



ATTEND – ENGAGE - PROGRESS

‘Reality Strikes Academy provides alternative education that combines academic learning with football coaching to help young people reengage with education, through a trauma informed, nurturing environment. The vision is to foster holistic personal and emotional growth to create positive pathways into the future for young people.’

REALITY STRIKES ACADEMY

Behaviour for Learning Policy

2025-26

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Introduction

Reality Strikes Academy deal with a wide spectrum of pupils in a variety of contexts. Naturally, the issue of pupil behaviour is central to our School and this document delineates both the philosophy and practice that informs our work.

It aims to provide a practical guide for staff in managing behaviour whilst ensuring that practice is grounded in a philosophy that places the needs of the child at its centre. All staff should be familiar and well versed in this policy.

Ethos

Reality Strikes Academy are committed to inclusive education and securing the greatest possible access to learning and opportunity to achieve for all pupils. Central to our ethos is the belief that pupils' behaviour can be modified, managed and enhanced in order to enable them to engage with the learning process.

We believe that pupils can, and should, be encouraged and taught to regulate their own behaviour. Also, that staff can, and should, influence pupil behaviour by creating positive environments where learning can take place in a calm, purposeful way.

Our belief that pupils can work towards autonomous control of their behaviour is tempered by our belief that children and young people need guidance and boundaries that are reflective of those of society more generally.

The range of provision at Reality Strikes is designed to meet the individual needs of every child as far as is practicably possible.

We are convinced that, where pupils' needs are adequately catered for, appropriate behaviour is fostered and emotional development is facilitated. Adaptation of the curriculum and the environment at Reality Strikes should take into account every pupil's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities as well as seeking to mitigate any environmental factors that the pupil may need to overcome in order to access school and education.

Promoting and Recognising Good/Expected Behaviour

Creating an appropriate environment to meet pupils' needs will provide the backdrop against which behaviour can improve and be maintained.

However, all Reality Strikes staff will be aware of and use techniques and communication methods that further enhance the process that collectively we would describe as *Positive Teaching*.

Positive Teaching entails the systematic and consistent application of sound behavioural principles centred on the positive reinforcement of desired behaviours.

Teachers will use verbal praise of pupils for standards of work, effort, pro-social behaviours and individual regulation of behaviour as a primary technique. This may seem obvious, but we recognise that research and our own observations indicate that educational professionals can tend to lapse into negative reinforcement and focus on rule breaking rather than giving positive feedback to pupils who are behaving appropriately.

Rewards and Celebrating Success

Pupils, in conjunction with Form Tutors/Key Workers, are set weekly points targets (See 'Whole School Behaviour System' and 'Appendix 1' below).

Each pupil's targets will be different dependant on their needs, their timetable, how long they have been on roll with Compass Community Schools and a variety of other factors concerning their SEMH needs and presentations.

Where pupils meet these targets, their points are then converted into tangible rewards in the form of vouchers, gift certificates or similar. Pupils can choose to 'cash in' on a weekly basis or save-up their rewards for a larger 'withdrawal' at a later stage in the term or academic year.

All pupil's successes are celebrated, rewards presented and targets set, in weekly-timetabled Celebration Assemblies.

Managing Challenging Behaviour

We are a therapeutic community and all staff will be trained by, and have access to, a broad network of experienced, skilled and qualified professionals from the fields of education, psychology, counselling, social care, safeguarding and school leadership.

Staff will always seek to understand the need being communicated by, or the underlying cause or trigger for, any negative presentation or challenging behaviour as a matter of course. Any identified needs, triggers or causes will then be addressed in order to prevent recurrence of such behaviours.

Any relevant information regarding underlying needs or triggers will be recorded in the pupil's Grab Sheet and Individual Learning Plan (ILP) in order that all staff can be aware of them to support their needs accordingly.

Reality Strikes Academy do not believe that being therapeutic and child centred is supported by being permissive.

Together with our emphasis on positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour, alongside extensive adaptation to the curriculum and learning environment to support positive behaviours, we also maintain high expectations with regards to standards of behaviour for all pupils at all times.

The *Whole School Behaviour System* reinforces these expectations and supports pupils to:

- Follow directions from staff
- Conduct themselves in a safe manner
- Engage in learning activities to the best of their ability and seek help if needed
- Communicate effectively and respectfully with others
- Treat property with care; be that their own, their peers' or the school's
- Remain at school throughout their school day
- Think and negotiate rather than react and demand
- Develop a sense of responsibility for their own actions and choices

All staff are insistent, consistent and persistent in these expectations.

Wherever pupils meet the behavioural and pro-social expectations placed upon them, the consequences will be that they are rewarded and their achievements will be celebrated.

Wherever pupils' behaviour falls below these expectations, the consequences will be that there are proportionate and predictable steps for either restoration or reflection that will support pupils to modify their behaviour and move forwards from them.

Positive and negative consequences outlined above are not mutually exclusive and both can exist in the same day, and even within the same lesson or interaction.

The Whole School Behaviour System

- Pupils have the opportunity to be rewarded with points in both structured and unstructured time throughout the school day.
- The school day consists of nine sessions. Every session provides an opportunity to 'start again' and leave any challenging issues behind.
 - Morning Registration/Warm Up
 - Lesson 1
 - Lesson 2
 - Morning Break
 - Lesson 3
 - Lesson 4
 - Lunch Break
 - Afternoon Registration/Settling Time
 - Football session
- Where a pupil arrives to a lesson on-time and ready to learn, they receive 5 points on entry.
or
- Where a pupil conducts themselves in a pro-social and safe/compliant manner during break times they receive 5 points.
- If a pupil remains on task, follows all instructions and maintains good listening, focus, effort & behaviour, they will retain these 5 points at the end of the lesson or session.
- In addition, pupils have the opportunity achieve bonus points for examples of kind, brave, reflective and pro-social behaviours as well as for excellent examples of focus, effort and academic output.
- Dependent on a pupil's behaviour in the course of a lesson, they may lose points. There is a sliding scale from 5 to 0 with clear and simple descriptors. These are displayed in every room and pupil-facing space in the school for reference. (See Appendix 1).
- Dependent on the behaviour, these Restorative/Reflective Sessions could include;
 - 'Natural consequences' such as completing work or lessons that were missed, tidying any mess created or fixing any damage caused.
 - 'Restorative practice' may involve mending relationships that have been damaged, re-establishing respectful practices and reminding pupils of expectations, discussing personal responsibilities and considering re-integrative strategies to prevent ongoing anxiety, shame or stress that may give rise to further incidences.
 - 'Reflective practice' may involve discussing, analysing or engaging in activities to help pupils make sense of what may have been a traumatic or chaotic event with a view to preventing them from reoccurring.
- Where a pupil refuses to, or is unable to, engage meaningfully in a Restorative/Reflective Session, Senior School Leaders will seek to liaise with the pupil's parents or carers on the same day to bring about a swift and meaningful resolution for all.

Detentions and Restorative/Reflective Sessions outside of school hours

- Where a pupil refuses to, or is unable to, engage meaningfully in a Restorative/Reflective Session during the school day as outlined above, Senior School Leaders are able to extend the session to take place after school.
- Schools do not have to give notice to parents for after-school detentions or Restorative/Reflective Sessions, provided the pupil can get home safely afterwards. Senior Leaders should consider individual circumstances and always seek to do this in communication and conjunction with parents/carers.
- Where pupils consistently leave lessons or refuse to complete work/engage with learning activities during the school day, catch up sessions will be arranged with permission from senior school leaders.
- Schools do not have to give notice to parents/carers for after-school detentions or catch-up sessions, provided the pupil can get home safely afterwards. Senior Leaders should consider individual circumstances and always seek to do this in communication and conjunction with parents/carers.

Restrictive Physical Intervention and Physical Contact with Children

Please refer to the *Physical Contact with Children Policy* for a full overview of Reality Strikes Academy approach and ethos.

The Department for Education states that:

'school staff can use reasonable force if necessary to protect pupils or others from harm. They can also use it to stop pupils from causing damage or disruption. Reasonable force includes physical restraint such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom'.

All staff are trained as soon as possible upon employment in PRICE techniques and de-escalation methods to avoid this being required wherever possible.

Reality Strikes Academy staff can and will, use the least restrictive method of physical intervention in order to:

- 1) Keep that child safe.
- 2) Keep others safe. This includes peers, staff and members of the wider community.
- 3) Prevent significant damage to property.
- 4) Prevent significant disruption to others.

Exclusions

Please refer to the *Exclusions Policy* for a full overview of Reality Strikes Academy approach and ethos.

The Exclusions Policy outlines our commitment to always precluding the need for exclusion or suspension.

Whilst Reality Strikes Academy never want to reject children, we must reject certain behaviours and always keep our communities safe and purposeful.

Record Keeping

Reality Strikes Academy use CPOMS as their primary behavioural record keeping system.

All incidences of challenging, unsafe, or non-compliant behaviour are recorded here. These records will include consequences and actions that the school have carried out, and any sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.

Incidences are regularly monitored by Senior Leadership Teams, Governors and the Operations Board to identify patterns or areas where additional support is required.

All pupils have dynamic individual risk assessments, Grab Sheets and Independent Learning Plans (ILPs).

The nature of our provision means that the behaviour of some pupils may present a risk to themselves and others. As such, accurate, timely and transparent record keeping serves a number of purposes:

- They are an invaluable aid to risk assessment and risk reduction by communicating information about known hazards.
- They can provide evidence of patterns to enable school leaders to provide appropriate training to staff.
- They protect children from malpractice or poor practice.
- They protect staff against false or malicious allegations.
- They provide a narrative of strategies and interventions that have been effective or otherwise over time to all stakeholders, not least to the pupils themselves as well as their parents and carers.

All staff have a duty to record all incidences of challenging, unsafe or non-compliant behaviour, ideally before the end of the day on which it occurred. Where this is not possible, it should be no later than 24 hours from the time that the incident occurred.

School Leaders are ultimately accountable for, and have a duty to review, all records concerning challenging, unsafe or non-compliant behaviour.

Damage & Loss of School Property

We understand that schools are dynamic, active places and that accidents happen. Sometimes pupils will accidentally damage or mishandle school property i.e. books, tools, equipment, furniture. If there is no reason to suspect any carelessness or malicious intent, there is often no reason to proceed any further.

Where a pupil,

- deliberately destroys or causes damage to any school property, or,
- does so as a result of significant refusal to comply with staff direction,

Senior Leaders will require the pupil to be actively involved in its repair or restoration.

There may be incidences where the property is particularly expensive to repair or is beyond means of repair. In these situations, the school reserves the right to seek repayment for all or part of any associated costs. This may be from the child themselves, from a parent or carer, or from a placing Local Authority.

Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Our policy with regards to Searching, Screening and Confiscation is informed by DfE advice and statutory guidance as outlined in *Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for schools* (July 2022).

Introduction

Ensuring school staff and pupils feel safe and secure is vital to establishing calm and supportive environments conducive to learning. Using searching, screening and confiscation powers appropriately is an important way to ensure pupil and staff welfare is protected and helps schools establish an environment where everyone is safe.

Reality Strikes Academy Senior Leaders and Governors will ensure that schools' powers are properly understood so that headteachers and other staff have the confidence to use them if necessary.

The Human Rights of a pupil subject to a search

Before screening or conducting a search of a pupil, it is vital that schools consider their obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights. Under Article 8, pupils have a right to respect for their private life. In the context of these rights and obligations, this means that pupils have the right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy.

The right under Article 8 is not absolute; it can be interfered with, but any interference with this right by a school (or any public body) must be justified and proportionate.

The powers to search in the Education Act 1996 are compatible with Article 8. A school exercising those powers lawfully should have no difficulty in demonstrating that it has also acted in accordance with Article 8.

The School's right and grounds for Searching Pupils

Reality Strikes Academy staff given authority to, can, and reserve the right to, search students or their possessions where there are reasonable grounds to suspect they have a prohibited item listed below, or any other item that is prohibited by school rules.

Any member of school staff can search a pupil for any item *with* their consent under common law. There is no requirement for written consent – it's enough to ask the pupil to turn out their pockets or to look in their bag or locker, and for the pupil to agree.

The member of staff should ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted so that their agreement is informed.

Senior Leaders, including SENCOs where necessary, must consider the age and needs of pupils being searched or screened. This includes the individual needs or learning difficulties of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and making reasonable adjustments that may be required where a pupil has a disability.

Prohibited items outlined by The DfE:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:
 - to commit an offence, or
 - to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil).
- an article specified in regulations:
 - tobacco and cigarette papers
 - fireworks; and
 - pornographic images.

Reality Strikes Academy also bans all use of mobile phones (see below) and vapes.

Role of the Headteacher and DSL

Only the headteacher, or a member of staff authorised by the headteacher, can carry out a search.

The headteacher will authorise individual members of staff to search for specific items on a case-by-case basis.

The headteacher will oversee, and is ultimately responsible for, the school's practice of searching to ensure that a culture of safe, proportionate and appropriate searching is maintained.

The headteacher is ultimately responsible for safeguarding the welfare of all pupils and staff with support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The headteacher and any authorised staff must be appropriately trained in how to lawfully and safely search a pupil who is not co-operating, so that these trained staff can support and advise other members of staff if this situation arises. [Search & Seizure Training Course & Certificate for Schools \(nationalcollege.com\)](https://www.nationalcollege.com)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed of any searching incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of a prohibited item as listed above. The staff member should also liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) without delay if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk.

Before a search

A search can be considered if the member of staff with authority from the Headteacher has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, or if the pupil has agreed.

Before any search takes place, the member of staff conducting the search should explain to the pupil why they are being searched, how and where the search is going to take place and give them the opportunity to ask any questions.

The authorised member of staff should always seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search. If the pupil is not willing to co-operate with the search, the member of staff should consider why this is. Reasons might include that they:

- are in possession of a prohibited item;
- do not understand the instruction;
- are unaware of what a search may involve; or
- have had a previous distressing experience of being searched.

If a pupil continues to refuse to co-operate, the member of staff may sanction the pupil in line with the whole school behaviour system outlined above, ensuring that they are responding to challenging behaviour consistently and fairly.

If the member of staff still considers a search to be necessary, but is not required urgently, they should seek the advice of the headteacher, designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) or pastoral member of staff who may have more information about the pupil. During this time the pupil should be supervised and kept away from other pupils.

If the pupil still refuses to co-operate, the member of staff should assess whether it is appropriate to use reasonable force to conduct the search. A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for the following prohibited items only;

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:
 - to commit an offence, or
 - to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil).
- an article specified in regulations:
 - tobacco and cigarette papers
 - fireworks; and
 - pornographic images.

Any reasonable force should be carried out in line with the Physical Contact with Children Policy.

During a search - Where

An appropriate location for the search should be found. Where possible, this should be away from other pupils. The search must only take place on the school premises or where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil, for example on a school trip.

During a search - Who

The law states the member of staff conducting the search must be of the same sex as the pupil being searched. There must be another member of staff present as a witness to the search.

There is a limited exception to this rule. This is that a member of staff can search a pupil of the opposite sex and/or without a witness present only:

- if the member of staff carrying out the search reasonably believes there is risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not carried out as a matter of urgency; and
- in the time available, it is not reasonably practicable for the search to be carried out by a member of staff who is same sex as the pupil or it is not reasonably practicable for the search to be carried out in the presence of another member of staff.

When a member of staff conducts a search without a witness they should immediately report this to another member of staff, and ensure a record of the search is kept on CPOMS.

During a search – The Extent of the Search

A member of staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers.

The person conducting the search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing. 'Outer clothing' means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear, as well as hats, shoes, boots or scarves.

'Possessions' means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control - this includes desks, lockers and bags.

It is a condition of using a personal space at school, such as a locker or desk, that a pupil agrees to it being searched as the discretion of school leadership. As such, a member of staff is able to search lockers and desks or other personal spaces at the school for any item.

A pupil's possessions should only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff.

There is one exception to the above which is that, where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

The member of staff may use a hand-held metal detector or 'wand' to assist with the search. This is known as 'Screening'.

Whilst this will not be routine, we are able to, and reserve the right to, require pupils to undergo screening by hand-held metal detector.

If a pupil refuses to be screened, we may refuse to have them on school premises. This will be treated as an unauthorised absence.

No member of staff has the power to conduct a strip search.

Only police officers can carry out strip searches. For any instances, please refer to [Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for schools \(July 2022\)](#).

After a Search

Whether or not any items have been found as a result of any search, staff in conjunction with School Leaders should consider whether the reasons for the search, the search itself, or the outcome of the search give cause to suspect that the pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer harm, and/or whether any specific support is needed.

Where this may be the case, school staff will follow the school's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as set out in Part 1 of Keeping children safe in education.

They will consider if pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

If any prohibited items are found during the search, the member of staff should follow the guidance set out below.

Recording Searches and Informing Parents/Carers

Any search as outlined above, including those carried out by police officers, should be recorded on CPOMS, including whether or not an item is found.

As a minimum, the following should be recorded:

- the date, time and location of the search;
- which pupil was searched;
- who conducted the search and any other adults or pupils present;
- what was being searched for;
- the reason for searching;
- what items, if any, were found; and
- what follow-up action was taken as a consequence of the search.

The schools will reinforce the whole-school approach by building and maintaining positive relationships with parents.

Whilst the school does not need to, and may not be able to, inform parents/carers before a search takes place, parents/carers should always be informed of any search that has taken place, and the outcome of the search as soon as is practicable. This should ideally be no later than the end of the day on which the search took place.

Any complaints about searching, screening or confiscation should be dealt with through the normal school complaints procedure.

Confiscating items

The Headteacher, or staff that they have authorised to do so, can confiscate, retain or dispose of any item that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting;

- poses a risk to staff or pupils
- is prohibited as per this policy; or
- is evidence in relation to an offence.

Controlled drugs must be delivered to the police as soon as possible. When staff are unsure as to the legal status of a substance and have reason to believe it may be a controlled drug, they should treat it as such.

Other substances which are not believed to be controlled should also be delivered to the police, as above, if the member of staff believes they could be harmful.

Where a member of staff conducting a search finds **alcohol, tobacco, cigarette papers or fireworks**, they may retain or dispose of them as they think appropriate but should not return them to the pupil. This also applies to **vapes and e-cigarettes**.

If a member of staff finds a **pornographic image**, they must dispose of the image unless they have reasonable grounds to suspect that its possession constitutes a specified offence (i.e. it is extreme or an indecent image of a child) in which case it must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.

Members of staff should never intentionally view any indecent image of a child (also sometimes known as nude or semi-nude images). Staff must never copy, print, share, store or save such images.

Where a member of staff finds **stolen items**, these must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. However, if there is good reason to do so, the member of staff may also return the item to the owner, or retain or dispose of it, considering the below;

- the value of the item - it would not be reasonable or desirable to involve the police in dealing with low value items such as pencil cases, though school staff may judge it appropriate to contact the police if the items are valuable;
- whether the item is banned by the school;
- whether retaining or returning the item to the owner may place any person at risk of harm; and
- whether the item can be disposed of safely.

Any **weapons or items which are evidence of a suspected offence** must be passed to the police as soon as possible.

Items that **have been (or are likely to be) used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury or damage to property** should be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable or disposed of if it is safe to do so.

Mobile phones

We recognise that many parents find their child carrying a mobile phone to and from school a comfort. However, we are also aware that some students find the temptation of a smartphone in the school bag too large to ignore.

Mobile phones and smartphones are therefore **prohibited** in school.

Where children wish to have their smartphone with them on the way to and from school, this must be discussed and agreed with Senior Leadership and parents/carers. The standard protocol will be that phones are switched off and locked away with a member of staff in the school reception or office throughout the school day.

Mobile phones are a distraction to learning; they are not needed within school, and they can lead children to making poor decisions which they then later regret. Schools have been praised for this approach by local police liaison officers.

Students who ignore this school policy and who bring smartphones into school or who use any form of mobile phone during the day will have the device confiscated. This will be stored securely and can only be collected and signed for by a student's parent or carer.

If a child needs to be contacted during the school day, this can be done via the school office or reception and vice versa.

Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data which relate to an offence, or which may cause harm to another person. This includes, but is not limited to, indecent images of children, pornography, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence relating to suspected criminal behaviour.

As with all prohibited items, staff should first consider the appropriate safeguarding response if they find images, data or files on an electronic device that they reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk.

Staff may examine any data or files on an electronic device they have confiscated as a result of a search, if there is good reason to do so.

If the member of staff conducting the search suspects they may find an indecent image of a child (sometimes known as nude or semi-nude images), the member of staff should never intentionally view the image, and must never copy, print, share, store or save such images.

When an incident might involve an indecent image of a child and/or video, the member of staff should confiscate the device, avoid looking at the device and refer the incident to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as the most appropriate person to advise on the school's response.

If a member of staff finds any image, data or file that they suspect might constitute a specified offence, then they must be delivered to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable.

In exceptional circumstances members of staff may dispose of the image or data if there is a good reason to do so. In determining a 'good reason' to examine or erase the data or files, the member of staff must have regard to the following guidance issued by the Secretary of State:

- the member of staff should reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device has been, or could be used, to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.
- the member of staff should consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In those instances, the data or files should not be deleted, and the device must be handed to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. If the data or files are not suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence, a member of staff may delete the data or files if the continued existence of the data or file is likely to continue to cause harm to any person and the pupil and/or the parent refuses to delete the data or files themselves.

Bullying

Please refer to the Countering Bullying Policy for in depth guidance and a statement of our stance and approach to bullying.

All pupils and staff need to feel safe within the school environment and staff need to be vigilant in spotting and preventing potential bullying.

Equally, staff need to take decisive and immediate action to deal with pupils who are bullying others. Such actions, whilst always being conscious of a child's cognitive and emotional development, will entail sanctions and/or consequences for pupils who bully others. Sanctions used should be the same as those employed for other forms of rule breaking as outlined in the Whole School Behaviour System above.

Behaviour beyond the school gates

Reality Strikes Academy may, and reserve the right to, intervene and impose consequences where a pupil's behaviour falls below expectations outside of school hours and off-school site.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity;
- travelling to or from school;
- being in some other way identifiable as a student from the school.

