



QUORN HALL
SCHOOL

Positive Behaviour Support Policy

Person Responsible: Headteacher

Last reviewed on: 10th September 2021

Next review due by: 10th September 2022

Created: 25th August 2009 (Gryphon School)

Revisions: Reviewed annually; 25th September 2020

Aims

This policy is intended to help staff carry out tasks to create and maintain a safe environment for all, with a specific focus on working with challenging behaviour, maintaining a therapeutic environment, and within this ensuring good order and discipline.

The policy covers the following sections:

- Section 1. General guidance for staff on working with challenging behaviour
- Section 2. Guidance on the use of sanctions and boundaries to promote positive behaviour
- Section 3. Use of restraint, including reasonable force
- Section 4. Monitoring incidents, use of reasonable force and restraint
- Appendix 1: Founding Principles and Rationale (Gryphon School)

SECTION 1. GENERAL GUIDANCE ON WORKING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR IN YOUNG PEOPLE PLACED AT QUORN HALL SCHOOL

“Misbehaviour should be viewed as a puzzle to be solved, not a threat to be removed”

R. Sprick

All of the young people placed at Quorn Hall School have struggled in previous specialist placements. Many have experienced early childhood adversity and all have additional learning needs which have made school feel particularly difficult and for some, a place that triggers feelings of shame that they have learned to cover with aggressive and avoidant behaviour. If the strategies used in mainstream schools, PRUs, and local authority maintained SEMH schools were effective with these students (as they are for many young people), we would have no students.

Our role is to work therapeutically and in a trauma-informed manner, building and using relationships to help them develop greater self-esteem and realise that they can make better choices. This has been extremely effective for some young people, who have gone on to succeed in college, university, and employment.

Relationship-based trauma can only be healed through a nurturing relationship” Dr Bruce Perry

We believe that children communicate their thoughts and feelings through their behaviour. We have a responsibility to try to understand what they are telling us even though this may not be immediately apparent. It is important to connect with the underlying reasons the child may be behaving in a particular way. Their observable behaviour is often the result of coping strategies developed over time so rewiring their brain to respond in different, healthier, and safer ways will take us time.

It can be easier for us to assume they are choosing to behave this way than to grapple with the complexity of what is happening for them and how they make us feel. Sometimes our feelings can give us insight into what they are experiencing. For example, when challenged or insulted by a child's behaviour, we may feel some level of anger/outrage and have a strong desire to assert control then later we may experience sadness e.g. a sense of being exposed, judged, and not good enough.

The combination of relationships, structure, routine, clear boundaries, and opportunities for thinking together promotes the development of positive, healthy, safe ways of relating to others. All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse).

It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it.

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers.

Our aim at Quorn Hall School is zero tolerance on peer on peer abuse, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Sexual Violence however this is to be dealt with in line with our Positive behaviour policy and individual Wellbeing plans with a Low Arousal Approach being used at all times. See Safeguarding Policy for more information.

1. Anticipate and prevent

Get to know each child well; a strong relationship based on trust and respect is one of the most effective preventative measures. Know the content of each student's Placement Plan and positive handling plan and risk assessment.

Involve the children: in decisions about their treatment and about reasonable limits appropriate to each child's age and understanding.

Teach by example – model exaggerated respect for the children, for each other, yourself, the school, and good ethical behaviours in all of our work. Verbalise this and explain the reasons for it.

Expect and assume good behaviour. Whilst being prepared for, and aware of, possible negative behaviours, attempt to portray a belief that the child wants to, is doing, and will do, the right thing. Your faith in who they could be will help them visualise this for themselves.

Encourage age-appropriate behaviour. Notice and respond when children are being helpful or constructive, friendly, or just appropriate and co-operative. When considering age-appropriate behaviour the cognitive "age" of the pupil should be taken into account as well as their chronological age.

Be consistent – all members of staff should endeavor to maintain consistent limits within the team and find out about the limits the child is used to at home and elsewhere.

Be clear – children need to be aware of what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour and responsibilities. Problems often occur when expectations are unclear or unreasonable.

Be assertive – a positively assertive staff member will help students to feel secure, and therefore safe, as they will not feel the need to be in control or overly vigilant. Be calm and controlled but not aggressive in your assertiveness, speak to pupils in a way that portrays expectations of their positive behaviours without appearing to plead for them to behave.

Work as a team – make use of your team to avoid unnecessary conflict and engage in ways that help the child think and be regulated.

Praise and positively reinforce behaviour whenever possible – remember you generally “get more of what you talk about.” Promote positive behaviour through feedback, certificates, and greater responsibilities, etc. Genuine pride in and enjoyment alongside children when they achieve may be the best recognition. We avoid the use of whole-class/school reward schemes, point systems, etc as these can cause destructive competition between pupils. Pupils’ individual behaviour should be monitored and reflected on.

2. When things become difficult, what helps?

No single approach or technique is helpful in all situations for all children. Pay attention to the child and do what actually helps them, here and now. Use strategies included in the child’s Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan.

Notice and be curious about the behaviour. Simply ignoring someone’s communication won’t calm things down.

Notice and be curious about feelings and emotions. Show you are willing and able to think about what’s happening for them. Give their mind space in your mind.

Recognise the child’s feelings – it may be unreasonable for the child to kick, bite or scream but it is not unreasonable for them to feel cross or unhappy. Confirm the feeling with/for the child and help find acceptable ways to express their feelings. Many of our children struggle to label their feelings! Quorn Hall School recognises that teaching young people to recognise and name their feelings is a core part of our work.

Try and avoid head-on conflict – try distraction or compromise – defuse the situation wherever you can and stop it escalating. Relaxed humor is helpful on occasions.

Use the opportunity for the child to find a better way – try and teach a more positive alternative to unacceptable behaviour i.e. “let’s do this” rather than “don’t do that”. Always aim to increase the child’s own self-control, at least until they demonstrate that they have control.

Set clear, simple expectations they can achieve. STOP or CHANGE an activity. Be clear and confident. Explain simply:

- Say “We need to stop [activity] because [reason] ”.
- Say “You need to stop [behaviour] because [reason] ”.

Don’t repeat the same words over and over.

Confidently problem-solve with the child; offer alternatives, make sure the child has a way out of the confrontation without losing face and make sure there are gains in getting out of the conflict.

Model PAUSING, REGULATING, and THINKING. Do not rush into sanctions or make threats:

- Say “I am going to think with other adults about this”.
- Say “We need to think about what has happened”.

Some of our older pupils may be able to reflect as part of their restorative work and identify a suitable way of repairing.

Make a distinction between the child and the behaviour; make it clear that you will go on caring for the child whatever they might do and recognise yourself that the behaviour is not really a personal affront to you (even though it may look and feel that way!).

Keep your own self-control – get help and do not be afraid to go away and hand over the situation to others if you feel you are losing your own self-control or simply to make things better for the child.

- Move confidently but calmly.
- Make simple clear statements to the child.
- Make sure your voice is quiet, firm, and assured.
- It is often best to simply leave a situation; you don't need to have your say before you go away and doing so can prevent the next person being able to reach the child and help them regulate.

Reduce the threat of your presence by sitting, kneeling, or giving space for the child to move about. If you are challenging the child it can help to avoid direct eye contact.

Stay with the child and focus on being reassuring, offering comfort and security through being there with the child when distressed and out of control. This may mean keeping very close, seeking eye contact, speaking even if there is no reply etc. It may mean keeping a distance the child can tolerate and allowing the child plenty of space. It may mean sitting quietly a little way away and simply being in the same space or area as the child. Don't try to sort things out in the heat of the moment, leave that for later when the child is regulated. Together you can agree on what needs to happen next in order to resolve the entire situation.

3. When things become difficult, what doesn't help?

Don't take it personally or make it personal. Depending on the child and the situation we can verbalise to pupils that their language or actions are unacceptable and that they cause offense. This should still be done in a calm manner and be put into generic terms. If a situation feels personal we may need to come out of it and ask other staff to support us and the child. Where possible staff should intervene for each other when behaviours are directed personally. A ‘change of face’ can defuse tension and break a stalemate. It

may be helpful to reflect with a colleague from Student Support or your Area Lead if you are finding it hard not to take things personally.

Don't try and deal with situations alone if you feel out of your depth – you don't need to 'prove yourself' and it is a sign of strength to ask for help, ideas, or advice.

Be very aware of your body language and positioning so that it will not be seen as threatening and so that the child can see safe ways out of the situation. Develop a habit of asking pupils if you can approach them, sit with them etc, if you do not have a strong relationship and understanding with them.

While the incident is not the time to be putting in or threatening sanctions, this should wait until the situation is calm and all involved can effectively participate.

Be very aware of the language used in order to match the age and understanding of the child.

Don't raise your voice as a routine response, nor give complicated garbled messages. Many of our children struggle to process complex verbal language when they are calm; very little of what you say will be consciously processed when they are reaching fight/flight/freeze/flop levels of arousal.

Don't try to sort things out by bombarding the child with statements and questions, loudly or harshly.

Don't use humour that belittles, shames or demeans the child or which they don't understand.

Unwanted or needed physical contact – unless a pupil has initiated it, given permission, needs it for safety reasons or has it as part of an agreed plan we should not touch them. This includes placing a hand on shoulders or ruffling hair, for some children this can be triggering and feel uncomfortable and invasive. A gentle touch can be more difficult for some children with ASD to tolerate than firm, deep pressure.

If you have to use sanctions as part of a planned approach: make them immediate, fair, and reasonable and try to ensure that the child understands why. See Section 2 for more detail. If it does not make sense and means nothing to the child there is probably no point in doing it. Sanctions should support a child to learn to modify their behaviour and should not be used as a punishment.

SECTION 2. GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF SANCTIONS AND BOUNDARIES TO PROMOTE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

A person who has to endure punishment provides himself with protection... a “tough crust” in order that our violence, whether physical or not, shall hurt him as little as possible... But our work is not concerned with the tough crust – it is with the soft core. We can never reach that core while we are provoking the subject to a hardening of his “crust”.

David Wills – The Hawkspur experiment

Agreed sanctions can be used by staff teams to promote appropriate behaviour and to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the adults caring for them, and the wider community. Sanctions aim to help children accept responsibility for their actions and to undertake reparative and restorative action. A sanction should hold open a space for thinking, feeling, and making things better. It is not intended as a punishment.

Staff teams regularly review the use of sanctions for individual children and for groups to ensure that they are helping them to learn and become more responsible. If a sanction is not appropriate or effective, it should not be used.

Fixed sanctions may be adopted by a team or the whole community, in relation to an individual child, a group, or the whole community, for periods of time when this is needed to support and contain the children and the staff teams working with them. All sanctions are reviewed and there are no whole school fixed sanctions permanently in place.

Good Sanctions Practice:

Staff will always consider behaviour as communication and seek to understand what is happening to the child(ren) in the context of their history and stage of development.

Sanctions should:

- fit the inappropriate behaviour.
- be seen to be fair in the eyes of children and discussed with them so that they know clearly what sanctions are and are not permitted.
- not be seen as revenge or getting even.
- be for a limited period where applicable.
- be used with thought/consideration.
- be tailored to the individual.
- be discussed with the staff team.
- be applied as soon after the event as possible.
- be reviewed periodically.

Staff members should aim to:

- Clearly set out what a child needs to work on.
- Use words that focus on relationships:
 - “We need to keep you safe; you can’t go on trips/ expeditions until you can work with us to keep you safe” (rather than “you’re grounded!”)
 - “When the class is less about you being on a computer, you can use one again” (rather than “you have a tech ban for a week!”).
- Clearly set out the expectation that adults and children need to work on this together.
- Be clear that moving on from a limit or sanction depends on judgments – when other people can see you are safe/calm/have made things better as best you can.
- e.g. “When I really feel you will be safe doing...” may be more frustrating for the child and for you than a hard deadline/date but it is caring and gives the child a motivation to improve (otherwise they have nothing to lose until that hard deadline).

Communication is key in making this approach work – information has to pass from adult to adult so each person can make judgments.

Staff members should notice and respond to lower-level behaviours. It is not fair to sanction children because adults have been too slow to notice the children’s more moderate communications (and the children will notice this).

Poor Sanctions Practice:

It is easy to set a sanction that simply stops the child from doing things or prevents them from being present at school for a period of time. This may make everybody feel safe, and may be necessary in the short-term, but it does not support anybody to grow. In general, a sanction that means people don’t need to struggle with difficult things is not a sanction that is very useful in helping promote long term growth and change for the child.

A sanction that prohibits something for a set time has simply to be borne by the child and also the adults and the child group until it is over. This can be easier than working on things that are a challenge. Simply banning something or grounding somebody is unlikely to help them to think, learn, and make reparations. Often the practical reality is that there are necessary exceptions to broad bans etc which make them confusing, tokenistic, or unjust.

Staff members should avoid:

- Words like “ban”.
- Children “doing their time” etc.
- A rigid time for a sanction to last.

- A broad sanction (no use of electronics, no going in vehicles).

It is the school's policy that children will be included in any educational or planned activity outside of school if they are safe and able to do so – these things are not withdrawn as part of a particular sanction. If a child being part of a regular activity does not fit with appropriate boundaries the placement plan for that child will be discussed by the treatment team and may be withdrawn or changed following appropriate discussion with the child.

Sanctions used in the school include:

- Reparation – this can be anything appropriate to the situation; apologising, making someone a drink, cleaning up, helping the school caretaker repair or paint damage. It should preferably be something that gives the child a positive experience. We want them to view reparation as a positive action so that they are more likely to repeat it of their own accord. Repairing cannot be forced, if a pupil is not ready to accept responsibility and engage positively with the reparation it will only be viewed as a punishment and more restorative and cognitive work needs to be done with that pupil. Reparations of a larger scale should be discussed and agreed with student support.
- Not being allowed to use specific pieces of equipment following their misuse e.g. reparation must be completed before using computers again, or not joining in a sports activity following inappropriate or dangerous behaviour in that specific sport. Any sanction of this type must be discussed and agreed with the Student Support Team, be clearly explained to the pupil, and be for as short a time as possible. Children will not learn to control their behaviours if they are not able to practice the advice they are being given.
- Attend a Panel Meeting following high levels of unacceptable or concerning behaviour. This should feel different to a Restorative Meeting. A Panel Meeting is convened by somebody with some emotional distance from the child (e.g. Executive Principal, Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher) who is not directly impacted by their behaviour. It will have a clear focus on setting expectations around a particular behaviour, relationship or challenging aspect of daily routine and agreeing on plans to support a change in that behaviour. It may be relatively firm in tone and present with clear authority, but will always aim to support change through clear expectations and appropriate authority, not through intimidation. A child will be accompanied by a supporting adult who can help them make the best use of the panel meeting. The panel meeting may meet once or may meet regularly for a period of time.
- Time away from the group or activity. Any time away from the group must be to support the child to regulate, to reflect on what has happened, and to consider how they can rejoin the group safely and make things better. Where a child is

supported away from the group, adults should ensure that the child understands what the expectations are and why this decision has been made.

Circumstances, where it may be appropriate for a child to spend some time away from the group, may include:-

- A child has become so unregulated they are placing themselves or others at risk;
- A child has become physically or verbally aggressive, bullying or racist toward another;
- A child or a number of children are behaving in a way that is encouraging group disintegration and there is clear evidence to suggest that unless the child/children take some space separately the situation could become unsafe.

Exclusion should be used only rarely and in exceptional circumstances. It should not be the first and only way of holding a boundary with young people. The decision to exclude can only be made by the Headteacher (DfE guidance, 2017). Exclusion can be very damaging to some of our children and can escalate rather than improve their behaviour – as the ultimate sanction it needs very careful consideration and it must be clear that other options have been tried.

In extreme circumstances, a fixed-term exclusion of between 1 and 5 days may need to be considered to allow the school to reflect with parents, carers, and social workers on the cause of the incident and to plan for a successful reintegration for the student. Such extreme circumstances might include the following, which is not an exhaustive list, but individual needs, risk, and context will always be considered:

- a) Extreme violence or assault
- b) Peer on peer abuse
- c) Supplying an illegal drug
- d) Carrying an offensive weapon

The school will work with parents/carers and the child to prevent both fixed term and permanent exclusion and will only issue fixed-term or permanent exclusions in extreme circumstances. We will adhere to the DfE 2017 statutory guidance on exclusion and the additional guidance from August 2020 reflecting COVID-19. Whenever a fixed-term or permanent exclusion is issued, parents/carers and the placing Local Authority, including the social worker of any looked-after children, will be notified by phone and letter.

Parents/carers will also be advised of their right to appeal and the process that will be followed should they choose to exercise this right.

Prohibited Sanctions:

The following measures may not be used to discipline any child:

- any form of corporal punishment;
- any punishment involving the consumption or deprivation of food or drink;
- the use or withholding of medication, or medical or dental treatment;

- any intimate physical examination;
- withholding any aids or equipment needed by a disabled child;
- any measure involving a child imposing any measure against another child;
- any measure involving punishing a group of children for the behaviour of an individual child;
- access to the toilet.
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In addition, the following are prohibited by law:

- The locking or blocking of a child or children in a single room at any time, even when accompanied by a responsible adult or adults;
- The locking or blocking of internal doors to confine a child or children in certain sections, even when accompanied by an adult or adults. (Locking of external doors in order to provide safety for the children and prevent unauthorised persons from accessing the building is permitted.)
- Seclusion is ‘forcing a person to spend time alone’. At Quorn Hall School no child is forced to spend time alone as a consequence of challenging behaviour or as a punishment. Any separation from the child’s group is in the company of or close proximity to an adult.

In addition, the School itself prohibits the use of the following:

- threats of unacceptable punishments or punishments that have not been agreed in advance, this includes contacting parents;
- any verbal abuse intended to humiliate or degrade a child, his/her family or other important people;
- removal of curriculum entitlement for any reason other than health and safety;
- removal of rewards that have already been earned;
- the whole group being sanctioned as the result of an individual child’s behaviour.

A natural consequence can also help a child to reflect on their actions (e.g. they broke their favourite game so it is no longer available and it will take time to get a new one). However, it is important not to remind the students excessively of something they did wrong, especially in front of peers, as this can be shaming.

For measures to combat bullying, see Countering Bullying Policy.

SECTION 3. USE OF RESTRAINT, INCLUDING REASONABLE FORCE

It should always be remembered that when working with challenging behaviour, interventions of any nature should be in the best interests of the child, reasonable, proportionate, and necessary.

At Quorn Hall School we use the Team Teach system of positive behaviour management, which emphasises that the majority of behaviour management should be proactive. The school follows the approach, guidance, and ethos of Team Teach in all matters relating to the use of restraint and the use of reasonable force.

If a child is presenting a risk to themselves or others or causing serious damage to property, physical interventions that are reasonable, necessary, proportionate, and in the best interest of that child may be required. This should be carried out with the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time.

Restraint or reasonable force should not be used as such a regular feature of practice that it comes to be seen by children as an everyday method of control and one which they will come to demand/expect before accepting adult authority.

Children who have suffered serious physical and/or sexual abuse can react powerfully to well-intentioned efforts of reasonable force or restraint, misperceiving such actions as the prelude to the further assault of either type. This is not to say that control by reasonable force or restraint should be avoided entirely, rather it indicates that this must be kept in mind by the adult who must be prepared to reassure a child of intention. It also confirms that children should be involved in discussing and identifying behaviours that might require adult intervention and reasonable force or restraint. This should occur at calm times, both prior to the need for any such intervention and as part of talking through occasions of reasonable force and/or restraint.

Staff using reasonable force must remember:

- To ensure that one person takes the lead in talking to the child during the interventions. This can avoid creating further confusion.
- After any physical intervention, a visual check of the child needs to be completed to check for injuries and ensure any medical treatment that is required is actioned and this needs recording on the report.
- Incidents of reasonable force or restraint are recorded on Behaviour Watch before the end of the working day, even if further detail will need to be added later. Parents/carers should ideally be informed before the child returns home and must be informed on the same day as the incident took place.
- To ensure that any appropriate amendments are made to the child's Risk Assessment/Positive Handling Plan.

- Reasonable force/restraint can only be used by a member of staff who is trained in the use of Team Teach or if reasonable force is required in an unforeseeable event.
- Reasonable force/restraint can only be used if a child is in danger of hurting themselves, yourself, or another person, causing serious damage to property or seriously disrupting other children.
- Reasonable force/restraint can only be used if other forms of intervention have been tried and preventative steps are unsuccessful. These may include talking, comforting, calming, withdrawing yourself from the situation.
- Remember reasonable force/restraint are defensive protective techniques. They should never be used offensively.
- All staff are trained to understand the risks of positional asphyxia during restraint and should ensure that practitioners monitor risk both during the restraint and afterwards.

SECTION 4. MONITORING INCIDENTS of USE OF REASONABLE FORCE AND RESTRAINT

All incidents of use of reasonable force and restraint are logged (see standardising logging and recording policy) and are reported weekly to the SLT and at least termly to the Cavendish Executive Team.

Records should:

- Be completed before the end of the working day;
- Use the systems and structure identified in our policies;
- Be factual and objective;
- Be dated;
- Inform PSPs, risk assessment, and positive handling plans.

Remember:

- After any physical intervention, a visual check of the child needs to be completed to check for injuries and ensure any medical treatment that is required is actioned; this check, with any outcome, needs recording on the report.
- If there is any concern about a child's wellbeing, or if they express concern about their own wellbeing the child will be seen by a first aider or the DSL. Where appropriate the staff member will document marks, injuries, etc. using a body map.
- Debriefs will be held after any physical intervention. These can be facilitated by any members of the SLT and the actions/points of discussion must be recorded before the incident is closed on Behaviour Watch.
- In all incidents of restraint, the child should be given the opportunity to go through the incident with a staff member. This needs to take place within 5 days of the incident.
- A key part of going through the incident with the child is about listening to and capturing the child's experience of restraint and involving them in thinking about strategies that may help them in the future.
- All incidents of control, discipline, and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny and must be reported externally.
- The LADO is consulted where the use of Physical Intervention or restraint becomes a concern. All records are archived along with current policy and guidance.

ROLE OF STAFF

- To be familiar with this policy.
- To ensure that behaviour management in the school is an active process that anticipates the children's needs and meets these where possible before acting out behaviour becomes extreme.
- To use their knowledge of the child to contribute to keeping Wellbeing plans and any additional behaviour support plans up to date.
- To ensure that any measure of discipline or control is used with thought and care in the best interest of the child(ren).
- To reflect on their own practice and to be a critical friend to colleagues.
- To contribute to developing best practices, including being open to changing and improving their own practice on an ongoing basis.

ROLE OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Leadership Team needs to know and understand what is happening in the school, including the way individual children are supported, how groups are contained and what interventions, sanctions, approaches, and relationships are in place to support positive behaviour. This involves ensuring sufficient oversight, monitoring, and accountability.

The Student Support and the Safeguarding Team hold oversight of the positive handling plans for each child and directly monitor the recording of incidents.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher monitor recording systems and maintain the systems used to ensure practice and recording is of the highest standard.

Area Leads set the tone for the proactive systems and expectations of staff which are appropriate for the children in their Key Stage.

ROLE OF THE CAVENDISH EXECUTIVE TEAM

This team remains focussed on the effectiveness of the school in working safely with and reducing children's challenging behaviours. Stephen Aiano is the Governor with lead responsibility for Safeguarding and has particular oversight of the intent, impact, and implementation of this policy on young people.

ROLE OF PUPILS

It is intended that, through participation in restorative meetings, as well as through the reflective process, children should come to understand their own challenging behaviours and develop their capacity for verbalising feelings and self-regulating. This should lead to a reduction in acting-out behaviour.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council plays an important role in modeling the behaviour expected of well-functioning community members. This does not mean they always behave well, but

when things don't go so well the School Council members should hold one another and other children to account and should role-model, or demonstrate, doing their best to work with the community to make things better. They should discuss concerns about behaviour within their meetings and take their thoughts and ideas for change to the sharing assembly or to other child and adult groups in the school.

ROLE OF PARENTS / CARERS

We know children make the most progress when we are working well with the parents and carers. This means good clear communication and the parents and carers understanding the ways in which we are working with behaviour. It also requires common expectations have been agreed upon and understood. Wellbeing plans, individual risk assessments and other plans which outline how we seek to work with an individual child should be shared with parents and carers.

Links & further information:

Team Teach (see your handbook or go to www.teamteach.co.uk)

<https://uktraumacouncil.org/resources>

Low Arousal Approach & Studio 3 reflective journey

<https://www.studio3.org/post/what-is-the-low-arousal-approach>

Physical Intervention Policy

The following books may also be helpful:

“Beyond behaviour” M. Delahooke

“Eyes are never quiet: listening beneath the behaviours of our most troubled students”

McKnight & Descautel

“The Trauma-sensitive classroom: building resilience” P. Jennings

“The trauma and attachment aware classroom” R Brookes

“Restoring Sanctuary” Bloom and Farragher

APPENDIX 1

Founding Principles articulated in 2016 by Christina Church, Founder and Former Proprietor

1. The child may need help in appreciating the rules and procedures of the classroom, finding them hard to remember. Teachers use visual supports and clear classroom routines. The classroom team works together to create a calm atmosphere, interacting respectfully with each other and ensuring that the resources they need are tidy and well-organised.
2. Reinforcement and meaningful rewards (including a positive comment or a smile) are often more effective than punishment for children who have experienced abuse and extreme adversity. Use reinforcers and rewards, ideally ones that help to ground the children or meet their sensory needs; you may need to change or rotate these frequently so they do not become bored.
3. Don't presume that the child will behave well because of receiving a reward or praise. Reward what they have achieved but remember that many have a core belief that they are bad and undeserving, so may struggle with praise. Achieving something positive can create further anxiety, fear of failure, and Imposter Syndrome.
4. When you see a child is beginning to struggle, use distraction and nurturing options e.g. a job that is helpful or maybe they need a short movement break or to go and get a drink before they can concentrate again. Try to ensure that they feel welcome to return and not rejected from the classroom.
5. Whenever possible, try to give the child opportunities to succeed and be responsible.
6. Teach the child to recognise their own arousal levels and how to self-soothe/calm, so that they feel in control. Feelings of helplessness can lead either to explosive or depressed behaviour.
7. Work on one behaviour at a time, making it achievable. You are teaching the child to behave positively, just as you are teaching them to read.
8. Remember that the threat of punishment when a situation is escalating has little or no positive effect on many of our children. It assumes that they are in control of themselves and their behaviour. They may be better able to accept or even to reflect and identify a suitable sanction later with you.
9. Make it clear that their behaviour and not the child is unacceptable.
10. Apply sanctions positively or explain natural consequences carefully; avoid lecturing, criticism, ridiculing, or sarcasm. Remember that many of our children have experienced emotional abuse as part of their journey, so will be attuned to such behaviour from adults who hurt them in the past.

11. When a child has been behaving well (or staying calm when others were less so), let them know how nice it was to be with them. Give positive regard.
12. If out of a whole day, the child was good for 10 minutes, hold onto, and focus on that. It will help you and them.

Rationale

In children with significant emotional trauma and other brain-damaging conditions (e.g. Foetal-alcohol syndrome) or conditions like ODD and ADHD, “persistent and seriously challenging behaviours in children are often impervious to reinforcement schedules, punishments, time-outs and other such techniques” Mona Delahooke (2020). In her recent book, “Beyond Behaviours”, she goes on to describe how we need to understand the child’s individual differences, challenges, and journey in order to tailor our relational and therapeutic approaches.

It is essential that the approach to working with challenging behaviour is matched to the individual child’s level of understanding and ability to make use of the approach. This requires staff teams to discuss and plan appropriate, helpful approaches to individuals within each group. These are then identified in each child’s PSP and their Positive Handling Plan/Risk Assessment if needed.

There will be an ongoing dialogue within teams, informed by current experiences alongside each child to ensure that approaches to individuals and to the group coexist effectively, as both are essential.

The underlying belief of the school is that children are most likely to adapt their behaviour positively when:

- Expectations are clear and achievable;
- They feel seen, heard, and understood; they feel valued and cared for;
- They receive regular praise and positive feedback in a form they can tolerate;
- They feel they are being successful;
- They receive consistent messages from staff, their families and carers, and their external networks;

Teaching and enabling our children to behave in socially acceptable ways is a key part of our work.

We use proactive attachment informed practices such as PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy) to support students to reflect on their behaviour and relationships, and tolerate the feelings of shame they may struggle with at times of stress.

We use opportunities across the curriculum, for example in PSHE, to support a better understanding of the emotions and behaviour of ourselves and others, developing empathy, resilience, and tolerance. We ensure that students have work that is structured, creative, and differentiated to support their engagement and progress.