



Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy

2025-26

Approved by Governing Body on	Autumn 2025
Internal review due:	September 2026
Full review and ratification due:	September 2026
Signed on behalf of the Governing Body by the Headteacher	



1.0 Principles and Ethos

At Park Aspire, relationships are the foundation of learning, behaviour and well-being. Many pupils arrive with fractured trust, unmet needs and trauma-related behaviours. This policy outlines how we prioritise creating a safe and nurturing environment that enables pupils to thrive. Our approach is built on connection, co-regulation and restoration.

Three core pillars underpin our positive behaviour policy:

- **Relationships** – strong, consistent and attuned adult–pupil connections.
- **Regulation** – supporting pupils to understand, manage and express their emotions.
- **Safety** – creating calm, structured and predictable environments where learning can flourish.

Ultimately, positive outcomes improve when we truly understand our pupils and what they need. That's why our pupils will always come first, because they deserve the very best.

2.0 Relevant Legislation and Guidance

This policy is aligned with the following statutory and non-statutory guidance:

- Behaviour in Schools (DfE, 2024)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2024)
- Education Act 1996 & 2011 Amendments
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DfE, 2023)
- Use of Reasonable Force (DfE, 2013)
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice (2014)
- Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance (DfE, 2016)
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance 2023
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

These documents shape the expectations, rights and responsibilities of our school and its members, and our approach operates fully within this framework.

3.0 Background and Context

Park Aspire educates pupils with complex SEMH needs who often arrive following exclusion or difficulty in mainstream settings. As a short-term, transitional provision, we provide personalised, Day 6 education grounded in strong relationships and consistent support. We work closely with families, previous schools and external agencies, regularly updating risk assessments and behaviour plans to ensure a safe, responsive and holistic approach to each child's development.

4.0 Core Beliefs About Behaviour

The following core beliefs about behaviour drive our practice:

All behaviour is communication

Children often express fear, frustration or unmet needs through actions before they have the language to explain them. Behaviour is therefore information, not a personal attack. At Park Aspire we respond with curiosity, asking what the behaviour is telling us so we can meet the need beneath it.

Safety comes before learning

Pupils struggle to think or learn when they feel unsafe or dysregulated. Emotional safety, predictability and trusted adults are our priority. During crisis, stabilisation and co-regulation take precedent; expectations and reflection follow once the child is regulated.

Relationships drive change

Positive change happens through safe, consistent and attuned relationships. Children grow when they feel understood and connected, not when they fear consequences. Emotionally available adults provide the secure base pupils need to take risks, learn from mistakes and rebuild trust in school.

Every child can learn to regulate

Regulation is a skill that develops with modelling, coaching and practice. Through co-regulation, predictable routines and explicitly taught strategies, pupils build the capacity to manage their emotions. Dysregulation is viewed as an unmet skill, not defiance.

Consequences are learning experiences

Consequences are restorative, helping pupils understand impact, take responsibility and make better choices. We prioritise repair, reflection and growth over blame or shame.

Consistency creates security

Reliable routines and predictable adult responses help pupils feel safe and reduce anxiety. Consistency builds trust and supports de-escalation and learning, offering a steady foundation without rigidity.

5.0 Relational and Therapeutic Approach

Our Relational and Therapeutic Approach is built on the following principles:

Trauma-Informed Practice: We recognise that behaviour can be shaped by past experiences or unmet needs, and we respond with empathy, curiosity and calm.

Nurture Principles: We create predictable, caring environments with warm, consistent relationships matched to each child's developmental stage.

Unconditional Positive Regard: Every pupil is valued, respected and believed in, regardless of behaviour; we separate the child from the behaviour.

Co-Regulation and Emotional Coaching: Adults model calm, teach emotional skills and support pupils to regulate before expecting them to reason.

Relational Care & Attachment-Aware Practice: Emotionally available adults provide attunement, reliability and secure relationships that help pupils feel safe.

Restorative Practice: When harm occurs, we focus on understanding impact, repairing relationships and agreeing positive next steps.

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS): We use proactive, needs-led strategies to understand the function of behaviour, adapt environments and teach safer alternatives (Appendix 1).

Together, these principles ensure our behaviour approach is compassionate, consistent and focused on long-term emotional growth.

6.0 Behaviour Response Cycle and Post Incident Learning

REGULATE → REFLECT → RESTORE → REINTEGRATE → REVIEW

This cycle ensures that every response at Park Aspire is consistent with our core principles: emotional safety, relational care, dignity, connection and long-term skill development. Appendix 2 outlines in more detail the staged response staff should follow when supporting pupils through dysregulation, conflict or behavioural difficulty. This ensures the system learns, adapts and becomes more proactive over time.

Post-Incident Learning (PIL) sits within this cycle and supports pupils to reflect on key incidents in a non-punitive way. Ultimately, we hope to develop children's emotional literacy and intelligence. The pupil must first be calm and ready. A staff member will then listen, link and learn; conversations will follow a similar format each time:

1. What happened?
2. How did that make you feel?
3. What can you/we do differently next time you feel that way?

7.0 Standards and Expectations

As an alternative provision, we hold consistently high standards and expectations for behaviour, ensuring every pupil experiences clear boundaries, respect and the structure they need to succeed.

Attitude to Learning

The Attitude Towards Learning Descriptor Levels (Appendix 3) provide a clear and structured way to assess how positively and consistently pupils engage with their learning. They highlight key behaviours such as motivation, independence and willingness to respond to support. This system helps staff understand each pupil's learning readiness and plan targeted strategies that encourage positive behaviour over time.

Rights versus Responsibilities

One of our most regularly discussed themes is the connection between pupils' rights as individuals and their responsibilities to others. While there is no fixed or exhaustive list, the following provides a clear and healthy overview:

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
To feel safe and protected from harm	To keep myself and others safe
To be treated with respect	To treat those around me with respect
To be heard	To listen to others
To access and enjoy learning	To work hard and allow others to learn
To get help and support from a trusted adult	To appreciate other pupils will also need their own version of help and support
To make mistakes and try again	To be honest and open, accepting others will also make mistakes
To express my identity	To respect other people's choices and identity
To work in a pleasant environment	To look after our school

8.0 Daily Procedures

Screening Process

To keep our school community safe, all KS3 and some identified KS2 pupils take part in a brief screening process on arrival. During this time, staff calmly and respectfully check for banned or unsafe items that could cause harm or disrupt learning. This process forms part of our safeguarding duties, helping us prevent harm, reduce risk and ensure a safe environment for all pupils and staff. Please enquire at the school office if you require any further information.

Quiet Rooms and Pastoral Support

Sometimes pupils may need time in a quiet room when the classroom feels overwhelming. This calmer space reduces pressure, prevents escalation and helps them refocus. The decision to work away from class is made with the pupil, with staff making the final call in their best interests. Pupils remain closely supervised, and time away is purposeful, monitored and recorded on CPOMS if required. Pastoral rooms also support restorative conversations once pupils are calm, helping them reflect, rebuild trust and return to class ready to learn.

Fresh Starts

We actively promote 'fresh starts' at Park Aspire, not just day-to-day, but lesson-to-lesson and moment-to-moment. This helps pupils move forward with purpose and re-engage positively in their learning. Offering a clean slate reduces anxiety about past behaviours, builds resilience and reinforces the belief that everyone can learn, grow and make better choices.

9.0 Praise and Rewards

At Park Aspire, we use praise and rewards to build intrinsic motivation and support pupils to recognise their own progress. Staff use specific, effort-based praise that highlights resilience, self-regulation and personal growth. While our approach prioritises internal motivation, we recognise that some pupils benefit from short-term external rewards, so we use a flexible system that meets individual needs.

Points System (KS1 & KS2)

Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 earn points throughout the day for positive engagement, learning behaviours and meeting personalised behaviour targets. Pupils can earn up to 60 points daily, with rewards linked to daily, weekly and termly achievements. Points sheets are shared with parents and carers to support reflection and celebrate progress.

Assemblies

Weekly assemblies provide an opportunity to recognise and celebrate positive behaviour across the school. Each class nominates a 'Star of the Week', and selected pupils in each Key Stage receive the 'Headteacher's Special Mention' award. Certificates, small privileges and positive recognition strengthen pupils' sense of achievement and reinforce our values-driven culture. End-of-term celebrations bring together all of the Headteacher nominees.

Reward Trips

Pupils demonstrating sustained positive engagement or significant progress are invited to take part in end-of-term reward trips. Activities vary by Key Stage and are chosen to motivate and recognise pupils' efforts. Additional short-term incentives may be offered to pupils who benefit from more immediate reinforcement.

School Values and Reward Shop

'Individually we Aspire, Together we Exceed.'

This school ethos helps shape our culture. Our practice is also driven by four key values.

Pride – we take pride in ourselves, others and our environment.

Achieve – we try to do our best in everything we do.

Respect – we respect ourselves and others in our community.

Kindness – we act with kindness and humility.

Pupils earn tokens to spend in the reward shop as positive recognition for demonstrating our school values. The Reward Shop offers a selection of items ranging from small treats to larger rewards. Pupils can choose to save or spend tokens, encouraging goal-setting and delayed gratification.

Class Target

Each class works collaboratively toward a shared class target based on identified cohort needs. When the target is achieved, pupils participate in a small class celebration, helping to develop teamwork, collective responsibility and a sense of shared success.

Spontaneous Rewards

The truest form of a reward arrives after a spontaneous piece of brilliance from one of our pupils and it's what we like best at Park Aspire. Random acts of kindness, subtle acts of bravery, unprompted determination - we aim to reward our pupils as much as possible for these unique and special moments. Examples include visits to the Headteacher's office, positive text messages and/or phone calls home, or short periods of extra reward time. Ultimately, we appreciate that sometimes it's the smallest things that make the biggest difference.

10.0 Tackling Challenging Behaviour

Low-Level Disruption

Staff respond to low-level disruption with calm, consistent and proactive strategies that keep pupils regulated and learning. This includes using predictable routines, clear reminders, proximity, and brief check-ins to redirect behaviour without escalation. Staff follow personalised behaviour plans where relevant, reinforcing expectations and offering supportive choices. Patterns of low-level disruption are monitored so additional strategies or interventions can be put in place early.

Logical Consequences

We use fair and consistent consequences to support pupils in developing positive attitudes and safer behaviour. Because challenging behaviour often stems from poor choices, our responses are clear, logical and focused on setting boundaries and guiding better decisions. Staff use empathy and follow each pupil's behaviour plan to reduce shame and maintain relationships. Above all, we view every incident as a learning opportunity that builds emotional intelligence and promotes more positive future behaviour, because *when children feel better, they behave better*.

Code of Conduct

Our Behaviour Code of Conduct sets out a clear, consistent, step-by-step framework for responding to pupil behaviour, ensuring high expectations and emotional safety across the school. Behaviours are categorised as Yellow, Orange or Red to reflect their severity, with each category linked to staged responses that combine consequence, support and restorative work. The system emphasises fresh starts, context-driven decisions, and regular updates to individual risk assessments. We realise that in some cases, we may be required to engage in difficult conversations with our pupils. More serious breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in

parents/carers being called to arrange a meeting. The meeting will then determine what further action needs to be taken.

Protected Characteristics

At Park Aspire, any incident involving a protected characteristic is treated as a serious hate-related concern. Staff report these behaviours to SLT immediately, who then agree the appropriate response and ensure the behaviour is tracked and monitored for a staged, proportionate approach. Pupils involved will always complete targeted learning around the protected characteristic to help them understand impact, challenge prejudice and rebuild positive, respectful relationships.

Suspensions

At Park Aspire we recognise that suspensions are not always the most effective response to risky behaviour. In extreme circumstances, a suspension may still be issued at the Headteacher's discretion. Senior leaders and the necessary wider staff team will discuss each individual incident to agree the most appropriate form of action. Internal suspensions may be used as an alternative, during which the pupil will work under supervision with their trusted adult and complete the necessary restorative work.

11.0 PBS Plans and Risk Assessments

Our behaviour plans are comprehensive, live documents that combine risk assessment with personalised support. We gather information from previous schools and families to form an accurate baseline, then update plans regularly as pupils' needs and behaviours change. We adopt a tiered approach to ensure behaviour plans are increasingly personalised according to level of need.

Tier 1

- **Risk assessments** identify a range of possible behaviours and uses severity and likelihood to calculate actual risk.
- **The Big Five – To Help Me Thrive** profile, outlines the top five strategies that help each pupil stay regulated throughout the day.

Tier 2

- A **Behaviour Response Guide** is collated that outlines known challenging behaviours for a specific pupil, with clear, consistent "when X happens, we do X" responses. This ensures staff have precise, agreed actions for situations that require a higher level of consistency and predictability.

Tier 3

- For more targeted support, pupil's individual triggers and tailored strategies are identified across the **Six Stages of Crisis** document. See Appendix 4 for a detailed explanation of how staff approach each stage. Staff move between stages based on the pupil's emotional state, not time - regressions or jumps between stages are normal.

Behaviour plans are discussed with the class team and relevant staff to ensure shared understanding, and we actively seek pupil voice to shape strategies that feel supportive and fair. Families are kept informed of key updates so that support remains joined-up across home and school. Together, these processes ensure responses are proactive, consistent and rooted in strong relationships.

12.0 CPOMS

All significant incidents related to behaviour, safeguarding or child protection, will be recorded on CPOMS and shared with the relevant staff, in an attempt to adapt and learn from practice. Entries must be factual, objective, concise, consistent and solution-focused.

13.0 Communication with Parents/Carers

We view parents and carers as key partners in supporting behaviour. We inform families promptly about significant incidents, share relevant restorative insights, and invite them to meetings when concerns continue or issues are serious. Parents are involved in updates to behaviour plans, and we encourage them to share any home information that may affect a child's regulation so support remains consistent and joined-up.

14.0 Use of Reasonable Force

The DfE guidance *Use of Reasonable Force* provides clear expectations around what constitutes reasonable force and how schools should apply it. While Park Aspire is committed to preventing crisis through proactive support and de-escalation, physical restraint may be used as a last resort to keep everyone safe. All staff are Team Teach trained and complete regular refresher sessions, in addition to ongoing training in trauma-informed practice, co-regulation and SEMH needs, to ensure our responses to behaviour remain consistent, safe and rooted in current evidence. Staff then work collaboratively, sharing expertise to identify the best ways to support individual pupils. The school is also committed to developing in-house Team Teach Tutors to further strengthen, embed and sustain high-quality practice.

15.0 Staff Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure consistency, emotional safety and high-quality support across the school, the following roles and responsibilities apply:

All Staff

- Build warm, predictable relationships rooted in trust and respect.
- Use trauma-informed, non-shaming language at all times.
- Follow the Behaviour Response Cycle (Regulate → Reflect → Restore → Reintegration → Review).
- Implement personalised strategies and behaviour plans consistently.
- Record key incidents and insights on CPOMS.
- Model emotional regulation and relational care.

Class Teachers

- Create calm, structured and emotionally safe classrooms.
- Use adaptive teaching and routine to reduce anxiety and promote engagement.
- Work proactively with the pastoral team to update behaviour plans and identify emerging needs.
- Facilitate restorative conversations as appropriate.
- Deliver high quality teaching that engages and motivates pupils.

Pastoral Staff and Behaviour Team

- Meet 1 x per week to monitor, review and evaluate progress.
- Provide specialist SEMH support through intervention, mentoring and regulation strategies.
- Lead or support restorative conversations and reintegration processes.
- Monitor patterns on CPOMS and share insights with teaching staff.
- Contribute to behaviour plan reviews and multi-agency discussions.

Senior Leaders (SLT)

- Model relational leadership and coach staff in trauma-informed practice.
- Oversee behaviour systems, safeguarding, CPOMS monitoring and training.
- Support complex cases and lead serious incident reviews.
- Ensure parents/carers are informed appropriately and sensitively.
- Prioritise staff wellbeing by providing emotional support, recognising that relational practice can place a high emotional load on colleagues.

Headteacher

- Make final decisions on suspensions and alternative arrangements.
- Ensure the policy aligns with statutory duties, safeguarding and ethical practice.
- Oversee significant changes to PBS plans and risk assessments.

Staff Non-Negotiables

To maintain a consistent and relational culture, staff at Park Aspire commit to a series of non-negotiables (Appendix 5). These principles ensure every pupil experiences unconditional positive regard, dignity and consistent support.

16.0 Aims and Objectives

Park Aspire aims to:

1. Create a physically and emotionally safe learning environment.
2. Build strong, trusting relationships between pupils and adults.
3. Understand behaviour as communication of unmet need.
4. Promote regulation, resilience and emotional literacy.
5. Teach social and emotional skills that improve long-term life outcomes.
6. Ensure pupils feel respected, valued, heard and supported.
7. Respond to dysregulation in a non-shaming, non-punitive way.
8. Restore relationships after harm and teach positive alternatives.
9. Provide consistency, predictability and clear routines.
10. Support staff through training, coaching and reflective practice.

We encourage pupils to:

1. Manage their own emotions and demonstrate self-control.
2. Take responsibility for their own behaviour.
3. Make positive and safe choices, both in and out of school.
4. Develop confidence, independence, self-worth and resilience.
5. Engage and co-operate in learning opportunities.
6. Discuss their feelings when necessary with a trusted adult.
7. Recognise and celebrate their own achievements and those of others.
8. Become their best selves in school and the wider community.

Appendix 1

At Park Aspire, **PBS** includes the following core elements:

- **Functional understanding of behaviour**

Staff look beyond the behaviour itself to identify the underlying need, trigger or purpose. This includes patterns recorded on CPOMS, information from previous settings, and insights from parents, carers and the pupil.

- **Proactive and preventative strategies**

We adapt classroom routines, expectations, teaching styles, sensory environments and transitions to reduce pressure and remove predictable triggers. This supports pupils to stay regulated and engaged.

- **Teaching replacement skills**

We intentionally teach the skills a pupil may be missing—such as emotional vocabulary, self-regulation strategies, help-seeking, problem-solving or social communication—so they have more appropriate ways to get their needs met.

- **Individualised support**

Strategies are matched to each pupil's developmental stage and SEMH profile. These may include personalised workstations, alternative tasks, sensory breaks, structured choices, consistent scripts or adult mentoring.

- **Positive reinforcement and solution-focused reflection**

We celebrate small steps, encourage effort and use restorative conversations to develop insight. Success is reinforced so pupils can practise and embed new habits over time.

- **Collaborative planning and review**

PBS is an ongoing team approach. Staff regularly review behaviour plans and risk assessments, updating them after significant incidents. The aim is to learn from patterns, adapt support and ensure each pupil experiences repeated opportunities for success.

Appendix 2

Behaviour Response Cycle

STAGE 1 – REGULATE

Focus: safety, calm, connection

Adult response:

- Stay calm, use soft tone, reduced language
- Offer co-regulation strategies (breathing, sensory tools, movement break)
- Reduce environmental demands (lower noise, clear space, remove audience)
- Use relationship cues: attunement, reassurance, predictable scripts
- If needed, move the pupil to a quiet room or calmer space

Key question for staff:

“What does this pupil need to feel safe right now?”

The pupil is not expected to talk, engage or reason at this stage.

STAGE 2 – REFLECT

Focus: understanding what happened (after the pupil is calm)

Adult response:

- Ensure the pupil is fully regulated before starting
- Use the “Listen – Link – Learn” structure:
 - What happened?
 - How did that make you feel?
 - What led up to this?
- Label emotions, model repair language
- Support the pupil to recognise triggers or unmet needs
- Record key details on CPOMS

Key question for staff:

“What is the need beneath the behaviour?”

This stage is quiet, non-judgemental and supportive.

STAGE 3 – RESTORE

Focus: rebuilding relationships and repairing harm

Adult response:

- Engage in a short restorative conversation:
 - Who was affected?
 - How can we make it right?
 - What needs to happen next?
- Facilitate reconnection with staff or peers
- Agree specific next steps (e.g., apology, repairing work, practical amends)
- Reinforce dignity, belonging and the pupil's value in the community

Key question for staff:

“How do we repair trust so everyone can move forward positively?”

Restorative work may continue in a pastoral room if appropriate.

STAGE 4 – REINTEGRATE

Focus: returning successfully to learning

Adult response:

- Support the pupil's transition back into class
- Agree what they might need to re-engage (e.g., check-ins, movement break, modified task, staff support, quiet workspace)
- Remind them of success strategies tailored to their plan
- Provide a genuine "fresh start"

Key question for staff:

"What support will help this pupil succeed for the rest of the day?"

A reintegration note or short, positive script may be shared with class staff.

STAGE 5 – REVIEW (when needed)

Focus: learning from patterns and improving support

Adult response:

- Review the incident with the pastoral team
- Adjust the behaviour plan, PBS plan or risk assessment if patterns emerge
- Communicate updates to relevant staff
- Plan proactive strategies to reduce future triggers
- Involve parents/carers where helpful

Key question for staff:

"What do we change in the environment or support to prevent recurrence?"

Appendix 3

Attitude Towards Learning Descriptor Levels

Level 5

- Consistently engages with learning, showing high levels of curiosity and motivation.
- Demonstrates self-regulation and resilience even when work is challenging.
- Takes responsibility for their own progress and supports others in class.
- Actively seeks feedback and uses it to improve.
- Displays a positive influence on peers through attitude and conduct.

Level 4

- Mostly engages well with learning and shows a willingness to complete tasks.
- Demonstrates emerging independence and uses self-regulation strategies effectively most of the time.
- Responds well to support and routines.
- Shows respect for adults and peers in learning contexts.
- Mostly takes pride in their progress and effort.

Level 3

- Sometimes engages positively with learning but remains inconsistent.
- May require frequent prompting, reassurance, or support to stay on task.
- Can show moments of effort or insight but struggles to sustain this.
- Emotional regulation and classroom behaviour may fluctuate, impacting learning.
- Shows signs of progress, but attitude remains reactive to mood or peer dynamics.

Level 2

- Rarely engages without high levels of adult support and encouragement.
- Avoids learning tasks and may display low motivation or confidence.
- May comply passively but without meaningful engagement or progress.
- Emotional regulation needs are significant and often interfere with learning.
- Demonstrates limited responsibility for own learning.

Level 1

- Frequently disengaged from learning and may actively avoid or disrupt lessons.
- Struggles significantly with self-regulation, leading to conflict.
- Shows little or no interest in progress, even with staff support.
- Attitude to learning is negative and can influence others.
- Requires consistent, high-level interventions to re-engage.

Appendix 4

Six Stages of Crisis

These stages help staff identify where a pupil is in their crisis journey and choose the safest, most effective response.

Stage One – Anxiety / Trigger

What it looks like:

The pupil starts to show early signs of distress: withdrawal, fidgeting, irritability, avoidance, becoming unusually quiet or suddenly oppositional. The trigger may be work-based, sensory, social or emotional.

What's happening internally:

Their stress levels rise. They feel unsafe, overwhelmed, or unsure how to cope.

Strategies – Need for support and reassurance:

- Validate feelings ("I can see this is tough—let's do it together").
- Reduce demands temporarily.
- Offer choices to restore control.
- Adjust the environment (movement break, quieter space, seating change).
- Use calm tone and predictable routines to bring them back to baseline.

Stage Two – Defensive / Escalation

What it looks like:

The pupil becomes visibly unsettled or reactive: arguing, refusing, raising their voice, pacing, challenging boundaries, denying responsibility, or "testing" adults.

What's happening internally:

Their thinking brain is shutting down. Fight/flight responses increase.

Strategies – Need for diversion, clear limits and boundaries:

- Keep your voice low, slow and minimal.
- Use simple, clear instructions ("Come with me," "Let's step outside").
- Avoid debates, warnings or long explanations.
- Present structured choices ("You can sit here or in the quiet space").
- Give physical space and reduce audience to prevent further escalation.

Stage Three – Crisis

What it looks like:

Loss of emotional control: shouting, crying, running, throwing objects, aggression, self-injury behaviours, or complete shutdown. The pupil is not able to reason or process instructions.

What's happening internally:

They are in full survival mode. Their nervous system is overwhelmed; logic is offline.

Strategies – Need for safety, containment and minimal language:

- Prioritise safety for everyone nearby.
- Use low-arousal, supportive statements ("I'm here. You're safe.").
- Remove triggers and reduce sensory input.

- Follow behaviour plan / Team Teach protocols.
- Physical intervention only if absolutely necessary and in line with policy.

Stage Four – Recovery

What it looks like:

Behaviour reduces. The pupil may be quiet, tearful, embarrassed, exhausted or trying to distract from what happened. They are calm enough to function but still emotionally fragile.

What's happening internally:

- Stress hormones are falling, but their system is still sensitive.
- Strategies – Need for continued letting go, support and gentle guidance:
- Allow time and space without pressure to talk.
- Offer water, a sensory item or a quiet seat.
- Keep tone neutral and non-judgemental.
- Avoid discussing the incident too soon—wait until they can think clearly.
- Help them ease back into expectations gradually.

Stage Five – Depression

What it looks like:

A “dip” after the crisis: low mood, guilt, shame, withdrawal, negative self-talk (“I’m stupid,” “Everyone hates me”), or reluctance to rejoin activities or class.

What's happening internally:

They are processing the aftermath emotionally. They may feel vulnerable or worried about consequences.

- Strategies – Need for observation, support, monitoring and repair:
- Offer reassurance and unconditional positive regard.
- Use personalised check-ins (“Are you ready to come back into class?”).
- Break tasks into manageable steps.
- Engage them in something they can succeed in quickly.
- Start preparing them for the restorative conversation.

Stage Six – Developmental Debrief (Listen – Link – Learn)

What it looks like:

The pupil is now able to think, talk and understand the incident. They engage in reflection, though they may still be sensitive or defensive at first.

What's happening internally:

Their nervous system is regulated enough for problem-solving, empathy and repair.

Strategies – Restorative work and future planning:

- **Listen:** Let them share their perspective without interruption.
- **Link:** Help them identify the feelings or triggers connected to the behaviour.
- **Learn:** Explore better choices, coping strategies and adjustments for next time.
- Agree next steps and reintegration plan.
- Update behaviour plan or risk assessment if patterns emerge.

Appendix 5

Staff non-negotiables

1. We regulate first; we never expect reasoning from a dysregulated pupil.
2. We use calm, attuned and predictable language.
3. We separate the child from the behaviour.
4. We do not shame, blame or use punitive approaches.
5. We provide fresh starts — lesson to lesson and moment to moment.
6. We follow the Behaviour Response Cycle every time.
7. We maintain professional curiosity and look for unmet need.
8. We prioritise emotional safety above all else.