St Hilary's Prep School Policy

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy

1. Purpose, scope and principles

St Hilary's School is committed to a happy, calm, safe and caring environment in which every pupil can learn, develop independence, feel respected and achieve their potential. Positive relationships, clear expectations, explicit teaching of behaviour, predictable responses and appropriate individual support underpin our approach. This policy applies to pupils in the EYFS, Pre-Prep and Prep, with developmentally appropriate implementation.

This policy sets out the school's formal disciplinary framework, serious incident response, exclusion and required-withdrawal arrangements. It must be read alongside the Behaviour Management Policy (reviewed September 2026), which governs everyday recognition, Trackit Lights procedures and behaviour support. Where operational detail differs, the September 2026 Behaviour Management Policy is the current operational model; this policy governs serious disciplinary decisions. Any inconsistency must be resolved by SLT before publication.

The school will apply its rules fairly, proportionately and without discrimination, considering the pupil's age, developmental stage, SEND, disability, individual circumstances and safeguarding needs. A reasonable adjustment may mean a different response, not an absence of expectations. Behaviour may communicate unmet needs or harm and must be understood as well as addressed.

2. Legal and inspection framework

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Schedule, Part 3, paragraphs 9 and 10: written and effectively implemented behaviour policy; records of sanctions for serious misbehaviour; effective anti-bullying strategy.
- DfE, Independent school standards guidance; Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (February 2024).
- Keeping children safe in education 2026; statutory EYFS framework applicable to the school's provision; Equality Act 2010 and relevant SEND duties.
- DfE, Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (effective 1 April 2026), replacing the 2013 Use of reasonable force guidance; Education and Inspections Act 2006, section 93A; Independent School Standards, Schedule, Part 3, paragraph 16A (recording restrictive interventions).
- ISI Framework for the inspection of association independent schools (September 2026).
- The DfE statutory suspension and permanent exclusion framework for maintained schools, academies and PRUs is not automatically the governing procedure for this independent school; the school's parent contract and published policy must define its own fair procedure.

3. Responsibilities and consistency

- Proprietor/governing body: ensure the policy is implemented effectively; monitor serious sanctions, trends, equality, safeguarding and appeals, and provide appropriate oversight.
- Headmaster: ultimate responsibility for serious disciplinary decisions, temporary exclusion and permanent exclusion/required withdrawal, subject to the school's contractual terms and review arrangements.

- Deputy Head: oversee Prep behaviour, serious incident records, Trackit patterns, support plans, parental communication and safeguarding escalation in the DSL capacity.
- Head of EYFS and Pre-Prep: lead developmentally appropriate practice, staff induction, recording, parent liaison and referrals in early years.
- SENCO: advise on barriers, reasonable adjustments, behaviour/social support plans and referrals to external professionals.
- All staff: teach and model expectations; apply the published response consistently; record accurately; refer safeguarding concerns immediately; never use corporal punishment or humiliating sanctions.
- Form teachers: monitor patterns, maintain family dialogue and coordinate support plans with the Deputy Head.

4. Code of conduct

The ten expectations below are taken from the September 2026 Behaviour Management Policy and are explained in an age-appropriate way at the start of each year and revisited regularly.

- Respect one another.
- Be courteous and polite to everyone in the school community.
- Walk around the school with awareness of other people and the environment.
- Line up quietly before lessons and finish lessons standing behind desks, where developmentally appropriate.
- Take a friendly interest in others and engage in whole-body listening, with appropriate adjustments for individual needs.
- Wear uniform with pride and care for belongings.
- Never use physical violence, retaliation or inappropriate language.
- Report behaviour that makes you uncomfortable and know how to seek help.
- Be well behaved, well mannered and attentive to learning.
- Be punctual and arrive at lessons promptly.

The school also teaches respect for protected characteristics, online safety, consent, personal boundaries, the school environment and the fundamental British values. Expectations apply on school visits, transport, fixtures and, where lawful and reasonable, conduct outside school that affects safety or the school community.

5. Positive recognition and rewards

Specific, proportionate praise is central to our culture. From Reception to Year 6, Trackit Lights records positive behaviour through green Trackits, which equate to House Points. Staff award only one reward type for the same act or piece of work and record it in the appropriate category.

- Merits recognise notable pastoral conduct, kindness, helpfulness and positive choices beyond routine expectations.
- Stars recognise exceptional individual academic work, effort or attitudes to learning beyond the pupil's expected standard.
- Further recognition includes House rewards, form prizes, Attitude to Learning and Progress prizes, pupil prizes, academic and pastoral commendations, Creative/Academic/Sport/Values Colours, public celebration, leadership responsibilities and annual awards.
- The September 2026 Behaviour Management Policy and its rewards flowchart provide the definitive recording and awarding procedure.

6. Everyday behaviour response and Trackit sanctions

Staff first respond calmly, discreetly and sensitively, making clear the behaviour to change and giving the pupil an opportunity to correct it. The current Prep graduated sequence is:

- Step 1: verbal warning and opportunity to correct the behaviour.
- Step 2: orange Trackit if behaviour remains uncorrected.
- Step 3: yellow Trackit if behaviour remains uncorrected.
- Step 4: red Trackit if behaviour remains uncorrected; the awarding teacher completes the generated form.
- At 5 red Trackits: break-time reflection with form tutor and email to parents; at 10: reflection with Deputy Head and email; at 15: reflection with Headmaster and email.

Serious conduct such as violence, aggression or bullying may justify an immediate red Trackit and immediate referral to the Deputy Head. In Prep, missed homework may result in an automatic red Trackit where no communication or explanation has been received from the pupil or parent about the non-completion. Staff will consider individual circumstances, SEND, reasonable adjustments and whether an appropriate opportunity to communicate was available before recording the sanction.

Reflection during first break is purposeful, supervised, age-appropriate and not ordinarily the whole break. Staff must protect access to food, drink, toilets and reasonable movement, and must not impose degrading or collective punishments. Pupils should not be sent unaccompanied to SLT as a disciplinary response; staff should request assistance. Any removal from learning must be supervised, necessary, time-limited, recorded and followed by reintegration.

7. EYFS and Pre-Prep response

Early years staff use warm relationships, co-regulation, modelling, predictable routines and developmentally appropriate teaching of emotional and social skills. The EYFS Behaviour Management Officer is the Head of EYFS and Pre-Prep. Staff consider fatigue, communication, sensory needs, changes at home and safeguarding indicators. The current Behaviour Management Policy requires staff to seek support, protect other children, inform parents promptly (normally within 24 hours for escalated incidents), and record incidents in the designated system. Persistent patterns are discussed in pastoral meetings and with parents, with a review date and SENCO/external agency input where needed. Biting is addressed under the separate Biting Management Policy.

EYFS and Pre-Prep behaviour responses are aligned with the current Behaviour Management Policy and age-appropriate procedures. Staff use the same principles of clear expectations, proportionate responses, positive recognition and escalation, adapted to pupils' developmental stages. Any EYFS-specific incidents and interventions are recorded and communicated in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy.

8. SEND, disability and graduated support

Staff will investigate patterns and triggers, hear the pupil's voice, seek parental input and assess whether unmet needs, disability, communication differences, trauma or safeguarding concerns are contributing. Staff will consider reasonable adjustments and whether a sanction is appropriate and proportionate. The SENCO and Deputy Head will agree targeted interventions and review impact. Academic IEPs are coordinated with the SENCO; behaviour/social support plans are coordinated by the form teacher with the Deputy Head, parents and pupil, with regular documented review. Plans should identify triggers, preventative approaches, de-escalation, trusted adults, measurable goals and reintegration strategies.

The school will not use an exclusion or pressure parents to withdraw as a substitute for considering reasonable adjustments, suitable support, or statutory safeguarding duties. Where an EHCP is in place, the school will consider relevant consultation and duties before a significant change in placement.

9. Serious misbehaviour and safeguarding

Serious incidents include significant or repeated violence, threats, bullying (including discriminatory and online bullying), sexual harassment or violence, child-on-child abuse, theft, weapons, drugs, serious damage, or conduct creating substantial risk. The Headmaster and Deputy Head must be informed promptly. The DSL must be informed immediately whenever safeguarding concerns may arise; staff must follow KCSIE 2026 and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including risk assessment, support for all affected pupils, appropriate external referral and consideration of criminal conduct. An allegation must not be treated merely as a behaviour infringement.

In accordance with paragraph 9(c) of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the school maintains a separate central log of sanctions imposed for serious misbehaviour, outside Trackit. Trackit remains the everyday behaviour-management record and does not replace this statutory serious-sanctions log. The separate log records the date, incident and evidence, sanction imposed, decision-maker, pupil account, SEND and equality considerations, safeguarding actions, parent communication and review/outcome. The Deputy Head oversees its completeness, and the Headmaster and governing body review trends and effectiveness with appropriate confidentiality.

10. Temporary exclusion, permanent exclusion and required withdrawal

Principles and authority

Exclusion is exceptional and must be reasonable, proportionate, evidence-based and procedurally fair. The Headmaster is the decision-maker, normally consulting the Chair of Governors without prejudicing any subsequent independent review. Temporary exclusion means a specified period away from school; permanent exclusion means the school ends the pupil's place on disciplinary grounds. Required withdrawal, where permitted by the parent contract, must be clearly distinguished from disciplinary exclusion and must not be used to avoid appropriate scrutiny.

Decision-making procedure

- Ensure immediate safety and safeguarding action; investigate promptly and impartially, obtaining accounts and relevant evidence.
- Inform parents of the concern and proposed process; allow the pupil to explain events in an age-appropriate and supported way, and invite parental representations before a final decision wherever practicable.
- Consider severity, impact, previous interventions, consistency, proportionality, reasonable adjustments, SEND, disability, mitigation, and alternatives to exclusion.
- Record the evidence, rationale, decision-maker, consultation and equality/safeguarding assessment.
- Provide parents with a written decision stating the reason, type, start/end date if temporary, educational provision, reintegration arrangements, and review/appeal route.
- Notify appropriate agencies and manage records, safeguarding transfer and attendance/registration requirements as applicable.

Temporary exclusion and reintegration

The Headmaster may impose a temporary exclusion for a maximum of one school week (five school days) for any single decision, where necessary and in accordance with the parent contract. The duration, reasons and arrangements will be confirmed in writing. The school will provide suitable work, maintain contact and plan a supported reintegration meeting before or upon return. Any further exclusion decision requires a fresh assessment and written decision; periods must not be used to circumvent the one-week limit.

Permanent exclusion / required withdrawal

Permanent exclusion may be considered for exceptionally serious one-off conduct or serious repeated misconduct despite appropriate support, where continued attendance would pose unacceptable risk or fundamentally undermine school life. Examples are not exhaustive and do not predetermine outcomes. Parents will receive a detailed written decision and arrangements for transferring educational and

safeguarding information appropriately. The school will support a safe transition and consider interim learning provision in accordance with its contract and duties.

Review and appeal

Parents may request review of a formal exclusion decision in writing to the Clerk to the Governors, in accordance with the parent contract and the school's published procedure. The governing body will determine the membership of a suitable review panel on a case-by-case basis, taking account of independence, impartiality and any prior involvement in the decision. Panel members must not have participated materially in the original decision. The panel will consider the evidence, fairness, contractual requirements, equality and safeguarding considerations, and communicate its decision and reasons in writing.

11. Restrictive interventions, reasonable force and seclusion

Corporal punishment, threats of corporal punishment and force as punishment are prohibited. Staff should prevent and de-escalate crises and use reasonable force only where lawful, necessary and proportionate, with the minimum force for the shortest time. The school will comply with DfE guidance effective from 1 April 2026, including the statutory duties to record and report significant incidents of force and applicable seclusion incidents. Seclusion must not be used as a routine sanction or as an unrecorded behaviour-management shortcut.

In line with DfE Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (effective 1 April 2026), and the Independent School Standards paragraph 16A, the school will record each significant use-of-force incident and each applicable incident of seclusion, restraint or immobilisation in writing as soon as practicable. Staff must secure safety, seek medical attention as required, and promptly inform the Headmaster and DSL. Parents will be informed as soon as practicable following significant use of force, subject to statutory safeguarding exceptions; the school will follow applicable notification requirements for other restrictive interventions. Records will include the circumstances, justification, intervention, duration, injuries, pupil voice, notifications and follow-up, with leadership review to reduce recurrence. The school does not use seclusion as a routine behaviour sanction. Staff will be trained in de-escalation and proportionate responses.

12. Searching, confiscation, mobile phones and online conduct

The school's procedures for searching, screening, confiscation and electronic devices must be consistent with applicable law and DfE advice, with particular attention to safeguarding, consent, proportionality and privacy. Staff must not search or examine device content outside authorised procedures. Mobile phones should not be used by pupils during the school day except for expressly approved circumstances, including reasonable adjustments or medical needs. Online and off-site incidents that affect the school community will be considered case by case and referred to the DSL where appropriate. The school should cross-reference its actual device and acceptable-use rules before publication.

13. Parent partnership, pupil voice and complaints

Parents are partners in maintaining a positive culture and will be informed early about persistent concerns and serious incidents. The school will listen to pupils and ensure accessible reporting routes, including through trusted adults, form time, assemblies and pupil voice structures. Behaviour concerns are normally raised with the form teacher and escalated to the Deputy Head/Headmaster. Formal complaints follow the school's Complaints Procedure; disciplinary review arrangements are set out in section 10.

14. Training, implementation, monitoring and review

All staff, including temporary and EYFS staff, will receive induction and updates on the Code of Conduct, Trackit procedures, serious incident recording, reasonable adjustments, safeguarding referrals, de-escalation and restrictive interventions. SLT will evaluate consistency through records, staff and pupil feedback, learning walks and case reviews. Governors will receive proportionate, anonymised assurance

about serious sanctions, exclusions, bullying and restrictive interventions. This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following legal or operational changes.

15. Related policies and guidance

Behaviour Management Policy (September 2026); Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy; SEND/Inclusion and Equality policies; Complaints Procedure; EYFS Biting Management Policy; Restrictive Intervention Procedure; Online Safety / Acceptable Use / Mobile Phone rules; Attendance and Admissions/Parent Contract documentation.

Official references: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/part/3 ; https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools ; https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2 ; https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2 .

Author: Mark Parton (Deputy Head/DSL)

Read & Approved by: The Headmaster and St Hilary's Senior Leadership Team

Read & Shared: with all staff at St Hilary's School

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Next Review Date: June 2027

Persons responsible: Mr Duncan Sinclair (Headmaster) and SLT