



THE Lodge AP

— At Sandbach House —

Statement of Ethos & Values

2026-2027

The Lodge AP – Nurture, Support, Educate



The Lodge is a unique and nurturing educational environment created to support children predominantly with medical needs and severe mental health challenges. Our mission is to provide a safe, supportive space where every child is valued, understood, and empowered to thrive academically and emotionally.

At The Lodge, we understand that traditional education can sometimes be inaccessible for children who face significant health or mental health challenges. That's why we offer a trauma-informed approach, prioritising the well-being of each student. Our personalised learning pathways are designed to meet the individual needs of every child, helping them to regain confidence, find their passion for learning, and move forward in their educational journey.

The Lodge is a 32-place co-educational school predominately to meet the needs of students who are struggling to attend mainstream education due to medical needs and or mental health issues. The Lodge will cater for boys and girls between the ages of 13 and 18 some of whom will have EHC plans.

Nurture, Support, Educate

Our ethos is simple: Nurture, Support, and Educate. These core values drive everything we do.

Nurture: A warm, caring, and compassionate environment where each child is treated with respect and kindness.

Support: Tailored programs that are designed to help children overcome barriers to learning and access the resources they need for personal growth.

Educate: Fostering a love for learning and providing high-quality, individualised education that empowers children to succeed.

We take a holistic approach to education, putting the child at the centre of all our practices. Our staff are highly trained in trauma-informed methods, ensuring that we not only meet the academic needs of our students, but also provide the emotional and mental health support they deserve.

At The Lodge we strive for excellence and believe that through a culture of support and guidance, which is fair and restorative, pupils will develop and reach their fullest potential. It is the belief that every child should be given Unconditional Positive Regard. Through research, evidence and trauma informed practice, staff are able to guide and lead pupils effectively. The aims, ethos and values are outlined in this policy.

Furthermore, it is recognised that in order to fully meet the needs of pupils, of which many present with complex needs, it is a necessity that the school is attuned, attachment friendly and nurturing (Wall; 2018). It is integral that work is carried out to co-regulate behaviours, but also to provide the skills for pupils to identify their own need and to educate them and upskill them in order to self-regulate and allow for positive changes. Work is carried out with parents to understand their needs and difficulties, as well their experiences and to help and provide support for them so that any unmet needs away from the school can be achieved.

Underpinning values and ethos

At The Lodge we aim to meet the complex needs of our pupils through:

- The provision of a predictable and safe environment, explicitly founded on nurture and attachment principles that promotes security through consistent routines and clear boundaries.
- An unrelenting focus on celebrating, promoting and positively reinforcing positive behaviour.
- The application of Unconditional Positive Regard for all pupils, acknowledging and addressing any inappropriate behaviours which may arise by attuning to the pupil and their need and working with them on strategies.

- All inappropriate behaviour is an expression of an unmet need – all staff seek to understand what the behaviour need is and working with the child, introduce strategies to support.
- The provision of an appropriate learning curriculum with carefully planned learning opportunities including the development of social and emotional aspects of learning.
- The confident and consistent employment of intimacy, warmth, banter and trust as a way to support and engage pupils by connecting in a congruent and caring way.

Relationships, Structure and Routine

The pupils who attend The Lodge have often suffered trauma and many have insecure attachments, they have often experienced a fragmented school life which makes relationship building and following organised structure a challenge. It is, however, important to provide those things in order to help them remain and feel safe, safe from harm and safe to make mistakes in order to progress.

Positive relationships between pupils and staff are essential in order to reach milestones and beyond. The Lodge use Restorative Approaches to ensure that the running of the school is smooth, and pupils learn, are engaged and progress. There is a need for rules in order to keep boundaries firm but fair.

Rules are more effective when:

Adults have formed positive relationships with young people and can be used to reinforce and develop the desired behaviours.

Key principles underpinning this policy:

- Systematic approaches to behaviour— this recognises that there are a range of systems, in and out of school, that impact on behaviour and mental health
- Humanistic approaches to behaviour — that we not only consider behaviour from an observer but also through the eyes of the person behaving
- That everyone has social, emotional and mental health and that all have the right to be safe, be respected and be treated equally.
- Developing children's emotional literacy through the promotion of positive values is an integral part of children's learning
- Growth mindset — where our basic abilities can develop and improve through hard work, fostering a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.
- A Whole-school positive ethos which develops co-operation, self-respect and consideration.
- All relationships within the school are respectful and the role of the different staff are understood
- Children know taught to and supported to behave positively in school and the community
- Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour and their impact on others
- Parents are involved in all aspects of their children's learning and are support by staff as and when necessary
- At all available points, children's emotional needs are provided for and that we promote positive behaviour for learning which is age appropriate
- Additional provision for emotional wellbeing is available as and when necessary
- Reward and sanctions systems, if needed, are clear and personally designed
- There is a system to combat bullying
- The school has a system for working with outside agencies for support
- Exclusion is only used as a last resort

At The Lodge we acknowledge that:

- All children deserve to attend a school where they feel safe and confident to learn
- All behaviour is communication, and we resist the use of stigmatising/ judgmental language when describing the behaviour, we are seeking to manage
- Traumatic experiences/ damaged attachments and lack of food/home insecurity can create dysregulated behavioural responses from the children/young people we are seeking to teach

- Relationships of trust, opportunities to make choices/ decisions, attunement to individuals i.e., knowledge of that individual, individualised responses, teaching emotional literacy and understanding can help to prevent damaging/ challenging incidents.

At the Lodge we are proactive in teaching children/ young people what good behaviour in our learning environment is and how individuals can learn how to be successful learners. Our school Values are clear about the characteristics of successful learners.

At The Lodge we are HAPPY, KIND, RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE, BRAVE learners. In discrete “Preparing for Adulthood” lessons these values are taught and reinforced (See Curriculum Policy and Curriculum map). We teach all of our children/ young people about developing a Growth Mindset and develop a language and understanding about how emotions are experienced and managed by individuals.

When interventions are required, our Emotionally Available Adults deliver specific programmes for small groups/ individuals e.g., safe touch, how to be a good friend, managing conflict. A small number of children require personalised behaviour support plans, that are agreed between the child, classroom staff and SENDCO/ SLT.

Policy Statement

The Lodge strives to create a school community which embodies our aspiration to build a nurturing, caring ethos which permeates our school environment. We have developed a behaviour policy which places relationships as the cornerstone for pupils to thrive, both academically and in relation to their wellbeing.

Our trauma informed approach to behaviour management benefits all pupils and staff for the following reasons:

- Relationships and a young person’s sense of safety and security are placed at the heart of classroom management.
- Our approach encourages nurture, respect and empathy, even when a young person is presenting with behaviours that feel challenging.
- Individual circumstances are taken into account.
- A sense of community and belonging is promoted.

Our Aims

- To ensure that all members of the school community feel respected and safe.
- To encourage relationships between all members of the school community that facilitate effective learning.
- To allow pupils to develop a strong sense of morality that allows them to take on board the thoughts and feelings of others, nurtured through our expectations of a being a responsible citizen.
- To teach pupils how to communicate their thoughts and feelings in a way that is beneficial now and in their adulthood.

Principle One:

Building relationships, empathy and a feeling of safety take precedence over other means of discipline.

The root of “discipline” is the word disciple, which means “student”, “pupil”, and “learner”. A disciple is not a recipient of punishment, but one who is learning through instruction. (Siegel and Payne Bryson, 2018).

Principle Two:

Discipline represents an opportunity to teach and nurture

When pupils exhibit challenging behaviours, in the first instance, we use the 3 steps of emotion coaching to build relationships, empathy and a feeling of safety:

- What was the function of (i.e. the reason behind) the behaviour?

- What lesson do I want to teach at this moment?
- How can I best teach this lesson?

Principle Three:

We aim to understand the function behind the behaviour

Principle Four:

The pupil is separate from their behaviour

Principle Five:

Routines help people to feel safe, but some pupils need differentiation within an overall structure.

Being 'fair' is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity).

At The Lodge, we aim to understand what a pupil might be trying to say to us through their behaviour. Behaviour that challenges is not seen as a choice, but as being a communication of an unmet need. At The Lodge, we see pupils as separate from the behaviours that they may exhibit; we demonstrate this through our language of choice – words and phrases used to describe the pupil and their behaviour. Whilst the majority of pupils will thrive when our whole school approach to behaviour is applied, we recognise that some of our pupils will need further support and intervention, and a few will require more intensive, individualised support. As such, our behaviour policy outlines the different levels of support available dependent on an individual's level of need.