



Positive Behaviour and Soft Touch Policy

Policy Reviewed by:	Hayley Richardson-Byrne / Suzy Hollett
Date:	01.09.2026
Policy Verified by:	Senior Management Team
Date:	06.10.2026
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Key Personnel	
Proprietor	Sara Llewellyn
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Suzy Hollett
Deputy Headteacher	Natalie Lovelock
HR Manager	Hayley Richardson Byrne
Business Manager	Sophie Illingworth
IT Manager	Jamie Martin
Teaching Staff	Joe Ross Ryan Colvin

1. Policy Statement

Maple Haven School is a specialist independent SEND school supporting up to 14 primary-aged pupils.

The school is committed to promoting positive behaviour, emotional wellbeing, safety, dignity and inclusion for all pupils. We believe that behaviour is a form of communication and that every pupil should be supported to develop safe, positive and effective ways of communicating their needs, feelings and experiences.

Maple Haven School adopts a stage not age approach, recognising that pupils may respond to situations according to their developmental stage, communication profile, sensory needs, emotional development and individual experiences rather than their chronological age.

We recognise that many pupils may experience:

- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.
- Communication and interaction differences.
- Learning difficulties.
- Sensory processing differences.
- Trauma-related needs.
- Emotional regulation difficulties.

The school is committed to using nurturing, relationship-based and trauma-informed approaches to support pupils' emotional regulation and development. The welfare of the child is paramount.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive behaviour and emotional wellbeing.
- Support pupils to feel safe, valued and understood.
- Reduce anxiety and distress.
- Promote positive relationships.
- Develop emotional regulation skills.
- Encourage communication and self-advocacy.
- Provide consistent responses to behaviour.
- Reduce the likelihood of behaviours that place pupils or others at risk.
- Ensure staff understand safe touch and positive support practices.
- Maintain the dignity and rights of all pupils.

3. Maple Haven School Context

Maple Haven School recognises that behaviour is often a form of communication, particularly for pupils with SEND.

Many pupils may communicate distress through:

- Behaviour.
- Withdrawal.
- Avoidance.
- Emotional outbursts.
- Sensory responses.
- Repetitive behaviours.
- Non-verbal communication.

The school seeks to understand:

- What a pupil may be communicating.
- What unmet need may be present.
- Whether environmental adjustments are required.
- How staff can support regulation and wellbeing.

Staff focus on understanding behaviour before responding to it.

4. Legislative Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Children Act 1989.
- Children Act 2004.

- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Education Act 2002.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 Years (2015).
- Use of Reasonable Force Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies.
- Independent School Standards.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Proprietor

Sara Llewellyn is responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate behaviour support arrangements are in place.
- Monitoring implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the school maintains a safe and supportive environment.
- Promoting safeguarding and pupil welfare.
- Reviewing significant incidents where necessary.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Suzy Hollett is responsible for:

- Monitoring incidents that raise safeguarding concerns.
- Reviewing behaviour patterns through CPOMS.
- Ensuring behaviour support remains safeguarding focused.
- Supporting staff and families where concerns arise.
- Monitoring vulnerable pupils.

Deputy Headteacher

Natalie Lovelock is responsible for:

- Overseeing implementation of this policy.
- Supporting behaviour planning.
- Monitoring behaviour trends.
- Supporting staff development and training.
- Reviewing incidents and interventions.

HR Manager

Hayley Richardson Byrne is responsible for:

- Maintaining staff training records.
- Supporting staff wellbeing.
- Monitoring training compliance.
- Supporting investigations where appropriate.

Business Manager

Sophie Illingworth is responsible for:

- Supporting administration and record keeping.
- Assisting with monitoring arrangements.
- Supporting compliance with policy requirements.

Teaching Staff

Teaching staff, including Joe Ross and Ryan Colvin, are responsible for:

- Building positive relationships.
- Implementing behaviour support plans.
- Promoting emotional wellbeing.
- Supporting pupils to regulate emotions safely.
- Recording concerns appropriately.
- Following this policy consistently.

6. Safe Touch

Maple Haven School recognises that appropriate touch can play an important role in supporting pupils' emotional wellbeing, development and sense of safety.

Any touch must always be:

- In the best interests of the pupil.
- Appropriate to the pupil's age and developmental stage.
- Respectful and proportionate.
- Consistent with the pupil's needs.
- Accepted by the pupil wherever possible.
- Safeguarding focused.

Staff will always consider:

- The pupil's communication profile.
- Cultural considerations.
- Trauma history where known.
- Sensory needs.
- Personal preferences.

Touch must never be used in a way that could be viewed as punitive, intimidating, coercive or degrading.

7. Types of Appropriate Touch

Casual, Informal or Incidental Touch

This may include:

- Holding a hand.
- Guiding a pupil safely.

- Offering reassurance.
- Congratulating or praising a pupil.

Appropriate touch can often support emotional regulation and prevent situations escalating.

Therapeutic and Reparative Touch

Some pupils may benefit from carefully considered, nurturing support.

Examples may include:

- Sitting alongside a pupil.
- Providing calming reassurance.
- Supporting emotional regulation.

Any therapeutic touch must:

- Be appropriate.
- Reflect the pupil's individual support plan.
- Be accepted by the pupil.
- Never compromise safeguarding standards.

Structured Play

Some pupils may participate in carefully supervised sensory or interactive play.

Activities must:

- Be age and stage appropriate.
- Be fully supervised.
- Follow agreed boundaries.
- Be risk assessed where appropriate.

8. Positive Behaviour Support

Maple Haven School promotes Positive Behaviour Support (PBS).

Staff seek to:

- Understand behaviour.
- Identify triggers.
- Reduce anxiety.
- Promote communication.
- Support regulation.
- Develop coping strategies.
- Teach alternative behaviours.

Support may include:

- Visual supports.
- Sensory regulation.
- Movement breaks.
- Communication aids.
- Safe spaces.
- Emotional literacy support.
- Choice making opportunities.

Positive reinforcement forms the foundation of behaviour support at Maple Haven School.

9. Positive Handling

Maple Haven School does not use restraint as a behaviour management strategy.

The school focuses on:

- Prevention.
- De-escalation.
- Co-regulation.
- Emotional support.
- Positive Behaviour Support.

In exceptional emergency situations, staff may use reasonable and proportionate physical intervention where necessary to:

- Prevent injury.
- Prevent serious damage to property.
- Prevent a pupil from placing themselves or others at immediate risk.

Any intervention must:

- Use the least restrictive approach.
- Last for the shortest possible time.
- Be reasonable and proportionate.
- Preserve dignity and wellbeing.

10. De-escalation Strategies

Staff will always seek to de-escalate situations before considering physical intervention.

Strategies may include:

- Calm communication.
- Reassurance.
- Distraction.
- Redirection.
- Offering choices.

- Sensory regulation support.
- Increasing space.
- Reducing demands.
- Access to safe spaces.
- Support from trusted adults.

These strategies form the primary response to distress or dysregulation.

11. Recording and Reporting

Where a significant behaviour incident or physical intervention occurs:

- Details must be recorded on CPOMS as soon as possible.
- The record should include factual information only.
- Actions taken prior to intervention should be recorded.
- Any injuries or concerns should be documented.
- Parents or carers will be informed where appropriate.

The DSL and Deputy Headteacher will review incidents.

CPOMS information may be used to identify:

- Behaviour patterns.
- Triggering factors.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Support needs.
- Training requirements.

12. Behaviour Support Plans

Where required, pupils will have an individual Positive Behaviour Support Plan.

Plans may include:

- Known triggers.
- Communication needs.
- Early warning signs.
- Successful de-escalation approaches.
- Regulation strategies.
- Risk management arrangements.
- Supportive responses.
- Review arrangements.

Plans will be developed collaboratively with families and professionals where appropriate.

13. Supporting Pupils After Incidents

Following significant incidents, pupils will receive appropriate support.

This may include:

- Restorative discussions.
- Emotional support.
- Reflection activities.
- Communication support.
- Regulation opportunities.
- Review of support plans.

The focus will remain on learning, understanding and positive future outcomes rather than punishment.

14. Staff Training

Staff will receive training relating to:

- Positive Behaviour Support.
- Safeguarding.
- Trauma-informed practice.
- SEND.
- Emotional regulation.
- Communication approaches.
- Use of reasonable force.
- Recording and reporting procedures.

Training records will be maintained by Hayley Richardson Byrne.

15. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored by:

- Sara Llewellyn, Proprietor.
- Suzy Hollett, DSL.
- Natalie Lovelock, Deputy Headteacher.

Monitoring activities may include:

- CPOMS reviews.
- Behaviour trend analysis.
- Safeguarding audits.
- Pupil voice.
- Parent feedback.
- Staff feedback.
- Behaviour support plan reviews.

Findings will be used to improve practice and pupil outcomes.

16. Complaints

Any concerns relating to implementation of this policy should be managed through the school's Complaints Procedure.

Where a complaint relates to safeguarding, the concern will also be considered under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

17. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where:

- Legislation changes.
- National guidance changes.
- Significant incidents occur.
- Inspection findings require amendment.
- School circumstances change.