Behaviour Policy
2021-22

The Bridge London Trust

Philosophy

The Trust's behaviour support policy is rooted in a positive, preventative approach – valuing mutual respect, participation and reward – and is an absolute and categorical rejection of anything that could be construed as punishment.

Our approach is based on a belief that each pupil is capable of learning through a process of mutual exchange. It is therefore paramount that any behaviour that challenges us as a school or community should be viewed as a communication and as staff we should explore the meaning of this behaviour and any unmet needs.

We believe that our pupils can develop a strong sense of self-worth, a belief in their own abilities and therefore confidence in themselves. They can learn respect for themselves and others within a positive environment, which is structured and supported on an individual basis. Our goal is to enable each pupil to be in a position to learn (at their own level of understanding) so they are able to understand how to engage and excel in different contexts and situations.

We look for our pupils to develop understanding and behaviours for wider contexts than the classroom and therefore ensure there is support for generalisation across settings, people and activities.

We recognise that in some situations behaviour responses may require specific teaching and will need to be taught as any other subject, e.g. Maths or swimming and therefore needs to be given time and a high profile, if it is to be successful. This occurs through our individualised approach to teaching and learning, which is fully supported through integrated working with families, therapists, social care and outside agencies.

We aim to reduce barriers to learning that can occur in the learning environment; in order to reduce anxiety and thus increase access to learning. We work closely with families and carers to promote a consistent and unified approach towards understanding and supporting behaviour.

We recognise and value the abilities of all our pupils whilst acknowledging that the pupil's communication and learning abilities may be a major factor in the pupils' behaviours that challenge. To this end, all adults are provided training to support them to understand the impact of these difficulties. This training also covers the role of sensory dis-regulation and social impairments upon a pupil's ability to understand and process information. It is therefore essential that we respond to challenging behaviour in a respectful, positive and confident manner.

We must value the individual needs and ability of each child and design appropriate and effective behavioural interventions that enable them to learn alternative and better ways to communicate their needs. To help understand this further, staff can use the following principles when gauging whether to ignore or respond to a behaviour:

- A Proactive Response is a *response* to a behaviour that promotes learning in a positive way; categorically rejecting negative reinforcement, fear and punishment.

- It supports children to understand and fulfill their needs and focus on finding alternative ways, where necessary, to communicate.

- Responding proactively = responding to try and prevent the behaviour happening again – with meaning and positive intention.

All schools in the Trust use the Positive Behaviour Support framework and regular training is provided on this framework.

Behaviour Policy

Use the 3 R's when using proactive responses:

- **Related**

  The response is clearly connected to the pupil's behaviour and its function. Relies on staff knowing the child well and that the function of the same behaviour may be different for each child, or even for the same child at different times.

- **Respectful**

  Responses need to be given with empathy –by being respectful in tone of voice and body language.

- **Reasonable**

  If boundaries are put in place they must be fair and appropriate for that child's' level of understanding.

Much of this work is embedded in the consistent approaches and teaching strategies used across the curriculum, however there may be specific strategies for both the management and the modification of a range of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviours.

We aim to share control with the pupil where possible; encouraging them to take responsibility for their own behaviour. When reasonable and necessary we will use physical interventions to prevent the pupil causing harm to self or others. The ethos of this is that we care enough about you not to let you hurt yourself or others. This is more specifically detailed further on in this policy.

Policy and procedures

1. Training and support

Training is provided to all staff:

1.1   To ensure that there is a real attempt to understand reasons for and functions of challenging behaviours through regular training, integrated working meetings and use of the 8 step behaviour support model to clarify thinking around the behaviours.

1.2   To recognise that challenging behaviours can be passive as well as active.

1.3   To recognise that the pupils' learning difficulties and disability may be a major contribution to their having challenging behaviour. Therefore no blame can be attached to the pupil as there is rarely any intention or understanding of the impact of these behaviours on others.

1.4   To ensure that the abilities and needs of each child are at the forefront of any behavioural plan or guidelines, considering each individual's Theory of Mind and the implementation of suitable strategies and boundaries.

1.5   To support all approaches to behaviour support as a non-aversive approach, by using the principles of 'human presence, participation and reward' with the rejection of any course of action that could be interpreted as punishment:

   a)   'human presence' means that pupils will always have the reassurance of an adult presence no matter how challenging their behaviour;

   b)   'participation' means that pupils' challenging behaviours, wherever possible and appropriate, will be redirected into other activities by persuasion and encouragement;

   c)   'reward' means that pupils' behaviour will be re-directed in a positive manner and so lead to a desire on the part of the pupil to re-engage in acceptable behaviour

1.6   To develop strong attitudes of self-worth and respect for others through a curriculum rooted in the pupils specific needs and using integrated working with therapists to ensure a consistent approach is achieved

1.7   Through INSET and regular training workshops, which seek to develop understanding of and strategies for managing inappropriate and challenging behaviours that are safe and humane for all involved.

1.8   To ensure that appropriate and specific behaviour targets are held within a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) for those pupils who habitually display behaviours which challenge, in consultation with relevant members of the multi-disciplinary team (including CAMHS), school staff and parents.

1.9   To ensure these programmes are shared and discussed with all staff working with that pupil regularly and are monitored and updated as necessary.

1.10 To ensure confidentiality and use of professional standards of language during discussion.

1.11 To train staff to be skilled at using physical handling techniques when it is necessary to do so.

1.12 To encourage thinking around the use of skills taught in line with TEAM TEACH principles and to support staff to be confident about using their professional judgement to use all skills in the best interest of the pupil (as outlined later).

1.13 Through literature and continuous professional development courses will be readily available to all staff and the wider community where possible.

1.14 Through induction new staff will be inducted into the workings of the school, including the philosophy of Positive Behaviour Support.

2. Pupil ownership:

2.1 Whenever possible pupils will be allowed to make choices about the content of their own education in order to promote independence, self-direction and self-esteem. This may include attendance at their own (formal) Reviews and IEP meetings as well as appropriate opportunities to evaluate their own achievements on a regular basis.

2.2 Staff will provide pupils the opportunity for self-reflection in relation to understanding and learning from the experience of their own behaviour. There are resources within the Behaviour Support Team button on the landing page which can help support staff to initiate and lead behaviour reflection.

2.3 Wherever possible pupils and staff will work together to set their own targets for behaviours. This will include writing behaviour contracts and reward systems that work towards the pupil taking ownership of their own behaviour and moving towards independence.

2.4 With pupils of a lower ability they will be encouraged to visually choose (using an appropriate form) what they are working for at the start of any session to encourage shared participation and learning.

2.5 It is recognised that awareness of the structure of a session and or day/evening reduces anxiety and therefore encourages a pupil to be more able and willing to learn. Therefore it is imperative that the community use any and all methods available to them to support this and therefore encourage independence and ownership. Visual supports can be key in helping individuals to understand their own behaviour. Therefore close integrated working with the Speech and Language Therapists is a high priority.

3. Communication, Collaboration and Partnership: We at The Bridge London Trust aim to:

3.1 Provide all staff with a global overview and up-dates of information on all pupils and to ensure effective channels of communication for relevant information.

3.2 Provide a structure of behaviour support team and senior management support which will enable staff to manage crisis situations

3.3 Provide an opportunity for all staff to request support from the BST

3.4 Run whole site behaviour workshop meetings, where class teams and the Behaviour Support Team collaboratively present behaviour guidelines and plans to the staff, with time for questions and comments at the end. These meetings will be used to focus on individual behaviours, discuss plans and guidelines and share knowledge and experience of working with the pupils.

3.5 Facilitate Integrated working meetings

3.6 Ensure minutes from all these meetings will be made available electronically.

3.7 Run Behaviour Workshops for all staff around refreshing their practice around core preventative skills, such as de-escalation and use of scripts. Each staff member will attend one of these sessions per half term which are run by the BST.

3.8 Encourage collective responsibility for finding, retaining and using the information available to support a consistent behaviour management approach.

3.9 Contribute to INSET and further training on a regular basis as part of the staff training programme to deal with any aspects of behaviour support that staff feel needs to be explained.

3.10 Provide debriefing opportunities for staff involved in incidents or a reflective space when working long-term with children with particularly complex behaviour. This can be specified on the Iris incident form or arranged informally with the BST or Senior Leadership.

4. Maintaining Confidentiality

4.1 It is important that a balance is kept between maintaining good channels of communication and the right of individuals to confidentiality. Matters discussed within the school team should not be discussed in front of, or with, visitors to the school who do not have specific duty of care to identified pupils.

4.2 Confidential reports relating to challenging behaviour will be kept in pupils' files, access to which is normally restricted to members of staff who are charged with the care of that pupil and the parents /carers of that child.

4.3 Confidential information will only be shared when necessary and ensuring any documents or videos of a sensitive nature are password protected.

5a. Support by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The procedures for dealing with challenging behaviour in relation to members of the Leadership are as follows:-

5.1   A member of the SLT will be available in each school during the day for decision making, advice and support.

5.2   Where an incident of challenging behaviour takes place outside the school, it is the duty of the most senior member of staff to make decisions on how to manage that particular behaviour in the light of guidance contained in this policy and in other school documentation (i.e. BSPs relating to individual pupils).

5.3   Where challenging behaviours are being dealt with outside the school, advice should be sought from a senior member of staff by telephone if such assurance will help the situation.

5.4   Should an incident occur outside school that did not require consultation with a member of the SLT; it is the responsibility of the staff involved in that incident to let the most senior person available know immediately and to record the incident following procedures.

5.5   It is accepted that where a member of staff follows the principles laid out in this policy and other school documentation any course of action taken will be fully supported by the Head of School. The safety of all pupils is paramount in dealing with challenging behaviours in and out of school.

5.6   All interventions should be consistent with any behaviour support programmes/guidelines in existence for particular pupils. Where there is no such programme, or the behaviour is unique, it is essential that any action taken follows the general principles laid down in this policy. Where possible, advice should be sought from a senior member of staff, but when that is not possible retrospective advice should be sought to ensure that the actions taken are either ratified or modified to bring them into line with school policy.

5.7   Staff are supported and encouraged to de-brief following highly stressful serious incidents. Members of the SLT are all able to do this.

5.8   Staff working with pupils with known challenging behaviour should have a means of contacting other staff for immediate help if it is required. Staff are required to find out how to do this if they are working with our most challenging pupils and for SLT to ensure these systems are available. It is incumbent upon all staff to be alert to situations where assistance may be required and to act accordingly in the spirit of 'help protocol'.

5.9   Staff who have dealt with a stressful situation will be given time to recover from the personal pressure which arises out of such incidents. Senior staff should be made aware of all such situations so that cover can be arranged and staff supported as appropriate.

5b. Recording incidents

5.10   All Incidents should be reported through the electronic system used by the school, which is accessed via the landing page, particularly those that include the use of physical intervention and/ or restraint.

5.11   Parents and carers should be informed of incidents and accidents through either the home school diary, telephone or face-to-face. Our aim is to be as transparent as possible to try and achieve a consistent approach to behaviour across both school and home, whilst being sensitive to the needs of the family also.

5.12   Senior Staff will regularly monitor all incidents recorded in order to ensure resources are prioritised and response is commensurate with needs.

5c. Recording injury

5.13   All injuries must be recorded.

5.14   Incidents of challenging behaviour which result in injury to pupils, staff or visitors must be recorded

5.15   Where a child or adult has been injured as the result of an accident, i.e. slip, trip or fall this must be recorded.

5.16   Medical treatment must be sought either from the First Aider on site or the school nurse and parent/ carer must be informed.

5.17   De-brief is available for staff (and pupils if it is appropriate).

6. The Use of Physical Restraint

6.1   The principles of all use of physical restraint are embedded in the regular training and understanding of principles outlined in TEAM TEACH.

6.2   The Behaviour Support Team aim to model and support this theory into practise.

6.3   Trained staff are encouraged to use their professional judgement, based on their training to use physical interventions when reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary. With the most amount of care and minimal time.

6.4   Training in physical restraint and holding techniques is provided through the Team-Teach programme with regular and continuous refreshers and updates available for specific situations with the Behaviour Support team.

6.5   The essential elements of the law are held in Use of Force Guidance July 2013 (England), copies of which are held by the Heads of School, and can also be found on the internet.

6.6   Physical restraint will not occur as a matter of common practice.

6.7   It is paramount that the principles used to guide the actions of staff in this regard should be taken from the duty of care which stems from our responsibility of being 'in loco parentis' (in the place of the parents). Pupils should be kept safe and secure from injury and any actions we taken in ensuring this will be judged as would the actions of 'a reasonable parent'.

6.8   When restraint is used with any pupil; the staff involved in the incident must record it as soon as possible

7. The Use of Quiet Rooms

7.1   There are a number of Quiet Rooms located across the schools which can act as a "place of safety" and an opportunity to withdraw for pupils.

7.2   They provide a safe space for pupils to access themselves and a facility for staff to support pupils through severe physical outbursts, helping them to calm whilst preserving the safety of other pupils, and staff in the classroom and surrounding area.

7.3   They are also a sensory neutral space for pupils to calm. They are never to be used as a punishment but rather from the principle of "I care about you enough not to let you be out of control". This is in line with TEAM TEACH principles.

7.4   The legal position on the use of quiet rooms for the purpose of calming pupils is held in "guidance for restrictive physical interventions" Department of Health (2002) and clearly states that it is an offence to lock an adult or child in a room without a court order (even if they are not aware that they locked in) except in an emergency when for example the use of a locked room as a temporary measure while seeking assistance would provide legal justification. The use of double or high door handles in classrooms or locking outside doors, as a safety measure and/or security precaution when children are supervised by an adult would be considered a reasonable measure to prevent a significant risk of harm within a school's duty of care to its pupils

7.5   In line with Team Teach, it is important to distinguish between the following definitions:

Seclusion: When a child is forced to spend time alone in a room by locking the door or restricted space. This is only to be used in an emergency and as a last resort. Children must be in view at all times and monitored at 3 minute intervals. The BST/ SLT must be informed within 10 minutes if seclusion is used. Parents will be informed and plans will be drawn up to ensure that it is not a strategy required again.

Time out/ Withdrawal: Used informally to mean a cooling off period, giving space to calm down and self-regulate. Children are free to come and go and the door remains unlocked, usually open. We do not use the term 'Time out' in a mainstream context of restricting access to positive reinforcement as part of a Behaviour Plan. Due to our positive, preventative approach towards behaviour support, we do not use a consequences based approach and always focus on what we give or can do rather than what we can't do or what we can take away. Please see section of 'Proactive responses' below. Staff must be aware that there are 2 ways in which the Quiet Room can be used, to ensure we are meeting the best interests of each child and working within the law:

7.6   If a pupil takes themselves there independently or wants time alone (and door is unlocked and open)

7.7   Emergency intervention: when staff judge that is safest for the individual or others around to be escorted to a Quiet room and the door is locked and pupil can be seen at all times.

7.8   (This is a one-off response to unforeseen circumstances. The same scenario cannot happen more than once.)

7.9   Staff must be aware of their Duty of care, i.e. their response must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary

7.10   Evidence has shown that there is no therapeutic value to seclusion

7.11   If there is a risk of self-harm seclusion cannot be used and staff must be supporting the child within the room

7.12   Staff are trained in the use of Quiet rooms (as per Team Teach Training) and are required to follow this training when using them and to record this every time. Under no circumstances will a pupil be left alone in a Quiet Room, without a member of staff being in the immediate visual vicinity.

8. The Trust's response to bullying

8.1   While the scope for bullying by some pupils at The Bridge London Trust is more limited many of our pupils are more vulnerable, and it is accepted that some pupils are potentially capable of causing other pupils to feel like they are being bullied.

8.2   Signs of potential feelings of bullying are a deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults and reluctance to come to school. These may be symptomatic of other problems but may also be early signs of pupils feeling bullied.

8.3   The whole staff community will be highly observant to early signs of a pupil's unhappiness that may be related to the behaviour of another and will act accordingly. This will follow the no blame, positive behaviour ethos of the school.

8.4   Opportunities to teach pupils how to be confident when they feel bullied and strategies to manage these real life situation will be taught in PHSE lessons.

Policy Owner and Contact Details

Dr. Penny Barratt, CEO

For further information on the Policy, please contact via email

penny.barratt@thebridgetrust.academy or phone 020 7619 1000

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