour Leads:
The Headteacher (operational lead)
Daniel Giblin, Proprietor (strategic oversight)

Responsibilities include:

- Leading restorative approaches and de-escalation strategies.
- Supporting staff in implementing trauma-informed behaviour support plans.
- Analysing behaviour trends and adapting interventions accordingly.

Trauma-Informed & Restorative Approach

Key Principles:

- **Behaviour is communication;** we respond with compassion and empathy.
- **No punitive measures;** we use relational, restorative approaches.
- **Emotional regulation over control;** we teach self-regulation rather than enforce compliance.
- **Consistency and predictability;** we create a safe, structured environment.

Our behaviour framework is overseen by therapeutic staff and clinical advisors, ensuring interventions are trauma-informed and rooted in pupil need. ADHD coaching principles and wellbeing-led practice underpin how we support pupils to self-regulate, rather than punish or isolate. Behaviour support at TAO is embedded within the curriculum and Schemes of Work, particularly within PSHE, RSHE, therapeutic provision and outdoor education. Behavioural regulation, emotional literacy and social communication skills are explicitly taught, practised and assessed through curriculum activities, ensuring behaviour support is proactive, developmental and aligned with learning.

Expectations for Behaviour

Our provision operates on three core principles:

1. **Respect:** We treat others with kindness and fairness.
2. **Responsibility:** We take ownership of our actions.
3. **Safety:** We keep ourselves and others safe.

This includes safe and appropriate use of technology. Pupils must follow the TAO Mobile Phone & Smart Device Policy. Unauthorised use of phones, smart watches, trackers, or covert devices is a breach of this Behaviour Policy.

Restorative Justice Approach

We use restorative practices instead of punitive consequences, including:

- Restorative Conversation: Addressing harm and rebuilding trust.
- Restorative Circles: Facilitating group discussions to resolve conflicts.
- Collaborative Solutions: Encouraging students to take accountability.

Restrictive Interventions, Reasonable Force, Restraint and Seclusion

TAO Independent School is committed to minimising the need for restrictive interventions. The School's primary approach is preventative, relational and trauma-informed. Staff use positive relationships, predictable routines, co-regulation, environmental adjustment, communication strategies, reasonable adjustments and de-escalation to reduce distress and prevent situations from escalating.

Restrictive intervention is not used as a routine behaviour-management strategy, as a punishment, merely to secure compliance with an instruction, or as a substitute for appropriate teaching, therapeutic support, reasonable adjustment or effective behaviour support.

The School recognises that there may nevertheless be exceptional circumstances in which a restrictive intervention is lawful, necessary and proportionate in order to protect a pupil or others or to maintain safety and good order.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Restrictive intervention means an action intended to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of a pupil's body or part of their body and may include physical or non-physical forms of restraint.

Reasonable force means the use of no more force than is necessary and proportionate in the circumstances, for the shortest period reasonably required.

Restraint means a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement.

Seclusion means a non-disciplinary intervention in which a pupil is kept apart from others and prevented from leaving a place.

Seclusion is distinct from a pupil voluntarily choosing to access a quiet, regulation or breakout space where they remain free to leave, or from ordinary removal from a learning environment where the pupil is not prevented from leaving.

Significant use of force means an incident in which the use of force goes beyond ordinary and appropriate physical contact between staff and pupils and is of a nature that requires formal recording under the School's statutory procedures.

Prevention and De-escalation

TAO seeks to prevent the need for restrictive intervention through:

• strong and trusting staff-pupil relationships;
• knowledge of each pupil's communication, SEND, sensory and regulation profile;
• appropriate adaptation of expectations, environment and curriculum;
• early recognition of dysregulation and known triggers;
• co-regulation and emotionally attuned adult responses;
• access to movement, space and regulation strategies;
• clear, calm and proportionate communication;
• individual behaviour, regulation or support planning where required;
• involvement of pupils and families in identifying strategies that support regulation and safety;
• review of incidents, patterns and emerging risks.

Where a foreseeable risk indicates that restrictive intervention may be required, an individual risk assessment and/or behaviour or support plan will be developed where appropriate. This will identify preventative strategies, known triggers, communication needs, reasonable adjustments, preferred responses and any additional staff competence or training required.

The existence of an individual plan does not in itself authorise the use of force, restraint or seclusion. Any intervention must still be necessary, lawful and proportionate to the circumstances at the time.

Least Restrictive Response

Before using or continuing a restrictive intervention, staff will consider, so far as circumstances permit:

• Is intervention necessary?
• Is there a less restrictive effective option available?
• Is the proposed response proportionate to the level of risk?
• Is the intervention likely to reduce rather than increase the immediate risk?
• What is the likely impact on this particular pupil's safety, welfare and dignity?
• Can the restriction be reduced or ended?

In an emergency, staff are not expected to delay necessary action where doing so would expose a pupil or another person to greater risk.

Reasonable Force

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in the circumstances permitted by law.

Reasonable force may be used where necessary to prevent a pupil from:

• committing a criminal offence;
• injuring themselves or another person;
• damaging property, including their own property; or
• prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the School or among pupils receiving education at the School.

The decision to use reasonable force is a matter of professional judgement based on the circumstances at the time.

Staff must take account, where known and relevant, of:

• the pupil's age and developmental level;
• SEND and disability;
• communication and processing needs;
• sensory needs;
• known trauma or vulnerabilities;
• medical conditions;
• relevant EHCP provision;
• the pupil's Learning Journey;
• behaviour/support plans;
• individual risk assessments;
• reasonable adjustments;
• whether a less restrictive effective response is reasonably available.

Where foreseeable risk indicates that physical intervention may be required, appropriately trained and competent staff will normally lead the intervention.

Nothing in this policy prevents a member of staff from using reasonable and proportionate force where immediately necessary and lawful, including in an unforeseen emergency where delay could expose a person to harm.

Any use of reasonable force must:

• be necessary in the circumstances;
• be proportionate to the risk presented;
• use the minimum level of force reasonably required;
• continue for the shortest possible period;
• seek to preserve the pupil's dignity and safety;
• cease as soon as the circumstances no longer justify its use.

Force must never be used as punishment.

Staff must not intentionally use methods which interfere with a pupil's airway, breathing or circulation, including pressure to the neck or abdomen or covering the mouth or nose.

Ground restraint should be avoided. Where a pupil comes to the ground during an intervention, staff should seek to release or reposition the pupil into a safer position as soon as circumstances safely permit.

Appropriate Physical Contact

This policy does not create a "no contact" approach.

Appropriate physical contact may form part of normal school practice, including:

• administering first aid;
• supporting a pupil during physical or outdoor activity;
• appropriately guiding a pupil;
• providing physical assistance where required;
• comforting a distressed pupil where appropriate;
• supporting a pupil who has chosen to access a regulation space.

Staff must exercise professional judgement and take account of safeguarding, SEND, communication needs, individual preferences and the circumstances.

Ordinary appropriate physical contact does not amount to restraint simply because physical contact has occurred.

Seclusion

TAO Independent School does not use seclusion as a punishment, sanction or disciplinary response and does not use seclusion as a routine or planned behaviour-management strategy.

Where an exceptional safety situation nevertheless amounts to seclusion, it may only be used as a non-disciplinary safety measure where a pupil is experiencing a high level of dysregulation and it is necessary to protect others from harm.

Where seclusion occurs:

• it must be necessary and proportionate to the immediate risk;
• the pupil must not be threatened with punishment for attempting to leave;

• the space used must be safe and must not be threatening or intimidating;
• the pupil must be supervised throughout;
• the pupil's physical and emotional wellbeing must be monitored;
• the restriction must last only for as long as the immediate risk requires;
• the pupil must be permitted to leave as soon as the immediate risk has sufficiently reduced.

A pupil voluntarily using a regulation, breakout or quiet area while remaining free to leave is not seclusion.

SEND, Disability and Individual Need

TAO recognises that pupils with SEND, disabilities, communication differences or trauma histories may be disproportionately affected by restrictive interventions.

Before, during and after any restrictive intervention, staff must therefore consider the pupil's individual circumstances, including:

• SEND and disability;
• communication and processing differences;
• sensory needs;
• trauma history and known triggers;
• physical and medical conditions;
• emotional and mental-health needs;
• EHCP provision where applicable;
• the Learning Journey;
• individual risk assessments;
• behaviour or support arrangements.

TAO will make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and will seek to minimise any disproportionate impact upon pupils with SEND or disability.

Staff Training and Competence

Staff who are reasonably likely to need to use restrictive interventions will receive training, guidance and support appropriate to their role, the needs of the pupils with whom they work and identified risk.

Formal training requirements will be determined through risk assessment, pupil need, operational circumstances and relevant professional or technical requirements rather than through an unnecessary blanket requirement applying to all staff.

Training and professional development will emphasise:

• prevention;
• relational practice;
• co-regulation;
• de-escalation;
• lawful decision-making;
• safeguarding;

• safe intervention;
• SEND and reasonable adjustment;
• post-incident support and learning.

Recording of Restrictive Interventions

The Proprietor will ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for recording restrictive interventions in accordance with statutory requirements.

Each incident of seclusion or restraint must be formally recorded.

Each significant incident involving the use of force must also be formally recorded.

Records must be completed in writing as soon as practicable following the incident and staff should normally aim to complete the record on the same day.

The record will include, as applicable:

• the pupil involved;
• staff directly involved;
• date, time and location;
• approximate duration of the intervention;
• relevant SEND, disability, medical, communication or other individual circumstances;
• what happened immediately before the intervention;
• known or possible triggers;
• preventative and de-escalation strategies used where relevant;
• why intervention was considered necessary;
• the type of intervention or force used;
• the degree of force used where applicable;
• how and when the intervention ended;
• any injury or adverse impact;
• first aid or medical treatment provided;
• post-incident support;
• the pupil's account where appropriate;
• staff accounts;
• when and how parents were informed;
• actions arising from subsequent review.

Where an incident falls within more than one recording category, the School will meet all applicable requirements without unnecessarily duplicating records.

Reporting to Parents

Information about each incident of seclusion or restraint and each significant use of force will be provided to the pupil's parent or carer in writing as soon as practicable following the incident.

TAO will normally aim to provide this information on the same day.

Written notification will include sufficient information to explain:

• when and where the incident occurred;
• the approximate duration;
• why the intervention was considered necessary;
• the type of intervention or force used;
• any injury sustained;
• relevant follow-up action.

Previous discussion with a parent, or inclusion of possible restrictive intervention within an individual plan, does not remove the requirement to report an incident where statutory reporting requirements apply.

Where there are exceptional safeguarding reasons why providing information to a particular parent may place the pupil at risk of significant harm, the School will follow the applicable statutory safeguarding and reporting arrangements and seek appropriate advice.

Immediate and Post-Incident Support

Following any restrictive intervention, staff will consider whether the pupil, members of staff involved or pupils who witnessed the incident require:

• first aid;
• medical assessment;
• emotional or regulation support;
• safeguarding support;
• time and space to recover;
• further professional support.

Any injury will be managed and recorded through the School's First Aid and Health & Safety procedures and reported externally where any applicable statutory reporting threshold is met.

A proportionate post-incident review will take place as soon as reasonably practicable.

The review will consider:

• what happened and why;
• what the pupil was communicating through their behaviour;
• the pupil's perspective;
• the perspective of staff involved;
• whether prevention and de-escalation strategies were effective;
• whether reasonable adjustments were sufficient;
• whether the intervention used was necessary and proportionate;
• whether any alternative response may reduce risk in future;
• whether any plan, assessment or strategy should change;
• whether staff require additional support, guidance or training;
• whether relationships require repair or restorative work.

Pupil Voice

The pupil will be supported, in a manner appropriate to their communication, developmental and emotional needs, to give their account of the incident and express how the intervention affected them.

Their views will inform post-incident review, relational repair and future prevention planning.

Pupils will not be compelled to discuss an incident before they are sufficiently regulated and ready to do so.

Learning and Future Planning

Where review identifies a change in need, trigger, risk or effective strategy, relevant pupil records will be updated proportionately.

This may include:

• the Learning Journey;
• individual risk assessment;
• behaviour or support arrangements;
• reasonable adjustments;
• identified regulation strategies;
• staff guidance;
• curriculum or environmental adaptations.

A single incident does not automatically require the creation of a new plan where existing arrangements remain appropriate.

The purpose of review is to learn from the incident and reduce the likelihood that restrictive intervention will be required again.

Safeguarding

Any concern that restrictive intervention was inappropriate, excessive, unsafe or otherwise raises a safeguarding concern must be reported immediately in accordance with the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

Any allegation or concern relating to the conduct of a member of staff will be managed under the School's safeguarding procedures, including referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer where the relevant threshold is met.

Restrictive intervention must never be used to conceal poor practice, avoid appropriate safeguarding action or prevent a pupil from expressing a concern.

Complaints

Parents and pupils may raise concerns regarding the use of restrictive intervention through the School's Complaints Policy.

The existence of a complaint does not prevent the School from simultaneously considering any safeguarding, staff-conduct, SEND, health and safety or other relevant issues arising from the incident.

Leadership and Proprietor Assurance

The Headteacher is responsible for the operational implementation of these arrangements and for ensuring that staff understand the School's expectations.

The DSL will ensure that safeguarding implications arising from incidents are identified and acted upon.

The SENDCo will support consideration of SEND, reasonable adjustments and individual support arrangements.

The Proprietor retains strategic oversight and accountability for ensuring that effective arrangements are in place for the lawful use, recording, reporting and review of restrictive interventions.

Restrictive-intervention information will be reviewed proportionately to identify:

• repeated or escalating use;
• patterns involving particular pupils, circumstances or environments;
• emerging safeguarding risks;
• disproportionate impact on pupils with SEND or disability;
• unmet need;
• reasonable-adjustment issues;
• training or competence needs;
• opportunities to strengthen prevention and de-escalation.

The purpose of leadership monitoring is not simply to count incidents. It is to understand why restrictive intervention became necessary, assure that intervention was lawful and proportionate, and identify what the School can do to minimise the likelihood of recurrence.

Behaviour information is reviewed proportionately by the Headteacher and relevant leaders. Patterns and trends are considered through the School's pupil assurance and quality-assurance arrangements to identify triggers, evaluate support, inform staff development and update individual provision where required.

Behaviour information is triangulated with attendance, assessment for learning, curriculum engagement, Learning Journeys and other relevant pupil evidence to support proportionate decision-making and ensure that interventions remain effective.

Monitoring, Recording & Data Analysis

Behaviour is tracked and reviewed to ensure interventions are effective.

Behaviour data is logged on the digital tracking system and Behaviour information is reviewed proportionately by the Headteacher and relevant leaders. Patterns and trends are considered through the School's pupil assurance and quality-assurance arrangements to identify triggers, evaluate support, inform staff development and update individual provision where required. to identify triggers, inform staff CPD, and update individual support plans. Summary data informs annual self-evaluation and the Headteacher's report to the Proprietor. Behaviour data is triangulated with attendance, assessment for learning, and curriculum engagement data to inform individual support plans, therapeutic interventions and next steps in learning.

Working with Families & External Agencies

We work collaboratively with parents, carers, and professionals to support students. Where behaviour concerns intersect with safeguarding thresholds, procedures are followed in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

Best Practice Guidelines

Building Positive Relationships

Example: If a student is disengaged, instead of saying, *'Why aren't you listening?'*, a staff member should say: *'You seem distracted. Is there something I can help with?'*, while also noting the positive behaviour of other pupils.

Using Positive Language

Example: Instead of saying, *'Don't shout!'*, say: *'Let's try using a calmer voice so we can all hear each other.'*

Policy Review & Continuous Improvement

- Annual review by senior leadership, behaviour leads, and staff.
- Regular feedback from students and families to refine approaches.
- Appropriate ongoing professional development in trauma-informed and restorative practice according to role and identified need.

Conclusion

This policy ensures a highly compliant, trauma-informed, and restorative approach to behaviour management, creating a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all students.

This Behaviour Management Policy operates as part of TAO's integrated curriculum, safeguarding, assessment and therapeutic framework, ensuring behaviour support is consistent, lawful and developmentally appropriate.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding Policy, Supervision Policy, Health & Safety Policy, and Staff Code of Conduct.

Legal & Statutory Framework

This policy has been developed with reference to the following legislation and guidance:

- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (DfE, updated February 2024)
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended) – Part 3
- Equality Act 2010
- KCSIE 2026
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools – Department for Education, effective April 2026
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 – sections 93 and 93A
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended – including provisions relating to recording and reporting significant use of force, restraint and seclusion n
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Version Updates

Version	Date	Author	Review / Changes	Approved By
1.0	01/10/2025	Daniel Giblin	Published	Headteacher / Proprietor
2.0	26/08/2026	Daniel Giblin	DSL/DDSL roles corrected to Headteacher/SENDCo	Headteacher / Proprietor

			in line with the Safeguarding Policy (named former staff removed); Behaviour Lead role split into Headteacher (operational) and Proprietor (strategic), per instruction; governing-body reference corrected; Legal Framework citations verified and corrected; a broken sentence in Serious Incidents repaired; proofread.	
3.0	13/09/2026	Daniel Giblin	Restrictive intervention, reasonable force, restraint and seclusion provisions updated in line with 2026 statutory guidance and amended Independent School Standards; recording, reporting, SEND, pupil voice and proprietor assurance strengthened; behaviour monitoring aligned with whole-school assurance arrangements. |	Proprietor

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL