



Relationships Policy

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**Document Control Information****Document Title, Issue and Date**

Relationships and Positive Behaviour Policy — Issue 1.4, October 2026

**Review Period**

Annually, or sooner following changes to legislation or statutory guidance

**Review Committee**

Local Governing Board

**Revision History (most recent first)**

| Author                         | Summary of Changes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Issue | Date Authorised      |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------------|
| Springs Senior Leadership Team | Amendments following circulation to the Senior Leadership Team: broad and balanced curriculum stated for both phases (Section 1.1); what co-production of My Plans and PLPs means in practice for families (Section 4.1); a statement of what staff may do, the order of less restrictive options, and confirmation that recording a seclusion carries no consequence for pupil or staff (Section 9.5.1); devices handed in to the pastoral team in the Lower phase (Section 7).                                                                              | 1.4   | [insert on approval] |
| Springs Senior Leadership Team | Version for approval. Outstanding items resolved: the recording route where a pupil cannot safely be allowed to leave a regulation space; the needs-led adapted curriculum plan model replacing internal suspension; reflective supervision for DSLs, with Mental Health First Aid and the wellbeing strategy for all other staff; phase-specific recognition with the rationale stated; monetary reward values removed from the policy; automatic written information to parents with the anonymised record available on request. Draft scaffolding removed. | 1.3   | October 2026         |
| Springs Senior Leadership Team | Amendments following Upper phase review and Designated Safeguarding Lead review.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 1.2   | September 2026       |
| Springs Senior Leadership Team | Amendments following Lower phase review.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 1.1   | August 2026          |
| Springs Senior Leadership Team | New consolidated single-academy policy combining the Lower and Upper phase predecessor policies, updated to reflect 2026 legislation and statutory guidance on suspensions, exclusions, restrictive interventions and seclusion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 1.0   | July 2026            |

| Equality Impact   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Statement:</b> | <p>We welcome feedback on this document and the way it operates. We are interested to know of any possible or actual adverse impact that may affect any group in respect of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Because every pupil at Spring Brook Academy has identified special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), this policy is applied with reasonable adjustments at its heart and in line with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice.</p> |
| <b>Screening:</b> | <p>This policy has been screened by the Equalities Team and the impact has been assessed as:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medium</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

# Contents

1. Purpose, ethos and scope
  2. Our shared relational approach
  3. Recognising and responding to positive choices
  4. Promoting and modelling positive choices
  5. Responding to behaviour: reflect, repair, reconnect
  6. Consequences, suspension and exclusion
  7. Mobile phones and personal technology
  8. Searching, screening and confiscation
  9. Restrictive interventions, reasonable force and seclusion
  10. Anti-bullying
  11. Sexual harassment, sexual violence and sexism
  12. Child-on-child abuse
  13. Allegations of abuse against staff
  14. Radicalisation and extremism (Prevent)
  15. Roles, responsibilities and staff wellbeing
  16. Monitoring, evaluation and review
- Appendix A: Key legislation and statutory guidance
- Appendix B: The two phases at a glance

## 1. Purpose, ethos and scope

### 1.1 One academy, two phases, one shared approach

Spring Brook Academy is a single special academy for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. It operates across two phases on the same set of shared values, the same relational philosophy and the same language of support:

- **The Lower phase (primary)** – our younger pupils, following a broad and balanced curriculum delivered through nurture, play, predictable routines and strong key-adult relationships.
- **The Upper phase (secondary)** – our older pupils, following a broad and balanced curriculum with increasing independence and preparation for the next stage, including transition for some pupils into the Springboard Project (14–19).

Both phases follow a broad and balanced curriculum. What differs is how it is delivered and what it is preparing pupils for; not whether it exists. This policy deliberately uses one consistent framework across both phases. Where practice differs, it differs only because of the age and developmental stage of the children, not because the underlying beliefs or expectations are different. Phase-specific detail is set out throughout in clearly marked notes so that families, staff and pupils experience a coherent approach from a child's first day in the Lower phase to their last day in the Upper phase.

### 1.2 Our ethos: relationships first

At the heart of this policy is a simple belief: there is no more effective intervention than a safe, predictable relationship with an emotionally available adult. We understand behaviour as communication, a response to a feeling, an experience, an unmet need or a perception of a situation, rather than as simple defiance to be punished. Many of our pupils have lived experience of developmental trauma, and shame plays a powerful role in how they respond to the world. Building strong, attuned relationships allows us to treat behaviour as the symptom rather than the problem itself, and to help pupils move from co-regulation towards self-regulation over time.

Our approach is therefore restorative and reflective rather than punitive. Mistakes are treated as part of learning. We model inquiry, reflection, resolution and interactive repair. We aim to create a calm, well-signposted, therapeutic and inclusive environment in which every member of our community feels they belong, is valued as an individual and can reach their potential.

### 1.3 Shared language across the Springs SEMH Ecosystem

Spring Brook Academy sits within the Springs SEMH Ecosystem and is grounded in its Relational Philosophy and Three Pathway Model. This framework is agreed with the Trust's Chief Executive as the approach that gives the SEMH schools a shared identity, and the Academy uses it as its practice framework across both phases. Both phases share the same evidence-informed language, drawn from the work of Perry, van der Kolk, Siegel and Porges (Polyvagal Theory), and applied through PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy), Emotion Coaching, the Zones of Regulation, Universal Design for Learning, and the principle of "Maslow before Bloom" – meeting a child's needs for safety, connection and regulation before we can expect learning to follow.

### 1.4 Our shared values – RESPECT

Across both phases, our values are summarised by the acronym RESPECT. They give pupils and staff a common, age-appropriate vocabulary for the kind of community we are building together:

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| ➤ Resilience | ➤ Equality |
| ➤ Effort     | ➤ Courage  |
| ➤ Safety     | ➤ Truth    |
| ➤ Politeness |            |

## 1.5 Scope

This policy applies to all pupils and to all staff, volunteers, governors and others working at or on behalf of Spring Brook Academy, in all locations. It applies during the school day, on school transport, on educational visits and off-site activities, and, where a pupil's conduct could affect the orderly running of the Academy, the safety or wellbeing of others, or the reputation of the Academy, to conduct beyond the school gate, including online conduct.

For statutory purposes, this document constitutes the Academy's behaviour policy. It should be read in conjunction with the linked policies listed in the document control section, in particular the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Restrictive Interventions / Positive Handling Policy and the Springs Staff Wellbeing Support Plan.

## 1.6 Legislative and statutory framework

This policy has been written with regard to the following legislation and statutory and non-statutory guidance, as in force in 2026. Where guidance is updated, this policy is read as referring to the current edition.

- **Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026** – wide-ranging reform including the statutory basis for the mobile phone position and related school measures (Royal Assent 29 April 2026).
- **Education and Inspections Act 2006** – including the power of staff to use reasonable force (section 93) and the statutory duty in relation to recording and reporting the use of force (section 93A).
- **Equality Act 2010** – including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.
- **Education Act 2011 and Education Act 2002** – including provisions on searching, off-site direction and behaviour.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education** – statutory safeguarding guidance (current edition).
- **Behaviour in Schools: advice for headteachers and school staff** (DfE, current edition) – non-statutory guidance on creating a positive culture and responding to misbehaviour, including removal from the classroom.
- **Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England** – statutory guidance, the current version applying from 26 July 2026.
- **Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools** (DfE) – in force from 1 April 2026, replacing the 2013 Use of Reasonable Force guidance.
- **The Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025** – statutory recording and reporting duties for use of force, seclusion and restraint.
- **Searching, Screening and Confiscation: advice for schools** (DfE, current edition).
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children; Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges** and related safeguarding guidance.
- **Mobile phones in schools** guidance (DfE), reflecting its strengthened, statutory status under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026.

## 2. Our shared relational approach

The following principles are constant across both phases. They are the “same language” that binds the Academy together and that families should expect to hear whichever phase their child is in.

- **Behaviour is communication.** We respond with curiosity – “what is this behaviour telling us?” – rather than reacting to surface behaviour alone.
- **Relationships repair regulation.** Calm, attuned, emotionally available adults help bring a dysregulated child back into a window of tolerance.
- **Co-regulation before self-regulation.** We do the regulating with and for a child first, and gradually hand over responsibility as they develop the skills to manage their own emotions safely.
- **Connection before correction.** We re-establish relationship and safety before any reflective or restorative conversation.
- **Maslow before Bloom.** Unmet basic needs (hunger, tiredness, sensory needs, safety, belonging) are acknowledged and met as a first response.
- **Consistency and predictability.** Shared routines, scripts and visual supports reduce anxiety and the need for challenge.
- **Every consequence is educative.** Consequences are used to teach, repair and keep people safe – never to shame or to “get compliance” through fear.
- **All adults model the values.** Staff demonstrate the RESPECT values and the relational approach in every interaction, including with each other.

### 2.1 Regulated adults and staff wellbeing

Relational, trauma-informed practice is demanding. Staff cannot co-regulate children if they are themselves depleted, unsupported or carrying the cumulative impact of distressing incidents. This policy is therefore explicitly connected to the Springs Staff Wellbeing Support Plan, and the two documents are intended to work together.

**Link to the Springs Staff Wellbeing Support Plan.** The Academy commits to: structured post-incident support and team de-brief after any significant incident, use of force or seclusion (see Section 9); access to training in de-escalation, trauma-informed practice and positive handling; attention to workload and the emotional labour of relational work; and a culture in which staff can ask for help without stigma. Leaders monitor the wellbeing impact of behaviour that challenges as part of normal line management and governance.

**Reflective supervision and wider staff support.** Formal reflective supervision is provided to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. For all other staff, the Academy provides Mental Health First Aid and the support set out in the Academy’s wellbeing strategy and the Springs Staff Wellbeing Support Plan. Where reflective supervision is offered it is timetabled and protected: sessions are not cancelled to cover staffing shortages, because a supervision offer that is routinely stood down is worse than none. Structured post-incident de-brief is separate from all of this and follows every significant incident, for every member of staff involved.

## 3. Recognising and responding to positive choices

We place the emphasis on positive acknowledgement and encouragement. Across both phases, recognition is anchored in the RESPECT values: pupils are recognised for their commitment to the values and for the effort, kindness, attendance and progress that go with them. Recognition is criterion-referenced rather than comparative, it is earned by meeting a described standard, not by being judged better than a peer, and it is specific, genuine and timely. It is never used in a way that sets pupils in competition in a manner that could shame those who find regulation hardest. Every pupil, in both phases, is recognised for following the ethos that comes with the RESPECT values.

### 3.1 Shared forms of recognition (both phases)

- Specific, purposeful verbal praise and positive non-verbal acknowledgement.
- Written acknowledgement in feedback and marking.
- 'Good news' postcards, phone calls, letters or emails home.
- Celebration of work and achievement through display, assembly and (with consent) social media and open events.
- Positions of responsibility and pupil voice roles.
- Individualised recognition linked to the targets in a pupil's Personal Learning Plan (PLP) and to the strategies in their My Plan, reducing over time as independence grows.

### 3.2 Phase-specific recognition systems

The principle is identical; the mechanism is matched to age and developmental stage.

| Lower phase (primary)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Upper phase (secondary)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Class and curriculum-based reward systems; whole-class and whole-school celebration; achievement certificates; key-adult recognition; tangible, immediate and frequent positive feedback appropriate to younger children. Recognition in the Lower phase is not awarded to a single 'achiever of the week' per class: every pupil in a class can achieve it in the same week, and the RESPECT value being recognised is made explicit to the child. | Two achievement certificates per class each week, each tied to a specified RESPECT core value for that week, plus one certificate from PE and one from IT — deliberately widening the number of pupils recognised each week. Milestone rewards are earned at 5, 10 and 15 certificates, after which the count resets; they recognise sustained commitment to the core values rather than a ranking between pupils. The weekly Head of School award, by nomination, recognises a pupil who has gone above and beyond, and carries a celebratory lunch out. |

| How recognition works       | Lower phase (primary)                                                                                                                                                    | Upper phase (secondary)                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What is recognised          | Commitment to the RESPECT values, shown in effort, kindness, attendance and progress. The value being recognised is named for the child.                                 | Commitment to a specified RESPECT core value, set for that week, plus subject recognition in PE and IT.                                     |
| How many pupils             | Uncapped. Every pupil in a class can be recognised in the same week.                                                                                                     | Two certificates per class each week, plus one from PE and one from IT.                                                                     |
| Milestones                  | Not used. Recognition is immediate and frequent rather than accumulated.                                                                                                 | Milestone rewards at 5, 10 and 15 certificates, after which the count resets.                                                               |
| Additional award            | Whole-class and whole-school celebration; key-adult recognition; good-news contact home.                                                                                 | Weekly Head of School award by nomination for a pupil who has gone above and beyond, with a celebratory lunch out.                          |
| Why it is designed this way | Younger pupils need recognition that is immediate, concrete and frequent, and that cannot be lost to a peer. An uncapped model keeps recognition attached to the child's | Older pupils respond to recognition that is distinctive enough to feel earned, and to sustained progress rewarded over time. A weekly focus |

| How recognition works | Lower phase (primary)                                                                                                                                                                                 | Upper phase (secondary)                                                                                              |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                       | own effort rather than to a comparison.                                                                                                                                                               | on one named value also gives the phase a shared language each week.                                                 |
| What is identical     | The values being recognised, the principle that recognition is criterion-referenced rather than comparative, and the duty to adjust where a pupil's SEND makes the standard mechanism unfair to them. | As Lower phase. The mechanism differs because of age and developmental stage; the expectation and the values do not. |

The nature and value of any milestone reward is a non-statutory operational matter and is held in a separate schedule maintained and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team, rather than in this policy, so that it can be adjusted without reopening the policy. Leaders keep all recognition mechanisms under review to ensure they remain motivating, equitable and consistent with our relational ethos. Because the Upper phase model caps the number of certificates available each week, leaders track distribution each half term to see whether any pupil is systematically missing out, and agree an individualised alternative, recorded in the pupil's plan, where a pupil's SEND means the standard mechanism cannot fairly recognise them. In reviewing any mechanism, leaders consider whether it places pupils in competition with one another or sets a threshold that pupils whose SEND makes regulation hardest cannot realistically reach, and adjust it where it does; in line with our reasonable-adjustment duties under the Equality Act 2010.

#### 4. Promoting and modelling positive choices

We are proactive in teaching, modelling and supporting positive communication and interaction. The following support systems operate across both phases, scaled to the age of the child:

- Timetabled teaching of emotional literacy and the Zones of Regulation.
- A pastoral / Positive Relationships Team, and regulation spaces and pastoral hubs for co-regulation and reflection (see Section 9.5 for the line between a regulation space and seclusion).
- Class teachers in the Lower phase and form tutors in the Upper phase, together with key adults and teaching assistants, as consistent relational anchors.
- Bespoke and small-group interventions, including therapeutic and relational programmes.
- A broad PSHE and RSHE curriculum covering healthy relationships, consent, online safety, prejudice and discrimination, and keeping safe.
- Home–school partnership, including a Home/School Agreement and Parent Code of Conduct, shared strategies and annual review meetings.
- Pupil voice and British Values – pupil committees, debate and democratic processes.
- Work with external partners, including CAMHS, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Educational/Clinical Psychology, Children's Social Care, school nursing, Early Help and police liaison.
- Alternative provision where appropriate and in the pupil's best interests.

##### 4.1 My Plans and Personal Learning Plans

Every pupil has a personalised behaviour and regulation plan – a 'My Plan'. The My Plan sets out the pupil's known triggers and regulation profile, describes what each stage of dysregulation looks like for that individual, and sets out the strategies adults should use and avoid at each stage. It is a working description of how to keep the pupil regulated, understood and safe; it does not contain targets.

Individual targets are held separately, in the pupil's Personal Learning Plan (PLP), alongside the outcomes in their Education, Health and Care Plan. The two documents are designed to be used together: the PLP sets out what the pupil is working towards, and the My Plan sets out how adults support them to get there.

My Plans and PLPs are co-produced with the pupil and, wherever possible, their family, and are reviewed and updated regularly and after any significant incident. The same plan architecture operates in both phases, so that a pupil moving from Lower to Upper carries the same documents, in the same form, to the adults who will work with them next.

**What co-production means in practice.** Families are invited to contribute when a plan is first written and at every review, in person or by phone, whichever suits them. We ask what they see at home — what helps, what to avoid, and what the early signs look like — and that goes into the plan in their words wherever we can. A current copy of the plan is shared with the family and re-shared whenever it changes. After any significant incident the family is contacted the same day (Section 9.6), and their view forms part of the plan review that follows. The pupil contributes in whatever way matches their communication, including through symbols, drawings or a key adult speaking on their behalf. Where a family is not able to engage, the plan is still built from what the pupil and the professionals around them can tell us, and the invitation stays open.

## 4.2 Phase-specific provision

**Lower phase (primary).** Nurture provision in the Lower phase is a Pathway 3 class – and in some years more than one class. Pathway 3 provision is identical in the Lower and Upper phases. Pupils are allocated to it full-time following an assessment of need; it is not a provision that pupils dip in and out of, and it is not used as a response to behaviour. It offers a safe, predictable base with consistency of approach, strong relationships and a high adult ratio, drawing heavily on play, sensory regulation and routine, alongside access to a broad and balanced curriculum matched to each pupil's stage of development. Any change of class or pathway is a planned decision, taken with the pupil and their family and kept under review.

**Upper phase (secondary).** Provision increasingly emphasises a broad curriculum, careers and preparation for adulthood, alongside continued pastoral and therapeutic support. For some pupils, planned transition into the Springboard Project (14–19) forms part of their pathway.

## 5. Responding to behaviour: reflect, repair, reconnect

When pupils find it difficult to meet expectations, our first response is always supportive and de-escalating. Class teams are expected to model and support positive choices using a shared toolkit, scaled to the age and plan of the child:

- Positive, clear instructions and clear, limited choices; reassurance.
- Visual reminders, gesture and symbols; reminders of the RESPECT values.
- Tactical ignoring of low-level behaviour where safe to do so; positive recognition of others.
- Movement breaks, sensory tools, a change of seat or an alternative space to work.
- PACE and Emotion Coaching; strategies from the pupil's My Plan and the Zones of Regulation.
- Solution-focused scripts that show the child how to get back on track and what happens next.
- Engagement with families to develop strategies together, and liaison with external agencies where this would benefit the pupil — so that the approach at home, at the Academy and across the professionals around a child pulls in the same direction.

### 5.1 Restorative practice

Restorative practice focuses on repairing harm and rebuilding relationships rather than on punishing. It emphasises communication, accountability and empathy. We use two main approaches, again consistent across both phases but pitched to the child's developmental stage:

- **Restorative conversations** – a structured, respectful, non-judgemental dialogue that helps those involved understand what happened, how it affected people, and what is needed to put things right.
- **Restorative conferences** – a more formal, facilitated process for more serious or ongoing harm, bringing together those affected (and, where appropriate, families or supporters) to share perspectives, take accountability and agree how to repair and move forward.

Both approaches aim for understanding, accountability and healing, not blame. They are led using a consistent set of restorative questions:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time, and what have you thought since?
- How do you feel about what happened?
- Who has been affected, and in what way?
- What needs to happen to put things right?
- What could you do differently next time?

**Lower phase (primary).** Restorative work is shorter, concrete and often supported by visuals, play or social stories. Reflection time takes place with a trusted adult and is framed as ‘time to feel ready’ rather than as a sanction. Internal reflection in a pastoral hub is used for the shortest time possible, with the explicit aim of returning the child to their class or activity with support.

**Upper phase (secondary).** Restorative conversations and conferences can be more verbally led and may involve the pupil reflecting on impact on the wider community and on their own goals. A restorative conference is held to support reintegration after any suspension.

## 6. Consequences, suspension and exclusion

Consequences are part of a graduated, relational response, not the starting point. They are always applied with regard to the pupil’s SEND, their My Plan and our reasonable-adjustment duties under the Equality Act 2010. A consequence is never a substitute for understanding and meeting the need behind the behaviour.

### 6.1 Graduated range of responses

In response to behaviour that challenges, our responses may include: the PACE approach; verbal reminders and encouragement; movement and sensory breaks; acknowledgement of unmet basic needs; Positive Relationships Team / pastoral intervention; supportive co-regulation and access to regulation spaces; restorative conversations and conferences; reasonable payback for deliberate damage; pastoral assessment of the unmet need behind the behaviour; and, only where necessary, fixed-period suspension or, in the most serious cases, permanent exclusion. Where a review concludes that a pupil’s need cannot be met within current provision, an adapted curriculum plan is considered (Section 6.2).

### 6.2 Meeting need in school, and adapted curriculum plans

The Academy prioritises keeping pupils in school and learning. The national direction of travel encourages schools to reserve home suspensions for the most serious cases and to use structured internal suspension instead. The Academy does not operate structured internal suspension in either phase: the estate cannot accommodate a separate supervised provision, and we will not describe in a statutory policy a model we are not able to deliver. We meet the same objective by a different route, set out below.

**Our model: identify the need, and meet it.** Behaviour that challenges is treated as a signal of unmet need. The pastoral and Positive Relationships Team works to identify that need and to meet it, drawing on the pupil’s My Plan, the graduated responses at Section 6.1, and external partners. Suspension is used only where there is a real and clearly identified need to suspend, on the grounds set out at Section 6.5, and never as a routine or default response.

Every suspension is reviewed. The review asks a specific question: can the Academy meet this pupil's needs within its current provision? Where it can, the pupil returns with the additional support identified, and the My Plan and risk assessment are updated. Where the review concludes that the need cannot be met as things stand, the pupil is assessed for an adapted curriculum plan.

**Adapted curriculum plans.** An adapted curriculum plan is a temporary, individually designed programme that allows the Academy to meet a pupil's identified needs and to return them to full-time provision. It is a response to need, never a consequence of behaviour and never a substitute for recording a suspension. Every adapted curriculum plan is agreed with the pupil and their parents/carers, is time-limited with a review date set at the outset, states what the Academy is putting in place and what it is working towards, and carries an explicit aim of return to full-time provision. Where a plan reduces a pupil's hours it is a part-time timetable and the requirements at Section 6.7 apply in full. Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the local authority is notified and an early annual review is requested if the provision needs to change. Adapted curriculum plans are recorded, monitored for patterns and for disproportionate impact on particular groups, and reported to governors termly alongside suspension and exclusion data.

### 6.3 Safeguarding separation

The statutory suspension and exclusion guidance applying from 26 July 2026 expressly recognises 'safeguarding separation' as a distinct, non-disciplinary power. It is intended for the rare circumstances in which an allegation of harm involving pupils makes it essential that they are physically separated, and the Academy cannot practicably keep both pupils apart on site. It allows a pupil to be temporarily forbidden from attending the premises on safeguarding grounds. It is not a behavioural sanction, it is not a way of buying time to investigate a behaviour incident, and it must not be used as either.

**Key points for the Academy.** A safeguarding separation is non-disciplinary and time-limited. Under the Trust's scheme of delegation the decision is taken by the Executive Headteacher, working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy. Parents/carers are told why their child has been temporarily forbidden from the premises, and the governing board is informed without delay. The Academy will seek to arrange education during the separation, and the use of this power engages the local authority's section 19 duty to provide suitable education. Decisions are recorded, kept under review and ended as soon as the safeguarding rationale no longer applies, with reintegration planned in the same way as a return from any other absence from the classroom. In reaching and reviewing the decision the Academy has regard to its duties under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010, and acts reasonably, rationally and in a procedurally fair manner.

**What it is not, and how it is recorded.** A safeguarding separation is not a suspension and not a permanent exclusion, and it is not recorded as one. Nor is it alternative provision or an adapted curriculum plan: education arranged during a separation may be delivered through alternative provision, but the separation is the safeguarding decision, not the placement, and it is not a response to need in the sense described at Section 6.2. Because it sits outside the exclusion codes, it needs its own record. The Academy maintains a distinct safeguarding separation record capturing the safeguarding rationale, the decision-maker and the Designated Safeguarding Lead involvement, the date it began, what education was arranged and by whom, the review dates, the date it ended and the reintegration plan. It is logged under its own category so that it can never be confused with, or counted as, a suspension.

### 6.4 Off-site direction

From 26 July 2026, academies may direct a pupil off-site for the purpose of improving their behaviour, on the same statutory footing as maintained schools, under the relevant 2026 Regulations. Under the Trust's scheme of delegation this power is exercised by the Executive Headteacher. Where the Academy uses an off-site direction it will follow the procedural requirements set out in the statutory guidance, including providing compliant written notice to parents/carers, keeping the placement under review, and addressing the transitional requirements for any direction already in place.

### **6.5 Suspension (fixed-period exclusion)**

A suspension (the legal term for a fixed-period exclusion) is a serious step, taken only where behaviour is illegal, extreme or dangerous and places the pupil or others at serious risk of harm – for example serious violence, sexual assault, a weapon brought into school, or severe property damage – and where in-school measures are not sufficient to keep people safe. A suspension also creates time to investigate, to update the My Plan and risk assessment, and to put further support in place.

- Only the Executive Headteacher / Head of Site (or, in their absence, the most senior teacher acting in that role) can suspend a pupil.
- A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods up to a maximum of 45 school days in any single academic year.
- The Academy must, without delay, notify parents/carers of the reason(s), the length and the start and end dates, and the date and arrangements for return.
- The Head must notify the local authority of every suspension without delay, regardless of length; and, where a pupil has a social worker or is looked after, must also notify the social worker and/or the Virtual School Head without delay.
- Suitable full-time education must be arranged for the pupil while they remain on roll, and from the sixth consecutive or cumulative school day of suspension the relevant alternative-provision duties apply; work is set and marked for shorter suspensions.
- A restorative reintegration meeting / conference is held to support the pupil's return.

### **6.6 Permanent exclusion**

Permanent exclusion is a last resort, used only where allowing the pupil to remain would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others, and where a wide range of other strategies has been exhausted (or in exceptional one-off circumstances). The decision can only be taken by the Executive Headteacher.

- The Executive Headteacher must notify parents/carers, the local authority and (where relevant) the social worker and Virtual School Head without delay.
- The governing board must convene to consider the exclusion; parents/carers are invited and may attend, make representations, bring someone with them and ask for an SEN expert and a local-authority representative to be present.
- Parents/carers have the right to request an independent review panel; the guidance on review timescales and the pupil's position on roll until the review is determined is followed in full.
- Particular regard is given to duties towards pupils with SEND and the SEND Code of Practice; given that all our pupils have SEND, the Academy gives the most careful consideration to whether everything reasonable has been done to avoid permanent exclusion.

### **6.7 Prohibited and unlawful practices**

- 'Off-rolling' – removing a pupil from roll in the school's interests rather than the pupil's – is never permitted, including pressuring a parent to remove a child under threat of permanent exclusion.
- Informal or 'unofficial' exclusions (e.g. sending a pupil home to 'cool off' without recording a suspension) are unlawful and are not used.
- Any part-time timetable — including one forming part of an adapted curriculum plan under Section 6.2 — is used only as a temporary, agreed and reviewed measure in the pupil's interests, with the aim of a return to full-time education, and is recorded appropriately.
- Managed moves are only ever arranged on a voluntary, transparent and properly recorded basis.

## 7. Mobile phones and personal technology

The Academy is mobile-phone-free by default during the school day, in line with the Government's strengthened position and the expectation in Keeping Children Safe in Education that schools are phone-free environments by default. Section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 (in force from 29 June 2026) inserts section 550C into the Education Act 1996 and requires the Academy to have regard to the Secretary of State's guidance on mobile phones and personal interactive communication devices. That duty applies during school hours on Academy premises; from the start of the first session to the end of the last session on a school day, including lessons, the time between lessons, break and lunchtime. It does not extend to a pupil's journey to and from the Academy. This position is set within the behaviour policy so that it links clearly to consequences and to searching, screening and confiscation.

- Pupils should not use mobile phones or similar smart/internet-enabled personal devices during the school day; devices are handed in on arrival, stored securely and returned at the end of the day, and these arrangements are communicated to families.
- Reasonable, individual exceptions are made where a device is needed for a medical reason, as a reasonable adjustment for a disability, or where it is specified in a pupil's EHCP or My Plan.
- Misuse is dealt with proportionately and relationally; confiscation follows the searching, screening and confiscation provisions in Section 8.

**Mobile phones and local authority transport.** Pupils may bring a mobile phone into the Academy. Every device is taken in on entry and stored securely, and is returned at the end of the day, so that a pupil can have their phone on transport without it being available during the school day. This is the Academy's settled position in both phases. The statutory position relates to school hours on Academy premises and does not extend to a pupil's journey to and from the Academy, and the Academy has no power to require the local authority or its transport providers to adopt the same approach. We have raised the question of a consistent position on transport with the local authority.

**Lower phase (primary).** Many of our younger pupils travel on local authority transport. Devices are handed in to the pastoral team on arrival and returned at the end of the day.

**Upper phase (secondary).** Older pupils may travel independently or on local authority transport. Phones are handed in on arrival and stored securely for the duration of the school day, with the same medical / reasonable-adjustment exceptions.

## 8. Searching, screening and confiscation

This section follows the current DfE guidance Searching, Screening and Confiscation: advice for schools. All searches are conducted in a way that is proportionate, that protects the dignity and safeguarding of the pupil, and that is recorded.

### 8.1 Screening on entry

To maintain the safety of everyone in the Academy, pupils may be screened on entry, including by walk-through or hand-held metal detector. The Academy may refuse entry to anyone who refuses to be screened; this is not treated as an exclusion but is recorded as appropriate.

### 8.2 Searching with and without consent

Staff may search a pupil or their possessions with the pupil's consent for any item. The Headteacher, and staff authorised by the Headteacher, may search a pupil or their possessions without consent where they have reasonable grounds to suspect the pupil has a prohibited item.

### 8.3 Prohibited items

Prohibited items include: knives and weapons; replica weapons; alcohol; illegal drugs and controlled substances (including so-called 'legal highs'); stolen items; tobacco, cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vapes and smoking paraphernalia; lighters and matches; fireworks; pornographic images; any article used or likely to be used to commit an offence or to cause injury or damage; and any item banned by the Academy rules and identified as one that may be searched for (for example energy drinks).

### 8.4 How searches are conducted

- The member of staff conducting a search (other than a search of possessions only) should normally be the same sex as the pupil, with a witness who should also, if possible, be the same sex.
- A search may be conducted by a member of staff of the opposite sex, and/or without a witness, only where there is a reasonable belief of a risk of serious harm if the search is not carried out immediately and it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.
- Reasonable force may be used to conduct a search for weapons or other items that pose a risk, where reasonable, proportionate and necessary – consistent with Section 9.
- The Academy considers the pupil's age, SEND and any trauma history, and the potential impact of a search, and seeks the least intrusive effective approach.

**Strip searches.** Searches that require the removal of more than outer clothing are an exceptional and last-resort measure governed by the additional safeguards in the current statutory guidance (introduced following the Child Q case). They are not conducted by Academy staff; where such a search is judged necessary it is a matter for the police, with appropriate-adult and parental-notification safeguards applied. The Academy's strong default is to involve the police where this level of concern arises.

### 8.5 Confiscation and what happens to items

- Staff may seize any prohibited item found in a search and any item they reasonably consider harmful or detrimental to good order.
- Controlled drugs, other harmful substances, stolen items and extreme pornography are handed to the police.
- Alcohol, tobacco and smoking paraphernalia are disposed of by staff; other banned items are retained and may be collected by parents/carers.
- Confiscation of mobile phones follows Section 7 and is dealt with proportionately.

## 9. Restrictive interventions, reasonable force and seclusion

This section reflects the DfE guidance Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (in force from 1 April 2026, replacing the 2013 guidance) and the statutory recording and reporting duties under section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025. It should be read with the Academy's Restrictive Interventions / Positive Handling Policy, which sets out our operational procedures in full.

### 9.1 Prevention first

Our overwhelming priority is to reduce the need for any restrictive intervention. We do this through relationships, knowledge of each child, environmental and sensory adjustments, de-escalation, individual risk assessment and the strategies in each pupil's My Plan. Restrictive intervention is always a last resort when other approaches have not kept people safe. The Academy does not operate a 'no contact' policy; appropriate, caring physical contact (for example comfort, guidance or first aid) is a normal part of working with children, and is distinct from restrictive intervention.

## 9.2 Lawful use of reasonable force

All staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Trained staff may use restrictive physical intervention only where it is reasonable, proportionate and necessary in the circumstances, and only to:

- prevent a pupil causing injury to themselves or others;
- prevent serious damage to property;
- prevent a pupil committing a criminal offence; or
- prevent behaviour seriously prejudicial to good order where the risk warrants it.

**Force is never a punishment.** Reasonable force must never be used as a punishment, as a behavioural sanction, or to secure compliance. Any force used must be the minimum necessary, proportionate to the risk, and time-limited – ending as soon as the immediate risk has reduced.

## 9.3 Safety limits on physical intervention

In line with the 2026 guidance, and to protect pupils from harm, staff must not:

- restrain a pupil in any way that affects their breathing or circulation;
- apply pressure to the neck, nose, mouth or abdomen;
- deliberately hold or restrain a pupil on the ground (prone or supine floor restraint), which carries serious physical and psychological risk and is to be avoided.

Where any restraint does occur, the pupil's welfare is monitored throughout and a medical assessment is sought where appropriate. The Academy is mindful that pupils with SEND – which includes all our pupils – may be disproportionately affected by restrictive intervention, and staff seek to understand and address the underlying triggers for behaviour.

Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent “side-effect” of ensuring that the service user remains safe.

**First aid after every intervention.** First aid is offered after any restrictive physical intervention – to the pupil and to any member of staff involved – whether or not an injury is apparent, and the offer is made by someone who was not directly involved wherever possible. Any injury, and any first aid given or declined, is recorded on Meditracker and cross-referenced to the incident record, so that the injury and post-incident support entries required in the record (Section 9.6) are complete and consistent.

## 9.4 Training

Staff who may need to use physical intervention are trained in Team Teach, a positive-handling approach accredited by the Institute of Conflict Management (ICM) and certified by BILD ACT against the Restraint Reduction Network Training Standards, which prioritises de-escalation and minimises the need for, and risk of, physical intervention. Team Teach at the accredited level is mandated by New Bridge Multi Academy Trust, and the standard and refresher cycle below are the Trust's confirmed position rather than a local choice. Training covers the lawful use of force, de-escalation, SEND considerations, the safeguarding links and the recording and reporting duties in this policy. A member of staff who is not trained may still intervene where not doing so would breach their duty of care (for example, a child running toward a road).

Accreditation levels and refresher cycle. The Academy works to the refresher requirements set by Team Teach under its ICM and BILD ACT accreditation:

- Level 1 is refreshed every two years through a three-hour course. No member of Spring Brook Academy staff holds Level 1 alone.
- Level 2 is reaccredited annually through a six-hour course.
- Intermediate trainers attend a two-day refresher annually.
- Advanced trainers – currently two post-holders – attend a three-day refresher annually.

**There is no grace period.** Where a refresher is missed and accreditation lapses, the full course must be completed again. Leaders maintain a register of who is trained, at what level and when reaccreditation falls due, and plan refreshers far enough ahead that accreditation does not lapse. A member of staff whose accreditation has lapsed does not take part in planned restrictive physical intervention until they have requalified, although the duty of care above continues to apply in an emergency.

## 9.5 Seclusion

The 2026 guidance gives seclusion a formal definition: a non-disciplinary intervention in which a pupil is confined away from others and prevented from leaving. Seclusion is fundamentally different from supported time in a regulation space that a pupil is free to leave, and different from removal from the classroom (which is dealt with as a behaviour measure under the Behaviour in Schools guidance).

- Seclusion may only ever be used in an emergency situation to protect others from harm where a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation.
- Seclusion must never be used as a punishment, a sanction, a 'time out' or a routine reflection measure.
- During any seclusion, the pupil must be continuously supervised, the environment must be safe and non-threatening, and the seclusion must end as soon as the immediate risk has reduced.
- Every instance of seclusion must be recorded and reported in line with the statutory requirements (see 9.6).

**Critical for our regulation spaces.** Any space used for regulation, calming or reflection – including regulation spaces, pastoral hubs and sensory rooms – must be a space that pupils can freely enter and leave. In the Upper phase these are described as regulation spaces rather than 'calm spaces', and pupils in them are fully supported by staff and leave at their own will. If a pupil cannot leave, or reasonably believes they cannot leave, the situation may legally constitute seclusion and must be treated, recorded and reported as such. Leaders audit our spaces and our practice against this test and train staff to apply the definitions consistently.

### 9.5.1 Keeping pupils apart, and when separation becomes seclusion

There are times – particularly in a SEMH setting – when a pupil needs to be kept apart from others in order to keep everyone safe, and times when staff judge that it would be dangerous to let a pupil leave a space. What matters in law is not the reason for the separation, and not what the space is called, but whether the pupil is free to leave it.

- Supported use of a regulation space is not seclusion. Where a pupil goes to, or is supported to, a regulation space, is accompanied or supervised by an adult, and is free to move about and to leave at their own will, this is not seclusion. It is recorded as supported use of a regulation space so that patterns can be understood, but it does not trigger the seclusion reporting duty.
- Preventing a pupil from leaving is seclusion, whatever we call it and however good the reason. Where a pupil is kept in a place away from others and prevented from leaving – by physical obstruction or blocking, by the space being secured, or because they reasonably believe they will be punished if they try to leave – that is seclusion in law. This includes the situation where staff judge that it would be extremely dangerous to allow a pupil to leave and therefore keep them in the space. That judgement may well be right, and the seclusion may well be lawful as an emergency safety measure under Section 9.5 – but it is still seclusion, and it must be recorded and reported under Section 9.6. Staff must not treat "it was for their own safety" as a reason not to record.
- Where pupils need to be kept apart because of an allegation of harm between them, staff involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead and consider the safeguarding separation route at Section 6.3, rather than relying on repeated or prolonged confinement of one pupil.
- Where force was used to bring about a seclusion or a restraint, the incident is recorded once, under the use-of-force recording duty, rather than being recorded twice.
- Four distinct categories are maintained so that the duties can be met and the data governed: (a) significant use of force; (b) seclusion; (c) restraint or immobilisation; and (d) supported use of a regulation space. The first three are reported to governors termly under Section 9.7; the fourth is used to understand need and to reduce restrictive practice over time.

**What staff may do.** Nothing in this section restricts the power at Section 9.2 to use reasonable force. Where a pupil is about to injure themselves or someone else, cause serious damage, or commit an offence, staff may act; including, if it comes to it, by physically preventing them from leaving a space, and this policy expects them to. Recording an episode as seclusion describes what happened; it is not a finding that the member of staff got it wrong.

- De-escalate first, using the strategies in the pupil's My Plan and the toolkit at Section 5. This is what prevents almost every incident from reaching the point where force is in question.
- Move the others, not the one. Where it is practical, taking the rest of the group out of the room is quicker, safer and far less restrictive than confining the pupil who is dysregulated. In a tight building this is often the better option and staff should reach for it first.
- Offer a regulation space the pupil is free to leave, with an adult alongside them. This is not seclusion and does not trigger the reporting duty.
- Use reasonable force where it is necessary, proportionate and for the shortest time the risk requires, within the limits at Section 9.3.
- Prevent the pupil from leaving only where the risk is immediate and cannot be met any other way. A member of the Senior Leadership Team is summoned at once, and the episode is recorded and reported as seclusion under Section 9.6.

**Where the building or staffing got in the way.** If a less restrictive option was not available because of the layout of the site or the staff on hand at that moment, staff record that in the incident record. It is information leaders need in order to fix the conditions, not a criticism of the people who were there. Leaders report to governors termly on whether estate or staffing constraints are driving restrictive practice in either phase.

**This does not make suspension more likely.** A seclusion does not trigger a suspension, and recording one has no consequence for the pupil in itself. Suspension is decided only on the grounds at Section 6.5, and only where there is a real and clearly identified need. Leaders monitor suspension rates in both phases alongside the use-of-force and seclusion data (Section 16); if recording practice turns out to be pushing suspensions up, that is a sign the policy is being misapplied and leaders will act on it rather than leave staff to absorb it.

**Training before this takes effect.** Staff in both phases receive practical training on the line between supported use of a regulation space and seclusion, using worked examples from our own classrooms and spaces, before this policy is implemented. No member of staff is expected to apply these definitions on the strength of having read them.

**What staff must do, and by when.** Where a pupil is prevented from leaving, including where staff judge it would be too dangerous to allow them to leave, the following applies in every case, whatever the space is called and however short the episode.

- At the time. The pupil is continuously supervised throughout by a member of staff who can see and hear them. A member of the Senior Leadership Team is summoned without delay. The seclusion ends as soon as the immediate risk has reduced; it is not continued to complete a task, a conversation or a period of time.
- Same day — the record. The incident is recorded on CPOMS on the day it happens, under the seclusion category, on the structured form, with the full minimum content set out at Section 9.6. The member of staff who made the judgement records why leaving was assessed as unsafe, in their own words.
- Same day — first aid. First aid is offered to the pupil and to any member of staff involved, whether or not an injury is apparent, and any injury or first aid given or declined is logged on Meditracker and cross-referenced to the incident record.
- Same day — parents. Written information about the incident is provided to parents/carers, and a member of staff makes personal contact by telephone or face to face (Section 9.6). Where the pupil has a social worker or an involved Virtual School Head, they are notified at the same time.
- By the end of the next school day — review. A member of the Senior Leadership Team reviews the incident and the record, confirms the duties above were met, and records the outcome.

- Within five school days — learning. A restorative conversation is held with the pupil when they are ready, and the My Plan and risk assessment are reviewed and updated. Where the same space or the same trigger recurs, the space and the practice are re-audited against the test at Section 9.5.
- Termly — governance. The incident is captured in ADDO and reported to governors with all other use-of-force, seclusion and restraint data, so that patterns and any disproportionate impact can be seen and acted on.
- No member of staff is criticised for making a judgement, honestly held at the time, that a pupil could not safely be allowed to leave. The expectation is that the judgement is recorded, not that it is avoided. An unrecorded seclusion, by contrast, is a breach of a statutory duty and leaves the member of staff who made the decision without the protection of a contemporaneous account.

## 9.6 Recording, reporting and notifying parents

Under section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025 (in force from 1 April 2026), the Academy has a statutory duty to record significant incidents involving the use of force, and incidents of seclusion, restraint and immobilisation, and to report them to parents.

- Every significant incident of use of force, seclusion or restraint is recorded as soon as practicable and, wherever possible, the same day, on a structured Academy form.
- A 'significant' use of force is any incident that goes beyond ordinary, appropriate physical contact between staff and pupils.
- The guidance sets the minimum content of the record but does not prescribe its format, so a form combining tick boxes with a short written account is acceptable and is what the Academy uses. Whatever the layout, the record must capture: the names of the pupil and the staff directly involved; the pupil's relevant needs and circumstances, including SEND and SEN status code; the date, time, location and approximate duration; a brief account of the incident including what led up to it, the triggers, the preventative and de-escalation strategies used, and the type and degree of force applied; why the intervention was assessed as necessary; any physical injuries; and the post-incident support provided, including any medical treatment. Tick boxes may carry the fixed elements, but the account of what led up to the incident, the de-escalation tried and the reason the intervention was necessary cannot be reduced to ticks.
- Staff complete these records knowing that written information drawn from them is provided to parents/carers on the same day. That is a reason to write them carefully and factually, not a reason to write less: the minimum content above is a legal requirement and is not reduced because the information goes home. The parent-facing version does not name other pupils.
- Parents/carers are informed as soon as practicable after the incident, and staff endeavour to do this no later than the same day.
- In addition to the written information, a member of staff makes personal contact with parents/carers, by telephone or face to face, on the same day as any restrictive physical intervention. The conversation explains what happened, how the pupil is, and what support has followed, so that families hear it from us first and from a person rather than only from a form.
- Where the incident involved seclusion, restraint or immobilisation, the Academy automatically provides each parent/carer with written information about the incident, normally the same day. The written information conveys the substance of the record: the date, time, location and approximate duration; what happened and why the intervention was used; what was done; any injury; and the support that followed.
- Parents/carers are told, in that written information, that they may ask to see the original record held on CPOMS, and the Academy provides it on request. The copy provided is anonymised so that no other pupil, and no member of staff beyond those the family already knows to have been involved, is identifiable. Parents do not have to give a reason for asking.

- Written information need not be provided where doing so would be likely to cause significant harm to the pupil, and the duty does not apply where the pupil is aged 20 or over. Where information is withheld on this basis, or where there is no parent who can safely be informed, the local authority is notified instead. Any such decision is taken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded with reasons.
- For a looked-after pupil, the written information is provided to each person who is a 'parent' for these purposes, which includes the carer with day-to-day care of the pupil and the person or local authority holding parental responsibility.
- Where a pupil has an allocated social worker, or an involved Virtual School Head, they are notified automatically after any restrictive physical intervention, seclusion or restraint, at the same time as parents/carers are informed and with the same written information. This goes beyond the minimum the Regulations require, and is the Academy's standard because the professionals around a vulnerable pupil should not learn of an incident later than anyone else. Incidents are also summarised at the pupil's PEP and looked-after review. For suspension and permanent exclusion, the statutory guidance separately requires the social worker and Virtual School Head to be notified without delay (see Sections 6.5 and 6.6).
- After any significant incident the Academy carries out post-incident learning, including a restorative conversation with the pupil when they are ready, and reviews and updates the pupil's My Plan and risk assessment.

### **9.7 Governance, oversight and staff support**

- Three systems are used and each has a defined purpose. CPOMS holds the record of incidents. Meditracker holds injuries and first aid. ADDO is the Academy's internal quality assurance document, used to capture seclusion and restraint data as part of our governance. The three are reconciled so that no incident is visible in one and missing from another. Leaders analyse the data to identify patterns, reduce the need for restrictive intervention over time, and check for any disproportionate impact (including by SEND, ethnicity, sex or other characteristics).
- Governors / proprietors receive at least termly information that allows them to interrogate practice and assurance, not merely confirm a policy exists.
- Every significant incident triggers structured staff de-brief and wellbeing support, in line with the Springs Staff Wellbeing Support Plan (see Section 2.1).

**Lower phase (primary).** Interventions are matched to the smaller size and developmental stage of younger children, with an even stronger emphasis on prevention, distraction, environmental change and the smallest possible intervention.

## **10. Anti-bullying**

We are committed to a climate in which all forms of bullying are unacceptable and in which everyone feels confident and safe to speak out. All members of the Academy community are helped to recognise bullying. All incidents of bullying are investigated promptly and appropriate, relational and restorative action is taken. This section is read with the Academy's Anti-Bullying Policy and Online Safety Policy. Our PSHE and RSHE curriculum addresses bullying, cyberbullying, and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, including in relation to SEND, race, religion or belief, disability, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

## **11. Sexual harassment, sexual violence and sexism**

Spring Brook Academy takes a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence, while never demonising any child and always supporting and listening to all the children involved. Our approach follows Keeping Children Safe in Education and related guidance.

- **Sexual harassment** – unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, such as sexual comments, jokes or taunting, physical behaviour such as interfering with clothing, and online sexual harassment.
- **Sexual violence** – rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault (intentional touching).

All reports are taken seriously and logged on CPOMS, however minor they may appear. When there is a report of sexual violence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) makes an immediate risk and needs assessment and engages children's social care and specialist services as required. Our response is proportionate, considered, supportive and decided on a case-by-case basis.

Where a report involves rape or assault by penetration, or otherwise where proximity would be distressing or unsafe, the alleged perpetrator(s) are kept a reasonable distance from the victim, including in shared classes, around the premises and on transport. These steps protect everyone and are not a judgement on guilt.

In deciding how to respond, important considerations include: the wishes of the victim, balanced against our duty to protect others; the nature of the alleged incident and whether a crime or harmful sexual behaviour may have occurred; the ages and developmental stages of those involved; any power imbalance; whether the incident is a one-off or a pattern; ongoing risks; and wider context, including any links to exploitation.

Consequences are matched to the level and nature of the behaviour and may include a verbal warning, a call home, reflection, internal or external intervention (including the police), a period in reflection, fixed-period suspension or, in the most serious cases, permanent exclusion. The alleged perpetrator(s) are offered support to change their behaviour. Victims are reassured that they are taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe. We promote healthy relationships throughout the RSHE curriculum, covering consent, respectful behaviour, body confidence and self-esteem, and healthy relationships.

**Lower phase (primary).** Concerns are understood through a developmental and safeguarding lens, recognising that younger children's behaviour may reflect their experiences, knowledge or unmet needs; the response is led by safeguarding and care rather than by sanction.

## 12. Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is not tolerated and is responded to immediately as a safeguarding matter. It may include, but is not limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate peer relationships; physical abuse; sexual violence and sexual harassment; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent; the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images ('sexting' / youth-produced sexual imagery); 'upskirting'; and initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals (which may have an online element).

In the event of any such behaviour, appropriate and proportionate consequences apply on a case-by-case basis, which may range from a verbal warning, a call home, a staged monitoring approach, reflection and internal or external intervention (including the police), through to fixed-period suspension or, in the most serious cases, permanent exclusion. All incidents, however minor, are logged on CPOMS, and our response is always grounded in safeguarding, support and restorative principles.

## 13. Allegations of abuse against staff

Allegations of abuse against staff are always taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly and consistently, in a way that protects pupils and supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. The procedures in Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Trust's allegations and Low-Level Concerns processes are followed, including liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where the threshold is met. Confidentiality is maintained as far as possible. Suspension of a staff member is not an automatic response and is considered only where no alternative is appropriate.

## 14. Radicalisation and extremism (Prevent)

In line with our duties under the Prevent strategy, we will not tolerate extremist activity of any kind. Radicalisation is the process of a person coming to support terrorism or extreme views; extremism is the holding of extreme political or religious views that are used to influence or harm others. Our curriculum promotes respect, tolerance and diversity, strengthened by our RESPECT values, and pupils are taught that they are entitled to their own beliefs but should not use them to harm or influence others.

Staff are trained to understand the threats, risks and vulnerabilities linked to radicalisation and to identify concerns early. Possible indicators include: increasing time spent with others holding extremist views; changes in dress or appearance to match a group; day-to-day life becoming centred on an ideology, group or cause; loss of interest in former friends and activities; attempts to recruit others; and a rise in prejudice-related behaviour such as physical or verbal assault, provocative behaviour, damage to property, derogatory name-calling, possession of prejudice-related material, refusal to co-operate, or condoning violence. All such concerns are reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, as appropriate, to the Head of Site, Executive Headteacher and Trust, and are acted on through safeguarding procedures.

## 15. Roles, responsibilities and staff wellbeing

- **The Trust and Local Governing Board set the strategic framework, approve this policy, maintain the scheme of delegation, under which the safeguarding separation, off-site direction and exclusion functions are exercised by the Executive Headteacher, and provide challenge and assurance, including receiving at least termly data on suspensions, exclusions, use of force and seclusion.**
- **The Executive Headteacher** holds overall responsibility for the consistent application of this policy across both phases and for the culture of the Academy.
- **Heads of Site (Lower and Upper phases)** lead the day-to-day implementation of the policy in their phase, ensure consistency with the shared approach, and make decisions reserved to them or to the Headteacher role (including suspension).
- **All staff build positive relationships, model the RESPECT values with pupils and with each other, follow pupils' My Plans and PLPs, de-escalate, record incidents accurately and promptly, and engage in training, reflection and de-brief.**
- **Parents and carers** work in partnership with the Academy, encourage mutual respect, and engage with the Home/School Agreement and Parent Code of Conduct.
- **Pupils** are supported and taught to understand expectations, to use their regulation strategies, and to take part in restorative processes and pupil voice.

### 15.1 Staff wellbeing

Because relational, trauma-informed work is emotionally demanding, the wellbeing of staff is treated as integral to behaviour practice rather than separate from it. This policy operates alongside the Springs Staff Wellbeing Support Plan, which sets out the de-brief, post-incident support, training and workload considerations that enable staff to remain calm, regulated and effective, and Section 2.1 sets out the current position on reflective supervision. The RESPECT values describe how we treat one another as a staff team as well as how we work with pupils, and the Academy's CPD programme includes team-level work on applying the values within and between teams. Leaders actively monitor the cumulative impact of behaviour that challenges on staff and act to protect their wellbeing.

## **16. Monitoring, evaluation and review**

This policy is monitored through the Trust's accountability framework and the Academy's self-evaluation and quality-assurance processes. Leaders monitor behaviour, recognition, suspension, exclusion, adapted curriculum plans, safeguarding separations, use of force, seclusion, restraint and bullying data to evaluate impact, reduce restrictive practice over time, and identify and address any disproportionate impact on particular groups. The policy is reviewed at least annually, and sooner in response to changes in legislation or statutory guidance, to incidents and learning, or to feedback from pupils, families and staff.

## Appendix A: Key legislation and statutory guidance

A summary of the principal sources underpinning this policy and their current status. Where a document is updated, the current edition applies.

| Source                                                                                                                                    | Status / relevance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 (Royal Assent 29 April 2026)                                                                    | Primary legislation; statutory basis for the mobile phone position and a range of school and safeguarding reforms.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Suspension and Permanent Exclusion statutory guidance                                                                                     | Applies from 26 July 2026; introduces safeguarding separation, extends off-site direction to academies, and embeds the internal-suspension direction of travel.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (DfE)                                                            | In force from 1 April 2026; replaces the 2013 Use of Reasonable Force guidance; largely non-statutory, with a statutory recording/reporting element.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025; s.93A Education and Inspections Act 2006 | Statutory duty to record use of force, seclusion, restraint and immobilisation and to report incidents to parents. For academies, through the Independent School Standards, the duty is to provide parents with information about each seclusion or restraint incident in writing; maintained schools must supply a copy of the record itself. Exceptions apply where disclosure would be likely to cause significant harm to the pupil, and where the pupil is aged 20 or over. |
| Behaviour in Schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, current edition)                                                     | Non-statutory; positive culture, responding to misbehaviour, removal from the classroom.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Searching, Screening and Confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, current edition)                                                          | Searching with/without consent, prohibited items, and post-Child Q safeguards on strip searches.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)                                                                                      | Statutory safeguarding guidance, including child-on-child abuse and sexual violence and harassment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Equality Act 2010; SEND Code of Practice                                                                                                  | Reasonable-adjustment and SEND duties applied throughout, given that all pupils have SEND.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Mobile phones in schools guidance (DfE)                                                                                                   | Now on a statutory footing through s.36 Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 / s.550C Education Act 1996: schools must have regard to the guidance. 'Mobile-phone-free by default' during school hours on school premises; the duty does not extend to travel to and from school. Linked here to behaviour and searching.                                                                                                                                                   |

## Appendix B: The two phases at a glance

The approach, values and language are identical across the Academy. This table summarises how delivery is matched to age and developmental stage. It does not create two different policies – it shows one policy applied consistently in two phases.

| Theme                    | Lower phase (primary)                                                                                                                                                           | Upper phase (secondary)                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Shared foundation        | Relationships first; behaviour as communication; RESPECT values; PACE; Zones of Regulation; My Plans (strategies and stages) and PLPs (targets); restorative practice.          | Identical foundation, values and language.                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Recognition              | Frequent, immediate, concrete praise; class and curriculum reward systems; certificates open to every pupil rather than a single weekly winner; good-news contact home.         | Two certificates per class each week against a specified RESPECT value, plus PE and IT awards; milestone rewards; Head of School award with celebratory lunch for going above and beyond; distribution tracked for equity; contact home. |
| Provision                | Broad and balanced curriculum matched to stage of development; Pathway 3 nurture class (full-time allocation); play, sensory and routine-based support; strong key-adult model. | Broad and balanced curriculum; careers and preparation for adulthood; transition into Springboard (14–19) for some pupils.                                                                                                               |
| Reflect & repair         | Short, concrete, visually supported restorative work; reflection framed as ‘getting ready’, shortest time possible.                                                             | Verbally led restorative conversations and conferences; reintegration conference after any suspension.                                                                                                                                   |
| Mobile phones            | May be brought in – many pupils travel on local authority transport; handed in on arrival, stored securely and returned at the end of the day.                                  | May be brought in – handed in on entry, stored securely and returned at the end of the day; medical / reasonable-adjustment exceptions.                                                                                                  |
| Restrictive intervention | Even stronger emphasis on prevention; smallest possible intervention matched to younger children.                                                                               | Same legal limits and recording; prevention-first; trained positive handling.                                                                                                                                                            |