



THE ALTUS SCHOOL

**BEHAVIOUR POLICY AND
STATEMENT OF
BEHAVIOUR PRINCIPLES**

Date Approved: September 2023

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Outline our positive behaviour expectations for the Altus School
- Provide a framework for adults supporting the behaviour in and out of the classroom
- Describe strategies used to de-escalate when a child is dysregulated and to help students meet our expectations

This policy applies both in school and when a young person is:

- Taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity (e.g. school trips)
- Travelling to or from school
- Wearing school uniform
- In any other way identifiable as a student of our school

Consequences may also be applied where a student has misbehaved off-site, at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, if the misbehaviour:

- Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- Poses a threat to another student
- Could adversely affect the reputation of the school

2. Legislation, statutory requirements and statutory guidance

This policy is based on legislation and advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff, 2016](#)
- [Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2022](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school 2018](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools 2022](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and student referral units in England 2017](#)
- [Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and student referral units in England, including student movement - 2022](#)

- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting students with medical conditions at school](#)

It is also based on the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#).

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its students
- Sections 88 to 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which requires schools to regulate students' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate students' property
- [DfE guidance](#) explaining that maintained schools must publish their behaviour policy online

3. Definitions

3.1 Positive behaviour expectations

We expect students to be:

- Ready
- Respectful
- Safe

Staff in each centre will describe with students what those behaviours look like and will model them in their interactions with students and with each other

3.2 Significant behaviour incidents

We aim to create a positive, safe, holistic learning environment for all students. This means we consider the following behaviours as significant incidents:

- Any form of bullying
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault (intentional sexual touching without consent)
- Sexual harassment, meaning unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, such as sexual comments or sexual jokes or taunting, physical behaviour like interfering with clothes
- Online sexual harassment, such as unwanted sexual comments and messages (including on social media), sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos, or sharing of unwanted explicit content

- Vandalism
- Theft
- Fighting
- Smoking
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory behaviour
- Possession of any prohibited items, including but not limited to knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, Tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images and any article a staff member reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person

4. Role of all staff

All staff, regardless of their role in the school, are responsible for:

- Creating a calm and safe environment for students
- Reinforcing through their interactions with students our positive behaviour expectations
- Modelling expected behaviour and positive relationships
- Providing a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of particular students
- Recording behaviour incidents promptly
- Supporting students to meet the school's expectations

5. Responding to behaviour incidents or concerns

Staff will take calm and supportive approach to helping students manage their behaviour, providing take up time at each stage.

- Expectation reminders (*e.g. we need you to be safe...*)
- Describe the expected behaviour to give the student a chance to do the right thing (*e.g. you need to now move into the classroom to get started with the lesson*)
- Provide students with a choice:
 - Meet expectation
 - Time out of the class
 - Calm down – move to an area for a more extended period (an adult will supervise)
- State consequence- payback time to:
 - Complete work missed
 - Ensure restorative approaches are possible

When a child is very angry or dysregulated, staff will:

- Use scripts with PACE/WIN, demonstrating curiosity about the behaviour

- Use distraction, if appropriate, to refocus on a positive behaviour, or ensure that basic needs are met with the offer of a drink or some food
- Step out to swap places with another member of staff if needed
- Encourage the student to stop and take deep breaths: providing them space and support to regulate themselves.

If the student continues to escalate further strategies include:

- Allowing students to remove themselves from the situation or direct them to go to a 'safe space' area and a key adult with whom they feel safe
- Allow student to go outside for fresh air

If the student presents a health and safety risk:

- Ensure student and staff safety by removing others from the situation – provide space for all
- Consider whether containment is necessary (see positive handling below)
- Allow a safe exit

6. Reasonable Force/Positive Handling

In some circumstances, staff may use reasonable force to positively handle a student to prevent them:

- Hurting themselves or others
- Causing significant damage to the school environment
- Committing an offence

Incidents of positive handling must:

- **Always be used as a last resort**
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded and reported to parents/carers

When considering using reasonable force, staff should, in considering the risks, carefully recognise any specific vulnerabilities of the student, including SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions.

7. Searching, screening and confiscation

Searching, screening and confiscation is conducted in line with the DfE's [latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).

Confiscation

Any prohibited items found in a student's possession as a result of a search will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to the student.

Searching a student

All teaching and student support staff are authorised to search a student.

Before carrying out a search the authorised member of staff will:

- Assess whether there is an urgent need for a search
- Assess whether not doing the search would put other students or staff at risk
- Consider whether the search would pose a safeguarding risk to the student
- Explain to the student why they are being searched
- Explain to the student what a search entails – e.g. I will ask you to turn out your pockets and remove your scarf
- Give the student the opportunity to ask questions and gain the student's co-operation

Informing parents

Parents will always be informed of any search for a prohibited item. A member of staff will tell the parents as soon as is reasonably practicable:

- What happened
- What was found, if anything
- What has been confiscated, if anything
- What action the school has taken, including any sanctions that have been applied to their child

Strip searches

See appendix 2

8. Possible criminal behaviour

If a student is suspected of criminal behaviour, the school will make an initial assessment of whether to report the incident to the police. When establishing the facts, the school will endeavour to preserve any relevant evidence to hand over to the police.

The school will not interfere with any police action taken. However, the school may continue to follow its own policy, as long as it does not conflict with police action.

If a report to the police is made, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will make a tandem report to children's social care, if appropriate.

9. Suspension

The school can use suspension and permanent exclusion in response to serious incidents or in response to persistent poor behaviour, which has not improved following in-school consequences and interventions.

The decision to suspend or exclude will be made by the Director and only as a last resort.

Please refer to our exclusions policy for more information.

10. Links with other policies

This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies

- Exclusions policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Mobile phone policy

Appendix 1: written statement of behaviour principles

- Every student understands they have the right to feel safe, valued and respected, and to be able to learn free from the disruption of others
- All students, staff and visitors are free from any form of discrimination
- Staff and volunteers set an excellent example to students at all times
- The exclusions policy explains that exclusions will only be used as a last resort, and outlines the processes involved in suspensions and exclusions
- Students are helped to take understand and manage their emotions to support positive behaviours
- Families are involved in behaviour incidents to foster good relationships between the school and students' home life

This written statement of behaviour principles is reviewed and approved by the management committee annually.

Appendix 2: Strip searches

For further guidance see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

The authorised member of staff's power to search does not enable them to conduct a strip search (removing more than the outer clothing) and strip searches on school premises shall only be carried out by police officers in accordance with the [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 \(PACE\) Code C](#).

Before calling the police into school, staff will assess and balance the risk of a potential strip search on the student's mental and physical wellbeing and the risk of not recovering the suspected item.

Staff will consider whether introducing the potential for a strip search through police involvement is absolutely necessary, and will always ensure that other appropriate, less invasive approaches have been exhausted first.

Once the police are on school premises, the decision on whether to conduct a strip search lies solely with them. The school will advocate for the safety and wellbeing of the student(s) involved. Staff retain a duty of care to the student involved and should advocate for student wellbeing at all times.

Communication and record-keeping

Where reasonably possible and unless there is an immediate risk of harm, staff will contact at least 1 of the student's parents to inform them that the police are going to strip search the student before strip search takes place, and ask them if they would like to come into school to act as the student's appropriate adult. If the school can't get in touch with the parents, or they aren't able to come into school to act as the appropriate adult, a member of staff can act as the appropriate adult (see below for the role of the appropriate adult).

The student's parents will always be informed by a staff member once a strip search has taken place. The school will keep records of strip searches that have been conducted on school premises, and monitor them for any trends that emerge.

Who will be present

For any strip search that involves exposure of intimate body parts, there will be at least 2 people present other than the student, except in urgent cases where there is risk of serious harm to the student or others.

One of these must be the appropriate adult, except if:

- The student explicitly states in the presence of an appropriate adult that they do not want an appropriate adult to be present during the search, **and**
- The appropriate adult agrees

If this is the case, a record will be made of the student's decision and it will be signed by the appropriate adult.

No more than 2 people other than the student and appropriate adult will be present, except in the most exceptional circumstances.

The appropriate adult will:

- Act to safeguard the rights, entitlement and welfare of the student
- Not be a police officer or otherwise associated with the police
- Not be the headteacher/Director
- Be of the same sex as the student, unless the student specifically requests an adult who is not of the same sex

Except for an appropriate adult of a different sex if the student specifically requests it, no one of a different sex will be permitted to be present and the search will not be carried out anywhere where the student could be seen by anyone else.

Care after a strip search

After any strip search, the student will be given appropriate support, irrespective of whether any suspected item is found. The student will also be given the opportunity to express their views about the strip search and the events surrounding it.

As with other searches, the school will consider whether the student may be suffering or likely to suffer harm and whether any further specific support is needed (due to the reasons for the search, the search itself, or the outcome of the search).

Staff will follow the school's safeguarding policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The DSL will consider if, in addition to pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

Any student(s) who have been strip searched more than once and/or groups of students who may be more likely to be subject to strip searching will be given particular consideration, and staff will consider any preventative approaches that can be taken.