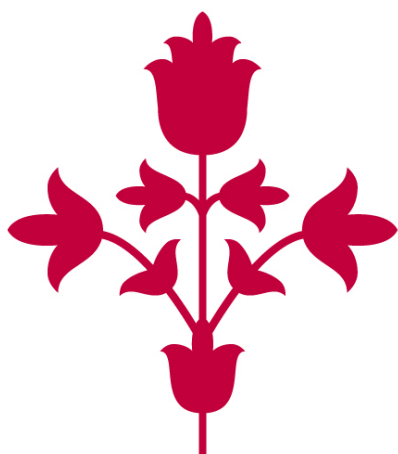




Earlscliffe



STATUTORY SCHOOL POLICY • 2026–27

Behaviour Policy

A clear, values-led framework for calm, safe and respectful learning and boarding.

Headteacher	Dr N Robinson
Deputy Headteacher	Mr L Connolly
Effective	Sept 1, 2026



Document control

Policy title	Behaviour Policy
School	Earlscliffe
Policy owner	Mr L Connolly, Deputy Headteacher
Accountable leader	Dr N Robinson, Headteacher
Approval authority	Governing Body
Version	1 - National College-aligned draft for governance approval
Prepared	Aug 17, 2026
Effective from	Sept 1, 2026
Next formal review	Before Sept 1, 2027 — or earlier following statutory, regulatory or school change
Applies to	All pupils, including boarders; all staff; governors and proprietors; volunteers; visitors; educational guardians; and pupils on school-arranged off-site activity

2026 COMMENCEMENT NOTE

This edition reflects Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, the statutory mobile-phone guidance to be followed from September 2026, the April 2026 restrictive-interventions guidance and the May 2026 National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. Approval should confirm that linked policies and operational routines have been aligned.

Approval and review record

Control	Record
Approved by	Dr N Robinson
Approval date	01 Sept 2026
Review completed by	01 Sept 2026
Date of next review	Before Sept 1, 2027

Changes in this edition

- Leadership and ownership updated to Dr N Robinson as Headteacher and Mr L Connolly as Deputy Headteacher; Earlscliffe × Dukes Education branding aligned with the 2026–27 policy suite.
- Reviewed against The National College model policy and expanded for Earlscliffe's independent day-and-boarding context without importing template instructions or maintained-school-only processes.
- Introduces an explicit behaviour curriculum, staff induction expectations, prevention and de-escalation, classroom removal and reintegration, and graduated SEND/SEMH support.
- Retains Earlscliffe's values-led recognition system and four-stage sanction ladder, while clarifying proportionality, decision-making authority, records, parental communication and appeals.
- Adds stronger provisions for child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, discriminatory conduct, malicious allegations, online conduct, generative AI, mobile phones, searches and confiscation.
- Replaces the superseded 2013 reasonable-force section with the April 2026 restrictive-interventions framework, including statutory recording and reporting duties for force, restraint and seclusion.
- Strengthens boarding controls under the May 2026 National Minimum Standards, including boarders' voice, consistent academic/residential practice, major-sanction and force records, and the right to raise concerns in good faith.
- Adds termly data evaluation by day/boarding status, SEND and relevant protected characteristics, together with a source register and pre-approval implementation checklist.

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Behaviour at a glance

CORE EXPECTATION

Every adult teaches, models and reinforces the same calm, respectful and inclusive routines. Every response combines accountability with support. Safety and safeguarding take priority over disciplinary process.

If you notice...	Immediate response	Then
A minor lapse	Use a calm reminder, restate the expected routine and allow the pupil to correct it.	Recognise correction. Record a strike only if the behaviour persists, repeats or needs monitoring.
Repeated or disruptive behaviour	Use proportionate teacher-led action; check for unmet need, SEND, SEMH or safeguarding indicators.	Record on iSAMS; inform the relevant tutor/boarding lead; use the staged ladder and targeted support.
Serious, unsafe or abusive behaviour	Protect people, summon senior support and separate pupils only where necessary and safe.	Inform the Deputy Headteacher and DSL where safeguarding may be engaged; preserve evidence; notify parents; record fully.
A disclosure or sexual/child-on-child incident	Listen, do not investigate beyond clarifying immediate safety, and do not promise confidentiality.	Follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy immediately. Disciplinary action must not prejudice police or social-care work.
A weapon, drugs or dangerous item	Do not take unnecessary personal risk. Seek senior assistance and call police in an emergency.	Follow the search/confiscation and safeguarding routes. Record decisions, items, disposal and follow-up.

Non-negotiable safeguards

- Corporal punishment, degrading treatment, humiliation, deprivation of food, drink, sleep or toilet access, and force used as punishment are prohibited.
- A pupil is not sanctioned simply for having SEND, a disability, a mental-health need, limited English, or for raising a concern or complaint in good faith.
- Unsubstantiated, unfounded or withdrawn allegations are not automatically malicious. Malice requires evidence that the report was knowingly false and intended to cause harm.
- Only authorised adults conduct searches. No member of school staff conducts a strip search. Suspected indecent images are not viewed, copied or forwarded.
- Significant use of force and every use of seclusion or restraint are recorded and reported in accordance with the 2026 framework.
- Boarders must have accessible routes to raise concerns and must not be penalised for doing so in good faith.

Contents

- 1. Purpose, scope and principles
- 2. Legal and regulatory framework
- 3. Culture, values and the behaviour curriculum
- 4. Roles and responsibilities
- 5. Equality, SEND, SEMH and safeguarding
- 6. Standards and pupil code of conduct
- 7. Recognition and rewards
- 8. Responding to behaviour
- 9. Sanctions and the four-stage ladder
- 10. Detention, removal, internal suspension and reintegration
- 11. Serious breaches, suspension and permanent exclusion
- 12. Bullying, discrimination, child-on-child abuse and sexual harassment
- 13. Mobile phones, online conduct and generative AI
- 14. Smoking, vaping, alcohol, drugs and prohibited items
- 15. Searches, screening and confiscation
- 16. Restrictive interventions, reasonable force and physical contact
- 17. Boarding and residential behaviour
- 18. Behaviour beyond the school site
- 19. Recording, data, quality assurance and review

Earlscliffe



1. Purpose, scope and principles

Earlscliffe promotes high standards of conduct so that every pupil can learn, live and flourish in a calm, safe, inclusive and ambitious community. This policy explains how the school teaches expected behaviour, recognises positive contribution, responds to misconduct and supports pupils whose needs affect behaviour.

It applies during the academic day and boarding time; on school premises; while a pupil is under school charge; on visits, activities, work experience, transport and school-arranged accommodation; and, where the legal and contractual threshold is met, to conduct away from school or online that affects safety, welfare, relationships, the orderly running of the school or the school community.

The policy is interpreted alongside the parent contract, safeguarding policy, anti-bullying policy, exclusions or required-removal arrangements, search and confiscation policy, SEND and learning-support procedures, acceptable-use and mobile-device rules, complaints procedure and boarding principles. Where documents overlap, safeguarding and statutory duties take priority.

Core principles

- High expectations are taught explicitly, modelled by adults and reinforced consistently across teaching and boarding.
- Responses are prompt, predictable, fair and proportionate; the purpose is to restore safety, learning and relationships and reduce recurrence.
- Recognition is specific and sincere, linked to effort, contribution and Earlscliffe's values rather than compliance alone.
- Sanctions are never purely punitive: support, reflection, repair and reintegration are considered alongside accountability.
- The school considers age, maturity, boarding status, cultural and linguistic background, SEND, disability, medical and mental-health needs, trauma, safeguarding and other relevant circumstances.
- Pupil voice is heard. A pupil is given a fair opportunity to explain what happened, without requiring a disclosure or admission before immediate safeguarding action is taken.
- The civil standard of proof - the balance of probabilities - is normally used for internal disciplinary findings, unless the parent contract or a specific procedure lawfully requires otherwise.
- The Headteacher may depart from the illustrative ladder where seriousness, risk, context or mitigation makes a different response reasonable. Similar cases are treated consistently, not mechanically identically.

2. Legal and regulatory framework

This policy has regard to legislation, statutory guidance and regulatory standards applicable to an independent boarding school in England. In particular:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, especially Part 3, paragraphs 7, 9 and 10, and Part 8 leadership and management requirements.
- The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, updated May 2026, especially Standards 3, 13–17 and the required records of major sanctions and use of force.
- Education Act 1996, including the statutory search powers in sections 550ZA–550ZC.
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, including the powers and duties relating to disciplinary penalties and use of force, and section 93A recording and reporting.
- Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012 and Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025.
- Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, Children Act 1989, Education Act 2002 and Children and Families Act 2014 where applicable.
- DfE Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; Mobile phones in schools statutory guidance 2026; Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools 2026; Searching, screening and confiscation guidance; SEND Code of Practice; and Mental health and behaviour in schools.

INDEPENDENT-SCHOOL CONTEXT

The statutory suspension and permanent-exclusion review framework for maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units does not govern Earlscliffe. Suspension, permanent exclusion/expulsion and any required removal are therefore managed under the school's parent contract, published procedures, natural justice, equality duties and safeguarding obligations. The national guidance is used where it provides relevant good practice.

3. Culture, values and the behaviour curriculum

Earlscliffe's behaviour culture is rooted in five values: Aspiration, Community, Curiosity, Personal Development and Respect. These values shape routines, relationships, recognition and the language used when behaviour falls below expectation.

Value	What it looks like
Aspiration	Arriving ready and on time; working with purpose; persevering; completing commitments; enabling others to learn.
Community	Contributing to shared life; including others; caring for spaces and property; participating positively in lessons, meals, houses and activities.
Curiosity	Engaging thoughtfully; asking questions; listening to different perspectives; using language that enables others to participate.
Personal Development	Taking responsibility; seeking help; reflecting honestly; making safe choices; managing devices, health, organisation and independence.
Respect	Protecting dignity, boundaries and consent; following reasonable instructions; speaking courteously; rejecting bullying, prejudice and harassment.

Teaching expected behaviour

Expected behaviour is taught rather than assumed. At induction and at planned points through the year, pupils are explicitly taught and reminded about:

- arrival, punctuality, registration, lesson entry and exit, equipment, movement between buildings and emergency routines;
- listening, discussion, independent study, assessment and examination conduct;
- shared-space, dining, boarding-house, bedroom, curfew, visitor and quiet-time expectations;
- kind, inclusive language; personal boundaries; consent; reporting concerns; and responding as an active bystander;
- mobile phones, smart technology, photography, recording, social media, generative AI and acceptable use;
- how recognition, strikes, detentions, reflection, suspension and reintegration operate; and
- how to ask for help, request a reasonable adjustment, challenge a decision appropriately or make a complaint without fear of retaliation.

Staff use consistent, calm language and model the routines they expect. Reasonable adjustments are taught and implemented without lowering legitimate expectations of safety or respect. The Deputy Headteacher reviews whether routines remain workable for day pupils, boarders, international pupils and pupils with additional needs.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body and proprietor

- Ensure a written behaviour policy is in place and implemented effectively, with appropriate oversight of equality, safeguarding and boarding standards.
- Approve this policy and receive assurance on serious sanctions, bullying, searches, mobile-phone implementation, restrictive interventions and relevant trends.
- Ensure procedures exist to record and report significant use of force and every incident of restraint or seclusion, and that data is used to reduce unnecessary or disproportionate intervention.
- Ensure complaints and appeals are heard fairly and without retaliation, in accordance with the school's procedures and parent contract.

Headteacher - Dr N Robinson

- Hold overall accountability for behaviour culture, school rules, resources, staff authority and consistent implementation.
- Decide suspensions and permanent exclusions/expulsions, and any required removal, subject to the applicable contract and review route.
- Ensure the policy is published, understood, resourced and reviewed, and that departures from the normal ladder are reasoned and recorded.

Deputy Headteacher/DSL - Mr L Connolly

- Lead day-to-day implementation across teaching, pastoral and boarding contexts and advise staff on proportionate responses.
- Oversee serious-incident investigation, Stage 3 reflection, behaviour support, reintegration and the termly analysis of behaviour data.
- Coordinate with the Safeguarding Team, SENCO/learning support, boarding leads, tutors and parents where behaviour may reflect safeguarding, SEND, SEMH, health or welfare needs.
- Maintain the serious-sanctions register and ensure iSAMS and CPOMS are used for their proper, distinct purposes.

DSL, SENCO/learning support and pastoral or boarding leads

- The DSL decides and coordinates safeguarding action. A disciplinary process must not delay a referral or compromise a statutory investigation.
- The SENCO or learning-support lead advises on assessment, provision, reasonable adjustments and whether support remains appropriate and effective.
- Tutors and boarding leads monitor patterns, maintain communication and deliver agreed support and reintegration plans.

All staff

- Teach and model expectations; apply routines consistently and fairly; notice and recognise positive conduct.
- Respond promptly, de-escalate where possible, use only authorised sanctions and record information accurately and factually.
- Know pupils' relevant needs and agreed adjustments, while avoiding assumptions or stereotypes.
- Report safeguarding concerns to the DSL and seek senior assistance when behaviour is serious, unsafe, repeated or beyond their authority.
- Maintain professional boundaries and avoid public confrontation, sarcasm, humiliation or collective punishment.

Pupils and parents

Pupils are expected to understand and meet the code of conduct, repair harm, engage with support and report concerns. Parents are expected to support the policy and safe transport arrangements, share relevant information promptly, attend meetings and use the complaints or review routes rather than undermining safety or disciplinary processes. Neither pupils nor parents may be penalised for raising a concern in good faith.

5. Equality, SEND, SEMH and safeguarding

Behaviour may communicate an unmet educational, communication, sensory, medical, mental-health, trauma-related or safeguarding need. This does not make unsafe or harmful conduct acceptable, but it changes what prevention, support, adjustment and response may be reasonable.

Graduated response

- **Assess:** establish what happened, antecedents, context, frequency, impact, pupil voice and existing provision; check for sudden change or safeguarding indicators.
- **Plan:** agree clear expectations, reasonable adjustments, preventative strategies, trusted adults, communication and review measures with the pupil and parents where appropriate.
- **Do:** implement the plan consistently across relevant academic and boarding settings; brief staff on what they need to know.
- **Review:** measure impact, seek pupil and parent views, identify disproportionality or new evidence, and revise provision after serious incidents.

Reasonable adjustments and prevention

Adjustments may include adapted instructions, visual prompts, seating, movement or sensory breaks, predictable transitions, an agreed calm space, additional processing time, modified uniform arrangements, communication support, mentoring or an individual behaviour support plan. Any adjustment must be specific, recorded, communicated and reviewed; it must not expose others to unreasonable risk.

Before escalating repeated behaviour, the school considers whether teaching, provision, communication or environment should change; whether the pupil may have unidentified SEND or SEMH needs; and whether early help, health input, specialist assessment or safeguarding action is required. The school does not use informal exclusion or repeatedly send a pupil home to manage unmet need.

SAFEGUARDING THRESHOLD

A change in behaviour, sexualised or harmful conduct, aggression, going missing, substance use, unexplained possessions, online coercion or repeated dysregulation may be a sign that a pupil is being harmed or exploited. Staff share concerns with the DSL; they do not diagnose, investigate abuse or wait for proof.



6. Standards and pupil code of conduct

Subject to reasonable adjustments, every pupil agrees to the following standards throughout school life:

Expectation	Pupil commitment
Respect and safety	Treat every person with dignity; respect consent, privacy and boundaries; use non-discriminatory language; do not bully, harass, threaten, fight, haze or deliberately exclude.
Learning	Attend and arrive punctually; bring required equipment; engage fully; follow reasonable instructions; complete work honestly and without disrupting others.
Community	Care for school, boarding and personal property; keep shared and personal spaces orderly; participate appropriately in meals, activities, meetings and duties.
Communication	Speak and listen courteously. In mixed-language shared settings, use a language everyone present can understand where this is necessary for inclusion; pupils remain free to use their home languages in private and in ways that do not deliberately exclude others.
Personal responsibility	Follow dress, health, curfew, sign-in/out, visitor, transport, device and safety rules; seek help before risk escalates; be honest during reflection and repair.
Digital conduct	Use accounts, devices, AI and networks lawfully and safely; do not record, impersonate, manipulate images, share private material or use technology to harm, cheat or evade school controls.
Voice and reporting	Report worries, bullying, abuse, unsafe conduct or dangerous items. Do not retaliate against anyone who raises a concern or participates in an investigation.

Pupil leaders model these standards and may support community routines, but they do not impose formal sanctions, search pupils, confiscate items using coercion or use restrictive interventions.

7. Recognition and rewards

Recognition makes Earlscliffe's values visible and supports intrinsic motivation. It is specific, sincere, timely and equitable; it recognises effort, progress, kindness, courage, responsibility and contribution, including achievements that may be less publicly visible.

- Verbal and written feedback in lessons, tutoring, activities and boarding.
- Values Awards recorded through iSAMS for Aspiration, Community, Curiosity, Personal Development and Respect.
- Positive communication with parents and educational guardians.
- Termly values celebrations, including Values Champions and the Boarding House Spirit Award.
- Academic commendations for exceptional attainment, progress, intellectual curiosity or perseverance.
- Boarding recognition for leadership, inclusion, care of shared life and constructive independence.
- Positions of responsibility or opportunities that are safe, attainable and not used to create unfair privilege.

Leaders review recognition data to check that opportunity and praise are not disproportionately concentrated by sex, race, nationality, language, disability, SEND, boarding status or other relevant characteristic.

8. Responding to behaviour

The standard adult response

- **Notice and assess:** identify the behaviour and immediate risk; consider whether the pupil understands the expectation and whether support or safeguarding is needed.
- **Regulate:** remain calm, reduce audience and stimulation, use clear language, allow processing time and offer a safe route back to expected behaviour.
- **Restore:** restate the expectation, protect learning and safety, and apply a proportionate response within the adult's authority.
- **Record and communicate:** record when required, inform the appropriate pastoral or boarding lead and parents at the level set out in this policy.
- **Repair and prevent:** facilitate reflection, restitution or restorative conversation where safe and voluntary, and adjust support to reduce recurrence.

De-escalation

Staff use a calm tone, simple and concrete language, non-threatening body position and appropriate personal space. They avoid arguing, crowding, blocking an exit without a safety reason, making demands that cannot be enforced, or insisting on public compliance when a face-saving route is available. They seek assistance early and remove bystanders where possible.

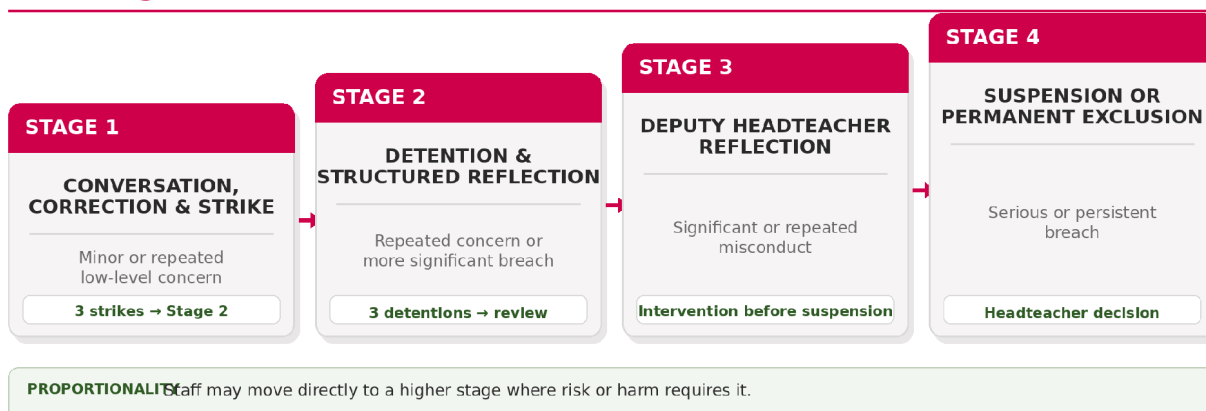
Fair fact-finding

A serious incident is investigated by an appropriate adult who was not materially involved where practicable. The pupil is told the concern in age-appropriate terms, can give an account and identify relevant evidence or witnesses, and is informed of the decision and response. Records distinguish observed fact, reported information, professional judgement and decision. The school may take interim safety measures without pre-judging the outcome.

Restorative work is not used to require contact between a harmed pupil and the pupil alleged to have caused harm, to obtain forgiveness, or to replace safeguarding action. Participation is voluntary and risk assessed.

9. Sanctions and the four-stage ladder

A sanction is lawful and appropriate only when imposed by an authorised paid member of staff, or another adult expressly authorised by the Headteacher where the law permits; when the pupil is on school premises or under school charge, or the off-site threshold is met; and when the response is reasonable, proportionate, non-discriminatory and consistent with the parent contract.

EARLSCLIFFE BEHAVIOUR RESPONSE
Four-stage sanctions ladder


Stage 1 - Conversation, correction and strike

A strike records a relatively minor failure to meet a taught routine or value after an initial reminder or teacher-led response, or where a record is needed because the behaviour is repeated. School strikes and boarding strikes are recorded on iSAMS. A single strike does not normally trigger parent notification, though staff may contact parents where context or pattern makes this helpful.

Three strikes ordinarily escalate to a Stage 2 detention. Staff may use judgement where strikes arise from one incident, an agreed adjustment applies, or immediate escalation is required.

Stage 2 - Detention and structured reflection

A detention responds to three strikes, repeated low-level misconduct or a more significant breach. It is logged in iSAMS and parents are notified. Reflection work should help the pupil identify what happened, who was affected, which value or expectation was not met and what will change. A detention may also include proportionate restitution or supervised school community service that is safe and dignified.

Three detentions in a term ordinarily trigger review at the next Students of Concern meeting, without waiting where risk or need requires earlier action.

Stage 3 - Deputy Headteacher reflection

Stage 3 is normally a two-hour Saturday morning session led by the Deputy Headteacher or a designated senior colleague. It is an intervention before suspension for significant or repeated misconduct and includes review of support, a pupil account, targets, repair and parent communication. A serious incident may be resolved at Stage 3 where the evidence, harm, honesty, mitigation, prior record and safeguarding context make this proportionate.

Stage 4 - Internal suspension, external suspension or permanent exclusion

Stage 4 is reserved for serious or persistent breaches. The Headteacher decides external suspension and permanent exclusion/expulsion. Internal suspension is supervised, structured, time-limited and focused on learning, reflection and reintegration; it is not seclusion and must not become prolonged isolation.

PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT

The examples in this policy are illustrative, not automatic tariffs. The school may move directly to a higher stage for serious risk or harm and may use a lower stage with stronger support where that is fair and safe. Reasons for material departure from the normal ladder are recorded.

10. Detention, removal, internal suspension and reintegration

Detention

Detentions may take place during supervised non-teaching time or, where permitted by school rules and the parent contract, after school or on a Saturday. Staff consider notice, age, SEND, medical needs, caring responsibilities, religious observance, travel, increased risk and whether safe arrangements can be made. Pupils receive reasonable access to food, drink, toilets and medication. Boarding pupils' sleep, meals, family contact and essential activities are not unreasonably restricted.

Removal from a lesson or activity

Removal is used only where necessary to maintain safety or restore a stable learning environment, to continue education in a managed setting, or to help a pupil regain calm. The receiving space is supervised, suitable for learning and responsive to SEND and medical needs. Removal is not used routinely for minor non-compliance or as an unrecorded exclusion.

- The removing adult records the reason, time, location and action taken.
- The pupil receives appropriate work and support and is not left locked or prevented from leaving in a way that amounts to seclusion.
- Parents are informed on the same day for significant or repeated removal.
- The Deputy Headteacher reviews prolonged or repeated removal and considers assessment, support, safeguarding and whether the approach is effective.

Internal suspension

Internal suspension is authorised by a senior leader, supervised throughout, separately timetabled, recorded and reviewed. It includes academic work, pastoral contact, reflection and a clear return point. It must not be confused with seclusion, which is a non-disciplinary safety intervention subject to separate recording and reporting duties.

Reintegration

Following significant removal or suspension, the school plans reintegration with the pupil and parents. The plan confirms expectations, support, reasonable adjustments, risk controls, repair, monitoring and review. Reintegration is constructive and forward-looking; it is not used to re-run the investigation or compel an apology.

11. Serious breaches, suspension and permanent exclusion

Serious breaches may justify immediate Stage 3 or Stage 4 action. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- physical assault, serious threatening behaviour, coercion, possession or use of a weapon, or conduct creating a serious safety risk;
- sexual violence, sexual harassment, image-based abuse, upskirting, deliberate creation or distribution of sexualised deepfakes, or other serious child-on-child abuse;
- serious or persistent bullying, hazing, discriminatory abuse or retaliation against a person who reports a concern;
- possession, supply or serious misuse of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vapes or psychoactive substances;
- theft, serious dishonesty, deliberate significant damage, extortion, blackmail, fraud or harmful misuse of technology;
- persistent refusal to comply with reasonable sanctions or a behaviour contract after support and review;
- conduct away from school or online that creates serious harm or risk to a pupil, staff member or the orderly operation of Earlscliffe; and
- a knowingly false and malicious allegation, proven following a fair process - not merely an allegation that is unsubstantiated, unfounded, withdrawn or not upheld.

External suspension

Only the Headteacher, or the formally acting Headteacher, may impose external suspension. Parents are informed promptly by telephone or secure communication and receive written notice of the reason, duration, educational arrangements, contact person, safeguarding or welfare arrangements and reintegration meeting. A pupil is not sent home without safe handover or agreed arrangements. A boarder remains appropriately supervised until collection or other safe arrangements are confirmed.

The Headteacher may extend or convert a suspension only when further evidence or risk justifies this, after the pupil and parents have a fair opportunity to respond. Reasons are recorded and communicated in writing.

Permanent exclusion / expulsion and required removal

Permanent exclusion/expulsion is a last-resort response to a grave breach, persistent serious breaches or a situation in which continued attendance would cause serious harm to the education, safety or welfare of the pupil or others. Any required removal for reasons other than disciplinary expulsion follows the parent contract and the school's published procedure and is not presented as a disciplinary finding unless that is what the evidence supports.

The Headteacher ensures a full and fair investigation, considers safeguarding, equality, SEND and mitigation, and writes to parents with the decision, reasons, effective date and review or appeal route. The Chair of Governors is informed. Any appeal is considered by an impartial panel or governors not previously involved, in accordance with the parent contract and published procedure. The pupil and parents may provide written representations and reasonable adjustments are made to enable participation.

12. Bullying, discrimination, child-on-child abuse and sexual harassment

Earlscliffe does not tolerate bullying, cyberbullying, prejudice-based or discriminatory conduct, initiation or hazing, sexual harassment, sexual violence or other child-on-child abuse. “Zero tolerance” means the school never normalises or dismisses harmful behaviour as banter or part of growing up; it does not mean automatic identical sanctions without assessment of safety, evidence, age, development, context and proportionality.

Any report is taken seriously and passed to the DSL where safeguarding may be engaged. Immediate measures protect the reporting pupil and others, consider the alleged pupil’s welfare and avoid unnecessary contact. The school works with police and children’s social care where required; internal disciplinary decisions are coordinated so they do not prejudice external enquiries.

- The harmed pupil’s wishes and terminology are considered, but the school may need to act to protect them or others.
- Risk assessment considers lessons, boarding, shared spaces, transport, activities, online contact and any power imbalance.
- Sanctions address the conduct and harm; support is offered to the harmed pupil, witnesses and the pupil who caused or is alleged to have caused harm.
- Boarding responses recognise that a boarder cannot simply leave the environment at the end of the school day.
- Retaliation, intimidation, interference with witnesses or sharing confidential details is itself a serious breach.
- Reports made in good faith are protected. Where evidence establishes a deliberately invented or malicious report, the Headteacher considers proportionate disciplinary action and safeguarding need.

Detailed prevention, reporting and response arrangements are set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Anti-bullying Policy. Those documents prevail for referral, information sharing and support.

13. Mobile phones, online conduct and generative AI

Mobile phone-free teaching day

From September 2026, Earlscliffe is a mobile phone-free environment throughout the teaching day by default. Pupils must not have access to or use mobile phones or smart technology with equivalent messaging, notification, audio or video capability during lessons, transitions, breaktimes or lunchtime, except under a specific authorised arrangement.

The school’s Mobile Devices Policy sets the storage method, collection/return arrangements and limited sixth-form or boarding permissions. Any sixth-form permission is restricted to designated times and places and must not undermine the phone-free environment for younger pupils. Boarding arrangements outside the teaching day protect welfare, sleep, study and community life while enabling private, suitable contact with families across international time zones.

Reasonable adjustments or exceptional access may be agreed for disability, medical monitoring, safeguarding, young-carer or other individual need. The permission states purpose, time, location and review date; it is not a general exemption. Parents contact pupils during the teaching day through the school office except in an agreed emergency route.

Breaches and confiscation

Unauthorised access or use may result in confiscation and a proportionate sanction. Staff record repeat or serious breaches, protect emergency and medical access, and consider SEND or safeguarding context. Mobile phones and similar devices are identified in school rules as items that authorised staff may search for where the statutory and policy requirements are met.

Online and AI-related conduct

The school may respond to online conduct away from school where it affects safety, welfare, relationships, learning or the orderly running of Earlscliffe. Prohibited conduct includes impersonation; harassment; non-consensual recording; doxxing; threats; sharing private material; accessing or creating illegal content; bypassing filters; account compromise; harmful deepfakes; sexualised image manipulation; and using generative AI to bully, fabricate evidence, cheat or evade accountability.

Where content may be a nude or semi-nude image of a child, or otherwise illegal, staff do not view, copy, print, forward or ask a pupil to display it. The device is secured as advised and the DSL seeks police or specialist guidance. Safeguarding, evidence preservation and support take priority over confiscation as punishment.

14. Smoking, vaping, alcohol, drugs and prohibited items

The school site, boarding houses, school transport and school activities are smoke- and vape-free. Pupils must not possess, use, supply or be under the influence of tobacco, nicotine products, vapes, alcohol, illegal drugs, psychoactive substances, misused medication or related paraphernalia. Energy drinks, aerosols, lighters and other age-restricted or high-risk items may also be banned under school rules.

Incidents are managed under the relevant substance-use, health, safeguarding and search procedures. The response considers immediate medical risk, supply or exploitation, coercion, criminality, age, intent, quantity, previous incidents and welfare. Emergency medical care and safeguarding referral are never delayed for disciplinary questioning. Illegal substances and weapons are handled and transferred to police as advised; staff do not conduct unsafe testing or disposal.

School prohibited items

In addition to items prohibited by law, Earlscliffe identifies the following as items that may be searched for under school rules: mobile phones and unauthorised smart devices; e-cigarettes and vapes; lighters and matches; psychoactive or unidentified substances; alcohol; tobacco and nicotine products; unauthorised medication; fireworks; aerosols used unsafely; energy drinks where prohibited; stolen property; and any item reasonably believed likely to be used to harm, threaten, harass, cheat, record covertly or damage property.

The list is published to pupils and parents and reviewed before implementation. The statutory power to use reasonable force during a search applies only to the legally specified prohibited items, not merely to items banned by school rules.

15. Searches, screening and confiscation

Searches are conducted only by the Headteacher or staff expressly authorised by the Headteacher, in accordance with the Education Act 1996, current DfE guidance, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the separate Search and Confiscation Policy. A search is based on reasonable grounds, is necessary and proportionate, and takes account of age, sex, SEND, communication, trauma, culture, privacy and risk.

Safeguards

- The authorised member of staff explains the reason and procedure, seeks cooperation and records the grounds, outcome and item handling.
- The search is conducted out of public view by a member of staff of the same sex as the pupil, with a same-sex witness, unless the lawful urgent-risk exception applies and delay would risk serious harm.
- A staff search is limited to outer clothing and possessions. School staff never conduct a strip search or require removal of clothing beyond outer clothing.
- If police consider a strip search, the DSL and school challenge any unnecessary or disproportionate action, seek to ensure an appropriate adult is present and follow safeguarding and parental-notification duties.
- Possessions and boarders' rooms are searched with respect for privacy and, where practicable, in the pupil's presence and with a witness. Safety or evidence risk may justify a different approach, which is recorded.
- Reasonable force is never used to search for an item banned only by school rules. Any force must be lawful, necessary and proportionate for a legally prohibited item.

Electronic devices and confiscation

Confiscation must pursue a legitimate disciplinary or safety purpose and last no longer than proportionate. The school records valuable, dangerous, illegal or evidential items; stores them securely; and decides whether to return, retain, dispose of or pass them to police in accordance with law and guidance. Parents are informed where appropriate.

Staff do not search through a device merely because it has been confiscated. Any examination of data must be lawful, necessary and proportionate and follow the separate policy. Suspected child sexual abuse material, intimate imagery or serious criminal evidence is not opened, copied or forwarded; the DSL or police advises on preservation and next steps.

16. Restrictive interventions, reasonable force and physical contact

Earlscliffe follows the DfE guidance Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools, effective April 2026. Prevention, early support and de-escalation are the default. Force is never used as punishment. The school does not operate a "no contact" policy: appropriate physical contact may be necessary for first aid, guidance, comfort, teaching a practical technique or protecting a person from harm.

When reasonable force may be used

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances to prevent or stop a pupil from causing injury, committing a criminal offence, damaging property or causing disorder among pupils. "Reasonable" means no more force than necessary for the least amount of time. Staff consider less restrictive options, likely effectiveness, the pupil's welfare, age, size, medical needs, SEND, communication, trauma, equality implications and risk to others.

Prohibited and high-risk practice

Staff must not use force to punish, humiliate or obtain compliance where there is no lawful necessity. They must not deliberately obstruct breathing or circulation, cover a pupil's mouth or nose, apply pressure to the neck or abdomen, or use prone or ground restraint except in an unforeseen emergency where immediate action is necessary to prevent greater harm; any unintentional ground hold is released or repositioned as quickly as possible. Medical assessment is arranged where injury or breathing concern may exist.

Restraint and seclusion

Restraint may involve physical or non-physical restriction of movement. Seclusion is a non-disciplinary safety intervention in which a dysregulated pupil is confined away from others and prevented from leaving. Seclusion is used only to protect from harm, in a safe and supervised place, and ends as soon as the immediate risk reduces. It is never threatened or used as a disciplinary penalty. Removal and internal suspension must not be implemented in a way that becomes seclusion.

Planning, recording, reporting and review

- Where foreseeable risk exists, leaders develop a co-produced behaviour support plan and risk assessment, including triggers, communication, adjustments, de-escalation and agreed contact parameters. Plans do not authorise unlawful force.
- Every significant incident of staff use of force is recorded in writing as soon as practicable, normally the same day, with the minimum information required by statutory guidance.
- Every incident of seclusion or restraint, including non-contact restraint, is recorded and reported under the 2025 Regulations and 2026 guidance.
- Parents are informed in writing as soon as practicable, normally the same day, subject only to the statutory serious-harm exception and alternative reporting route.
- The pupil and staff receive medical attention and wellbeing support where needed. A post-incident review considers accounts separately, repair, the effectiveness of prevention and whether plans or training must change.
- Senior leaders review patterns by pupil, staff, setting, intervention and relevant characteristic. Governors/proprietors receive anonymised assurance and act on disproportionate or inappropriate use.

17. Boarding and residential behaviour

The same values, safeguarding thresholds and standards apply across academic and residential life. Boarding routines add legitimate expectations about curfew, sign-in/out, bedrooms, visitors, quiet hours, meals, shared kitchens, laundry, property, family contact, devices, overnight safety and respect for staff accommodation. Academic and boarding staff communicate promptly so pupils do not receive contradictory, duplicated or excessive sanctions.

- Boarding rules and consequences are explained at induction in accessible language and revisited through house meetings and individual support.
- Boarders are actively encouraged to give views and raise concerns through clear, accessible routes and receive feedback. No boarder is penalised for a concern or complaint made in good faith.
- Sanctions do not unreasonably restrict sleep, food, drink, toilets, medication, education, religious observance, confidential help or private family contact. Any necessary safeguarding restriction is individually risk assessed and reviewed.

- House staff recognise that bullying in boarding can be inescapable. Safety planning covers bedrooms, communal areas, meals, activities, transport, devices and contact outside school.
- Major sanctions and use of force are recorded in the boarding records required by the National Minimum Standards and monitored by the Headteacher or nominated senior leader.
- Educational guardians and homestays do not independently impose school sanctions. Concerns are reported to Earlscliffe and handled under school policy and contractual arrangements.

Physical contact in boarding

Comforting or supportive physical contact may be appropriate when it is child-centred, brief, proportionate, culturally sensitive and consistent with the pupil's wishes and safeguarding plan. Staff remain alert to power, perception and professional boundaries. Contact that could be misinterpreted, or that causes concern, is reported and recorded promptly.

18. Behaviour beyond the school site

The school may sanction conduct outside the premises, including online conduct, when the pupil is taking part in a school activity, travelling to or from school, wearing uniform, otherwise identifiable as an Earlscliffe pupil, or when the conduct could reasonably threaten a person, cause significant harm, disrupt the orderly running of the school or materially affect the school community.

The response considers the connection to school, the school's ability and duty to act, safeguarding and police involvement, evidence, privacy, freedom of expression and proportionality. Criticism of the school, lawful protest, reporting wrongdoing or making a complaint in good faith is not misconduct merely because it may be unwelcome or affect reputation. The sanction addresses the underlying conduct and harm, not simple reputational discomfort.

During visits, transport, work experience and activities, the supervising adult may take immediate proportionate action to maintain safety. Serious incidents are reported to the trip leader and senior staff; safeguarding, medical and emergency procedures apply. Where another provider is involved, Earlscliffe remains responsible for deciding its own disciplinary response and for assuring pupil welfare.

19. Recording, data, quality assurance and review

Records

iSAMS is used for routine behaviour and recognition records. CPOMS is used where information is pastoral or safeguarding-relevant; it is not a substitute for the behaviour record, nor is iSAMS a substitute for a safeguarding referral. Serious incident, suspension, permanent exclusion, major boarding sanction, search, confiscation and restrictive-intervention records are maintained with appropriate access controls and retention.

Records are factual, timely and sufficient to explain the context, evidence, pupil voice, decision, sanction, support, parent communication and review. Staff avoid speculative or discriminatory language. Pupils and parents may request access or correction in accordance with data-protection law, subject to safeguarding and third-party rights.

Termly evaluation

The Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher review at least termly:

- recognition, strikes, detentions, removals, internal suspensions, external suspensions, permanent exclusions and required removals;
- bullying, discriminatory incidents, sexual harassment and other child-on-child harmful behaviour;
- mobile-phone breaches, searches, confiscations, substance incidents and police involvement;
- use of force, restraint and seclusion, including necessity, duration, injuries, staff, location and prevention;
- patterns across teaching and boarding, houses, year groups, subjects, activities and times of day;
- attendance and progress links, repeated incidents and the effectiveness of support and reintegration; and
- possible disproportionality by sex, race, nationality, language, disability, SEND, boarding/day status and other relevant protected or vulnerability characteristics.

Findings inform staff training, curriculum, supervision, environment, individual support and policy change. The Governing Body receives regular anonymised assurance, including serious sanctions and restrictive-intervention data, and challenges leaders where implementation is inconsistent or disproportionate.

Training and review

All staff receive behaviour-culture induction before or at the start of work and regular refreshers on routines, sanctions, SEND/SEMH, safeguarding, de-escalation, mobile phones, searches, physical contact and restrictive interventions. Staff likely to use restrictive interventions receive training appropriate to the school's risk assessment. Understanding and application are checked through observation, record sampling, pupil and parent voice and case review.

This policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner after a serious incident, statutory or regulatory change, pattern or disproportionality, complaint, safeguarding learning, inspection finding or material operational change. The approved policy is published, explained to pupils and parents, included in staff induction and aligned with boarding and linked policies.

Appendix A - Earlscliffe sanction ladder

Stage	Typical trigger	Response and record	Authority / communication
1 Correction and strike	Minor lapse after reminder; repeated failure to meet a taught routine.	Calm correction; teacher-led action; strike on iSAMS where needed. Three strikes ordinarily lead to Stage 2.	Authorised staff. Parent contact optional unless pattern/context requires.
2 Detention	Three strikes; repeated low-level misconduct; a more significant breach.	Supervised detention, reflection and proportionate repair. Logged on iSAMS; safeguarding concern also on CPOMS. Three in a term trigger review.	Authorised staff under school arrangements. Parents notified.
3 Deputy Headteacher reflection	Repeated Stage 2; significant disruption; serious breach where Stage 4 is not proportionate.	Normally two hours on Saturday; investigation review, reflection, support and targets; possible behaviour contract.	Deputy Headteacher or designated senior leader. Parents informed and usually involved.
4 Internal/external suspension or permanent exclusion	Serious or persistent breach; significant risk or harm; failure of support and earlier measures.	Structured internal suspension; time-limited external suspension; or permanent exclusion/expulsion under contract and procedure.	Headteacher for external suspension and permanent exclusion. Written notice and review/appeal route.

Illustrative response guide

Behaviour	Possible starting point	Relevant checks
Lateness, missing equipment, low-level talk, untidy shared space	Correction / Stage 1	Routine taught? pattern? transport, SEND or welfare factor?
Repeated disruption, refusal, dishonesty, unauthorised phone use	Stage 2 or 3	Need, adjustment, safeguarding, impact, previous support.
Bullying, discriminatory abuse, harmful recording, serious online misuse	Stage 3 or 4	DSL, victim safety, evidence, retaliation, police threshold.
Assault, weapon, sexual violence, drug supply, serious threat	Immediate safety action / Stage 4 may follow	Emergency services, DSL, medical care, external investigation, interim risk plan.

This guide does not create automatic tariffs. Context, evidence, seriousness, harm, mitigation, prior conduct, SEND, safeguarding and consistency are considered in every case.