Isebrook School Relationship (Behaviour) Policy
~Every interaction is an intervention ~

Purpose and scope of this policy

This document defines our approach across the school to support the promotion of positive behaviour through our relational and trauma informed approach.

This policy applies to all members of our school community (staff, students, parents / carers, and governors) and we expect that all school staff, students, and governors adhere to this approach, and that parents / carers support us, in implementing our relationship policy.

Wellbeing in our Trust

This document aims to set out Isebrook School's relational approach to supporting behaviour. We know that sometimes supporting a student's behaviour can be challenging so this policy aims to set out how we do this at Isebrook and the support available to staff.

We are all affected by poor physical and mental health at times during our lives and it is important the appropriate support is available in a timely manner.

Health and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility and we encourage an open and honest culture whereby anyone can discuss any issues they may have.

The Trustees of Creating Tomorrow take the health and wellbeing of all employees seriously and are committed to supporting our staff. The Trustees ensure that support for staff is available through:

- Effective line management
- Commitment to ensuring an appropriate and balanced workload
- Supportive and professional working environments
- Employee Assist Programme
    - The Education Support Line telephone number 08000 856148
    - or online resources educationsupport.org.uk/onlinesupport

Compiled by: HT	Date: Sep 25
Committee: LGB	Date agreed by Governors: Oct 25
Review Cycle: Annually	Review Date: Sep 27

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1. Purpose, Principles, and Policy Aims

Isebrook School supports students with a wide range of cognition and learning needs, including those with autism and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. We recognise that all our students require personalised approaches that build on their strengths and respond to their individual needs. Our Relationship Policy reflects this and is underpinned by principles of inclusion, understanding and respect.

We recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication, and therefore we use the term "distressed behaviour" instead of "challenging behaviour."

We expect everyone supporting our students to use language that reflects trauma-informed practice, and an understanding of the principles of Thrive. This is because the words we use shape the way students are perceived and supported. Trauma-informed, respectful language reduces stigma, promotes empathy, and helps staff respond in ways that de-escalate situations, preserve dignity, and support emotional regulation. Using this approach ensures that students feel safe, understood, and valued, which is essential for their wellbeing, learning, personal development and helps to always maintain a positive relationship.

Policy Aims
This policy aims to enable each student to create positive and supportive relationships that will support them to be successful. At Isebrook we do this by:

Securing and nurturing a safe, inclusive and positive culture:
We want our school to feel safe, welcoming, and positive, where everyone is accepted for who they are. Everyone's strengths and needs are noticed and supported, and the school day feels calm, fair, and predictable so students and adults know what to expect.

Why this is important to us:
Students feel valued & understood
Students are better able to regulate their emotions
Students are able to engage in learning
Students are able to build positive relationships

Promoting a whole-school approach to behaviour:
Our whole school works together to show kindness, empathy, and our core values of respect, compassion, achievement and responsibility. We understand that students see and experience the world in different ways, and we celebrate these differences while helping everyone feel connected and included.

Why this is important to us:
Creates consistency, fairness and a shared sense of belonging.
Helps students feel safe and supported, which helps them to build positive relationships.
Creates a culture where boundaries are clear, behaviour is understood in context, and everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Establishing clear and consistent expectations:
We have clear and simple boundaries & expectations about how we live and learn together. These are shown through words, pictures, routines, and by adults modelling them every day & are linked to our Rights Respecting School Class

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Charter. We know that all behaviour is a way of communicating, so adults look deeper to understand what students might be feeling or needing and then give the right support. We are curious!

Why this is important to us:
Creates safety and predictability
Supports positive behaviour & interactions
Enhances communication
Ensuring a fair, relational and consistent response to behaviour:
When things don't go as expected, adults respond with fairness and compassion using a trauma informed approach – keeping relationships at the heart. They help students to learn about themselves, manage their feelings, and find positive ways to regulate (in the moment & longer term). Learning moments are important so that times when things don't go as planned are treated as opportunities to learn, with a focus on guidance, repairing relationships, and reconnecting. We make adjustments where needed so everyone can succeed.

Why this is important to us:
We need to meet our students where they are developmentally & emotionally
We need to support them appropriately
We use a graduated approach to supporting our students (assess, plan, do, and review cycle) especially for those who find it difficult to regulate.
We will:
- identify any specific needs
- create tailored interventions, working with the student, families, and professionals as appropriate
- implementing interventions, and then
- continually reviewing the effectiveness of the support in place

This cycle builds upon quality first teaching and allows for the gradual increase in the intensity of support as needed, incorporating the views of the student, family, and professionals to ensure effective, person-centred provision.

Identifying and responding effectively to behaviours that may cause harm (including bullying and discrimination):
If behaviour causes harm, such as bullying or discrimination, adults act quickly to keep everyone safe.

A trauma-informed response means:
- **Ensuring immediate safety:** Harmful behaviour is stopped calmly, fairly, and without escalation.
- **Supporting regulation first**: Students are given time and guidance to calm and regulate before discussing the incident.
- **Restoring trust:** Adults work with all students involved to rebuild relationships, repair harm, and ensure that each student feels safe, respected, and included. This takes time.
- **Listening to all voices:** The perspectives of every student are heard with empathy, ensuring no one feels silenced or dismissed.
- **Guidance:** The focus is on understanding impact, building empathy, and teaching positive alternatives rather than blame or exclusion.
- **Ongoing support and adjustments:** Adults check in and make necessary adjustments to help all students feel secure, connected, and ready to succeed.

How we implement our behaviour curriculum (our expectations for adults supporting students):
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When supporting a student who is displaying distressed behaviours, Isebrook expects all staff to live and breathe our core values and to respond in ways that are appropriate to each student's developmental stage and individual special educational needs, as identified through Thrive. This ensures that support is tailored to the student's current emotional and social needs, enabling staff to respond effectively and consistently in line with our values.

Respect:

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Every member of our school community is treated with dignity & respect. Staff model respectful language and behaviour, and students are guided to develop respectful relationships with peers and adults, even when experiencing distress.

Compassion:

We respond to distressed behaviour with empathy, understanding & compassion. Our trauma-informed approach ensures that students feel safe, listened to, and cared for, recognising the needs beneath their actions.

Achievement:

We believe that all students can succeed. By reducing barriers caused by distressed behaviour, we enable students to re-engage in learning and develop the self-regulation and resilience they need to achieve personal and academic goals. To feel safe and be safe.

Responsibility:

We encourage students to take responsibility for their actions in a supportive and restorative way. Staff guide students to repair relationships, make positive choices, and develop skills that help them manage emotions and behaviour responsibly.

We take all distressed behaviour seriously, focusing on protecting safety, restoring trust, and addressing underlying needs. Our approach is always relational and restorative, ensuring that boundaries & expectations are clear while supporting students to learn safer and more positive ways of managing their feelings and relationships.

We strive to create an environment where students feel safe, heard, and supported, and where harm is addressed in ways that promote repair, belonging, and growth.

This reflects our alignment with:

- **Trauma-informed practice**: ensuring safety, predictability, and compassion to reduce shame and support recovery. (The why)
- **Thrive approach**: prioritising relational repair, co-regulation, and developmental support. (The how)
- **Recognising behaviour as communication:** responding with curiosity, not judgement. (The what)

2. Legislation, statutory requirements and statutory guidance

This policy is based on legislation and advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2024
- Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools 2022
- The Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and student referral units in England, including student movement
- Use of reasonable force in schools
- Supporting students with medical conditions at school
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014; paragraph 7 outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, paragraph 9 requires the school to have a written behaviour policy, and paragraph 10 requires the school to have an anti-bullying strategy
- DfE guidance explaining that academies should publish their behaviour policy and anti-bullying strategy

All information recorded, and stored, with regards to behaviour will be stored in line with the UK, data protection UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

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3. Definitions and Implementation

At Isebrook we recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication, and therefore we use the term **"distressed behaviour"** instead of "challenging behaviour" which often presents as negative behaviours.

When considering 'distressed behaviours', we implement strategies supportive of a Trauma Informed Approach to help prevent as many of these distressed behaviours as possible. We place great emphasis on our staff being 'emotionally available adults' to best support our students, both day to day and in moments of distress.

Behaviour can indicate:

- Communication of need
- Seeking reassurance when anxious
- Managing difficult situations or emotions
- Expressing unmet needs related to autism differences
- Distress due to lack of reasonable adjustments
- Feeling unsafe when outside their control
- Navigating a neurotypical world
- Escaping a difficult situation
- Expressing sensory differences
- Trauma

Using the term distressed behaviour reduces stigma, shifts focus to understanding and support, and highlights need over blame.

Further to support positive behaviour, we believe in setting clear and consistent boundaries & expectations. We regularly remind our students why these boundaries are in place, with the vast majority being there to keep everyone safe and to help create a successful learning environment.

Understanding and Responding to Distressed Behaviour:
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Every student deserves safety, connection, and understanding. Our trauma-informed approach meets each student's unique developmental and educational needs, guided by Thrive profiling and our knowledge of the student.

- **All behaviour is communication**: What may seem challenging often reflects unmet needs, distress, or dysregulation, and should be responded to with understanding, support, and a focus on safety and connection.
- **Relationships are central**: staff **connect before they correct**, using co-regulation, active listening, and restorative conversations.
- **Calm, relational, and restorative responses:** we will always promote self-regulation, repair, and long-term learning.
- **Consistent language:** clear communication across the school creates clarity and shared understanding for staff, students, and families.

We distinguish between:

1. **Everyday distressed behaviours** – dysregulation that interrupts learning or social interactions.
2. **More serious distressed behaviours** – behaviours that pose risk or harm to self or others, violate safety, or break trust.

Everyday Distressed Behaviours

These behaviours communicate unmet needs, dysregulation, or anxiety. These behaviours may interrupt learning, relationships, or the calm running of the school day.

At Isebrook we use **PACE** and the communication skills of the **Vital Relational Functions (VRFs)** to support our students. Using **PACE and VRFs together** means behaviour is addressed as a communication of unmet needs. Staff respond with understanding, curiosity, and relational support, which helps students feel safe, valued, and better able to learn.

PACE Framework at Isebrook

PACE is a relational approach used to support students, particularly those with cognition and learning needs and SEMH challenges, by focusing on connection before correction. Each element helps staff respond to behaviour in a way that fosters trust, emotional regulation, and learning:

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Playfulness (Redirection & Engagement)
- o Use humour, gentle energy, or creative approaches to engage students
- o Offer choices, scaffold tasks, or provide structured breaks
- o Use your relationship with the student and knowledge of them to encourage participation rather than enforce compliance

Acceptance (Relational Support)
- o Recognise that behaviour is often a form of communication
- o Understand the student may struggle to verbalise their needs especially when showing distressed behaviour
- o Respond without judgment, validating the student's feelings and experiences

Curiosity (Emotion Coaching & Exploration)
- o Ask open questions: *"I wonder what this behaviour is telling us?"*
- o Approach behaviours with genuine, non-judgmental interest
- o Use language that helps the student identify and express emotions safely

Empathy (Connection & Co-Regulation)
- o Prioritise connecting with the student before addressing behaviour
- o Co-regulate: match and gently guide the student's emotional state toward calm
- o Provide reassurance and relational support to strengthen self-worth and trust

Vital Relational Functions (VRFs) and Communication Skills
The VRFs complement PACE by providing practical ways to communicate and connect effectively:

Attunement: Tune in to the student's emotional state and respond appropriately

Validation: Acknowledge feelings and experiences without judgment

Invitation: Encourage participation and engagement through choice and gentle guidance

Containment: Provide a safe, structured environment to help the student manage strong emotions

Regulation: Support emotional self-regulation through modelling calm behaviour and co-regulation techniques

Examples of everyday distressed behaviour may include:
- Disruption in lessons, corridors, or during break/lunchtimes
- Difficulty completing classwork, walking out of lesson
- Resistant, withdrawn, or refusal to follow instructions
- Not following agreed routines (e.g., timetable, class expectations/ boundaries)

More Serious Distressed Behaviours
These behaviours place the student or others at risk of harm, or represent serious breaches of trust and safety. They require immediate protective action alongside restorative and supportive work.
The term "distressed behaviour" can describe the student's underlying need even in serious incidents, but it does not replace language about risk, accountability, or safeguarding.

Staff response:
- Immediate safety measures to protect the student and others around them
- Recording in line with our Safeguarding and Relationship Polices – use of My Concern & Arbor
- Restorative and relational work once safety is secured, supporting the student to understand the impact of their behaviour, repair relationships, and develop safer ways to communicate distress. Remember this takes time.
- Uphold Isebrook's core values: respect, compassion, achievement, responsibility

Examples of more serious distressed behaviours include:

- Repeated breaches of agreed expectations and boundaries
- Bullying (online and face-to-face)
- Sexual violence (including assault by penetration or any sexual assault without consent)
- Sexual harassment, including:
  o Sexual comments, jokes, or taunting
  o Physical behaviour such as interfering with clothes
  o Online harassment (e.g., unwanted sexual messages, sharing nude/semi-nude images or videos)
- Vandalism or deliberate damage to property
- Theft
- Physical aggression or fighting
- Smoking, vaping, or use of tobacco products
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or other discriminatory behaviour
- Possession of prohibited or banned items, including:
  o Knives or weapons
  o Alcohol
  o Illegal drugs
  o Stolen items
  o Tobacco, cigarette papers, e-cigarettes or vapes
  o Fireworks
  o Pornographic images
  o Any article a staff member reasonably suspects could be used to commit an offence, cause injury, or damage property
  o Any additional unsafe or disruptive items (e.g., mobile devices during learning time)

4. Bullying

Isebrook is an inclusive school that celebrates everyone's differences, and we have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying as we believe that everyone has the right to feel safe all of the time. We are aware that bullying can occur in multiple different ways both online and offline.

Bullying is NOT an inevitable part of school life, or part of growing up, and we believe that we should work together to make our school a happy, enjoyable and safe place for all.

Bullying harms everyone. It affects those directly involved and the whole school community by reducing feelings of safety, wellbeing, and belonging.
As a rights-respecting school, we promise that:
- Everyone has the right to feel safe, valued, and heard.
- Bullying is never okay – it goes against our values of Compassion, Respect, Responsibility, and Achievement,.
- We understand that behaviour can be a way of showing feelings. We respond with empathy, kindness, and support.
- Using a trauma-informed approach, we focus on safety, understanding, and helping our students to regulate their emotions.
- Through Thrive, we build strong, nurturing relationships that help everyone feel calm, connected, and ready to learn.
- We ensure that our students are supported with clear communication, predictable routines, and respect for differences.
- Staff are trained to notice when someone is struggling and to respond in ways that promote wellbeing, resilience, and belonging.

We are committed to creating a school where every student can thrive, respect others, and be themselves, and through supporting all involved we will always take a restorative approach.
Please see our Trust anti-bullying policy for more detailed information on our approach, and how we support all those involved, including the alleged perpetrator.

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To support students in taking responsibility for their own, and others', behaviours Isebrook has a committed team of student Anti-Bullying Ambassadors who are trained to:

- Support their peers during unstructured times
- Deliver whole school training and student workshops
- Collect, and represent student voice, e.g. organise student surveys
- Work closely with leaders to create and maintain an anti-bullying environment

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring this policy's effectiveness and holding the headteacher to account for its implementation.

5.2 The headteacher

Headteacher Responsibilities:

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving this policy to ensure it reflects a supportive, inclusive, and trauma-informed approach.
- Promoting a school environment that encourages positive behaviour, connection, safety, and emotional wellbeing.
- Ensuring all staff are trained, supported, and confident in implementing trauma-informed approaches, Thrive, AET, and principles of Rights Respecting Schools.
- Supporting staff to respond effectively to distressed behaviour using empathy, understanding, and de-escalation strategies.
- Ensuring staff understand and apply behavioural expectations with care, sensitivity, and relational awareness.
- Providing trauma-informed induction and ongoing professional development, including guidance on routines, SEND, mental health, and relational approaches.
- Aligning the policy with safeguarding procedures to provide students with both support and appropriate boundaries.
- Reviewing behaviour data regularly to ensure equity, inclusion, and that no student groups are disproportionately affected.

5.3 Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for:

- Creating a safe, calm, and supportive environment that promotes connection, emotional wellbeing, and respect for all.
- Establishing and maintaining clear, consistent boundaries to support students' social, emotional, and behavioural development.
- Implementing our relational behaviour policy consistently, responding with empathy and understanding to the underlying needs behind behaviours.
- Communicating expectations, routines, values, and standards through teaching, modelling, and interactions using a relationship-based, rights-respecting approach.
- Modelling positive behaviour, respectful interactions, and healthy relationships, demonstrating emotional regulation and social skills.
- Providing personalised support tailored to individual needs, including SEND and mental health considerations.
- Reflecting on the impact of their own behaviour on school culture and modelling core values, expectations, and children's rights.
- Recording behaviour incidents promptly on Arbor, including context, triggers, and interventions.
- Supporting students to encourage self-regulation, resilience, personal responsibility, and awareness of rights.

5.4 Leadership responsibilities

Leaders will:

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- Support staff in responding to behaviour incidents using a trauma-informed, Thrive-informed, and rights-respecting approach, ensuring interventions are consistent, empathetic, and focused on relationships and restoring wellbeing.
- Provide guidance, coaching, and resources so staff can apply Thrive, AET, relational, and Rights Respecting School principles effectively in daily practice.
- Ensure that staff receive support as required, and especially following more serious distressed behaviours. This will include a debrief as needed and following all physical interventions.

5.5 Students' Responsibilities

Students at Isebrook will learn about the school values and what they mean for the whole community. Staff will support students to understand these values and will remind them in kind, consistent ways.

This learning will begin during transition into Isebrook and will be reinforced through positive, supportive interactions every day.

Students will be encouraged to show our core values at all times:

- Compassion – caring for themselves and others
- Respect – treating people, property, and our environment with care
- Achievement – trying their best and celebrating progress
- Responsibility – making thoughtful choices and learning from mistakes

Students will work with their class team to create a Class Charter. This is a shared agreement about how everyone wants to treat and support each other.

Students will learn about school expectations and boundaries, which help everyone feel safe, supported, and able to learn. Staff will explain these clearly and calmly and remind students with understanding if they need help following them.

Students will be taught how the rewards system works, so they can recognise and celebrate positive choices and achievements.

When relationships are harmed or mistakes happen, students will take part in repairing relationships using a restorative approach led by staff. This focuses on understanding feelings, learning from what happened, and rebuilding trust.

Student voice will be valued. Students will be invited to share their thoughts about the relationship policy so that it continues to support everyone in a fair and caring way.

5.6 Parents and Carers Responsibilities

Research shows that when schools work in partnership with parents, students have greater opportunities for success, therefore we encourage parents to:

- Familiarise themselves with Isebrook's Relationship policy and reinforce it at home where appropriate.
- Support their child in demonstrating the school's core values – Compassion, Respect, Achievement, and Responsibility.
- Support their child in developing positive behaviour and self-regulation skills, recognising that behaviour is often a form of communication.
- Inform the school of changes in circumstances that may affect their child's wellbeing.
- Discuss behavioural concerns early with the class teacher so support can be provided promptly.
- Work in partnership with the school following incidents, including attending meetings or participating in reviews of behaviour support plans, to help their child develop resilience and coping strategies.
- Raise concerns about behaviour management constructively, maintaining a partnership approach.
- Participate in school life and culture, supporting a safe, inclusive, and rights-respecting environment that values connection, empathy, and emotional wellbeing.

The school will:

- Maintain open and honest communication
- Build trusting, positive relationships with parents and carers by keeping them informed about their child's progress and any incidents of distressed behaviour.
- Work collaboratively with families to support student's emotional wellbeing and address behavioural challenges in a consistent, compassionate, and understanding way, recognising behaviour as a form of communication.

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6. Isebrook Behaviour Curriculum

At Isebrook, we are committed to relational approaches and inclusion, recognising the importance of psychological safety. Our work is underpinned by **Thrive**, a trauma-informed whole-school approach that supports the mental health and wellbeing of all students.

We aim for every student to embody our core values and to grow as successful learners, confident individuals, and responsible citizens. As a Rights Respecting School, students also learn about their own rights and the rights of others, ensuring everyone is treated fairly and with respect. Each class creates a class charter outlining expectations for how they will work together.

This approach enables students, in line with their cognitive and developmental stage, to:

- Learn what positive behaviour looks like and how it promotes safety and respect for all.
- Understand their responsibility to follow school boundaries and expectations, with support where needed.
- Earn rewards for positive behaviour and receive guidance to regulate emotions and behaviour when necessary.
- Access a wide range of pastoral support and interventions to help manage emotions, behaviour, and wellbeing.
- Share their thoughts and feedback about behaviour at school, helping to strengthen our student voice.
- Understand how their actions impact the rights and wellbeing of others, and are supported to advocate for fairness, kindness, and inclusion.
- Develop the skills, confidence, and character they need to thrive now and in the future through tailored support, structured guidance, and positive relationships.

Curriculum and Programmes

We support students through a range of evidence- and research-based approaches that have been embedded over time, wellbeing safety, emotional awareness, and self-regulation, tailored to their developmental and social-emotional stage.

Our approach focuses on meeting students where they are and includes the following:

Protective Behaviours

A structured approach that teaches students how to recognise, understand, and respond to situations that may threaten their personal safety or well-being.

Key points include:

- **Understanding feelings and safety:** recognising when they feel safe or unsafe
- **Identifying trusted adults:** knowing who to turn to for help and support (network of support / helping hand)
- **Developing strategies:** practical ways to keep themselves safe, set boundaries, and respond to risky situations
- **Empowerment and confidence:** building the skills to make safe choices and speak up if something is wrong

Supports students to:

- Recognise and respond to unsafe situations
- Build confidence in making safe choices
- Develop independence and self-advocacy

Zones of Regulation

A structured programme designed to help students recognise, understand, and manage their emotions and behaviours.

Key points include:

- **Identifying emotions:** categorising feelings into four "zones" (Blue = low energy/sad, Green = calm/ready to learn, Yellow = heightened alertness/anxious, Red = extreme emotions/unsafe)
- **Self-awareness:** recognising which zone they are in at any given time
- **Self-regulation strategies:** using tools and techniques to manage emotions and move toward the "Green Zone" to engage effectively in learning and social interactions

- **Problem-solving and coping:** developing skills to respond appropriately to challenges and maintain emotional control

Supports students to:
- Recognise and manage their emotions
- Use coping strategies to self-regulate in different situations
- Engage successfully in learning and social interactions

Rights Respecting Schools
Promotes children's understanding of their rights and the rights of others, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Key points include:
- **Understanding rights:** teaching students about their own rights, responsibilities, and the rights of others
- **Promoting respect and fairness:** encouraging a culture of respect, equality, and inclusion
- **Developing responsibility:** helping students make informed choices and take responsibility for their actions
- **Embedding values in practice:** integrating respect, fairness, and rights into everyday school life and the wider community

Supports students to:
- Understand and respect their own rights and the rights of others
- Make informed choices and take responsibility for their actions
- Contribute positively to a safe and inclusive school community

Teaching Boundaries and Expectations
Students are supported to understand and apply the school's core values in practice.

Key points include:
- Reinforced throughout the year, including during transition timetables and restorative practices
- Embedded into everyday routines and expectations, aligned with the school reward system
- Integrated with the EDI calendar, ensuring core values are explicitly taught

Supports students to:
- Apply school values consistently in everyday life
- Understand expectations and boundaries
- Develop confidence and social skills in line with school values

SoSAFE! – Social Safety, Personal Boundaries, and Protective Behaviours
A visual teaching program developed by Pyramid Educational Consultants, providing students with tools to understand social safety, personal boundaries, and protective behaviours.

Key points include:
- **Private body parts:** learning which parts of the body are private and should be covered
- **Consent:** understanding that permission must always be asked and given before actions or touch
- **The right to say no:** knowing they can refuse help if uncomfortable, while staff maintain duty of care
- **Seeking help:** identifying trusted adults and asking for support in unsafe or uncomfortable situations
- **Practical application:** practicing skills in real-life contexts, such as hygiene, medical care, and toileting

Supports students to:
- Recognise and respond to unsafe situations
- Set and respect personal boundaries
- Communicate their needs and feelings confidently

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- Build independence, self-advocacy, and confidence in everyday life

Summary

These programmes are central to our approach at Isebrook because they help students:

- Stay safe and make informed choices about themselves and others
- Develop emotional awareness, self-regulation, and resilience
- Understand and respect boundaries, rights, and responsibilities
- Build confidence, independence, and lifelong skills for wellbeing

Together, they create a safe, inclusive, and empowering environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. These programmes are underpinned by our relational approach which is at the heart of everything we do.

6.1 Use of Mobile Devices

Our approach to the use of mobile devices is designed to balance students' independence and access to technology with the need for a safe, calm, and focused learning environment.

Students in KS3, KS4 & Connected Provision

- Students may bring their mobile devices to school to support communication while travelling to and from school.
- Once on site, devices must be switched off and stored in bags for the remainder of the school day.
- Mobile devices must not be used during lessons, breaks, or transitions.
- If a student needs to contact parents or carers in an urgent or distressing situation, a staff member will facilitate access via a school landline or a staff member's work phone.

Supportive responses to device use:

- If a student is seen using their device during the day, staff will gently remind them of the school expectations and guide them to put the device away.
- Continued use will result in the device being confiscated and stored safely in the main office until the end of the day.
- Repeated or persistent difficulties may lead to further measures, such as:
  - Parents collecting the device
  - Longer periods of confiscation
  - Temporary loss of the privilege to bring the device to school

This approach is consistent, predictable, and supportive, helping students feel safe and understand expectations.

Students in Post-16

- Students in Post-16 are encouraged to develop independence and responsibility with their mobile devices.
- Devices may be used during break times, lunch, and daily review to access music or games.
- Devices must not be used to access social media or the internet, and the camera function cannot be used during the school day.

Supportive responses to device use:

- Staff will remind students of expectations if devices are used outside the agreed times or functions.
- Persistent or repeated non-compliance will result in the device being confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- Multiple infringements may lead to a temporary or permanent restriction on bringing the device into school.
- All guidance is delivered with respect and empathy, recognising that students may test boundaries as a way of managing stress or uncertainty.
- Staff use predictable routines, calm language, and clear boundaries, helping students feel safe and supported.
- The focus is on teaching responsibility and self-regulation

7. Training and Support

Supporting students who are distressed can be challenging, and we are committed to the wellbeing of all members of our team. Staff training is heavily focussed on developing and maintaining a culture of trauma-informed practice, ensuring that all staff feel confident, skilled, and supported in their roles.

Training includes:

- **Understanding Trauma-Informed Practice:** building knowledge of how trauma affects behaviour, learning, and emotional regulation.
- **Thrive:** training in the Thrive Approach equips staff to understand and support the social and emotional development of students. This includes:
- **PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy):** developing relational skills to engage students in a safe and emotionally supportive way.
- **Vital Relational Functions (VRFs):** understanding the essential relational needs of students and how to meet them to promote wellbeing and resilience.
- **Brain development and neuroscience:** understanding how early experiences, trauma, and attachment affect brain development, learning, and behaviour.
- **Understanding responses to threat:** recognising and responding to fight, flight, freeze, and fawn behaviours, as well as emotional dysregulation such as "flipping the lid," and knowing strategies to support students safely through these states.
- **Sensory processing and emotional regulation:** recognising sensory sensitivities or overload and supporting students to regulate their emotions effectively.
- **Recognising attachment needs**, promoting emotional regulation, and creating emotionally safe learning environments.
- **Attachment Awareness:** understanding the impact of attachment styles on behaviour and relationships.
- **AET (Autism Education Trust):** developing knowledge and strategies to support autistic students effectively.
- **De-escalation:** techniques to safely prevent or reduce behavioural incidents.
- **Approaches to Physical Intervention:** staff are trained in Team Teach; the school has a licensed Team Teach Instructor who also works across the trust.
- **Mental Health Training:** including support and guidance from the Mental Health Support Team.

By integrating Thrive (including PACE, VRFs, neuroscience-informed brain development, responses to threat, and sensory/emotional regulation awareness) and other trauma-informed approaches, staff are supported to respond effectively to students' social, emotional, and sensory needs while maintaining their own wellbeing, creating a resilient, skilled, and compassionate team.

Additional Staff Wellbeing and Support

- All staff are supported through our line management system, providing regular supervision, guidance, and opportunities to reflect.
- Following incidents involving seriously distressed behaviours, staff are offered a debrief to reflect and access further support.
- Staff have access to counselling through our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to manage the impact of potentially traumatic incidents.
- Occupational Therapy Support: Isebrook employs an Occupational Therapist (OT) who works with students to assess sensory integration needs and supports class staff to implement bespoke sensory programmes, promoting emotional regulation and engagement.

8. Responding to Behaviour

8.1 Responding to Positive Engagement

When students demonstrate behaviours that reflect our core values—Respect, Responsibility, Compassion, and Achievement—staff will recognise and celebrate these actions. Positive engagement should be acknowledged consistently to reinforce routines, expectations, and boundaries, supporting a safe and predictable school culture.

Examples of Recognition

- **Verbal praise** highlighting specific actions in a way the student can understand, explicitly linking positive behaviour to clear expectations and boundaries
- **House points** linked to core values and consistent with school expectations, redeemable in the school's reward shop
- **Recognition on Class Dojo** to celebrate positive behaviours that align with expectations and boundaries
- **Stickers, postcards, or certificates** (e.g., Student of the Week) to reinforce positive behaviours

- **Special responsibilities** within the school community to encourage ownership of expectations
- **Phone calls home** to celebrate adherence to boundaries and positive behaviours
- **Pastoral Tea** or other school-wide rewards for consistent positive engagement
- **Specific celebrations or events** highlighting students who consistently follow expectations and demonstrate positive behaviours

Outcomes of Positive Recognition

By recognising positive behaviours in ways that match students' developmental and cognitive needs, we support them to:

- Understand expectations and boundaries
- Develop social, emotional, and relational skills
- Build confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging
- Embed our school values in everyday actions

8.2 Classroom Management

All staff play a crucial role in setting the tone and emotional climate of the school. Every interaction is an opportunity to support learning, emotional regulation, and positive relationships. Students benefit most from high-quality, consistent engagement throughout the day.

Staff will:

- **Create and maintain a stimulating and supportive environment** that encourages engagement and participation.
- **Display key principles and charters**, including the class charter, Protective Behaviours, SoSAFE!, and other relevant programmes, to provide visual reminders of expectations and safety.
- **Develop positive, trusting relationships** with students by:
  - Greeting and welcoming students warmly at all times
  - Establishing clear, predictable routines to help students understand expectations and boundaries
  - Communicating behavioural expectations through multiple channels, including visual supports, gestures, and modelling, not only verbally
  - Highlighting, promoting, and modelling expected behaviours, and reinforcing positive behaviours through praise and rewards
  - Ending the day positively, allowing students to reflect and start the next day afresh
  - Having a proactive plan for managing a student's level of distress, including strategies for de-escalation, self-regulation, and support
  - Use the principles of PACE and VRF's to support interactions with students

Recognise that students may test boundaries or react emotionally as a response to stress or past experiences.

- Maintain predictable routines, calm interactions, and consistent responses to help students feel safe.
- Use every interaction as an opportunity to teach, support, and reinforce positive behaviours rather than solely manage them.
- Prioritise emotional safety, relationship-building, and self-regulation skills alongside academic learning

8.3 Safeguarding

We recognise that changes in distressed behaviour and wellbeing may be an indicator that a student is in need of help or protection.

We will consider whether a students' distressed behaviour may be linked to them suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Where this may be the case, we will follow our child protection and safeguarding policy, and consider whether pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information

8.4 Use of Physical Force

Use of reasonable force in schools: Guidance about the use of physical restraint in schools for governing bodies, headteachers and school staff (DfE 2025) allows all adults who are authorised by the Headteacher to be responsible for students to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a student:

      a) Committing a criminal offence (or for younger children that which would be an offence)

      b) Causing personal injury, injury to others or damage to property

c) Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force, as well as a duty of care to themselves and others to keep themselves and others safe however, reasonable force must always be necessary, proportionate, and in the best interests of the child. Staff must take account of the student's age, SEND, medical needs, and level of understanding before intervening.

Incidents of reasonable force must:

- Always be used as a last resort
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded and reported to parents/carers on the day

For further information please refer to our Trust Approach to the Use of Physical Force and Searching Students

8.5 Searching, Screening, and Confiscation

At Creating Tomorrow we will always consider that all students have a right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy, under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Therefore any 'interference' with this right by our schools and college must be justified and proportionate. The best interests of the child will always be our primary consideration and therefore we will balance:

- The need to safeguard all students by confiscating harmful, illegal, or disruptive items
- The safeguarding needs and wellbeing of students suspected of possessing these items

On occasions a member of staff may have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is in possession of an item, or items, which contravene school regulations and could potentially cause harm to the student or others. Under these circumstances The Education Act 2011, and guidance "Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DfE July 2022)" extends the power of staff to search students without their consent.

Searching, screening and confiscation is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Before carrying out a search the authorised member of staff will:

- Assess whether there is an urgent need for a search
- Assess whether not doing the search would put other students or staff at risk
- Consider whether the search would pose a safeguarding risk to the student
- Explain to the student why they are being searched
- Explain to the student what a search entails – e.g. "I will ask you to turn out your pockets and remove your scarf"
- Explain how and where the search will be carried out
- Give the student the opportunity to ask questions
- Seek the student's co-operation

For further information please refer to our Trust Approach to the Use of Physical Force and Searching Students

8.5 Suspected Criminal Behaviour

If a student is suspected of criminal behaviour, the school will make an initial assessment of whether to report the incident to the police.

When establishing the facts, the school will endeavour to preserve any relevant evidence to hand over to the police.

If a decision is made to report the matter to the police Headteacher will be informed

The school will not interfere with any police action taken. However, the school may continue to follow its own investigation procedure and enforce sanctions, as long as it does not conflict with police action.

If a report to the police is made, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will make a tandem report to children's social care, if appropriate.

8.6 Zero-tolerance Approach to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Isebrook school will ensure that all incidents of sexual harassment and/or violence are met with a suitable response, and never ignored.

Students are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they feel it might be.

Isebrook's response will be:

- Proportionate

Isebrook School Relationship (Behaviour) Policy

~Every interaction is an intervention ~

- Considered
- Supportive
- Decided on a case-by-case basis

Isebrook school has procedures in place to respond to any allegations or concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing.

These include clear processes for:

- Responding to a report
- Carrying out risk assessments, where appropriate, to help determine whether to:
  - o Manage the incident internally
  - o Refer to early help
  - o Refer to children's social care
  - o Report to the police

Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information

8.7 Malicious Allegations

Where a student makes an allegation against a member of staff and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider next steps to manage this situation including a risk assessment.

Where a student makes an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment against another student and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider next steps to manage this situation including a risk assessment

In all cases where an allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the school (in collaboration with the local authority designated officer (LADO), where relevant) will consider whether the student who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help. If so, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.

The school will also consider the pastoral needs of staff and students accused of misconduct.

Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information on responding to allegations of abuse against staff or other students.

8.8 Responding to serious breaches of school expectations and boundaries

In cases of serious or persistent breaches of school expectations and boundaries or where the safety and wellbeing of students or staff are at risk, the school may implement serious sanctions. These sanctions are always applied proportionately, fairly, and with consideration of the student's needs, including age, SEND, and any safeguarding or trauma-related factors.

Examples of serious sanctions may include:

- Internal exclusion or removal from a classroom to maintain safety and support reflection.
- Fixed-term suspension for repeated or significant incidents that disrupt learning or pose a risk to others.
- Permanent exclusion in the most serious cases, following statutory guidance and careful review.
- Referral to alternative provision or specialist support to meet the student's emotional, social, or educational needs.

Key principles when applying serious sanctions:

- Ensure decisions are fair, transparent, and proportionate.
- Maintain open communication with parents/carers, explaining the reasons for the sanction and any steps for support or reintegration.
- Continue to support the student's emotional wellbeing, using restorative approaches where appropriate.
- Consider the impact of the sanction on the student's learning, social development, and sense of belonging.
- Record and monitor all serious sanctions to ensure consistency, accountability, and reflection on practice.

The school will always aim to balance accountability with care, ensuring that sanctions help students learn from their actions, repair harm where possible, and develop the skills to make positive choices in the future

Staff will record all incidents of removal from the classroom in the behaviour log, along with details of the incident that led to the removal, and any protected characteristics of the student.

The decision to suspend or exclude will be made by the headteacher and only as a last resort.

Please refer to our suspension & exclusions policy for more information

Isebrook School Relationship (Behaviour) Policy

~Every interaction is an intervention ~

9. Supporting students following serious breaches of school expectations and boundaries

We will consider strategies to help the student to understand how to manage their behaviour and meet the expectations & boundaries of the school. Where a suspension takes place there will always be a

- A reintegration meeting attended by parents / carers, school staff and the student themselves to review the support in place and up date any risk assessments, plans or interventions as identified in the meeting.
- Daily contact with a named adult in school to support the reintegration and monitor this.
- A personalised goals chart may be used to support students
- The timetable may be amended to support the student including the addition of specific interventions or access to Alternative Provision in line with EHCP outcomes.

There will be a record of the meeting shared with all stakeholders

10. Student transition

10.1 Inducting incoming students

We will support incoming students by ensuring that they have access to an induction process which includes familiarisation of our core values, school expectations and boundaries. This will ensure that all students have a clear understanding of our Relationship Policy and why it is important to us.

10.2 Preparing outgoing students for transition

To ensure a smooth transition to the next year, students have transition sessions with their new teacher in the summer term. This is a two week transition and has a very clear timetable so that students and staff can get to know each other, revisit the core values and our school expectations and boundaries. In addition, staff members hold transition meetings so that student information can be shared.

11. Monitoring arrangements

11.1 Monitoring and evaluating behaviour

Isebrook will collect data on the following:

- Behavioural incidents, including removal from the classroom
- Attendance, internal exclusion, suspensions & permanent exclusions
- Use of Alternative Provision
- Use of part time timetables (the Local Authority will always be notified)
- Incidents of searching, screening and confiscation
- Perceptions and experiences of the school behaviour culture for staff, students, governors, trustees and other stakeholders (via anonymous surveys)

The data will be analysed every term by the Senior Welfare Lead & Headteacher and shared as part of governance.

The data will be analysed from a variety of perspectives including:

- At school level
- By age group
- At the level of individual members of staff
- By time of day/week/term
- By protected characteristic

We will use the results of this analysis to make sure we are meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010. If any trends or disparities between groups of students are identified by this analysis, we will review our policies to tackle them.

All data will be stored securely in line with GDPR

11.2 Monitoring this policy

This Relationship Policy will be reviewed by the headteacher and the local governing body at least annually, or more frequently, if needed, to address findings from the regular monitoring of the behaviour data

12. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the following policies

- Trust Approach to the Use of Physical Force and Searching Students

Isebrook School Relationship (Behaviour) Policy

~Every interaction is an intervention ~

- Creating Tomorrow Anti-Bullying Framework
- Suspensions and Exclusions policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Mobile Devices policy

Isebrook School Relationship (Behaviour) Policy
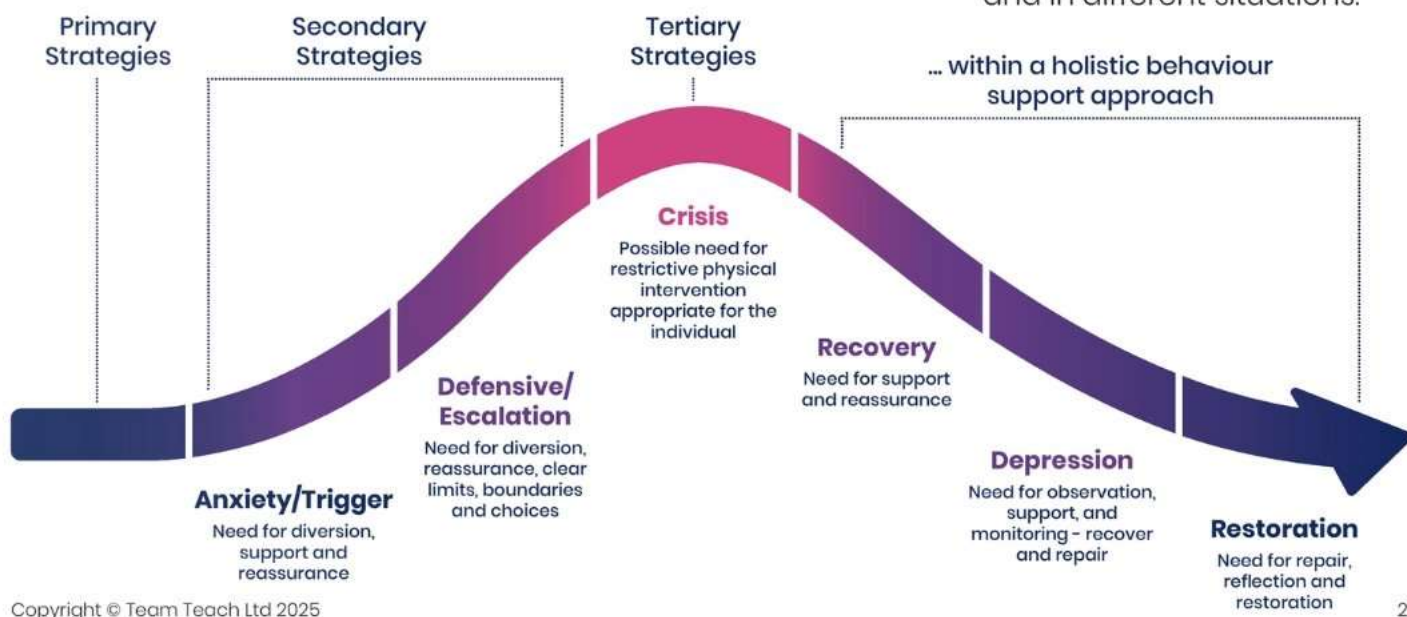
~Every interaction is an intervention ~

(insert Student Picture to identify and insert name)	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Recovery (*Depression)	Restoration
What behaviours might we see?					
How could the individual support themselves.					
How can staff support and respond.					
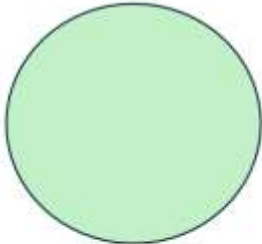
Stages of Distress and Support

TeamTeach

The Stages of Distress and Support can look very different for individuals and in different situations.

... within a holistic behaviour support approach

Primary Strategies

Secondary Strategies

Tertiary Strategies

Crisis
Possible need for restrictive physical intervention appropriate for the individual

Anxiety/Trigger
Need for diversion, support and reassurance

Defensive/ Escalation
Need for diversion, reassurance, clear limits, boundaries and choices

Recovery
Need for support and reassurance

Depression
Need for observation, support, and monitoring - recover and repair

Restoration
Need for repair, reflection and restoration

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Appendix 2: One Page Profile for students (adapted from AET)

Goals Card Guidance:

- ✓ Goals cards are used to support students to be successful and to celebrate those successes.
- ✓ They provide clear expectations & boundaries for our students and are most successful when used consistently and in collaboration with a student.
- ✓ Goals cards should apply a day at a time – it's important that students see each day as a new day and a chance to achieve.
- ✓ Goals cards should be introduced to students and parents/carers as a positive measure and feedback should be given regularly.
- ✓ Goals cards should be used for a fixed and agreed period of time and then their use for that student should be reviewed.

Completing Goals Cards

- ✓ Goals cards should be completed with the student after each lesson, so they feel involved, heard, and valued.
- ✓ Focus first on what went well, using language that highlights effort, progress, and strengths.
- ✓ If a goal isn't met in one session, simply leave the space blank – this avoids the feeling of failure and reinforces that it is an opportunity to try again.
- ✓ At the end of the day, review the card together, reflecting on successes and identifying what helped the student to achieve their goals.
- ✓ Goals cards can also be shared with members of the leadership team (as agreed when they are set), helping to celebrate achievements more widely and ensure consistent support.
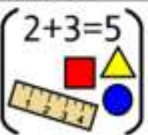
Goals Card

Student Name _____   **Day/Date** _____

Morning	Session	Target 1	Target 2		Afternoon	Session	Target 1	Target 2
	Arrivals					Lunch		
	Lesson 1					Lesson 4		
	Break					Lesson 5		
	Lesson 2					Review of the Day	**Student Review**	**Teacher Review**
	Lesson 3							

What is Thrive?

Thrive is a whole-school approach that supports children and young people's social and emotional development. It helps staff understand the reasons behind behaviour and respond in ways that build safety, connection, and resilience. Instead of focusing only on "what went wrong," Thrive looks at **what the child needs** and how adults can meet those needs through positive, attuned relationships.

Why Thrive in Behaviour?

- Behaviour is communication — it tells us something about a child's feelings, needs, or level of regulation.
- Thrive provides a framework for staff to respond consistently, compassionately, and effectively.
- By recognising developmental needs, we can reduce behaviour that challenges and increase students' ability to engage, learn, and thrive in school.

The Thrive Strands

Thrive identifies six strands of social and emotional development. Each strand builds on the one before, and sometimes children may need support in earlier strands before they can move forward.

1. **Being** *(0–6 months developmental stage)*
   - Focus: Feeling safe, secure, and cared for.
   - In practice: Providing warmth, consistency, predictable routines, and emotional containment.

2. **Doing** *(6–18 months)*
   - Focus: Exploring the world safely with the support of a trusted adult.
   - In practice: Encouraging curiosity, play, and shared activities with supportive boundaries.

3. **Thinking** *(18 months–3 years)*
   - Focus: Beginning to understand cause and effect, and developing simple problem-solving skills.
   - In practice: Naming feelings, modelling safe choices, helping children manage impulses.

4. **Power and Identity** *(3–7 years)*
    - o Focus: Developing independence, confidence, and a sense of self.
    - o In practice: Offering choices, celebrating individuality, setting fair boundaries, and supporting responsibility.

5. **Skills and Structure** *(7–11 years)*
    - o Focus: Learning to manage relationships, responsibilities, and expectations.
    - o In practice: Encouraging teamwork, planning, fairness, empathy, and following agreed rules.

6. **Interdependence** *(11 years+)*
    - o Focus: Building mature, trusting relationships and contributing positively to community life.
    - o In practice: Supporting collaboration, leadership, and a balance between independence and belonging.

Isebrook School supports young people with a wide range of needs, including cognition and learning, communication, autism, sensory processing, SEMH (social, emotional, and mental health), and complex medical conditions. For many of these students, traditional behaviour management approaches are not enough — they need approaches that understand the *reasons behind behaviour* and provide tools for regulation and connection.

Thrive is particularly valuable in this context because:

1. **Behaviour as Communication**
   o Many students may struggle to express their feelings, needs, or anxieties with words. Behaviour becomes their main form of communication.
   o Thrive helps staff interpret the meaning behind behaviour and respond in ways that reduce stress rather than escalate it.

2. **Developmental Gaps**
   o Some students may have developmental delays or uneven progress across emotional and social milestones.
   o Thrive allows staff to meet students where they are developmentally, not just chronologically, and support them to fill gaps in a safe, structured way.

3. **Consistency and Predictability**
   o Students with additional needs often rely on predictable routines and consistent adult responses to feel secure.
   o The Thrive approach gives all staff a shared framework, reducing inconsistency and helping students trust adult responses.

4. **Focus on Relationships**
   o Strong, trusting relationships are the foundation for learning in special schools.
   o Thrive prioritises co-regulation, attunement, and repair, which are essential for students who may have experienced trauma, attachment difficulties, or high anxiety.

5. **Celebrating Progress, Not Just Outcomes**
   o In a special school, small steps of progress are significant and should be celebrated.
   o Thrive shifts the focus from "fixing behaviour" to recognising growth in self-regulation, resilience, and relationships — all key skills for lifelong independence.

6. **Supports Staff Wellbeing and Confidence**
   - o Staff are given practical strategies to use in challenging situations, reducing stress and increasing confidence.
   - o This in turn creates a calmer, more nurturing school environment.

In short: Thrive equips Isebrook school staff with a *trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate, and relational approach* that helps students feel safe, understood, and able to learn — while also supporting staff to respond with consistency and care.