



St. Giles' School Behaviour as Communication policy

9th July 2024

Document control

SGS staff lead on policy : SN		Date of next review: Summer 2025
No.	Updates/Changes made in 2023 include:	Page
1	Changes in red	Various



St Giles Behaviour as Communication Policy

Nurture principle link: All behaviour is communication

At St Giles we understand that our pupils communicate in a range of ways including through their behaviours. We recognise that behaviour is a social construct and that people with neurodiversity's may find following society's expectations challenging. We support our young people in learning self-regulate in socially appropriate ways, preparing them for life beyond St Giles.



Aim

To provide a positive and safe environment within the school in which all its members feel valued, happy and secure and are encouraged to be the best they can be in all areas of their holistic development.

Our learners being understood and having a safe space to communicate their wants and needs effectively with those around them. This may include not only their physical needs but their emotional and sensory needs too.



Rationale

What is behaviour as communication?

We acknowledge that behaviour is a social construct. For our pupils, behaviour is functional and is how they communicate. Behaviour for our pupils is another way for them to communicate their wants and needs to those around them. Behaviour is usually as a result of an unmet need e.g. physical, emotional, sensory. Behaviours are individual to each pupil but may include: Vocalisations including shouting, self-stimming or repetitive behaviours, self-harm, kicking, hitting, spitting. We acknowledge that some pupils may have behaviours that challenge us linking to their communication to their sensory needs and impact on their personal and emotional wellbeing. These need to be addressed, responded to and listened to as communications. St Giles staff will take time to understand the pupil and consider what the pupil is trying to communicate through the use of these behaviours.








We aspire for all pupils to want to engage with all areas of their school life in a meaningful way. We support pupils in communicating in ways which are socially acceptable standards of behaviour that appropriate to them and what they wish to communicate. It is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards, rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not. By supporting our pupils to self-regulate in a socially acceptable way we are supporting their participating in the wider community.

Our approach to understanding and supporting behaviour as communication runs throughout the school. The high adult-pupil ratio supports the development of positive personal relationships through the consistent demonstration and application of our school values by all stakeholders.



Responsibilities

Promoting communication at St Giles is the responsibility of all stakeholders including pupils, staff, multi-agency professionals and parents/carers. These responsibilities are underpinned by our school values:

Value	Pupils will:	Staff will:
Respect 	- work towards having care and consideration for each other including respecting each other's thoughts, feelings and personal space	- create a safe learning environment where respect for others is promoted - foster positive relationships with colleagues, pupils, parents and all other stakeholders
Choice 	- learn to communicate their needs, wants and wishes using appropriate strategies	- listen to, and be advocates for, all pupils - recognise that pupils may use actions, vocalisations and many other strategies as a form of rejection/acceptance
Celebration 	- work towards celebrating individual achievements and differences in the school community and wider world	- provide opportunities for pupils to celebrate the differences of others through work in class and whole-school events
Community 	- work towards working with peers with a range of ages and different needs	- create opportunities for pupils to be active members of the class, school and wider communities - provide opportunities for pupils to work with each other in a range of contexts
Responsibility 	- be involved in the creation of their class charter - work towards taking responsibility for their actions	- provide opportunities for pupils to think about their actions in meaningful ways
Cooperation 	- work towards working and communicating with adults to support their holistic development	- work closely together in their teams and across all disciplines (health, social care etc.) to ensure that they are equipped with appropriate strategies that support pupil's choices to cooperate at all levels
Participation 	- work towards engaging and participating across all areas of their curriculum	- communicate information about each pupil to enable all pupils to access their learning and plan appropriately to engage pupils in their learning

Zones of Regulation:

St Giles school use Zones of Regulation as a tool to understand our pupils emotional needs. There are 4 zones of regulation to categorise emotional and alertness states.



Everyone experiences these different zones throughout the day or week. This is normal. We use Zones of regulation to encourage co and self-regulation and provide students with strategies that support them in calming down at their own pace if something has upset them. Staff will understand the pupil's needs before offering choices and activities which may support the pupil to regulate. St Giles also recognises that pupils learn best when in the green zone however, their emotional, physical and sensory needs may not make this possible.



Strategies for Supporting behaviour as a form of communication:

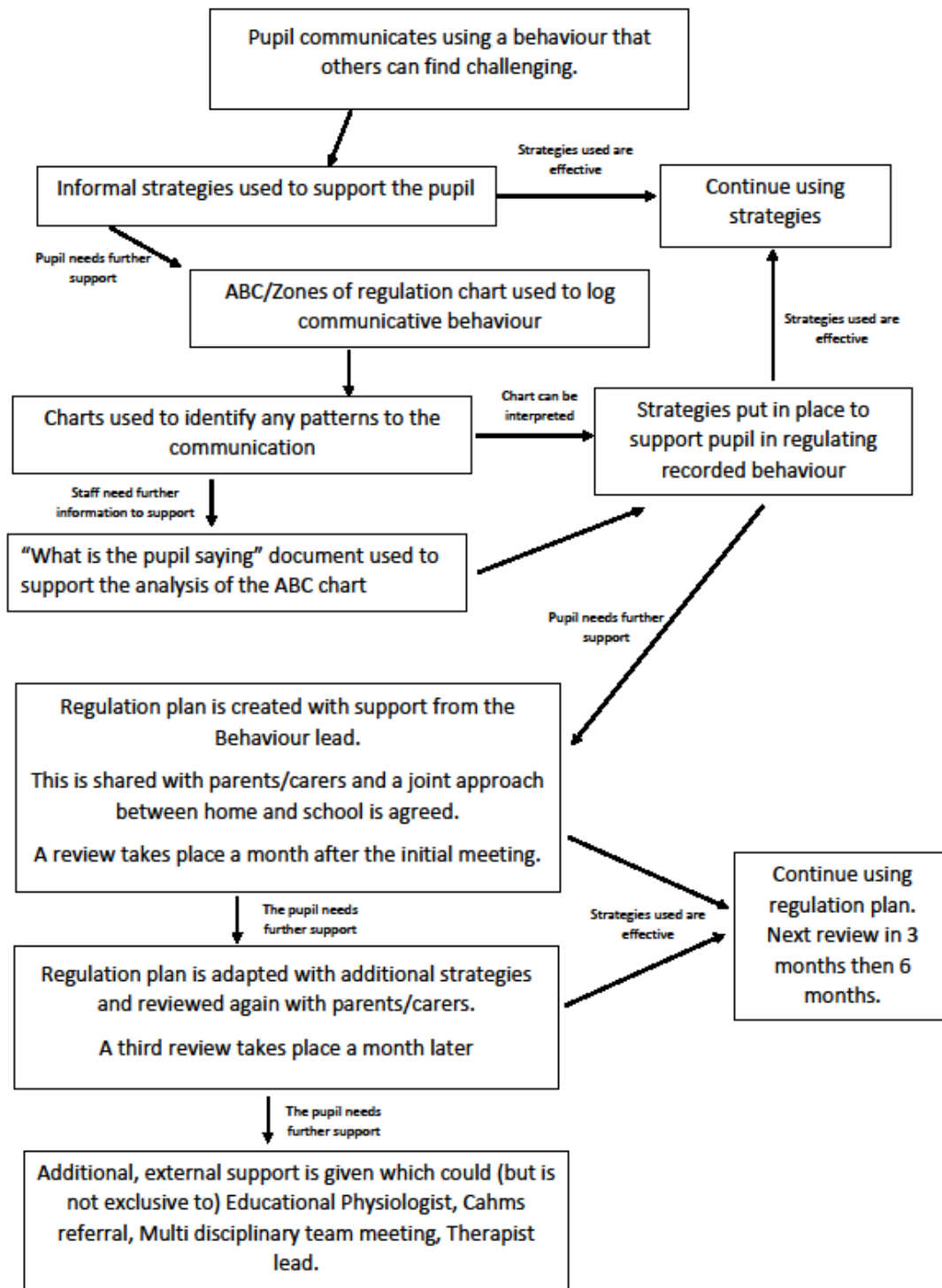
- Be positive and calm in your approach
- Involve pupils in the creation of a class charter through incorporating their own ideas or advocating for them appropriately
- Be aware of known triggers that may cause a pupil to demonstrate particular behaviours which challenge and plan for these accordingly. **This may include reducing the sensory information available, changing times of snacks, giving warning of transitions during the school day etc.**
- **Consider whether the pupil currently has an unmet need e.g. sensory, physical or emotional. Once the need is identified, a solution and strategy can be found to meet that need.**
- Problem-solve collaboratively as a team, drawing on advice from multi-agency professionals where appropriate, identifying realistically achievable expectations
- Ensure that expectations are made as clear as is possible through the employment of a range of communication strategies (signing, symbols, photos, touch cues, social stories etc.)
- Acknowledge a pupil's feelings when they demonstrate behaviour that challenges us, supporting them in developing **socially** appropriate strategies to communicate these
- Be emotionally aware of your own feelings and limitations (**feeling frustrated**, not knowing the pupils as well as someone else, not having enough experience etc.), do not take things personally and be open to asking for help including asking a colleague to swap with you or to provide additional support
- Understand that classroom organisation, including the management of the team, affects **Pupil needs e.g. sensory, emotional and physical.**
- Ensure praise given is specific and meaningful recognising progress, effort and participation

- Be consistent in your approach but flexible to the needs individual pupils and how these may change over time
- Encourage pupils to reflect on their communication and choices, as appropriate, focussing on a positive outcome
- Work with parents/carers to share strategies that help at home and at school.



Procedures

At St Giles we have a member of LMT who is responsible for monitoring behaviour as communication. St Giles staff are encouraged to use the flow chart to know the level of support which may be required to support the pupil.



Regulation plans are a document used to list strategies which can support the pupil in self-regulating. Pupils will use the regulation plan for a minimum of 6 months with regular reviews. At St Giles we recognise that pupils needs can change and therefore their methods of communication can change. At 6 months it will be determined by the class teacher and lead for Behaviour as communication whether the pupils still require the regulation plan or is able to self-regulate themselves and no longer need a plan – although strategies will continue to be used in the classroom to support them.

Incidences of behaviour that put the pupil or others at risk of harm are recorded on an Incident Report. These are monitored by the **PCSA Director** who will liaise with the **Behaviour as communication** Lead to develop strategies for the team to employ. Please refer to the Positive Handling policy for more information on the school's approach to using physical intervention.

School behaviour as communication curriculum

The school's curriculum supports pupils to develop their understanding that their behaviour can affect other people.

The school's pre-formal Personal and Emotional Wellbeing Curriculum covers:

- Making Relationships
- Managing feelings and behaviour
- Self –confidence and self-awareness

Adults support learners, interpreting their behaviours as communication. They adapt the individual's environment and experiences through the curriculum to enable individuals to regulate their behaviours.

The school's semi-formal and formal Personal and Emotional Wellbeing Curriculum covers:

- Relationships Education KS2 / Relationships and Sex Education KS3 and 4
 - Self-care, Support and Safety (Looking after myself and keeping safe)
 - Managing Feelings (Understanding feelings, and that how I feel and how others feel affects choices and behaviour)
 - Changing and Growing (How I and others are changing; new opportunities and responsibilities)
- Living in the Wider World
 - Self-Awareness (Me, who I am, my likes, dislikes, strengths and interests)
 - The World I Live in (Living confidently in the wider world)

Where appropriate, adjustments may be made to routines within the curriculum to ensure all pupils can communicate effectively.

Mobile phones

With parental permission, pupils are allowed to have mobile phones with them on transport into school, but may not use them during the school day. The phone should be taken to Reception at the beginning of the day and collected from Reception at the end of the day.

Searching pupils and confiscation – see also <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out the statutory duty of all staff to make sure that they make decisions in the best interests of the child. This applies to decisions to search pupils and confiscate items. All pupils have a right

to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy, under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Any 'interference' with this right by the school must be justified and proportionate.

The school is aware that searching a pupil could infringe upon their wellbeing and rights:

- Physical loss of privacy when clothes, bags, or possessions are searched
- Loss of a sense of security, if they feel they are being monitored and searched without reason
- The impact to a pupil's dignity or reputation if they are unduly searched or suspected of possessing prohibited items

Only the Headteacher or Deputy Head can conduct a search for prohibited or banned items, with or without the pupil's consent. There would always be another member of staff present as a witness to the search. Unless there is an immediate risk of harm and, where reasonably possible, staff should inform a parent of the pupil suspected of concealing an item in advance of the search.

Prohibited items are:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to:
- Commit an offence
- Cause personal injury (including the pupil) or damage to property.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy will be informed and, if any child is at risk, they will make a referral to children's social care services immediately.



Bullying

Deliberately hurting, threatening, frightening or ostracising anyone else contrary to our school values will be addressed in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

= Equal Opportunities Statement

Every pupil has the right to be given the opportunity of learning to his/her maximum potential.

Linked Policies / Documents

- [St Giles Personal and Social curriculum](#)
- [St Giles Communication curriculum](#)
- [Positive handling policy](#)
- [Accident and First aid policy](#)
- [Anti-bullying Policy](#)
- [Communication Policy](#)



This policy has been approved by the Governing Body of St Giles School at the meeting on 09/07/24

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Signed:

Headteacher

Date for next review: Summer 2025