POLICY 06 | 2026-27

Behaviour and anti bullying

Owner: Martha Bache, Director and Proprietor. Operational safeguarding: Martha Bache, DSL; Stephanie Selby, DDSL. Health and safety: Edwin Ralph.

Version: 2026-27.1 | Approved and effective: 17 October 2026

Approved by: Martha Bache, Director and Proprietor | Next review: September 2027, or earlier if required.

1 Purpose and ethos

Crea Pax provides a small, trauma-informed alternative provision for learners whose needs may include social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, SEND, neurodiversity, anxiety, previous exclusion or difficulty accessing conventional education. Our approach is relational and strengths-based. We understand behaviour as communication and seek to understand the need, emotion, experience or barrier behind it while maintaining clear boundaries and keeping everybody safe.

The purpose of this policy is to promote emotional and physical safety, positive relationships, respectful behaviour and effective learning; to prevent and respond to bullying and child-on-child abuse; and to ensure that staff respond consistently, proportionately and in a way that reflects each learner’s individual needs.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all learners attending or receiving provision from Crea Pax and to all employees, apprentices, volunteers, contractors and visitors involved in provision. It applies on the Crea Pax site, during animal-assisted and outdoor activities, on local or off-site activities, during transport where Crea Pax is responsible, and to relevant online or digital behaviour that affects learner safety or wellbeing.

3 Core principles

- Emotional and physical safety comes first.
- Behaviour is considered in context and is not separated from SEND, communication, trauma, sensory needs, mental health or safeguarding.
- Learners are treated with dignity. Staff remain calm, curious, predictable and boundaried.
- Regulation and co-regulation may be needed before reflection, problem-solving or learning can take place.
- Positive behaviour is developed through relationships, modelling, meaningful activity, clear expectations and appropriate support rather than punishment alone.
- Consequences, where needed, are reasonable, proportionate, educational and connected to safety or repairing harm.
- Bullying, discriminatory behaviour, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour and other child-on-child abuse are never dismissed as banter or an inevitable part of growing up.

4 Roles and responsibilities

Proprietor and DSL Martha Bache

Has overall responsibility for this policy, ensures behaviour practice remains consistent with safeguarding requirements, oversees serious or repeated incidents and ensures concerns are shared with commissioning schools, families and statutory agencies where appropriate.

Deputy DSL Stephanie Selby

Supports safeguarding and behaviour oversight, staff practice, restorative work and communication with learners, families and partner professionals.

Health and Safety Lead Edwin Ralph

Supports operational risk management, environmental controls, incident review and changes to risk assessments where behaviour creates or is affected by health and safety risks.

All staff

All staff must model respectful behaviour, follow individual learner plans and risk controls, use agreed de-escalation and regulation approaches, record significant incidents accurately and report safeguarding concerns without delay.

5 Expectations and individualisation

Crea Pax keeps expectations simple and accessible: treat people, animals, property and the environment with care; follow reasonable safety instructions; communicate needs where possible; and allow others to learn and feel safe. Expectations are explained in ways that reflect a learner’s age, development, communication profile, SEND and current level of regulation.

Equal treatment does not always mean identical treatment. Reasonable adjustments and individual support may include reduced demands, visual prompts, processing time, movement, quiet space, sensory support, access to a trusted adult, animal-assisted activity, changes to group size or staffing, and planned step-away or regulation opportunities.

6 Supporting positive behaviour and engagement

Staff use proactive strategies to reduce distress and increase engagement. These may include predictable routines, preparation for transitions, clear choices, achievable tasks, co-regulation, emotional coaching, Motivational Interviewing approaches, CBT-informed tools, creative or practical activity, outdoor learning and carefully planned Animal-Assisted Interventions.

Praise and reinforcement should be genuine, specific and appropriate to the learner. Staff recognise effort, communication, safe choices, kindness, independence, persistence and successful use of regulation strategies.

7 Dysregulation, distress and unsafe behaviour

When a learner becomes distressed or dysregulated, staff prioritise safety and reduce escalation. Depending on the learner and situation, staff may reduce language and demands, increase space, remove unnecessary people or hazards, offer a familiar regulating activity, provide access to a trusted adult or safer area, and use the learner’s individual support/risk plan.

Staff do not use humiliation, intimidation, shouting as a behaviour-management strategy, collective punishment, deprivation of food or drink, or sanctions that knowingly aggravate a learner’s disability, SEND or emotional distress.

Where there is immediate risk, staff may stop an activity, move other learners, remove accessible hazards or unsafe equipment, increase staffing, contact a parent/carer or commissioning school, or end the session if this is necessary to maintain safety. Significant events are reviewed so that plans and controls can be improved.

8 Physical contact and restrictive intervention

Crea Pax does not use physical intervention as a routine behaviour-management strategy. Staff should use prevention, de-escalation, environmental changes and relational approaches wherever possible. Any physical intervention must be lawful, necessary and proportionate to the immediate risk and must use the minimum force required for the shortest practicable time.

Any significant physical intervention or incident involving physical contact for safety must be recorded, communicated to the DSL and parent/carer/commissioner as appropriate, and reviewed. Safeguarding concerns arising from an incident are managed under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Crea Pax does not assume that statutory search or use-of-force powers granted to a particular class of school automatically apply to this provision. Staff act only within an applicable lawful basis and their role, training and competence. Physical intervention is a last resort to prevent significant harm, not a means of punishment, enforcing task completion or stopping a capacitous adult choosing to leave.

9 Individual risk assessment and support planning

Where a learner presents additional behavioural, emotional, medical, sensory, self-harm, absconding, aggression or other safety risks, Crea Pax uses an individual risk assessment and support plan. This identifies known triggers or stressors, early signs, communication needs, helpful and unhelpful responses, staffing requirements, environmental controls, regulation strategies and emergency/escalation arrangements.

Plans are informed by the learner, family, commissioning school and relevant professional information and are reviewed after significant incidents or changes in need, and routinely as part of placement oversight.

10 Bullying and child on child abuse

Crea Pax does not tolerate bullying or child-on-child abuse. Behaviour may occur face-to-face or online and may include repeated verbal or physical intimidation, exclusion, coercion, discriminatory abuse, cyberbullying, sexual harassment or violence, harmful sexual behaviour, sharing sexual imagery, upskirting, initiation or hazing-type behaviour, or abuse within intimate personal relationships between children.

Staff remain alert to the fact that learners with SEND, communication differences or previous trauma may be particularly vulnerable to being targeted, may find it harder to report concerns, or may communicate distress through changes in behaviour.

11 Responding to bullying or peer abuse

All reports are taken seriously. Staff listen without blaming, avoid promising confidentiality, ensure immediate safety, preserve relevant evidence where appropriate and report safeguarding concerns promptly to the DSL/DDSL. The needs and wishes of the learner who has experienced harm are considered alongside the safety and support needs of all learners involved.

Responses may include increased supervision, changes to groups or activities, individual support, restorative work where safe and appropriate, education about relationships and boundaries, risk-assessment changes, family and school liaison, safeguarding referral or police involvement where thresholds are met. Restorative work is never used to pressure a learner into contact with somebody who has harmed them.

12 Discriminatory and prejudicial behaviour

Racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, ableist, faith-based or other discriminatory language or behaviour is challenged and addressed. Staff consider both education and safeguarding needs, record significant incidents and monitor patterns. Reasonable adjustments or SEND do not mean that harmful behaviour is ignored; they inform how it is understood and responded to.

13 Searching, confiscation and prohibited or unsafe items

Crea Pax prioritises voluntary cooperation and de-escalation. Where an item presents a safety or safeguarding concern, staff may ask a learner to hand it over and secure it. Any search or confiscation must be lawful, necessary, proportionate and sensitive to the learner’s dignity, SEND, trauma history and safeguarding needs. Where the situation falls outside staff competence or presents immediate danger, staff should secure safety and seek support from the DSL, commissioning school, parent/carer or police as appropriate rather than escalating risk through an unsafe search.

Any search linked to a safeguarding concern, weapon, suspected illegal substance or sexual imagery must be reported immediately to the DSL and recorded.

Staff do not undertake forced searches under assumed school powers. If voluntary cooperation cannot safely resolve the concern, maintain immediate safety, involve the DSL and seek police or other appropriate assistance. Suspected sexual imagery is not viewed, copied, forwarded or searched for by staff.

14 Animals, outdoor areas and practical activities

Animals are an important part of Crea Pax provision and must never be used as a punishment, threat or bargaining tool. Learners are supported to interact with animals safely and respectfully, according to individual risk assessment, staff instruction and animal welfare requirements. Staff may immediately end or redirect animal contact where a learner, animal or other person could be harmed.

The same principle applies to tools, cooking equipment, sports equipment, fire-based activities, machinery and other practical resources: access is based on risk, competence, supervision and current regulation, not simply age or preference.

15 Leaving the learning area, refusal and missing learners

A learner who needs space should be supported through their agreed plan wherever possible. Staff do not create an avoidable confrontation solely because a learner refuses an activity. However, leaving an agreed safe area, attempting to leave the site or becoming unaccounted for is treated according to the learner's risk assessment and Crea Pax missing-learner procedures. Safeguarding and immediate safety take priority.

16 Recording, communication and review

Significant behaviour incidents are recorded factually and without judgement. Records should distinguish observation from what a learner or other person reports and, where relevant, include the context, antecedents or triggers, behaviour observed, risks, staff response and de-escalation used, injuries or damage, outcome, learner voice, notifications and follow-up actions.

Parents/carers and commissioning schools are informed in line with the seriousness of the incident, safeguarding requirements and placement arrangements. Patterns are considered alongside attendance, safeguarding, SEND and learner-progress information rather than viewing incidents in isolation.

17 Suspension, pause or ending a placement

Crea Pax aims to maintain placements through appropriate support, reasonable adjustment and multi-agency planning. A session or placement may nevertheless need to be paused, reviewed or ended where risks cannot be managed safely within the provision, where the placement no longer meets need, or following serious circumstances requiring commissioner review.

Any such decision is made with the commissioning school/local authority as appropriate and considers safeguarding, SEND, transition and continuity of support. Crea Pax does not use informal exclusion or simply send a learner away without appropriate communication and safeguarding consideration.

18 Links with safeguarding and other policies

Behaviour that causes concern may be an indicator of abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental ill-health, unmet SEND, peer abuse or other safeguarding need. Staff must not allow a behaviour-management response to replace a safeguarding response. Where there is a safeguarding concern, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy takes precedence.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Behaviour / Code of Conduct, Online Safety & Acceptable Use Policy, Attendance & CME Policy, SEND Policy, Equality & Diversity Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Risk Assessment Policy and Missing Learner procedure.

19 Training, monitoring and review

Behaviour expectations, de-escalation, safeguarding, SEND-informed practice and relevant individual learner plans are covered through induction, staff training, supervision and team discussion. The Proprietor/DSL monitors significant incidents and patterns, with the H&S Lead involved where environmental or operational risk is relevant.

This policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner following significant incidents, changes to statutory guidance, local authority requirements, staffing or provision, or where monitoring identifies a need for change.