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Details of policy updates

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10.01.2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added: Section 9 - Positive communication Added: Section 10 Monitoring and tracking Added: 5.6 Escalation of concern Updated: Roles and responsibilities Updated: Effective communication Updated: Behaviour for learning process
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1 Introduction

At Tute, we believe that effective communication is central to a safe, structured, and productive online learning environment. Our communication policy is designed to ensure that students, teachers, and partners understand the expectations for positive engagement in lessons.

This policy has been developed with reference to the DfE's "Behaviour in Schools" guidance (February 2024), which outlines national expectations for creating and maintaining high standards of behaviour in educational settings. The guidance highlights the importance of:

- Setting and reinforcing high expectations for student behaviour.
- Teaching positive communication habits, rather than just responding to misbehaviour.
- Applying behaviour systems consistently and fairly, ensuring all students feel safe and supported.
- Providing structured interventions for students who need additional support to meet expectations.

Tute's approach aligns with this guidance, ensuring that students:

- Are taught how to communicate positively and respectfully.
- Understand the clear sequence of warnings and consequences for disruptive behaviour.
- Have access to support where communication challenges arise, particularly for students with SEND or other additional needs.
- Are subject to fair, transparent, and consistently applied behaviour expectations that prioritise inclusion, engagement, and safety.

Through this policy, we aim to create an environment where students can engage confidently, develop essential communication skills, and participate fully in their learning.

2 Purpose and aims

- Recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication.
- Create a secure, stimulating, caring environment in which effective learning can take place.
- Provide opportunities for students with mechanisms through which they can communicate challenges, barriers or difficulties in engaging with learning.
- Have the highest expectations of student conduct to ensure that all students have the opportunity to make progress in relation to their individual learning needs.
- Create an atmosphere where achievement is recognised, respected and valued by all.
- Establish good working relationships and encourage mutual respect amongst all members of the class, including the teacher.
- Work with commissioning bodies and students to address communication needs.
- Identify where behaviours are or are not conducive to learning and to ensure rewards and discouragements are fairly apportioned according to communicated behaviours.
- Develop individual potential, recognising and celebrating personal milestones.
- Encourage students to take responsibility for their actions.
- Unite against bullying.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Tute learning community, including students, teachers, the senior leadership team, the inclusion team, and commissioning partners. It sets out expectations for communication within the Learning Cloud environment and outlines the processes for both positive communication and behaviour management.

This policy applies during all Tute lessons and extends to communication between Tute staff and commissioning partners. It does not replace safeguarding procedures but works alongside them to ensure a safe and productive learning environment.

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Senior leadership team (SLT)

- Set and maintain high expectations for communication across Tute.
- Ensure that communication policies align with safeguarding, inclusion, and partner engagement.
- Provide leadership and oversight of lesson-based communication, including interventions for students with persistent communication difficulties.
- Ensure all staff receive relevant training on positive communication strategies.
- Support teachers in implementing the communication policy and responding to concerns as they arise.

4.2 Teaching and learning SLT

- Provide in-lesson support when requested by teachers.
- Monitor trends in student communication and behaviour, using data to inform training and improvements.
- Work with teachers to implement effective communication strategies in lessons.
- Oversee the escalation process when a student receives multiple communication warnings or removals.

4.3 Inclusion team

- Provide additional guidance and strategies for students with communication barriers.
- Offer tailored support for students with SEND and those struggling to engage in lessons.
- Review communication concerns and student removals, liaising with partners where necessary.
- Deliver training and support to teachers on inclusive communication strategies.

4.4 Teachers

- Arrive early to lessons to greet students as they log in and to begin learning promptly.
- Set high expectations for communication in the Learning Cloud and role model positive interactions.
- Deliver well-planned and structured lesson which meet all individual needs.
- Promote and reinforce positive communication in the classroom.
- Deal promptly if instances occur whereby communication results in disruption to teaching and learning by following Tute's procedures and processes.

- Provide feedback on communication from students to the commissioning partner.
- Encourage student participation through structured questioning and positive reinforcement.
- Apply the three-warning system fairly and consistently to maintain lesson engagement.
- Use praise certificates and the "Just So You Know" initiative to recognise and reinforce positive student communication.

4.5 Students

- Arrive on time to lessons, ready to learn.
- Conduct themselves in the Learning Cloud in a safe, sensible manner and show regard to others.
- Engage with learning by communicating respectfully and constructively.
- Follow teacher instructions and contribute to a positive lesson environment.
- Express any challenges or needs in a way that allows for support and intervention.
- Show respect for the opinions and beliefs of others.
- Accept responsibility for their behaviour
- Show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which they live, to society more widely, and as a global citizen.
- Show respect for the Learning Cloud environment.

4.6 Commissioning partners

- Collaborate with Tute to support students in meeting communication expectations.
- Respond to reports regarding student communication challenges and removals.
- Work with Tute to provide additional scaffolds for students where necessary.

5 Principles of effective communication

5.1 Clarity

All communication should be clear, accurate, and precise. This ensures that expectations are well understood, reducing misunderstandings and fostering a structured learning environment. Clarity in communication helps students engage confidently, knowing what is required of them.

Key expectations:

- Teachers should communicate instructions in simple, structured, and accessible ways.
- Students should be encouraged to ask for clarification if they do not understand something.

- Feedback and responses should be direct and free from ambiguity to support student progress.

5.2 Inclusion

Communication should include the whole Tute community. Every student, regardless of background or learning needs, should feel they belong and are valued in the online classroom.

To support inclusion:

- Communication methods should be accessible to all students, including those with SEND.
- Lessons should encourage active participation from all students, ensuring a variety of ways for students to engage (e.g., chat, microphone, polls).
- The inclusion team provides additional support where students may experience communication barriers.

5.3 Feedback

Effective systems for feedback should be utilised to support student learning, behaviour, and engagement.

This includes:

- Teachers providing constructive feedback on student participation and communication.
- Students receiving praise and recognition for positive communication through praise certificates and the "Just So You Know – celebrating positive student moments" initiative.
- Partners being kept informed of student successes and challenges to foster a collaborative approach.

5.4 Listening

Improving our student experience by listening to each other is essential to a respectful and engaging learning environment.

Good listening involves:

- Teachers actively engaging with student input, responding appropriately to their needs.
- Students being given space to express themselves, fostering confidence and participation.
- Feedback loops, where students know that their voices are heard and valued in shaping their learning experience.

5.5 Respect

Respect underpins all communication within the Tute learning environment.

This includes:

- Students treating their peers and teachers with respect, avoiding disruptive or inappropriate communication.
- Teachers modelling professional and respectful communication, setting a clear standard for students.
- Partners and staff working together, ensuring mutual understanding and shared responsibility for student success.

5.6 Accountability

All members of the Tute learning community are responsible for maintaining high communication standards.

To support this:

- Students should take responsibility for their communication, ensuring it is appropriate and contributes positively to the lesson.
- Teachers should apply communication expectations fairly and consistently, ensuring that all students feel supported.
- The inclusion team and SLT will review and refine communication processes, using data and feedback to drive continuous improvement.

5.7 Considerations for communication approaches

We recognise that students come from a range of backgrounds and experiences that can impact how they communicate and engage in learning. To support all students effectively, teachers are encouraged to adopt a trauma-informed and inclusive approach to communication, ensuring that interactions are considerate, supportive, and responsive to individual needs.

This includes:

- **Recognising a student's starting point** – Understanding that previous experiences, such as trauma or anxiety, may affect a student's ability or willingness to communicate.
- **Being mindful of tone and language** – Using clear, calm, and supportive language to encourage positive interactions.
- **Offering alternative communication methods** – Providing students with multiple ways to engage (chat, microphone, whiteboard) to accommodate different needs and preferences.

- **Encouraging, not forcing, participation** – Acknowledging that some students may need additional time or scaffolding to feel comfortable contributing to discussions.
- **Recognising non-verbal communication** – Some students may express themselves through emojis, reactions, or engagement with lesson content, which should be acknowledged as valid forms of interaction.

6 Process and procedures

6.1 Providing avenues for communication

Effective communication is key to creating a supportive and engaging learning environment. Teachers are encouraged to check in with students at the start of each lesson, build rapport, and provide opportunities for students to express themselves.

By proactively engaging with students, teachers can better understand their needs and adapt their approach accordingly. For example:

- If a student communicates that they are frustrated, tired, or anxious, the teacher may adjust their engagement strategies to provide additional support.
- If a student expresses that they are focused, calm, and ready to learn, the teacher can challenge and extend their learning appropriately.

Encouraging open communication also means students may disclose safeguarding concerns. If this occurs, teachers must immediately follow Tute's safeguarding policy and reporting process to ensure the appropriate actions are taken.


6.2 Maintaining high expectations

While we acknowledge that negative behaviour is a form of communication, it is essential that high expectations for student conduct are maintained in the Learning Cloud. A structured approach to communication ensures that all students can engage positively in lessons, fostering a respectful and productive learning environment.

To support this:

- Clear communication expectations are presented at the start of every programme via the default Learning Cloud slide (see below)
- When new students join a programme, teachers reintroduce these expectations to ensure consistency.

- The expectations remain available throughout every lesson, so teachers can refer to them whenever necessary.
- Students have access to the Student Hub, which provides guidance on lesson expectations, participation, and communication standards.
 - Understand how to engage effectively in lessons.
 - Learn about lesson etiquette and appropriate communication.
 - Access additional support if they need help with engagement or participation.



Welcome to your Tute lesson

While your teacher is getting today's lesson ready, here's a recap on what we expect in lessons

Tute teachers will:

- Plan engaging lessons to help you make progress and grow in confidence
- Arrive early to lessons to greet you as you log in
- Not tolerate any disrespectful behaviour
- Ensure you communicate respectfully
- Follow Tute's behaviour for learning process
- Share your progress and engagement with you after every lesson

We expect you to:

- Attend all lessons on time and stay until the end
- Complete all work asked by your teacher
- Respect everyone: be kind, open-minded, and value people's differences
- Share ideas, listen well, and show empathy
- Let your teacher know if you need support
- **TRY YOUR BEST!**

Safeguarding

This means keeping you safe. It is our priority. We will always tell your school if we are concerned about your wellbeing.

Do not share any personal information

It's important you **do not** share personal information during a Tute lesson or in Tute's Learning Base that could allow another individual to contact you, either online or offline, e.g:

Address | Telephone numbers | Social media | Gaming handles

If you have **any concerns** about yourself or someone else in your class, let your teacher know or email safeguarding@tute.com; more support is available on the **Student Hub**.

StudentHub

hub.tute.com/student-hub

Your Student Hub has everything to help you succeed!
video guides | staying safe | support for you | latest updates

While we encourage open communication and positive engagement, it is essential that all students contribute to a respectful and productive learning environment. If a student's communication disrupts others' ability to learn or does not align with Tute's expectations for constructive participation, teachers will take appropriate steps to manage the situation.

6.3 Behaviour for learning process

Tute follows a three warning system to support students in maintaining positive communication within the Learning Cloud. This approach ensures that students receive clear guidance and opportunities to adjust their communication before further action is taken.

Each stage of the process reinforces expectations for respectful and productive communication, ensuring fairness and consistency in how behavioural concerns are managed.

6.3.1 First lapse in communication/behaviour:

- The teacher will explain to the student that their communication does not align with agreed expectations and is not acceptable.
- The specific lapse in communication or behaviour will be outlined, providing context on why it falls below expectations.
- The student will be informed that they have received their first warning.

6.3.2 Second lapse in communication/behaviour:

- The teacher will explain that the student's communication continues to fall below expectations.
- A second warning is issued, with a clear and specific explanation of what behaviour is unacceptable.
- The student will be encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and reminded of their choice:
 - Adjust communication to remain in the lesson.
 - Continue the behaviour and risk removal.
- The teacher will reinforce that any further lapses will result in removal from the lesson and the contact at their organisation informed.

6.3.3 Third lapse in communication/behaviour:

- If communication falls below expectations a third time, a third and final warning is issued.
- The teacher will clearly explain the reason for the warning and remind the student that they have had previous opportunities to amend their behaviour.
- The student will be removed from the lesson, and their designated link contact at the commissioning organisation will be notified.

If the student attempts to rejoin the lesson, they will be removed again without drawing attention to it. This reinforces that disruptive communication will not be tolerated.

If the removal relates to a safeguarding concern, the teacher will complete an incident report, ensuring the issue is escalated appropriately.

6.3.4 Reporting

Following the removal of a student from a lesson, the teacher will complete a student removal form, detailing:

- The specific reasons for each warning issued.

- The context of the behaviour and any relevant contributing factors.

The inclusion team will:

- Review all student removal reports before sharing them with the designated teaching and learning contact for the student.
- Conduct weekly and monthly analysis of removal data to identify patterns and trends.
- Use this data to provide targeted support for students, inform teacher training, and enhance partner and parental collaboration.

This structured reporting process ensures that student behaviour and communication challenges are monitored effectively, allowing for proactive interventions to support students in their learning journey.

6.3.5 Escalation of concern

In cases where a student's communication and behaviour consistently fall below expectations or a single incident is particularly disruptive, further intervention is required to ensure appropriate support is in place.

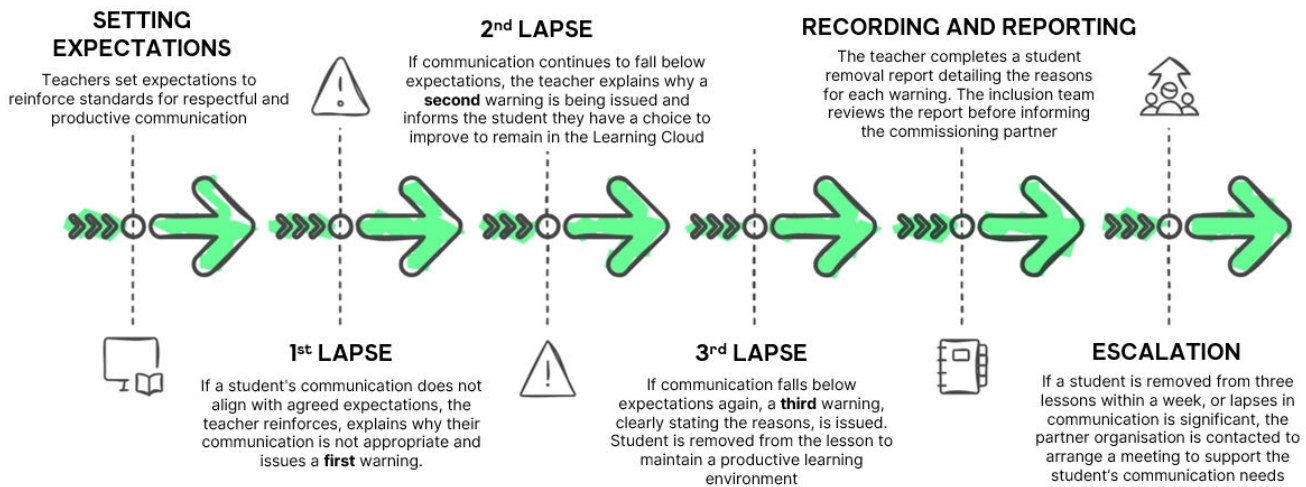
- If a student receives three or more removal forms within a single week, the partner organisation will be contacted via email to arrange a support meeting.
- This meeting provides an opportunity to collaborate on strategies that will help the student engage more positively in lessons.
- The focus will be on identifying underlying challenges, reinforcing expectations, and ensuring that appropriate interventions are in place to support the student's development.

While discretion is applied in individual cases, for consistency and fairness, this process is followed wherever practical to ensure a structured and supportive approach.

6.3.6 Returning to lessons

Students who are removed from a lesson will be able to rejoin their next Tute lesson with a fresh start. Each lesson is treated as a new opportunity for the student to engage positively, with the expectation that they will adhere to communication and behaviour standards moving forward.

COMMUNICATION (BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING)



6.4 Exceptional circumstances

Tute is committed to supporting all students in achieving positive outcomes through clear expectations, structured interventions, and collaboration with partners. Permanent deregistration is not a typical course of action, as our approach prioritises support and intervention to help students re-engage successfully.

However, in rare and extreme cases, where all reasonable strategies have been exhausted, it may be necessary to discuss deregistration with our partners. If a partner believes that permanent deregistration is in the student's best interests, Tute will:

- Provide guidance and recommendations to ensure the decision is made in alignment with the student's welfare.
- Offer support in exploring alternative options where appropriate.
- Ensure that the integrity of the learning environment is maintained for all students.

This process will always be handled with careful consideration, fairness, and collaboration, ensuring that the best possible outcome is reached for both the student and the wider learning community.

7 Communication channels for students

Tute provides multiple communication channels to ensure students can effectively engage with their teachers and peers while maintaining a safe and structured online learning environment.

7.1 Communication in lessons

During live lessons, students can communicate with teachers and peers through the following methods:

- Public chat – Messages sent here are visible to all students and teachers in the lesson.
- Private messaging – Students can send direct messages to their teacher, which are visible only to the student and teacher.
- Learning Cloud whiteboard features – Students can contribute to class discussions and activities via interactive tools.
- Microphone – Students can communicate verbally with their teacher and classmates if they feel comfortable doing so.
- Emojis – Students can use emojis as a non-verbal way to interact and express engagement.

7.2 Communication outside of lessons

Beyond live lessons, students have access to additional communication channels within the Tute platform:

- Direct messaging – Students can message their teacher outside of lesson times through the Tute platform. Students do not have the ability to message each other.
- File sharing – Students can upload and share attachments with their teacher.
- Learning Base (where applicable) – For students enrolled in programmes that include a Learning Base, they can:
 - Communicate with their teacher and classmates in an open forum-style message board.
 - Ask questions and participate in ongoing discussions facilitated by the teacher.
 - Upload assessments and independent learning tasks.
 - Review teacher posts and guidance for additional learning support.

7.3 Safeguarding and security

Tute's communication system is designed with robust safeguarding measures to ensure student safety:

- All communication occurs within a secure and monitored platform.
- Messages cannot be deleted by teachers or students, ensuring transparency.
- The safeguarding team reviews communications as part of ongoing monitoring to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment.

By offering structured, safeguarded communication options, Tute ensures that students can interact in a way that supports their learning, encourages engagement, and maintains a secure and inclusive environment.

8 Mechanisms for support

8.1 Contacting the referring partner

Keeping partners informed about lapses in communication or behaviour allows for a coordinated approach to student support. By sharing relevant information, Tute ensures that interventions can be implemented both within lessons and beyond.

Tute will:

- Work closely with partners to ensure appropriate systems, scaffolds, and support are in place within Tute lessons.
- Provide timely updates to enable partners to address any concerns within their own provision.
- Collaborate with partners to develop tailored strategies that help students re-engage and meet communication expectations.

This joint approach ensures that students receive consistent and effective support across all areas of their education.

8.2 Inclusion team support

Where communication issues frequently arise, teachers are encouraged to request a meeting with the inclusion team, led by the assistant head of teaching and learning – Inclusion and SEND.

The inclusion team can:

- Provide case-by-case advice on supporting students with persistent communication challenges.
- Offer strategies and interventions tailored to individual student needs.
- Collaborate with teachers to enhance lesson engagement and accessibility for students requiring additional support.

If a student demonstrates low-level but ongoing poor communication or behaviour that does not lead to removal from lessons but still disrupts the learning environment, teachers can request support from the inclusion team.

The team will:

- Identify patterns of disruption and explore underlying causes.
- Recommend classroom management strategies to promote positive communication.

- Work with partners to implement additional interventions if needed.

This proactive approach ensures that students receive the right level of guidance and intervention, helping them to develop positive communication habits and engage successfully in lessons.

8.2.1 Student support associates

Student support associates (SSAs) provide targeted intervention for students who experience difficulties in regulating their behaviour or communication during lessons. Their role is to:

- Offer additional support to students who may struggle to meet communication expectations.
- Work with students to identify barriers to learning that may be impacting their engagement.
- Develop support plans to help students communicate their needs more effectively.
- Provide mentoring sessions, if requested, to offer further guidance, reflection, and strategies for improving communication and engagement.

8.2.2 Family engagement

Where appropriate Tute engages with parents and carers to provide additional support for students' communication and engagement.

Tute's Parent Support Associate (PSA) plays a key role in this process by:

- Acting as a point of contact for families where engagement is needed.
- Sharing strategies and insights to help parents support their child's communication and participation in lessons.
- Providing updates on progress, where permitted, to ensure a joined-up approach between home and learning.
- Signposting families to relevant resources, including the Parent and Carer Hub, which offers guidance on supporting student engagement, communication, and wellbeing.

By working collaboratively with families, the PSA helps to strengthen student engagement and ensure communication expectations are reinforced both within and beyond Tute lessons. However, this level of engagement is only initiated where the partner has granted permission for Tute to liaise directly with parents or carers.

8.3 Teaching and learning SLT live-lesson call in

Teachers can request live lesson support from a member of the teaching and learning senior leadership team (SLT) if additional intervention is needed during a lesson.

SLT support may be requested when:

- A student's communication is persistently disruptive, and immediate intervention is required.
- A student repeatedly ignores expectations, despite previous warnings.
- A teacher requires additional support in managing engagement and behaviour within the Learning Cloud environment.

When providing support, SLT will use restorative practices to help students recognise expectations, reflect on their communication, and re-engage positively in the lesson. This approach encourages students to take responsibility for their participation, supports relationship-building within the learning environment, and reinforces a calm and productive atmosphere for all learners.

9 Encouraging positive communication

We recognise that communication is not just about managing behaviour but also about celebrating and reinforcing positive interactions. Encouraging students to express themselves constructively and confidently is a fundamental part of our approach.

9.1 Student praise certificates

To recognise and celebrate student achievements, Tute teachers can generate praise certificates directly through our platform. These certificates acknowledge positive engagement, effort, and progress in lessons, reinforcing the importance of effective communication and participation.

A teacher can select from predefined praise reasons, such as:

- brilliant engagement
- fantastic teamwork
- creative thinking
- perseverance and positivity

Teachers can also add personalised comments, such as: "Well done on demonstrating such fantastic engagement in your English lessons. It's great to see so many responses to tasks; you are making brilliant progress with your learning as a result."

These certificates are shared directly with students, offering instant recognition and encouraging continued positive communication in lessons.

9.2 Celebrating positive student moments

Beyond individual praise, Tute ensures that student successes are shared more widely through the "Just So You Know" initiative. This process allows teachers to report notable moments of student progress and achievement, which are then shared with the student's commissioning partner.

Examples of moments we celebrate include:

- A student engaging in the lesson after a period of inactivity
- A student using the chat or microphone for the first time
- Demonstrating confidence or resilience in a new way

Once submitted, the positive moments are reviewed by the Tute inclusion team, who notify the commissioning partner. This process strengthens our collaborative approach, ensuring partners are informed of student successes and can celebrate progress alongside us.

By embedding positive communication practices into our teaching approach, we foster a supportive and encouraging learning environment where students feel valued, motivated, and engaged.

10 Monitoring and tracking

10.1 Behaviour dashboard

Tute uses a behaviour for learning dashboard (see image below) to monitor and track student communication and behaviour trends across lessons. This dashboard provides real-time data on key indicators, enabling us to identify patterns and highlight any areas of concern.

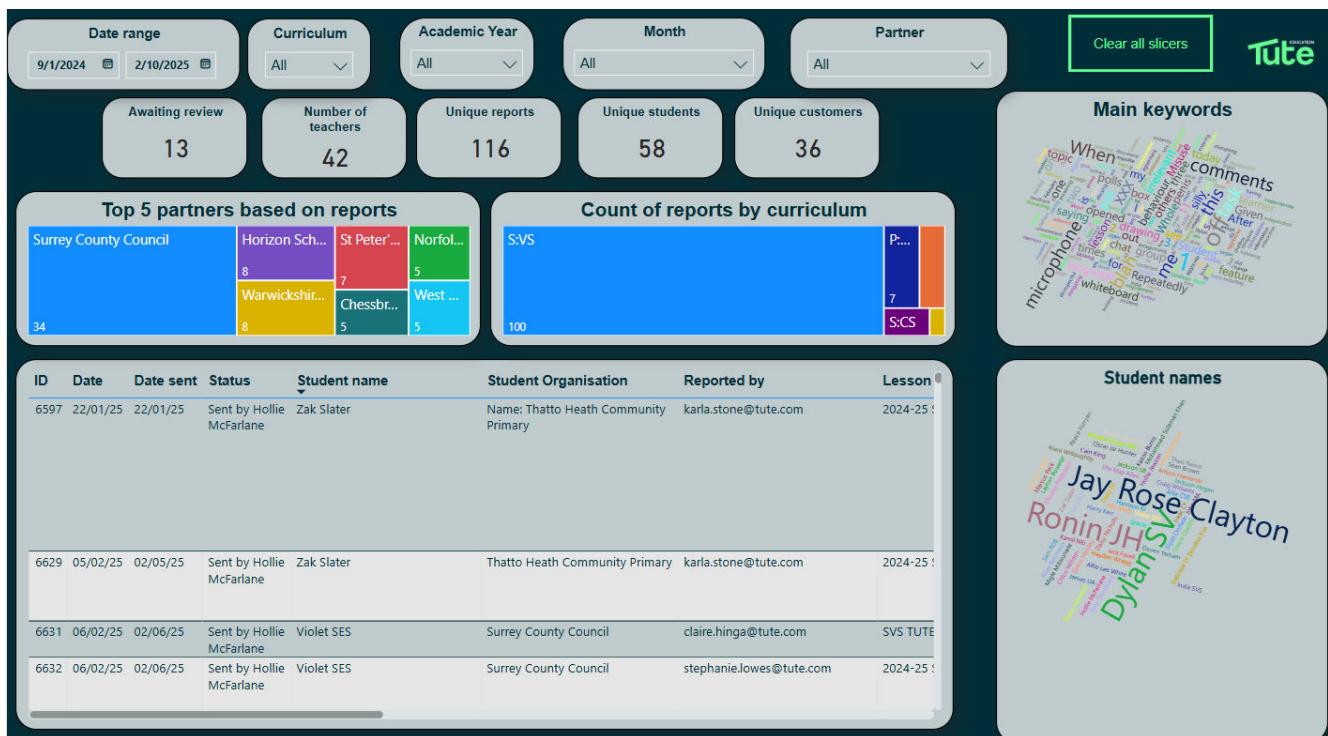
The dashboard allows us to track:

- The number of occasions a student was removed from a lesson.
- The number of unique students removed from lessons.
- The number of teachers who have issued student removals.
- The curriculum areas where behaviour concerns have occurred.
- Behaviour trends filtered by date range and partner, helping to identify any emerging issues.

By using this data, Tute can:

- Identify patterns and trends in student behaviour.
- Provide targeted support to students who may be struggling with communication and engagement.
- Support teachers with interventions and strategies.
- Work proactively with partners to address concerns and implement solutions.

The behaviour for learning dashboard is a key tool in our commitment to maintaining a positive, structured, and supportive learning environment.



10.2 Positive moments

In addition to monitoring behaviour trends, Tute also tracks and logs positive student moments shared through the "Just So You Know" initiative.

The positive student moments log allows us to track:

- Which students have been recognised for positive contributions.
- What specific achievements or moments were shared.
- Which partners received updates about their students.

This log is regularly reviewed by the team and used by account managers in their regular review meetings with partners. This enables us to:

- Celebrate student successes in a structured and meaningful way.

- Highlight patterns of engagement and improvement across lessons.
- Strengthen relationships with partners by keeping them informed of their students' positive progress.

By tracking both behaviour interventions and positive student moments, Tute ensures a balanced, supportive approach to communication and engagement across all lessons.

11 Professional boundaries

All Tute staff are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional conduct, ensuring that their communication and interactions with students remain appropriate, respectful, and within clear professional boundaries.

Staff must:

- Communicate with students in a professional manner, maintaining formal and appropriate language at all times.
- Ensure that all communication only takes place within Tute's secure platform, using approved channels such as the Learning Cloud, direct messaging, and the Learning Base.
- Avoid any informal, personal, or inappropriate interactions, including on social media or other external platforms.
- Ensure that their online presence and conduct outside of lessons do not bring Tute's name into disrepute.

12 Related policies

- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Allegations Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Serious Incident Policy
- GDPR Policy

13 Annual review

The communications policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.