

Behaviour Support Policy



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VALLEY SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT POLICY

This whole school behaviour support policy provides a framework to support positive behaviour and provide agreed strategies to respond safely to the challenging behaviour displayed by some of our pupils when in distress. Stockport Local Authority Care and Control guidance (January 2010) is the overarching document that informs our procedures and practice in school and this school policy sits within that guidance.

Challenging behaviour is behaviour which challenges our resources in dealing with it. It can include, for example, self-injury, excessive self-stimulation, injuring others, screaming, kicking, refusal or disengagement.

We will remember that children who exhibit challenging behaviour are more than the sum of those behaviours and have a right to

- be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect
- an equality of opportunity for learning and therapy
- planned support to deliver the above

Children may be

- trying to communicate
- frustrated at being unable to communicate
- anxious, vulnerable or misunderstood
- in need of attention
- needing to be empowered by being given choices
- may be experiencing pain
- may be experiencing a form of abuse or neglect*

**Keeping children safe in Education 2019 (draft 2020): Indicators of abuse and neglect [p.7]*

** Valley School Safeguarding Policy*

Parents

We work closely with parents in supporting their children in managing their behaviour. Parents will be kept fully informed about all matters relating to this support both through discussion with school staff and the provision of a written behaviour support plan. The written plan must be agreed and signed by parents. The written plan will have a clear review date.

Understanding complex and challenging behaviour

Some of our students display challenging behaviour as a response to the needs associated with their learning difficulties, complex medical conditions or sensory processing difficulties. Additionally we need to consider specific environmental factors and mental health conditions which may be affecting behavioural responses.

In order to establish behaviour support strategies we need to engage in a thorough behaviour analysis process which will enable us to identify the function of behaviour, or in other words, the area of need which the behaviour is serving.

We shall be more successful in supporting children's behaviour if we accurately record the behaviour including what happened immediately before and after an incident.

At times a more in-depth functional assessment may be necessary, which may involve recording patterns of behaviour over a certain period of time. The data will be analysed and if appropriate shared with other professionals such as CCLDT or Educational Psychologist.

Principles underpinning our practice

In dealing with incidents of challenging behaviour we will:

- put the safety of children and staff first
- remain calm
- avoid needless conflict
- take steps to reduce stress – deploy techniques of distraction, de-escalation and diffusion as early as possible
- maintain and support communication at an appropriate level
- avoid win/lose scenarios
- use rewards and sanctions as planned and agreed
- make sure the manner of your
VOICE
BODY LANGUAGE
FACIAL EXPRESSION is never threatening or intimidating
- treat children as individuals e.g. some children may not respond well to prolonged eye contact or over praising
- try to recognise when challenging behaviour is a plea for attention, reassurance or comfort and supply these before an incident occurs
- be prepared to assist a member of staff dealing with challenging behaviour
- try to make incidents into positive learning experiences by the use of restorative approaches

We recognise that the following may contribute to challenging behaviour and will try to avoid:

- Too much noise
- Excessive waiting before or after activities
- An absence of structure which makes sense to the pupil
- Lots of interruptions – visitors etc.

- Changes in routine
- Requests or instructions which the pupils finds difficult to understand

Physical restraint and intervention

Physical restraints must be seen as the last resort in de-escalation strategies

Pupils may need to be restrained only in order to

- Prevent them hurting themselves
- Prevent them hurting other people
- Prevent significant damage to property
- When their behaviour compromises good order and discipline e.g. consistently and seriously prevents others from learning
- This is only appropriate when all other de-escalation strategies have been exhausted and there is no alternative or if a specific RPI has been agreed in the student's Behaviour Support Plan and only performed by a member of staff who received appropriate training.
- Restraint should involve the minimum physical force necessary to achieve these objectives
- Restraint should never be used as punishment
- Some personal safety responses / disengagement techniques used in response to e.g. biting or hair pulling. These may involve the minimal discomfort to the child involved but this is proportionate to the risk involved. Parents would always be informed if such techniques were part of their child's Behaviour Support Plan.

Recording and reporting

- All restrictive physical interventions must be recorded on the appropriate 'incident report form' and passed on directly to the Head teacher or Deputy Head.
- The numbers of physical interventions are reported to Governors on a termly basis and to the local authority at least termly.
- Parents are informed of physical interventions and incidents of challenging behaviour. The way in which this information is shared is agreed with parents/carers on an individual basis.

The following sanctions are not acceptable

- Corporal punishment or the use of force as a punishment (this is also illegal)
- The use of seclusion where a pupil is forced to spend time on their own against their will (see appendix 1 'Guidelines for staff in the use of the haven/blue room')
- Withdrawal of education or therapy as if it were a privilege
- Withdrawal of food or drink as a sanction is not permissible in accordance with human rights legislation.

Behaviour support plans

For certain pupils at certain times it may be appropriate to agree formally a support plan. Behaviour Support Plan provides a planned and consistent framework which addresses behaviour that not sufficiently addressed through the standard principles of good classroom practice and common sense. Behaviour Support Plan may be written by the class teacher or in collaboration with other professionals. The process must involve consultation with parents and the Head teacher/Deputy/Assistant Head. A plan must be approved by the Headteacher before being applied. The programme will be reviewed after an agreed timescale.

Team Teach

This is the Local Authority's approved approach to dealing safely with incidents which may require staff to use physical interventions when dealing with challenging behaviour. Valley School is a Team Teach trained school. One member of staff in school is also an intermediate local authority tutor.

Staff training

Team Teach training is given to all staff in school on a two yearly cycle. New members of staff who work with pupils exhibiting challenging behaviour are given a short Team Teach induction and then at the earliest possible time, have access to the full 12 hour initial training provided by the LA. Until their 12 hour training is completed, they are not authorised to take a lead in physical interventions, they can only support a trained and more experienced colleague. The Team Teach tutor within school provide regular on-going support and training in supporting challenging behaviour and emergency training on particular physical interventions as needed.

Support for staff

We acknowledge the stress that may result from working with pupils who display challenging behaviour and at all times aim to maintain the well being of individual members of staff who are working in challenging situations. Staff who have become particularly anxious should be prepared to discuss their concerns with colleagues; this is a positive strategy and is not seen as a weakness. Staff will be supported by further open and honest discussions, a re-consideration of strategies, input from the Educational Psychologist/therapist as appropriate, all within a context that enhances the strength of the team. A de-brief following incidents is always available, with careful consideration given to the timing of this.

Post-Incident Support for Pupils

We acknowledge that the incidents have a significant impact on our pupils' emotional wellbeing. Children may experience extreme emotions, fatigue and become very confused. For children for whom it is appropriate we should create opportunities to engage in a restorative discussion or a calming activity

which will allow them to restore the relationships with staff or peers. For some children it will require re-establishing familiar routines relatively quickly, other children may need to remain in a low-arousal environment for a longer period of time. Person specific restorative strategies are included in the Behaviour Support Plans.

Risk assessments

Where there is a foreseeable risk of challenging behaviour the Head/ Deputy Head / Assistant Headteacher will complete a risk assessment in consultation with the class teacher and parents.

Governors have authorised the Teaching Assistants and Mid-day assistants who have completed their full Team Teach training to be involved in physical interventions.

Bullying

Bullying is a rare occurrence at Valley school.
Bullying is defined as:

Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or a group. Bullying may take the form of physical, verbal, emotional, racial, sexual, homophobic, disablist or cyber bullying.

Incidents of bullying are taken seriously in school and reported and recorded.
Summary information of bullying incidents will be included in the Headteacher's report to Governors. The school follows agreed procedures for dealing with complaints about bullying.
Staff are vigilant to the possibility of bullying and consider incidents of challenging behaviour between children in terms of whether they fit the criteria for bullying.

Exclusions

A decision to exclude a pupil from this school will only be taken:
in response to serious breaches of the school's discipline policy: and
if allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the educational welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

Unacceptable behaviour which might result in exclusion includes:

- Non-compliance
- Fighting
- Verbal abuse
- Physical violence
- Bullying
- Racism
- Vandalism
- Theft

- Drug related incidents.
- This school takes a very serious view of incidents of this type and in

extreme cases the Headteacher has the power to exclude for a fixed period of time or permanently.

For drug related incidents the school will refer to 'The Making It Back Team' and will follow LA procedures.

If a pupil's behaviour leads to an exclusion this school will follow guidelines provided by Stockport LA and parents will be informed of actions taken. Further information may be obtained by contacting Children and Young People's Services, Town Hall, Stockport.



Guidelines for staff in the use of the haven/blue room

These guidelines have been written following the DfES and DoH publication July 2002:

‘Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention for Staff Working with Children and Adults who Display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorder’

The use of the haven where a pupil is compelled to go there by staff should be regarded as a physical intervention. As such we need to consider its use very carefully and take into account the above guidance.

The design of the haven and blue room was linked to our previous experiences of children exhibiting highly anxious behaviour and our strong feelings for the need for a quiet calm environment in order for them to de-escalate.

The purpose of this document is to clarify our use of the haven for children in school specifically when it is used as a physical intervention. For much of the time during the school day the haven/blue room may be used as an additional low distraction teaching area. However there will be times in school when we need to prioritise the rooms for one or a few individual children who are in need of a safe environment for periods of time during the school day.

For our pupils the haven and blue room is:

A withdrawal area

A space for de-escalation

Planned provision in the facilities for any pupil(s) in school who may need to use it for the reasons stated below

It is used to:

To reduce anxieties

To reduce the likelihood of a loss of control and the risk of injury

To calm after an outburst

It is not

A time out room

Used as a form of punishment

A seclusion area

Time spent in the haven/blue room should never be referred to in a threatening manner.

When the haven and blue room is used as a form of physical intervention:

- It should be part of an overall behaviour support plan that has been fully discussed by the staff team and both the parents/carers/other professional involved and pupil should be informed and involved if appropriate.

- A log book is provided for recording the use of the haven and this should be filled in every time it is used as a form of physical intervention giving the following information: the time, date, length of time and reason for use.
- There will be a clear expectation that the room will be used for these purposes for the shortest period of time.
- Give pupils clear opportunities to stop the undesired/unsafe behaviour prior to using the haven/blue room.
- Inform the pupil before taking them to the haven, if appropriate explain to them why they need to go there and tell them it is to help them calm down.
- Children will always be observed and supported.
- When safety demands there are times when this supervision may take place from outside of the room, however pupils will not be left alone and unattended.
- No door will be locked or forcibly held to prevent a child from leaving these areas.
- Children's requests to leave these areas must be acknowledged and acted upon if staff are not able to safely support them to calm from inside these rooms – staff teams must have a plan to allow for the safe exiting of these areas by a child who may still be in crisis
- Children return to the normal class activity as soon as they are ready to resume their usual or another appropriate activity.
- If it is possible talk to the pupil afterwards about why they were taken into the haven

It is acceptable to use the haven/blue room without going through the above process in response to unforeseen circumstances where a pupil presents an unexpected behavioural change, however their behaviour support plan should subsequently be updated to include its use.

We will be clear about the need for the use of the haven in a child's behaviour support plan.

We will regularly monitor and evaluate all behaviour support plans, as part of this we will reconsider the appropriateness and effectiveness of continuing to use the haven as a form of a physical intervention.

As professionals working within the Every Child Matters Framework and in the context of The Human Rights Act (1998) we must continually strive to ensure that we question and monitor our practice.

Valley School October 2013

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