

THE HAVEN

Operated by the Autistic Girls Network charity — 1196655 (England and Wales), SC054837 (Scotland)

Relational Behaviour and Regulation Policy

Document	Relational Behaviour and Regulation Policy
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1. Statement of intent

At The Haven, behaviour is understood as **communication**, not defiance. Every action tells a story about need, safety and connection. Staff listen before they label, support before they respond, and repair before they remove.

This policy affirms that:

- All young people want to belong, and behaviour improves through relationship, not fear.
- Every learner can grow when met with **empathy, structure and co-regulation**.
- Inclusion and psychological safety are non-negotiable foundations for learning.
- Restorative practice replaces punishment; curiosity replaces blame.
- Removal from learning is never a first response. It is a last resort, used for safety, after graduated relational support.

2. Legal and guidance framework

This policy is written with regard to:

- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners
- Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015
- DfE *Keeping Children Safe in Education* 2026
- DfE *Behaviour in Schools* (2024) and *Suspension and Permanent Exclusion* (2024)

The Haven is not a DfE-registered independent school and has no premises. The two DfE behaviour documents are **adopted as a voluntary benchmark**; they do not apply to The Haven as a matter of law. Statutory suspension and exclusion powers sit with the learner's commissioning school or local authority, not with The Haven. Physical intervention and searching powers do not apply to an online provision.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Proprietor and governing body - Champion inclusion, dignity and trauma-informed practice. - Approve this policy annually and scrutinise data on removals from sessions and on protected-characteristic incidents.

Head - Leads the relational regulation framework and staff training. - Makes decisions at Tier 4 and Tier 5 (section 8) with the DSL.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Reviews behaviour records termly for safeguarding patterns. - Leads any response where behaviour indicates risk of harm to or from a learner.

SENCo - Ensures responses take account of each learner's SEND and EHCP outcomes.

Educators and staff - Model respectful communication and calm presence. - Anticipate triggers and design lessons that reduce cognitive and sensory overload. - Use relational check-ins, not reprimands. - Record incidents in TutorCruncher under the Behaviour Incident Reporting Procedure.

Learners - Practise kindness and self-advocacy. - Communicate when support or space is needed. - Contribute to a culture of mutual respect through The Haven Code of Respect.

Parents and carers - Share changes in context or emerging needs promptly. - Work with staff on shared plans when dysregulation persists.

4. Definitions

- **Relational rupture:** a breakdown in connection that causes distress or disruption.
- **Repair:** restoring trust and safety through dialogue and reflection.
- **Low-level behaviours:** signs of dysregulation such as distraction, withdrawal or lateness.
- **Serious behaviours:** actions causing harm, harassment or discrimination, managed within safeguarding and restorative frameworks.

All behaviour is looked at through a **neurodevelopmental and sensory lens** before any response is decided.

5. Staff induction, development and support

All staff are trained at induction in The Haven's trauma-informed, neuro-affirming and attachment-aware approach. Continuing CPD covers co-regulation, executive-function scaffolding, autism and ADHD profiles, restorative conferencing, and compassion fatigue and staff wellbeing. Reflective supervision is offered termly or as needed.

6. Supporting social, emotional and mental health

- Wellbeing or sensory check-ins at the start of sessions
- Camera-optional participation and digital regulation spaces (breakout rooms, pause and return)
- Emotion coaching embedded in feedback

- Flexible scheduling and sensory accommodations recorded in learner support plans

7. Managing behaviour through relationship

- **Connection before correction:** noticing distress early.
- **Co-regulation:** lending calm when a learner cannot find their own.
- **Restoration:** repairing trust and re-establishing safety.
- **Reflection:** helping learners understand impact and choose next steps.

No response will shame, isolate or humiliate a learner.

Co-designed agreements are relational commitments agreed between the learner, their tutor and, where appropriate, the parent or carer and commissioner. They describe what helps the learner feel safe and ready to learn, and set shared expectations. They are reviewed regularly.

Restorative reflection is used when an incident disrupts learning or relationships. The learner is guided to explore what happened, what they were feeling or needing, the impact on others, and what could be different next time. Notes are recorded in TutorCruncher.

8. Online behaviour: digital etiquette and tiered response

The Haven's live lessons (Google Meet) and learning platform (Google Classroom) are governed by the same principles of respect and inclusion as any classroom.

- **Chat:** keep it relevant to learning; no spamming or off-topic comments.
- **Camera and microphone:** learners choose whether to appear on camera.
- **Emoji:** welcome for communication, never for sarcasm, teasing or coded language.
- **Tone:** written messages are kind, inclusive and mindful.
- **Channels:** only official Haven channels are used; there is no private staff-learner messaging outside them.

Tier	Response	Typical examples	Follow-up
1 – Gentle reminder	Tutor gives a verbal or chat reminder	Off-topic chat, minor distraction	Noted informally
2 – 1:1 discussion	Tutor meets the learner to review the co-designed agreement	Repeated chat misuse, unkind tone	DSL told if a pattern emerges
3 – Temporary removal from the session	Learner removed for the rest of the session; restorative reflection arranged before the next session	Persistent disruption, inappropriate or discriminatory comments	Recorded in TutorCruncher; parent or carer informed
4 – Restorative meeting	Facilitated by the Head, DSL or pastoral lead with the learner, parent or carer and commissioner where relevant	Ongoing incidents, harm to others	Actions recorded and shared
5 – Commissioner review	DSL convenes a multi-agency meeting on next steps	Repeated or serious breaches, sharing harmful content	Formal report completed

9. Sanctions and consequences

The Haven does not use punitive sanctions. There are no detentions, loss of break, public behaviour charts, points systems, isolation or fixed-term exclusion. This is a deliberate position, not an omission:

- Most learners at The Haven are autistic or otherwise neurodivergent, and many have experienced exclusion, school-based trauma or emotionally based school non-attendance. Punitive sanctions are likely to increase anxiety and withdrawal rather than change behaviour.
- The Equality Act 2010 requires reasonable adjustments for disabled learners, including in how behaviour is responded to. A sanction applied to behaviour that arises from a learner's disability may be unlawful discrimination.
- *DfE Behaviour in Schools (2024)*, adopted here as a benchmark, leaves each setting to decide its own approach provided it is clear, consistent and promotes good behaviour.

Behaviour still has **consequences**. These are protective, restorative and proportionate:

Consequence	When it is used	Purpose
Reminder or 1:1 conversation	Low-level disruption	Re-establish expectations
Review of the co-designed agreement	Repeated difficulty	Adjust support and expectations
Temporary removal from a live session (Tier 3)	Safety or others' learning is at risk and co-regulation has not worked	Protect the group; always followed by restorative reflection
Restorative meeting or conference (Tier 4)	Harm to others	Repair harm and agree change
Restricted access to a platform feature (for example chat) for a set period	Misuse of that feature	Protect others; reviewed within a week
Commissioner review (Tier 5)	Serious or repeated harm	Multi-agency decision on placement and support

All consequences are: - never humiliating, discriminatory or applied without considering SEND and trauma history; - recorded in TutorCruncher with the reason and the outcome; - reviewed termly by the Head and DSL for proportionality and for disproportionate impact on any group of learners.

Where an inspector or commissioner asks "what are your sanctions?", the answer is this section: The Haven uses relational and restorative consequences instead of punitive sanctions, and can evidence their use and impact (see section 15).

10. Removal from sessions and exclusion

- Permanent exclusion is not part of The Haven's provision, and The Haven does not hold statutory exclusion powers.
- Temporary removal from a live session is a safety measure, not a punishment. The DSL and parent or carer are told on the same day.
- Where a placement may no longer be safe or suitable, the decision is made with the commissioning school or local authority at a Tier 5 review.
- All removals are recorded, reviewed by the DSL, and reported to commissioners where relevant.

- Physical intervention (restraint) is not used. The Haven is an online provision.

11. Preventing harmful content online

- Only approved, age-appropriate platforms are used, under staff moderation.
- The Haven does not manage learners' devices or home networks and cannot filter them. Its position on filtering and monitoring is set out in the *Risk Assessment – Learner Access from Personally-Owned Devices*. In-session controls (who can join, chat and share screens) are managed by staff.
- Any harmful, sexualised, extremist or discriminatory content triggers DSL escalation and, where an adult may be involved, contact with the LADO.

12. Sexual harassment, abuse and discrimination

Harassment and discriminatory conduct, including conduct targeting any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, are not tolerated. Concerns are treated as safeguarding matters under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy. Support is trauma-informed and centred on the person harmed.

13. Lesson design and the learning environment

Lessons are structured to reduce anxiety and executive-function load: predictable routines and visual schedules, clear transitions, flexible pacing and movement breaks, assistive technology and multimodal expression, and reflection time at the end of sessions.

14. The Haven Code of Respect

- Be kind, always.
- Take a breath before reacting.
- Ask for a break when you need one.
- Try, pause, and try again.
- Respect others' space, time and privacy.
- Share ideas and listen with curiosity.
- Celebrate your growth.
- Solve problems together.

15. Recognition, recording and evaluation

- Effort, courage and growth are celebrated, not compliance. Feedback is descriptive and strength-based.
- Incidents, removals and consequences are recorded in TutorCruncher and analysed termly by the Head, SENCo and DSL, including by protected characteristic and SEND need.
- Restorative practice case studies are kept as evidence of how the approach works in practice.
- Learner and family feedback informs each annual review.

16. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head and approved by the Proprietor and governing body, or sooner if guidance or practice changes.

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