

Ormiston Academies Trust

Ormiston Kensington Queensmill Academy Behaviour policy

Policy version control

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The main purpose of the Behaviour Policy is to ensure that all pupils and staff are safe and that academies create a culture where emotional regulation is supported so that pupils can engage proactively in their learning. All pupils should be able to learn in environments that are calm, safe, and supportive and free from disruption. All Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) academies are committed to inclusivity and implementing strategies that reduce bias and support individual pupil's needs. Where 'parent' is used in this policy this should be taken to include guardian or carer.
- 1.2. At Ormiston Kensington Queensmill Academy, our approach to behaviour is based on the understanding of autism, a commitment to safeguarding, and a belief that all pupils can thrive when their needs are recognised, respected, and met through highly individualised provision. As an autism specialist setting, we recognise that behaviour is a form of communication. Our pupil's responses are shaped by their sensory profiles, communication differences, emotional regulation, and past experiences.
- 1.3. A consistent and values-driven academy culture, grounded in OAT's five values, shapes expectations, relationships, and everyday experiences across the academy.

Values:

- **Ambition:** We believe everyone can achieve and strive for excellence in all we do.
- **Learning:** We are committed to continuous learning, seeing growth and development as the path to improvement
- **Perseverance:** We embrace challenges and grow by tackling difficult things
- **Collaboration:** We achieve more by working together
- **Inclusion:** We break down barriers to ensure everyone can learn, grow and participate
- These are further reflected through Ormiston Kensington Queensmill Academy's mission statement and values
 - At Ormiston Kensington Queensmill Academy, we provide a nurturing, inclusive and autism-specific environment in which every child and young person can thrive, develop independence and gain the skills and confidence to lead a fulfilling life.
 - Our values are:
 - Respect – we value every pupil's identity, strengths and needs.
 - Communication – every pupil has a voice and is supported to express it.
 - Inclusion – We remove barriers to participation and create a strong sense of belonging.

- High aspirations – we enable independence, achievement and successful preparation for adulthood.
- Wellbeing – We prioritise safety, regulation and positive relationships.

2. Legislation, statutory requirements and statutory guidance

- 2.1. This policy is based on legislation and advice from the Department of Education (DfE) on:
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2024

3. Related OAT Policies

- Attendance
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff
- Use of Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force
- Anti-bullying
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Equality and Diversity
- Searching, screening, and confiscation
- SEND
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing

4. Leadership, Partnership, and Shared Responsibility

- 4.1. Trustees and Governors
- Trustees will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the Behaviour Policy across the trust.
 - Trustees will:
 - Hold the Executive Team to account for the successful implementation of the policy, ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly

- The local governing body in each academy is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the Behaviour Policy in the academy
- Governors will:
 - Hold the principal to account for the successful implementation of the policy, including ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly

4.2. Principal

- The principal is responsible for setting and maintaining the behaviour culture of the academy and ensuring that all staff and pupils feel safe and supported.
- The principal will:
 - Ensure that the academy has high expectations and clear routines and rules, and that this is understood and applied consistently and fairly by all staff
 - Aim to prevent all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, harassment, or any unkind or harmful behaviour
 - Together with the leadership team, be highly visible in the academy to engage with pupils, staff, and parents and promote high standards of behaviour, adopting the OAT five components of high and effective visible leadership
 - Ensure that all staff are successfully inducted into the academy's behaviour culture and systems, and will make sure that all staff receive high-quality training on how to support pupils, teach routines, and manage behaviour calmly and effectively

4.3. Teachers

- Teachers are responsible for managing behaviour effectively to ensure a calm and safe learning environment for all pupils
- Teachers will:
 - Establish well-structured and predictable routines and visual supports that pupils understand and can follow
 - Teach and model behaviour explicitly, practicing routines and expectations consistently across all areas of school life
 - Promote positive behaviour and good choices in all areas of the school by following the behaviour policy and agreed teaching routines
 - Understand behaviour as communication, using proactive strategies and early identification of dysregulation to prevent escalation
 - Use agreed deescalation strategies to support dysregulation, reduce anxiety and prevent situations from becoming overwhelming, and apply these strategies consistently in line with the behaviour policy and teaching and learning routines.

- Aim to understand the needs of all pupils in their classes by referring to specific plans and strategies for individuals where relevant
- Respond with empathy and positive regard, maintaining respectful interactions, adapting teaching and the environment to meet pupil's needs, and modelling calm communication
- Work collaboratively and professionally, building strong relationships, recording significant behaviour, participating in de-brief sessions, engaging with families, and taking part in ongoing professional development

4.4. All Staff

- All staff will:
 - Model and maintain positive relationships with pupils, so that they can see examples of good behaviours and feel confident to ask for help when needed
 - Use proactive, autism informed strategies to recognise early signs of anxiety or sensory overload and offer appropriate support
 - Apply agreed de-escalation approaches, including Team Teach strategies, prioritizing safety, dignity and the least restrictive practice
 - Support communication, independence and learning, reinforcing visual supports, routines and regulation strategies as directed by the teacher
 - Share key observations and record significant incidents, ensuring consistent, well-coordinated behaviour support across the school
 - Work collaboratively, participate in de-brief sessions, engage with families, and take part in ongoing professional development

4.5. Pupils

- Pupils will:
 - Receive regular and tailored teaching of routines, regulation strategies and expectations
 - Be made aware of support available to help them feel safe, regulated, and ready to engage positively with school life
 - Share their experiences of the school's behaviour culture, in ways appropriate to their communication profiles, to contribute to the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the Behaviour Policy

4.6. Parents

- Parents are responsible for working in partnership with the academy to support and reinforce the behaviour policy.
- Parents are expected to:
 - Promote a positive culture of behaviour and celebrate their child's successes and achievements
 - Get to know the academy's behaviour policy and reinforce the ethos and values of the policy with their child when necessary
 - Support their child in adhering to the academy's behaviour policy
 - Inform the academy of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
 - Discuss any behavioural concerns with relevant staff promptly
 - Engage with the academy following incidents of dysregulation
 - Positively engage in the review and implementation of personalised support plans and referral processes
 - Raise any concerns about the management of behaviour directly with the Principal

5. Responding to Behaviour

- 5.1. The following consistent approaches and guiding principles enable academy staff to effectively support pupils' emotional regulation and to address barriers to engagement in learning
- Understanding that our pupils do well when they can and that their behaviour is not a choice
 - Implementation and application of the SCERTS model and practice principles
 - Holistic consideration of the pupil and their context (for example: their home/family circumstances, their medical needs, their history, their culture, their preferred method(s) of communication, their sensory needs, their relationships with other pupils and adults at school)
 - Consideration of the impact of neurological differences in autism
 - Teaching pupils about their individual strengths and needs
 - Using a trauma informed approach
 - Building trusting relationships as a priority

- Focusing on supporting emotional regulation rather than changing behaviour
 - Implementing individualised emotional regulation support plans (ERSPs) to enable staff members to:
 - Notice early signs of dysregulation in pupils and potential risk factors for this
 - Avoid pupils' risk factors for dysregulation where identified and this is possible
 - Adjust support strategies to meet the pupil's needs in the zone they are in
 - Honouring our pupils' sensory needs and communication preferences
 - Ensuring all pupils can experience meaningful success
 - Focusing on developing intrinsic motivation for learning (using engaging materials and activities linked to pupils' interests and ensuring tasks are optimally challenging) over the use of external rewards.
- 5.2. At Ormiston Kensington Queensmill Academy, many pupils are working at an early developmental stage and experience the world as unpredictable, overwhelming, or unsafe. Therefore, Ormiston Kensington Queensmill has adopted the Connection Over Compliance approach.
- 5.3. Connection builds the emotional safety pupils need to regulate, learn, and engage. Compliance may produce short-term behaviour change, but often increases anxiety, power struggles, and long-term dysregulation.
- 5.4. Connection does not mean having no boundaries. It means prioritising the relationship first, so that expectations can be met with the pupil rather than done to the pupil.
- 5.5. What connection looks like in action: (appendix 2)
- Warm, predictable greetings
 - Playful, attuned interactions
 - Recognizing and accepting a pupil's intentions, even when behaviour needs support
 - Using curiosity rather than blame
 - Repairing relationships after difficult situations
 - Remaining emotionally available during difficult moments

6. Behaviour Curriculum

6.1. At Ormiston Kensington Queensmill Academy, we understand behaviour as communication. Our goal is to teach regulation skills through safe, attuned relationships, not to enforce compliance. We prioritise connection before correction.

6.2. Autistic pupils may experience:

- Differences in interoception (noticing internal states), making self-awareness of emotions harder
- Sensory processing difficulties, which can lead to dysregulation in environments typical schools consider “neutral”
- Communication differences, meaning that stress or shutdown may be misread as “non-compliance”

Our curriculum acknowledges these realities and teaches regulation as a developmental skillset, not a moral choice.

6.3. We commit to:

- Seeing behaviour through a neurodiversity-affirming, trauma-informed lens
- Focusing on co-regulation first, then supported practice, and when ready, self-regulation
- Avoiding shaming, sanctions, or token systems that undermine safety and intrinsic motivation
- Working in partnership with pupils, families and multidisciplinary professionals

6.4. Alongside teaching regulation, routines and expectations are regularly taught to all pupils in a way that is personalised and accessible. Key routines and habits that support pupils' regulation, wellbeing, and independence are taught through explicit instruction, modelling, repetition and the use of consistent visual supports. Routines, such as entering the classroom, sharing resources, or transitioning around the building, are made simple, consistent and accessible, and are supported by clear visual timetables, first and then boards, cues, prompts, and consistent staff language.

6.5. Opportunities to revisit, reinforce and generalize learning are intentionally woven into transitions, enrichment activities, community experiences and everyday interactions, ensuring that core regulation and relational skills are embedded throughout all aspects of school life.

7. Emotional Regulation Support

7.1. Ormiston Kensington Queensmill Academy implements the knowledge of the SCERTS methodology to create individualised plans for pupils to guide staff in how to provide consistent

support to reduce the likelihood of dysregulation and how to adjust their support strategies as needed in response to dysregulation.

- 7.2. Each pupil has an Emotional Regulation Support Plan (ERSP) created with input from the class team, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, and families. An individual risk assessment is also written for pupils where required.
- 7.3. ERSPs include the following:
- A summary of consistent approaches used at school to support the pupil's regulation. These can be classed as proactive/preventative measures to minimize the likelihood of dysregulation.
 - A list of potential risk factors (triggers) for dysregulation which may include particular environments, activities, or times of the day, sensory experiences. It is important for school staff to be aware of these so adjustments can be made where relevant
 - A description of how the pupil presents when regulated (their energy and arousal levels match the expectation for the activity) and a description of their presentation when dysregulated, using the Zones of Regulation framework
 - The strategies used by the staff team to support pupils in moments when they are presenting with dysregulation
- 7.4. ESRPs are regularly reviewed by the class team, therapists and other relevant professionals

8. Responding to Episodes of Dysregulation

- 8.1. Any significant episodes of dysregulation experienced by pupils, including all incidents where physical intervention is used, or the pupil's liberty has been temporarily restricted, are: brought to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team, monitored, and then followed up by a debrief meeting.
- 8.2. Debrief meetings include a member of the senior leadership team, all staff members involved in the incident, and where possible or relevant, a Team Teach trainer and therapist(s). The debrief includes considerations of meaningful restorative practice for the pupil and opportunity to reflect on the pupil's risk factors for dysregulation that were present and whether these were avoidable, the strategies implemented and whether they can be adjusted. These debriefs provide an opportunity for a check-in with the staff team and a chance to share any concerns or challenges they are experiencing in their work with the pupil.
- 8.3. Any incident of restrictive physical intervention must be logged on CPOMS on the same day as the incident. Any injuries must be recorded on Medical Tracker and/or iAM Compliant. Procedures set out in the Restrictive Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force Policy will also be followed.

9. Position on Rewards and Sanctions

9.1. Specific types of rewards, used in the right way with consideration of the pupils' needs and motivation, may be used to support pupil motivation. This, however, should always be offered alongside and secondary to approaches that develop intrinsic motivation.

9.2. The following types of rewards/recognition are offered consistently to pupils at the academy:

- Targeted verbal or written praise*
- Communication with parents to share positive feedback
- Public praise in assembly*
- Certificates
- Being entrusted with specific roles and responsibilities
- The opportunity for pupils to share work they are proud of with the people important to them

*This type of reward/recognition should be considered carefully depending on the individual pupil and their needs and responses to feedback. Autistic children and young people may process social rewards differently. Those with a PDA profile and/or those who struggle with being perceived may respond negatively to praise and find this dysregulating, particularly public praise. It is also important to consider that, when the feedback loop is too long (there is too much time between the pupil's action and the reward or consequence being given as feedback), then this can become meaningless.

9.3. Praise/rewards are most meaningful when:

- Sincere
- Specific – praise is more impactful when it is clear and concrete in what is being noticed and celebrated
- Process-oriented. Reward/praise for: effort; use of specific learning strategies/processes; persistence; resilience; progress rather than attainment
- Proportionate
- Unexpected. When praise is over-used or becomes an expectation, this can create an undermining effect. Praise is best used as an unexpected bonus or celebration.
- In the moment. Where possible – to avoid potential confusion from the pupil about the connection between their actions and the feedback/praise reward. When offering certificates, these should include a meaningful reference such as a photograph of the pupil in the relevant activity.

9.4. With guidance from research, trauma-informed approaches, autism specific approaches and best practice for embedding a positive climate for learning, **the following practices are avoided when using rewards:**

- **No use of food-based rewards.** Evidence shows this can lead to disordered eating, promotes unhealthy/unhelpful connections between certain foods and emotions, and can complicate feeding therapy approaches.
- **No use of rewards for tasks/activities that involve cueing into internal body signals (such as rewarding a pupil for toileting, eating, drinking).** This can lead to prompt/reward dependency and individuals ignoring their body signals. Compliance-based approaches can cause reduced interoceptive awareness, which is the foundation of healthy self-regulation.
- **No reminding pupils about the opportunity to earn rewards when they are disengaged/not showing interest as a means to support their engagement/to bribe them.**
- **No threatening removal/cancellation of motivating activities.** Research shows us this is ineffective, causes stress and dysregulation, and negatively impacts relationships between staff and pupils.
- **No use of special interests as a reward/removal of these as a sanction.** An autistic person's passions might be used to increase the meaning and relevance of a particular task or lesson, but they should not be used as a reward for compliance, or to coerce the pupil's cooperation. This undermines the passion and risks compromising the pleasure of that interest. Passions are precious and should be treated with respect.
- **No use of rewards to encourage a pupil to 'tolerate' a challenging sensory stimuli/environment.** This teaches pupils to ignore their own discomfort to comply/please others and is a missed opportunity to model/teach the pupil to advocate for their own sensory needs – a valuable life skill.
- **No use of a sensory need as a reward.** Sensory needs do not need to be earned. It is important that pupils' sensory needs are honoured and met so they should not be contingent on completing something else first. When sensory needs are met effectively for pupils, their ability to engage in learning is optimised.

9.5. The use of sanctions is not practiced at the academy as this approach is aligned with an assumption that a pupil's behaviour/dysregulation is a wilful choice and is under their control. Behaviour is not a choice when it because of or in response to:

- Shutdown
- Sensory overload
- Social anxiety
- Excessive processing demands

- A fight/flight/freeze/fawn nervous system response
- Trauma
- Phobias
- The cognitive/social demands placed on a pupil being beyond their capacity

9.6. Dysregulation is often the result of a mismatch between our expectations and the pupil's skills such as:

- Flexibility/adaptability
- Frustration tolerance
- Problem solving
- Expressing concerns and needs
- Recognising and meeting sensory needs
- Coping with transitions
- Being able to wait, plan, sequence, share

These challenges are best addressed by supporting pupils to develop these skills and/or in the meantime, compensating for these and adjusting expectations.

9.7. The academy chooses to avoid the use of sanctions and consequences other than natural consequences. This is because we know that sanctions tend to:

- Cause distress and anxiety
- May not be understood by the pupil
- Focus on the symptoms of behaviour rather than causes
- Negatively impact relationships and trust between the staff and pupils
- Reduce motivation towards engaging in school activities in future
- Encourage pupils to perseverate on thinking about the negative event
- Impact self-esteem negatively

9.8. A pupil may experience **natural consequences** to their dysregulation. These are not sanctions and should not be talked about as such. They may include:

- A damaged item being unavailable to use

- A pupil being unable to join a cycling session if they are unable to tolerate wearing a helmet
- A room being cleared to keep people safe
- Access to an activity being delayed for a pupil until it is safe for them to join

10. Alternatives to Suspension and Permanent Exclusion

- 10.1. As a specialist provision, the academy does not use suspensions or permanent exclusions. When pupils experience significant dysregulation, distress or behaviours of concern, the response is based on personalised support, specialist intervention and collaborative problem solving. Our aim is to always understand the underlying reasons for behaviour and remove barriers, not to withdraw education. Every effort is made to maintain the pupil's placement safely, consistently, and compassionately.
- 10.2. Only when all available internal strategies, resources, and external professional input have been exhausted will leaders consider whether an alternative pathway may better meet the pupil's needs.
- 10.3. Alternative Provision/Off-site direction
 - The school does not remove pupils from their placement through exclusion or suspension. Any consideration of alternative provision or offsite direction occurs only in exceptional circumstances, and only when a pupil is experiencing prolonged periods of significant dysregulation or distress that cannot be safely or effectively supported within the current setting, despite extensive intervention.
 - Such a decision is made only after:
 - Comprehensive assessments (communication, sensory, emotional regulation)
 - Personalised interventions
 - Therapeutic and regulation programmes
 - Targeted support
 - Close partnership working with parents/carers
 - Involvement from external agencies (eg. Educational psychology, CAHMS, PBS)
 - If the pupil's needs exceed what can reasonably be met within the resource level and specialist provision of the school, leaders may consider exploring a change of placement. This is always carefully planned and centred on the pupil's wellbeing, communication style, sensory needs, and EHCP outcomes. The proposed plan is discussed jointly with parents and external professionals.

- The local authority will be notified so an early EHCP review can be held. This review will determine whether:
 - Additional support, resources, or adjustments can maintain the placement, or
 - A different type of specialist provision or pathway may better meet the pupil's needs
- For pupils with a social worker or those who are looked after, the social worker and Virtual School Head (VSH) will be consulted at the earliest possible stage to ensure joined-up planning, safeguarding oversight and continuity of support.

11. Restrictive Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force

- 11.1. Please refer to separate Restrictive Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force Policy.

12. Supporting Pupils Beyond School Gates

- 12.1. Pupils and parents should be aware that the behaviour policy can extend to activities outside the school day, off the school premises, including online conduct when the pupil is:
- Taking part in any academy-organised or academy-related activity
 - Travelling to or from the academy
 - Wearing academy uniform
 - In some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school
- 12.2. Even when the four conditions above do not apply, the behaviour policy can extend to any conduct which could have repercussions for the orderly running of the academy, pose a threat to another pupil or member of the public, or could adversely affect the reputation of the academy. This will include any instances of cyberbullying or misuse of social media.

13. Mobile Phones

- 13.1. Mobile phones are not routinely used by pupils during the school day, however, the academy recognises that, for some pupils, access to a mobile phone or personal device can provide important support during transitions, support emotional regulation, or for other agreed individual needs.
- 13.2. Where a pupil brings a mobile device or personal device from home, a written agreement will be put in place.

14. Searching, Screening and Confiscation

- 14.1. Please refer to separate Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

15. Suspected Criminal Behaviour

- 15.1. If a pupil is suspected of criminal behaviour, the academy will make an initial assessment of whether to report the incident to the police.
- 15.2. When establishing the facts, the academy will endeavour to preserve any relevant evidence to hand over to the police.
- 15.3. If a decision is made to report the matter to the police, a member of the senior leadership team or DSL will make the report.
- 15.4. The academy will not interfere with any police action taken. However, the academy may continue to follow its own investigation procedure, if it does not conflict with police action.
- 15.5. If a report to the police is made, the DSL will make a tandem report to children's social care, if appropriate. All investigations, decisions, actions and rationale behind decisions and actions must be recorded on CPOMS.

16. Bullying

- 16.1. Please refer to separate Anti-Bullying Policy.

17. Serious incidents that require investigation

- 17.1. If there is a serious incident that requires an investigation or practice review, this will be overseen by the Principal or other member of the senior leadership team.
- 17.2. Parents will be informed as soon as is practically possible within the same day of pupils directly involved in a serious incident. Any delay may be associated with staff immediately supporting pupils and ensuring any fact finding is thorough and truthful.
- 17.3. Where CCTV is available and it has captured a serious incident, this may not be made available to parents when the academy must consider the privacy of other pupils. The academy must comply with data protection laws.
- 17.4. Once an investigation or practice review has been completed, the principal will review all of the evidence before any decisions are made around appropriate actions and next steps.

18. Monitoring and evaluating academy behaviour

- 18.1. The analysis of behaviour data helps to identify patterns and trends that will inform next steps in supporting pupils.
- 18.2. The academy will collect data on the following:
- Significant incident reports
 - Attendance reports
 - Incidents of searching, screening, and confiscation
 - Incidents of positive handling/reasonable force
 - Anonymous surveys for staff, pupils, governors, trustees and other stakeholders on their perceptions and experiences of the academy behaviour culture
- 18.3. The data will be analysed from a variety of perspectives including:
- Academy level
 - Age group
 - By time of day/week/term
 - By location
- 18.4. The academy will use the results of this analysis to make sure it is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010. If any trends or disparities between groups of pupils are identified by this analysis, the academy will review its policies and practice to tackle it.

19. Safeguarding

- 19.1. The academy recognises that changes in behaviour may be an indicator that a pupil is in need of help or protection. All staff should maintain professional curiosity and proactively consider whether a pupil's behaviour may be linked to them suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.
- 19.2. Any safeguarding or child protection concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately, in person and using CPOMS. The DSL, after liaising with appropriate staff or other agencies, will determine whether early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate, where it is not already in place.

20. Complaints

- 20.1. Complaints regarding any aspects of the Behaviour Policy will be addressed under the OAT Complaints Policy.
- 20.2. Concerns about wrongdoing at OAT academies in relation to the behaviour policy, such as malpractice, mismanagement or breach of health and safety law or any other illegal or unethical act either on the part of management, the Governing Body or by fellow employees should be raised using the Whistleblowing Policy.

