



PARITY
EDUCATION

Shaping Futures
With Equal Opportunities

Behaviour Policy

Relational • trauma-informed • SEND-aware • safeguarding-led

Alternative Provision • EOTAS • SEND • Tuition • Mentoring

Organisation	Parity Education and Careers Services Ltd
Policy owner	Head of Provision / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Version	2.0 - August 2026
Last reviewed	August 2026
Next review due	August 2027, or sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, commissioner requirements or organisational practice changes
Applies to	Employees, tutors, learning support practitioners, mentors, contractors, directors, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Parity Education
Related Policies	Safeguarding and Child Protection; Attendance and Non-Engagement; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Anti-Bullying; Health and Safety; Lone Working; Online Safety; Complaints; Tutor & Contractor Handbook

Contents

1. Policy statement
2. Purpose and scope
3. Guidance and framework
5. Understanding behaviour and individual need
6. Expectations for adults
7. Expectations for learners
8. Planning and prevention
9. Positive relationships, recognition and motivation
10. Responding to dysregulation and behaviour of concern
11. De-escalation
12. Serious incidents and immediate safety
13. Restrictive interventions and physical contact
14. Prohibited and unsafe items
15. Searching, screening and confiscation
16. Bullying, discrimination and harmful behaviour
17. Online and community-based behaviour
18. Behaviour support plans and risk assessment
19. Recording, reporting and information sharing
20. Parents, carers, commissioners and other professionals
21. Suspension, ending or changing provision
22. Safeguarding and behaviour
23. Training, supervision and staff wellbeing
24. Monitoring and quality assurance
25. Related policies
26. Policy approval and review

1. Policy statement

Parity Education is committed to providing safe, respectful and inclusive education for children and young people whose previous experiences of education may include exclusion, reduced attendance, emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), SEND, SEMH needs, trauma, disrupted relationships or other barriers to learning.

We understand that behaviour can communicate need, distress, anxiety, sensory overload, difficulty with communication, a learned response to previous experiences, or an attempt to regain safety and control. Understanding the reason for behaviour does not mean ignoring unsafe or harmful behaviour. Our role is to respond calmly, protect safety, maintain appropriate boundaries and help learners develop safer and more effective ways to communicate, regulate and participate.

Parity Education uses a relational, trauma-informed and SEND-aware approach. We seek to prevent incidents through good planning, predictable routines, appropriate adjustments and strong relationships. Where incidents occur, responses will be proportionate, individualised and focused on safety, learning, repair and future support rather than punishment for its own sake.

2. Purpose and scope

This policy explains the standards and approach that apply to behaviour across Parity Education provision. It applies to:

- 1:1 and 2:1 tuition
- Alternative Provision and EOTAS provision
- SEND and SEMH support
- Home-based and community-based tuition
- School-based or commissioned on-site provision
- Online tuition
- Mentoring and learning support
- Introductory visits, assessments, reviews and transition activity
- Travel or movement directly connected with a Parity Education session where this forms part of the commissioned arrangement

The policy applies to all employees, tutors, learning support practitioners, mentors, contractors, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Parity Education. Where provision takes place on another organisation's premises, relevant site rules and emergency procedures must also be followed.

3. Guidance and framework

Parity Education is a non-school alternative provision provider. School-specific statutory powers do not automatically apply to Parity Education in every delivery context. We nevertheless use relevant Department for Education guidance as a benchmark for safe and effective practice and align our approach with commissioner requirements.

- Department for Education - Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff.
- Department for Education - Non-school alternative provision: voluntary national standards.
- Department for Education - Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (effective from 1 April 2026), used as relevant good-practice guidance.
- Department for Education - Preventing and tackling bullying.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, where relevant to safeguarding expectations and commissioned provision.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.
- Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and relevant risk-management duties.

The Department for Education's voluntary national standards for non-school alternative provision expect providers to have a strategy for good behaviour for learning, record behaviour and progress, make adjustments for identified needs,

train staff in de-escalation and avoidance of restraint, and report significant incidents promptly to commissioners and parents.

4. Our approach to behaviour

- Behaviour is understood in context, but safety and appropriate boundaries remain important.
- The learner is not defined by their behaviour. Staff should describe what happened rather than label the child.
- Connection, predictability and co-regulation often need to come before academic demand.
- Adults are responsible for modelling calm, respectful and emotionally regulated behaviour.
- Expectations should be clear, realistic, accessible and consistent with the learner's developmental level and needs.
- Reasonable adjustments are part of good behaviour support, not a lowering of standards.
- De-escalation and prevention are preferred to confrontation, punishment or restrictive intervention.
- Repair and reflection should happen when the learner is regulated enough to benefit from them.
- Responses should preserve dignity and avoid shame, humiliation, public confrontation or unnecessary power struggles.

5. Understanding behaviour and individual need

Parity Education works with learners whose behaviour and engagement may be affected by autism, ADHD, communication differences, learning difficulties, sensory processing needs, anxiety, trauma, attachment experiences, mental health needs, developmental delay or other factors. Staff must avoid assuming that the same behaviour has the same meaning for every learner.

When behaviour becomes difficult or unsafe, staff should consider what may have happened before it, what the learner may be communicating, what demands or environmental factors are present and what support may reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

- Known triggers, anxieties and early signs of dysregulation
- Communication needs and preferred ways of expressing choice or distress
- Sensory needs and environmental factors such as noise, light, crowds or unfamiliar spaces
- Changes in routine, staffing, venue or family circumstances
- The level, pace and accessibility of academic demand
- Hunger, tiredness, pain, medication or other health-related factors where known
- Previous trauma or experiences that may make particular interactions difficult
- Whether the learner understands the expectation and has the skills to meet it
- Whether a reasonable adjustment or different approach is required

6. Expectations for adults

Consistency is primarily created through adult practice. All adults working for Parity Education are expected to:

- Build professional, respectful relationships and learn what helps the individual learner feel safe and ready to engage.
- Prepare sessions that are appropriately paced, purposeful and adapted to need.
- Use clear, calm and respectful language, including during difficult incidents.
- Give instructions and choices that the learner can understand and realistically follow.
- Notice and reinforce effort, regulation, communication, engagement and progress.
- Use agreed routines, visual supports, breaks, movement or sensory strategies where appropriate.
- Intervene early when they notice signs of dysregulation.
- Avoid sarcasm, shouting, humiliation, threats, collective punishment, public confrontation or deliberately provocative language.
- Never use food, drink, access to the toilet, essential sensory regulation or contact with a safe adult as a punishment.

- Maintain professional boundaries and follow the Tutor & Contractor Handbook and Safeguarding Policy.
- Record significant concerns accurately and escalate them in line with this policy.

7. Expectations for learners

Expectations will be explained in a way that is appropriate to the learner's age, communication, cognition and developmental level. They may be simplified or represented visually where this is helpful.

- Treat other people with reasonable respect and avoid deliberately harming, threatening or intimidating them.
- Use agreed ways to communicate when something feels difficult, unsafe or overwhelming.
- Take reasonable care of property, equipment and the learning environment.
- Follow safety instructions and agreed boundaries, particularly in community settings.
- Engage with learning and activities at a level that is realistic for them, with support and adjustments as needed.
- Respect privacy, personal space and appropriate boundaries.
- Do not bring weapons, illegal substances or other unsafe items into provision.
- Work towards repairing harm after incidents when they are able to do so.

A learner who is dysregulated, overwhelmed or unable to meet an expectation at a particular moment will be supported rather than treated as wilfully non-compliant. However, unsafe behaviour will still be addressed and appropriate action taken to protect the learner and others.

8. Planning and prevention

Good behaviour support begins before a session starts. Referral information, EHCPs, risk assessments, professional reports and known behaviour strategies should be reviewed before delivery wherever they are available.

- Match staffing levels to assessed need, including 2:1 provision where commissioned or required by risk assessment.
- Choose a venue that is appropriate to the learner's needs and known risks.
- Agree arrival, departure, breaks and community-access arrangements.
- Plan transitions and changes in staffing carefully.
- Use predictable session structures while retaining enough flexibility to respond to regulation and engagement.
- Identify safe spaces, exits and support arrangements without creating an unnecessarily restrictive environment.
- Ensure staff know who to contact if risk escalates.
- Review incidents and adapt the plan rather than repeatedly using an approach that is not working.

9. Positive relationships, recognition and motivation

Parity Education recognises progress in a way that is meaningful to the individual learner. Recognition is not limited to academic attainment and may include effort, communication, returning after a difficult moment, tolerating a transition, asking for a break, completing part of a task, repairing a relationship or managing a previously difficult situation.

Appropriate approaches may include specific verbal praise, positive feedback to parents/carers, sharing success with the commissioner, choice of activity, certificates or other agreed motivational systems. Rewards must be age-appropriate, proportionate, safe and consistent with professional boundaries. Staff must not personally give significant gifts, money or inappropriate incentives to learners.

A rigid points or sanctions system is not required across all learners. Where an individual reward or motivation plan is used, it should be purposeful, achievable and reviewed if it causes anxiety, competition or disengagement.

10. Responding to dysregulation and behaviour of concern

There is no fixed ladder of warnings that must be followed in every case. Staff should use professional judgement within the learner's plan and respond to the level of risk, the learner's needs and the circumstances.

- Notice and respond to early signs of dysregulation.
- Reduce unnecessary language, demands, audience or sensory load.
- Use a calm reminder, redirection, visual cue or agreed prompt.
- Offer realistic choices and allow take-up time.
- Offer an agreed break, movement, regulation strategy or change of task where appropriate.
- Increase physical space and avoid blocking the learner unless immediate safety requires otherwise.
- Seek additional support if risk is increasing.
- End or pause the activity if continuing would be unsafe or likely to escalate the situation.
- Once calm has returned, support reflection and repair at a level the learner can manage.

Consequences, where used, should be directly related to the behaviour and focused on safety or repair. For example, temporarily pausing access to equipment that has been used unsafely may be appropriate. Arbitrary punishments, humiliating sanctions or removal of basic needs are not.

11. De-escalation

De-escalation is a core expectation of Parity Education practice. Staff should remain aware that their own tone, body position, language and emotional state can either reduce or increase risk.

- Speak slowly and calmly and avoid arguing about facts while the learner is highly dysregulated.
- Use short, concrete language and avoid repeated instructions.
- Reduce demands where this can be done safely.
- Do not crowd, corner or surround a learner.
- Allow processing time and safe silence.
- Keep an appropriate exit route available where possible.
- Remove other people, objects or demands that are contributing to risk where safe to do so.
- Use known co-regulation or sensory strategies from the learner's plan.
- Call for support early rather than waiting for a situation to become a crisis.

12. Serious incidents and immediate safety

Where behaviour creates an immediate risk of harm, the first priority is safety. Examples may include serious violence, use or threatened use of a weapon, significant self-harm risk, dangerous behaviour near traffic or other hazards, serious damage creating a safety risk, or a situation in which staff cannot safely maintain the session.

- Move other people away from danger where possible.
- Use the least restrictive response that can safely manage the situation.
- Call a parent/carer, Parity Education manager, venue staff or other agreed support as appropriate.
- Call 999 where there is an immediate danger to life or a serious incident requiring emergency services.
- Follow safeguarding procedures where the behaviour or circumstances indicate abuse, exploitation, neglect or another safeguarding concern.
- Do not pursue a learner into an unsafe situation unless this is necessary to respond to an immediate risk and can be done safely.
- Record the incident and actions taken as soon as practicable.

13. Restrictive interventions and physical contact

Parity Education aims to minimise the need for restrictive interventions. De-escalation, environmental adaptation, appropriate staffing, positive relationships and individual planning should be used to reduce foreseeable risk.

Physical contact may sometimes be appropriate for ordinary care, reassurance, first aid, guidance or safety, provided it is professional, proportionate, welcomed or reasonably necessary in the circumstances, and consistent with the learner's needs and safeguarding plan.

Restrictive physical intervention must never be used as punishment, to cause pain, to humiliate a learner or merely to secure compliance with an instruction. Where an immediate risk makes physical intervention unavoidable, any intervention must be the minimum necessary for the shortest possible time and must stop as soon as the immediate risk has reduced.

Staff must act within their competence, training, role and the law. Where a learner's known presentation creates a foreseeable likelihood that restrictive intervention may be required, this must be escalated to senior leadership so that staffing, risk assessment, training and the suitability of the provision can be reviewed before delivery continues.

Any restrictive intervention or significant physical safety intervention must be reported to Parity Education as soon as possible, recorded in detail, reviewed by an appropriate manager and shared with the parent/carer and commissioner as appropriate. Any injury or safeguarding concern must be managed under the relevant procedure.

14. Prohibited and unsafe items

Learners must not bring items into a Parity Education session that create an unacceptable safety, safeguarding or legal risk. This includes:

- Knives, weapons or items carried or adapted for use as a weapon
- Illegal drugs or substances
- Alcohol
- Fireworks or explosives
- Stolen items
- Tobacco, cigarettes, vapes or other age-restricted nicotine products
- Pornographic or otherwise unlawful sexual material
- Any item reasonably believed to be intended for use to injure a person, threaten someone, commit an offence or cause serious damage

Other items may be restricted for an individual learner or venue where this is necessary for safety, health, safeguarding or the effective delivery of provision. Any such restriction should be proportionate and, where ongoing, reflected in the learner's plan or risk assessment.

15. Searching, screening and confiscation

The previous Parity Education policy stated that designated staff could search learners. This policy replaces that approach. Parity Education staff must not assume they have the statutory search powers available to staff in schools, because Parity Education is a non-school provider and delivery takes place across varied settings.

Staff should not conduct an intrusive physical search of a learner. If there is reason to believe a learner has a weapon, illegal substance or another item presenting an immediate serious risk, staff should prioritise safety, seek senior support and contact the police or emergency services where necessary.

A learner may be asked to hand over an unsafe or prohibited item voluntarily. An item may be removed or secured where it can be done safely and lawfully and this is necessary to prevent immediate harm. Staff should avoid physical confrontation over property.

Any confiscated item must be handled according to its nature and risk. It may be returned to a parent/carer, retained temporarily for safety, handed to the venue or commissioner, or given to the police where appropriate. Illegal drugs, weapons or other evidence of a potential offence must not simply be returned to the learner.

16. Bullying, discrimination and harmful behaviour

Bullying, harassment, discriminatory abuse, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, hate-related incidents and targeted intimidation are not acceptable. They may also be safeguarding concerns and must be considered under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Parity Education's predominantly 1:1 model means child-on-child incidents may occur less frequently than in group settings, but risks can arise in community venues, online activity, shared spaces, transitions or contact outside sessions. Staff must not dismiss harmful behaviour as banter or an inevitable part of a learner's needs.

- Protect the person affected and address immediate safety.
- Record the incident factually, including relevant words or actions.
- Consider SEND, communication and developmental context without minimising harm.
- Inform the DSL where there is a safeguarding element.
- Share information with parents/carers, commissioners and relevant professionals as appropriate.
- Review risk assessments, staffing, venue arrangements or support plans where necessary.

17. Online and community-based behaviour

Behaviour expectations apply in online and community provision, but staff must adapt their approach to the setting. In libraries, community venues, homes and public spaces, staff should plan for environmental risks, privacy, members of the public, transport and safe exit arrangements.

Online sessions must follow Parity Education's Online Safety and Safeguarding arrangements. Threatening, abusive, sexualised or discriminatory online behaviour, inappropriate recording or sharing, and attempts to move communication to unauthorised personal channels must be addressed and reported appropriately.

If behaviour in a public or community setting creates a risk that cannot be managed safely, the session may be paused or ended and the learner moved to an agreed safe location where possible. Staff must inform Parity Education and follow the learner's emergency and safeguarding arrangements.

18. Behaviour support plans and risk assessment

A behaviour support plan or individual risk-management plan may be required where behaviour is frequent, escalating, complex or presents a foreseeable risk. Plans should be practical and specific rather than generic.

- Known triggers and early warning signs
- Communication needs and reasonable adjustments
- Helpful regulation and de-escalation strategies
- Approaches known to increase distress and therefore to avoid
- Staffing level and role allocation, including 2:1 arrangements where required
- Environmental and community risks
- Safe break, exit and emergency arrangements
- How and when parents/carers, commissioners or emergency services should be contacted
- Post-incident support and review arrangements

Plans should be informed by the learner, parent/carer, commissioner and relevant professionals where appropriate. They must be reviewed after significant incidents, material changes in presentation or where existing strategies are no longer effective.

19. Recording, reporting and information sharing

Behaviour recording should be proportionate and useful. Routine session information should be captured through Parity Education's student check-in and reporting systems. Significant behaviour incidents require sufficient detail to understand what happened, what preceded it, what action was taken, the outcome and whether follow-up is required.

Records should use factual, neutral language. Avoid labels such as 'naughty', 'manipulative', 'attention seeking' or 'aggressive' without describing the observable behaviour. Where exact words are relevant, particularly threats, discriminatory language or safeguarding disclosures, they should be recorded accurately.

Significant incidents should be shared promptly with Parity Education management and, where appropriate, with the parent/carer and commissioner. The Department for Education's voluntary standards for non-school AP indicate that significant behaviour incidents should ideally be reported to commissioners and parents on the same day.

A safeguarding concern must not be left only within a behaviour record. It must also be escalated through the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedure.

20. Parents, carers, commissioners and other professionals

Effective behaviour support depends on appropriate information sharing and consistent planning. Parents and carers often hold important information about communication, regulation, triggers and successful strategies. Commissioners remain responsible for oversight of the placement and should be informed of significant or recurring concerns.

Parity Education will communicate positive progress as well as concerns. Where behaviour is becoming a barrier to education or creating increased risk, we will work with the commissioner and relevant professionals to review the plan, rather than allowing difficulties to continue without adjustment.

Where a learner has an EHCP, social worker, Virtual School involvement, clinical support or other professional network, relevant plans and advice should be considered where available and information shared on a need-to-know and lawful basis.

21. Suspension, ending or changing provision

Parity Education is not a school and does not operate a school suspension or permanent exclusion process. However, a session may need to be paused, a venue changed, staffing increased, hours temporarily adjusted or provision ended where risk cannot be safely managed or the commissioned arrangement is no longer suitable.

Such decisions must not be used as an automatic punishment for behaviour. Before a significant reduction or ending of provision, senior leaders should consider the learner's SEND and safeguarding needs, reasonable adjustments already attempted, risk to the learner and others, the views of the commissioner, and whether a safer alternative arrangement is available.

Where immediate risk requires a session to end on the day, staff should follow the agreed handover or emergency arrangement and notify Parity Education promptly. Longer-term decisions about commissioned provision will be made by Parity Education senior leadership in consultation with the commissioner.

22. Safeguarding and behaviour

Behaviour can be an indicator of abuse, neglect, exploitation, trauma, mental health difficulty or another safeguarding concern. Sudden or significant changes in behaviour, sexualised behaviour, serious aggression, self-harm, fear of particular people or places, substance use, missing episodes, exploitation indicators or disclosures must be considered through a safeguarding lens.

Staff must not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves. They should make the learner safe, listen where appropriate, record facts and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL without delay in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

23. Training, supervision and staff wellbeing

All staff and contractors must understand the behaviour expectations relevant to their role before delivering provision. Induction and ongoing support will address relational practice, SEND-aware behaviour support, de-escalation, safeguarding, incident reporting and professional boundaries.

Additional training will be arranged where a learner's assessed needs require specialist approaches. Staff must not use restrictive techniques for which they are not trained or competent.

Significant incidents can affect staff as well as learners. Parity Education will provide appropriate management follow-up, debrief and review after serious incidents. Debrief should focus on learning and support rather than blame, while still addressing any practice concerns that arise.

24. Monitoring and quality assurance

Parity Education will monitor behaviour support through existing quality-assurance systems, including:

- Student session check-ins and incident records
- Safeguarding records where relevant
- Attendance and non-engagement patterns
- Risk assessments and behaviour support plans
- Case reviews and staff supervision
- Feedback from learners, parents/carers and commissioners
- Patterns in incidents, including repeated triggers, locations, staffing or times
- Use of restrictive interventions or emergency services
- Complaints, concerns and lessons learned

Senior leaders will review significant patterns and take proportionate action, which may include changes to staffing, venue, timetable, training, risk controls, learner support or the commissioned arrangement.

25. Related policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance and Non-Engagement Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Tutor & Contractor Handbook, including professional conduct expectations
- Risk Assessment Procedures

26. Policy approval and review

This Version 2.0 replaces the Behaviour Policy approved in September 2025. It has been rewritten for Parity Education's current non-school alternative provision model, including 1:1 and 2:1 home, community and online delivery, and to align behaviour practice with current safeguarding, SEND, equality and non-school AP expectations.

Version	Date	Summary	Status
1.0	1 September 2025	Previous Behaviour Policy under former branding and more school-style operating model.	Superseded

2.0	August 2026	Full rewrite for current non-school AP model; relational and SEND-aware practice; de-escalation; updated restrictive-intervention approach; revised searching/confiscation position; incident recording and commissioner reporting.	For approval
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Approved by: Patrick Iberi - Head of Provision / Designated Safeguarding Lead; Nicola Catherall - Operations Director / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Approval date: August 2026

Next review: August 2027, or earlier if legislation, statutory guidance, commissioner requirements or organisational practice changes.