



Inspiring Futures through Learning

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Responsible Citizens and Behaviour Core Values*

September 2023 - September 2025



Policy name:	Responsible Citizens and Behaviour Core Values* (updated with Covid-19 response)
Version:	V4
Date relevant from:	September 2023
Date to be reviewed:	September 2025 <i>This policy will be reviewed every two years unless legislation dictates otherwise. Recent changes in Legislation will need to be read and used to review this Policy.</i>
Role of reviewer:	IFtL Head of Safeguarding, Health, Children & Families. IFtL Head of Quality Assurance.
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Bodies consulted:	Employees Trade unions School / department governance bodies
Approved by:	IFtL Board of Trustees
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Key:

*** Publication on website:**

IFtL website		School website	
1	Statutory publication	A	Statutory publication
2	Good practice	B	Good practice
3	Not required	C	Not required

**** Policy level:**

1. Trust wide:
 - This one policy is relevant to everyone and consistently applied across all schools and Trust departments with no variations.
 - o *Approved by the IFtL Board of Trustees.*
2. Trust core values:
 - This policy defines the values to be incorporated fully in all other policies on this subject across all schools and Trust departments. This policy should therefore form the basis of a localised school / department policy that in addition contains relevant information, procedures and / or processes contextualised to that school / department.
 - o *Approved by the IFtL Board of Trustees as a Trust Core Values policy.*



- *Approved by school / department governance bodies as a relevantly contextualised school / department policy.*
3. School / department policies
- These are defined independently by schools / departments as appropriate
 - *Approved by school / department governance bodies.*

IFtL Responsible Citizen and Behaviour Core Values

Vision

At IFtL Trust Schools, we are relentlessly driven by our pursuit of excellence and high expectations of learning, behaviour and respect for every member of our community. We strive to promote and create responsible citizens who are independent, innovative, positive and articulate thinkers who celebrate life and seize opportunities, viewing mistakes as a learning experience and valuing diversity and equality.

Aspirations

We strive to promote and create responsible citizens who:

- make good choices and encourage others to do the same.
- behave positively and respectfully to all, including the protected characteristics
- are considerate and value themselves, others, and their environment
- strive for success
- are independent, articulate thinkers and learners
- have confidence to attain their ambitions
- are inclusive and embrace differences
- have high levels of engagement
- demonstrate positive learning behaviours and exhibit a growth mindset
- are role models to others

Core Values

We believe everyone within the IFtL community has the right:

1. To learn
2. To be respected
3. To be safe and supported

To enable this to occur everyone has:

- Personal responsibility to make sure their behaviour ensures these rights are observed.
- Follow and adhere to the policies and procedures at both a Trust and a school level.
- Equality and respect are irrespective of background, race, gender or culture.

Success indicators

All schools within the trust will implement the following indicators:



- All stakeholders, staff, children and parents/carers, view behaviour as everyone's responsibility and mutual respect and positive behaviours are an expectation for all.
- We foster a positive environment where children exhibit a sense of pride within their school.
- Bullying including cyber-bullying and any form of bullying or discrimination or harassment (including sexual and in relation to any of the protected characteristics) will not be tolerated and is unacceptable.
- High and consistent expectations that everyone, irrespective of gender, race or culture, feels safe, secure and has respect and empathy for one another and diversities are embraced and appreciated.
- There are collaborative working relationships with parents/carers promoting positive behaviour with effective two-way partnership.
- Children understand the impact of their behavior and adapt this behaviour in future making more positive and informed choices.
- Proactive support and guidance to help children learn from their mistakes and take ownership from them.

Promotion of Positive Behaviours

At IFtL and within all IFtL schools we believe it is important to focus on and celebrate positive choices and promote good behaviour using praise, recognition and rewards, building self-esteem and a child's sense of worth. The specific reward and recognition systems and the code of practice will be pertinent and bespoke to each of the schools whilst adopting the core values and principles of the IFtL.

Consequences & dealing with inappropriate behaviour

Children are learning their way in the world and we need to help them make the right choices and support the development of their moral compass. As a part of this learning process, sometimes mistakes will be made. We need to help children make informed and positive choices but if poor choices are made, whether deliberate or intentional, consequences need to be implemented. It is the duty of all staff within school to support children and strive to understand the underlying reasons for behaviour whilst recognising that children should be supported in taking responsibility for their actions.

The consequences and stages of approach will be included within each school's behavior policy again adhering to the IFtL core values and vision. Humiliating, belittling or punitive punishments are always unacceptable approaches.

Zero tolerance behaviours

There are certain inappropriate behaviours which IFtL believe all schools should have a zero-tolerance approach to, with clear consequences outlined within their policy. These are:

- Any form of discrimination or harassment including sexual and those against any of the protected characteristics*
- Racism
- Inequality
- Homophobia
- Extremist behavior



- Bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudicial bullying
- Criminal damage
- Harassment including sexual harassment

IFtL and all schools will strictly adhere to the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998; we will not tolerate any discrimination against someone because of any of the protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and/ or sexual orientation).

Any zero tolerance behaviours/ incidents, will be referred to the Senior Leadership Team and reported to IFtL.

Equality and Diversity

We must be aware and be vigilant to any form of bullying, discrimination or harassment of any nature. However, we need to be particularly aware of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) and any form of behaviour occurring against these rights will not be tolerated under any circumstances. As highlighted within KCSIE September 2023, being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, may breach children's rights as stated within the Human Rights Act.

Children who are lesbian, gay or trans (LGBT), identify as LGBT or those who are perceived as being to be LGBT may be particularly vulnerable to be bullying and we need to be extra vigilant for signs of this.

At IFtL, we will not tolerate any form of bullying, discrimination or harassment and will ensure they are swift and fully investigated. We also believe in educating and supporting our school communities to help prevent the occurrence in the first place.

Sexual harassment and violence

We are aware and must be ultra-vigilant for signs of sexual violence and harassment as we know that it is highly prevalent and children often do not talk out about this and even accept it as the 'norm'. We must ensure this is not the case in any of our schools.

Behaviour in Schools Guidance (July 22)

Within IFtL, we follow and adhere to the DfE Behaviour in Schools Guidance (July 22) [Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

All schools will ensure they fulfil all the 'must' requirements and where appropriate all the should criteria as we believe in good practice in addition to compliance. All headteachers take responsibility for implementing measures to secure acceptable standards of behaviour" to meet the national minimum expectation.

We will ensure will fulfil the national minimum expectation and that it is aligned with Ofsted's 'Good' grade descriptor for behaviour and attitudes:



1. High expectations that are commonly understood and applied consistently
2. Visible leaders that support staff to follow the policy
3. Measures and interventions are in place to improve behaviour
4. Behaviour does not normally disrupt teaching, learning or routines, and disruption is not tolerated
5. Bullying is not tolerated, and the environment is safe and respectful; and
6. Incidents of bullying, aggression and discrimination are dealt with quickly and effectively.

Positive Handling Interventions and Searching

All schools within IFtL will adhere to the permitted actions in line with government guidelines on the restraint of children. The Education Act 1996 forbids corporal punishment but permits staff to use 'reasonable force' to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Injuring themselves or others
- Damaging property
- Acting in a way that is counter to maintaining good order and discipline at the school.

KCSIE September 2023 paragraph 163 states:

'There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.'

Reasonable means 'Using no more force than is needed.' When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with SEND including disabilities, mental health or with medical conditions schools should consider the risks carefully and recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups. They should also consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, nondiscrimination and their Public Sector Equality Duty. (KCSIE, 2023 para 165)

Early and proactive intervention with a focus on de-escalation is the key approach and 'positive handling' will only be used as a last resort according to the criteria stated above. Appropriate training by qualified team-teach trainers needs to be provided for staff where you can anticipate positive handling may be required and positive handling plans for these children, agreed with the parents/ carers, need to be in place. If positive



handling does occur, they must always be recorded within the positive handling bound and number book and parent/ carers informed.

In line with KCSIE September 2023, IFtL schools recognise the importance of planning and implementing positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance through drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children, and agreeing them with parents and carers, and effective adaptations and personalized approaches to meet varied needs can help to reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force.

Under common law, school staff can search pupils with their consent for any item. If a member of staff suspects that a pupil has a banned item in their possession (weapons, alcohol, drugs, stolen items, fireworks, tobacco or pornographic images) a pupil can be searched in the presence of another member of staff without removing any item of clothing, without the pupil's consent but the parent/ carer must be informed. Any searches will be conducted by a member of staff who is the same sex as the pupil being searched.

Within IFtL we believe in the approach and ethos outlined within the Ofsted document, 'Positive environments where children can flourish.' We promote our staff working positively and confidently with children and that we must find the least intrusive way possible to support, empower and keep children safe. Building relationships of trust and understanding, understanding triggers and finding solutions and where incidents do occur, defusing and de-escalating the situation and/ or distracting the child wherever possible are key.

Searching, Screening and Confiscation advice for schools

IFtL and all their schools will also comply to the searching, screening and confiscation DfE advice for schools. This reflects the response to the treatment of Child Q in December 2020.

Within our schools, if the police attend an incident at school that requires searching, the role of school staff is to always retain a duty of care for the pupils and advocate for their wellbeing. An assessment will be made of the balance between the potential mental and physical wellbeing of the child, and the risk of not recovering the suspected item.

Our staff will be aware and knowledgeable about all other appropriate and less invasive approaches have been exhausted before involving the police. If a search does take place, schools should do everything "reasonably possible" to inform parents ahead of the search, and must inform them after a search take places.

At least two other people must be present with the child throughout the search, one of which must be an appropriate adult.



Schools will always focus on the wellbeing of the pupil during and after any search, whether an item is found or not. This should involve relevant staff, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

IFtL executive team will be informed should a police search be required within any IFtL school.

Fixed term Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion

Schools within the IFtL do not wish to suspend or exclude any child from school, but sometimes as a very last resort and for very specific reasons, this may be necessary. A child may be suspended or excluded with the direct agreement of the Head Teacher. Every effort will be made to avoid the need for any exclusion, but schools will have the right to suspend/ exclude pupils whose behavior infringes on the safety of themselves or others and infringes upon the rights of the school community. Parents/ carers have the right to appeal any decision to exclude their child both fixed term and permanently. Parent/ carers will be informed of any form of suspension or exclusion in writing and their rights to appeal will be clearly explained within the letter.

IFtL all believe in the importance of inclusion and meeting of varied needs and therefore will regularly review and adapt provision to help reduce the need for exclusion. Close collaborative working and partnership with parents/ carers and external agencies are also seen as key. Should the last resort of an internal exclusion, fixed term suspension be required, provision will be carefully considered and reviewed to help prevent the reoccurrence and these will be discussed and documented in the reintegration meeting. During the period of suspension, the child will be provided with appropriate work as detailed within guidance.

Internal exclusions may be used as part of a continuum to enable the child to regulate, reflect on their behaviour as part of the restorative practice bespoke to their needs. As with suspensions, these will be used as a last resort and adaptations will be made to help prevent the need for more moving forward. Internal exclusions must be logged and shared with parents/ carers at all times.

All IFtL schools adhere to all the latest guidance and fulfill all legal requirements relating to behaviour and exclusions including the 'Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion' and with Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Any form of suspensions, exclusions or internal exclusions will be reported to IFtL on a half termly basis.

Permanent exclusions will only occur in extenuating circumstances and only with the agreement of the CEO.

Any decision to exclude a pupil will be lawful ((with respect to the legislation relating directly to exclusions and a school's wider legal duties, including the European Convention on Human Rights and the Equality Act 2010); rational; fair; and proportionate. Permanent exclusion will only be used as an absolute last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy,



and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school. The Chief Executive Officer, Sarah Bennett, must be fully consulted and informed of any potential permanent exclusions.

In highly exceptional circumstances, if a child is permanently excluded, we expect schools to work with parents/ carers, IFtL and the local authority, to arrange a place at an alternative educational setting as soon as possible so as to minimise any further breaks in education provision. Where the child in question is vulnerable, the school should notify the local authority/social worker immediately and should work with the local authority to ensure that the child is found a place in another educational setting quickly. During any gap in provision, schools must work closely together with IFtL, social workers, local authorities and other professionals to ensure adequate and appropriate arrangements are in place to keep in touch with vulnerable children and young people.

[Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance](#) September 2022

IFtL and all our schools will comply with the DfE ‘Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England’ September 2022 [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

We fully believe and adhere to the DfE “ambition to create high standards of behaviour in schools”.

As stated within the guidance, we will adhere to the following:

- Headteachers are able to cancel an exclusion that has not been reviewed by the governing board (previously referred to as rescinding/withdrawing a suspension or exclusion). It is expected this will be used where, following investigation, it is felt the suspension or exclusion should be cancelled, but where suspension or exclusion was the correct response initially. Where this occurs, parents and governors must be notified, as should social workers/virtual school heads if relevant. Cancelled suspensions and/or exclusions should be reported to governors on a termly basis.
- When a pupil is suspended or excluded, parents must be notified “without delay”. This requirement extends to social workers and/or virtual school heads as applicable for looked-after children and children with a social worker.
- When a pupil is suspended or excluded, the local authority must be notified – regardless of the length of suspension.
- We will work closely with social workers and virtual school heads if they are allocated to the suspended or excluded pupil.
- Data monitoring for governing boards and Trustees will be in place to ensure exclusion is used only as a last resort.

Inclusion, SEND and Behaviour



Some Children with additional needs, may require additional bespoke support and intervention to help meet their needs and support them in making positive choices. The programme of support will be highly bespoke, personalised and specifically targeted to address these needs with the collaboration of the parents/ carers. The successes will be reviewed and the programme of support adapted adaptations made as frequently as the needs of the child requires.

Longer Term Impacts of Covid and Awareness

It is important that we ensure we create a positive culture is embedded throughout all our schools and we create calm and respectful environments whereby everyone, children, staff, parent/ carers, follow the rules. We recognise that mental health can result in changes within behaviour or emotional well-being. We also recognise that some children will have been exposed to a range of adversity, which may include serious illness, bereavement and long-term anxiety, leading to an increase in SEMH needs. Moreover, for some SEND children, their provision is likely to have been adapted which may have had an impact on their behaviour.

At IFtL, we will ensure we support all these needs both at a wider school level and at a more bespoke, personalised level, as required. Some children may require additional support and we will therefore ensure we work closely with external agencies and providers, for example, Educational Psychologists, social workers, counsellors etc., to help provide the best support possible for all our children.

Governance:

The timeframes set out in the School Discipline Pupil Exclusions and Reviews (England) Regulations 2012 remain in force. This applies to all exclusions, including those that were issued before 23 March.

Within IFtL, we will endeavour to meet the timeframes set out in regulations for review meetings and IRPs, but recognise these might need to be extended if there are current coronavirus outbreaks or disruptions and the health risks of holding meetings. The Regulations themselves envisage that the timeframes may not always be met, which is why they specify that meetings and panel hearings must still go ahead even if the relevant deadline has been missed. It is for the governing board or IFtL Trust to assess the facts of the case and decide whether the statutory deadlines are achievable or whether, in the circumstances, the meeting has to be delayed. Governing boards and IFtL will continue to take reasonable steps to ensure meetings are arranged for a time when all parties are able to attend. However, it is recognised with the return of schools full time into education since September 2021, the timeframes are expected to be met unless in exceptional circumstances.

Recording and Reporting Behaviour



All higher levels of inappropriate behaviour and zero tolerance behaviours will be recorded using the recording systems adopted by each school and parent/ carers will be informed. All schools within the IFtL will inform the Trust of any internal exclusions, fixed term suspensions or permanent exclusions.

School requirements

Each school will incorporate the IFtL responsible citizens and behavior core values within their school policy and include how these core values will be promoted and met within their school. All schools will ensure they include details of their process and procedures for exclusion, positive handling and will ensure they publish all relevant information to meet website compliancy. They will ensure their policy complies with all government guidance and requirements including the DfE Behaviour in Schools Guidance September 2022.

Safeguarding Statement

Safeguarding is everyone's business. IFtL is committed to ensuring that all our children, young people and adults are safe and feel safe.

If you have any concerns at all, raise them **immediately** with the local DSL or IFtL's Head of Safeguarding, Health, Children and Families: vblackmore@iftl.co.uk

For further contact details, see:

- IFtL Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- IFtL Whistleblowing policy

<https://www.iftl.co.uk/policies/>

