

# Positive Behaviour Support Policy



Produced by	Colette Keane
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Signed by	<i>Linda Hilton</i>
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**This or any policy can be made available in a range of formats, large print or translation.**

At points the language of this policy has been simplified, sentences are shorter and lists have altered so the most important points first and some more current language has been added.

The dates of KCSIE have been updated.

The core policy remains the same.

### **Supporting children's behaviour**

Valley School provides a caring and nurturing learning environment that encourages positive behaviour. All members of our school community need to feel valued, safe and respected. We consider the promotion and teaching of positive behaviour skills as central to our curriculum. It ensures personal achievement, independence and wider community participation - key areas of intent in our curriculum.

This policy provides a framework to support positive behaviour. It provides agreed strategies to respond to behaviours of concern displayed by children so as to get their needs met. We understand that these behaviours can be challenging for children, their families and staff supporting them. We hold the individuals' best interest is at the core of everything we do. All targets and recommendations are centred around what is important to the unique child. and each Positive Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) is individualised to meet their needs.

Our procedures and practice in school are informed by a Positive Behaviour Support approach which is a person centred framework for providing long-term support to people with a learning disability, and/or autism, who have, or may be at risk of developing, behaviours that challenge.

This school policy sits within the following sources of guidance and/or legislation:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - see Appendix 1
- Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention - Children and young people with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions and mental health difficulties in health and social care services and special education settings (May 2019)
- Stockport Local Authority Care and Control guidance (March 2023)

### **Understanding complex and challenging behaviours of concern**

'Behaviour is a language.....What is it telling us?'

Some of our students display behaviour as a response to the needs associated with their learning difficulties, complex medical conditions and/or sensory processing difficulties. Additionally we often need to consider specific environmental factors and mental health conditions which may be affecting behavioural responses. Behaviours are functional and communicative acts, which are meaningful because they achieve important results for an individual (e.g. gaining attention or coping strategy). In order to establish behaviour support strategies we need to engage in a thorough behaviour analysis process, including antecedent (what happened before) and consequence (what happened after), which will enable us to identify the function of behaviour, or in other words, the area of need which the behaviour is serving. As behaviours serve a communicative function, it is therefore more effective and valid to teach an alternative, appropriate response than to try and stop a behaviour by using aversive techniques. We aim to teach an appropriate alternative means to achieve the same goal and ultimately build self-esteem. Behaviour recommendations will then include interventions for meeting the child's need and teaching alternative skills to meet their needs.

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, CAMHS and/or Educational Psychology.

### **Responding to behaviours of concern**

Children at Valley School who display behaviours of concern will be supported through a low arousal, non confrontational approach with empathy for, and understanding of all our children. We aim to develop functional emotional regulation skills to maintain the optimum level of emotional arousal to cope with everyday stress in order to attend, engage and learn. We use a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach to understand the function of the behaviour whilst respecting the individual.

Children may use behaviours of concern to:

- communicate need e.g. tangible item such as a favourite toy or 'precious item'
- seek an interaction
- respond to a sensory need
- seek escape e.g. to leave an environment or activity
- communicate pain or discomfort
- communicate feelings of raised anxiety and fear
- may be experiencing a form of abuse or neglect\*\*

*\*\*Keeping children safe in Education 2023: Indicators of abuse and neglect [p.7]*

*\*\* Valley School Safeguarding Policy*

### **Responsibility of staff**

- To value every child as a unique individual, regardless of their behaviours of concern and level of support
- To notify SLT of any serious incident and to follow the appropriate school procedures concerning incidents and accidents.
- To understand that all adults have a duty of care that requires them to act in the child's best interest and to treat all children we support fairly, with respect and understanding managing our own paraverbal communication including voice, tone, body and facial expressions
- All persons have a duty to report any concerns about practice to the Headteacher, or if appropriate, to the Governors (Refer to Whistle-blowing policy)

- To respond to all children in a calm and positive manner.
- To provide positive role models to all pupils ensuring that their behaviour reflects the good practice of the school
- To make clear what they would like a pupil to do rather than over emphasise what they do not want them to do.
- To be prepared to assist a member of staff dealing with behaviours of concern
- To enable and support pupils to recognise a range of feelings, both positive and negative and to develop their emotional regulation
- To work with their team, pupils, parents and carers to ensure that strategies are developed together and that there is continuity of approach
- Teachers will work closely with parents/carers in supporting their children in supporting their behaviour keeping parents/carers fully informed about all matters relating to this support

### **Responsibility of volunteers**

- To follow guidance given.
- To request support and advice when necessary.

### **Responsibility of parents**

Parents and carers should keep the school informed about concerns, problems and family circumstances which may affect their child's behaviour or well-being. We encourage families to work with staff to plan and implement individual positive behaviour support plans. The individual plans must be agreed in consultation with parents and have a clear review date however we would always encourage parents to inform us of changes they feel are required prior to review date if needed.

### **Physical intervention, restrictive physical interventions and restraint**

Everyday we engage in positive physical contact with the children we support, for example a child may seek out our hand to hold for reassurance or embrace us when they're feeling happy or excited. Physical touch is an integral part of building strong and trusting relationships with the children in our care and at Valley we recognise the power of physical touch e.g. providing deep pressure sensory input as requested by children, supporting children in transition with a handhold or supporting co-regulation strategies where a child may request a hug from an adult. Throughout the day, staff support children achieve their full potential using the minimal level of physical intervention required using prompts, guides and escort. This is very much through a gradual and graded response; using the lowest level of physical intervention. If a slightly higher level of physical intervention is required e.g. guide, this is always for the minimum amount of time and is stepped down to a lower level of physical intervention at the first available opportunity. As children progress towards Step 3, we consider age appropriate physical intervention and where children are required to be guided, we teach the most age appropriate physical support e.g. move from hand hold to a more mature 'link'. The vast majority of the physical interventions that take place at Valley relate to prompts and guides.

On rare occasions, a restrictive physical intervention which is physical restraint where rigorous resistance is experienced, may be utilised if it is felt to be in the best interest of the child and in the following situations:

- Prevent children from hurting themselves

- Prevent children from hurting other people
- Prevent significant damage to property
- When their behaviour compromises good order and discipline (more relevant in mainstream settings)

Physical restraints must always be seen as the last resort and is only appropriate when all other de-escalation strategies have been exhausted and there is no alternative and in the best interests of the child. They should involve the minimum physical force necessary to safeguard the child. Staff at Valley School are trained in Team Teach Level 2 to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and training to be able to reduce the risk of needing to use a restrictive physical intervention whilst also ensuring that they are trained to use Team Teach Physical Restraints in the safest way possible thus minimising risk to the child. Staff may need to carry out some personal safety responses / disengagement techniques used in response to e.g. biting or hair pulling. These may involve 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. Parents are also always informed if their child has been involved in a Restrictive Physical Intervention on the same day, usually by phone (unless other method is requested). IF this happens, a Behaviour Support Plan is implemented to ensure we reduce the risk of a Restrictive Physical Intervention being needed in the future.

### **Recording and reporting**

- All restrictive physical interventions must be recorded on the appropriate 'incident report form' and passed on directly to SLT on the day of the incident.
- 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 on the day of the incident.

### **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 2 '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**

Behaviour Support Plans are available at Valley. The aim of the plan is ultimately to help each child lead a fulfilling life by understanding the function of the behaviour's and thereby reducing behaviours of concern and replacing the behaviour with functionally equivalent alternatives. As well as recommendations for supporting the pupil in class in relation to engagement, motivation and learning.

Each Plan is reflective of the 'Stages' outlined within Team Teach (adopted by Stockport LA) and sets out detailed proactive strategies to respond to behaviours outlined, taking steps to reduce stress – deploy techniques of distraction, de-escalation and diffusion as early as possible as it is only in a place of security and in a regulated state that new learning can take place.

Behaviour Support Plan may be written by the class teacher, the class team and/or in collaboration with other professionals such as Speech and Language, School Nursing Team and/or Occupational Therapy. The process must involve consultation with parents and SLT. All plans must be approved by the Headteacher before being applied and it must be remembered this is a working document that must be reviewed regularly.

### **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 behaviours of concern. 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 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 provides regular on-going support and training along with emergency training on particular physical interventions as needed.

### **Support for staff**

We acknowledge the stress that may result from working with pupils who display behaviours of concern and at all times aim to maintain the wellbeing of individual members of staff who are working in challenging situations. We strongly encourage staff to seek debriefs (formal or informal) in such situations either internally within the team or alternatively externally as appropriate. It is also important to remember that seeking support is always a sign of strength and we strongly encourage staff to seek support if they find themselves in a situation whereby they no longer feel they are able to sustain support. Team Teach is non-hierarchical and colleagues should remember that if they recognise that a colleague is in need of support, but unable to request (or if they have additional relevant information which is unavailable to their colleague supporting) they should use Team Teach scripts to offer support.

Staff will be supported by further open and honest discussions including the use of solution circles, analysis of function, re-consideration of proactive strategies, input from the Educational Psychologist/therapist as appropriate, all within a context that enhances the strength of the team.

### **Post-incident support for pupils**

We acknowledge that challenging 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 play-based 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 e.g. the need for a restrictive physical intervention, SLT will complete a risk assessment in consultation with the class team and parents. This will

form part of the Behaviour Support Plan. 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**

See Exclusion Policy

Updated Colette Keane October 2023

## **Appendix 1**

### **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children. Article 23 (children with a disability) A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families. Article 29 (goals of education) Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment. Article 5 (parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities) Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up, so that they fully enjoy their rights. This must be done in a way that recognises the child's increasing capacity to make their own choices. Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect) Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaningful experience and Achievement. The initial stages of the PBS process commonly involves assessing a pupil's interests and expanding their meaningful and enjoyable experiences in school.

## Appendix 2



### 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

Reviewed October 2015

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