

The Birches Specialist Support School

Behaviour Policy



Date Reviewed: February 2019

Reviewed by: Dani March Assistant Head

Signed:
On behalf of the Governors

Signed:
Head teacher

Date of next review: February 2022

THE BIRCHES SCHOOL SPECIALIST SUPPORT SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

POLICY

Rationale

At The Birches School we believe that all children should be treated with respect and dignity. By setting clear expectations, fostering positive relationships and working in partnership with parents and families we encourage and develop positive behaviours. We see behaviour as a form of communication and are committed to ensuring that all pupils are supported to communicate their needs and feelings appropriately and safely. With the right support and individualised approaches all children can learn to improve their behaviour and maximise their learning potential.

Aims

- To promote a happy, calm and safe environment in school.
- For staff to foster high quality, empathetic and nurturing relationships with all pupils.
- To define expectations for behaviour that can be understood by all stakeholders.
- To ensure a consistent approach to behaviour, encouraging parental involvement and support
- To commit to helping pupils to understand and self-regulate their emotional states.
- To encourage independence, promote self-esteem and self- discipline.
- To create an environment that is conducive for effective learning.
- To create an environment where positive behaviour is recognised and celebrated.

The Birches School core values

We respect one another

- We expect mutual respect between staff, between pupils as well as between staff and pupils.
- We aim to begin to prepare our pupils for adult life through teaching the rights and responsibilities of being a member of a community.

We value the wellbeing of all staff and pupils

- We aim to develop good self-esteem and self-confidence in a positive environment.
- We aim for all staff and pupils to feel safe, supported, cared for and protected, so that we can try new things and be ourselves.
- We will work together to achieve an atmosphere of trust where staff and pupils know their viewpoints and feelings are valued.
- We will endeavour to promote a sense of happiness around the school, to provide a happy, safe and secure working atmosphere for all.

We expect the best

- We believe that our expectations will lead to personal achievement and success that is a right for all.
- We strive to have a can-do attitude.
- We recognise and value the contribution of all members of the school community.

We value cooperative working

- We are committed to working together as a whole school so that each individual feels valued.
- We strive to achieve good teamwork which will support everyone within the school community.

We recognise that everyone is an individual and we value diversity

- We value and respect diversity; we actively celebrate diversity within our own community.
- We promote and provide equal opportunities and equity of provision.
- We recognise that different people have different needs and we strive to meet the needs of all within the school community.

We value learning

- We are a learning school that recognises the right of all to lifelong learning.
- All members of the school community work together to ensure that learning at The Birches is meaningful, challenging and fun.

Supporting positive behaviour

At The Birches we understand that relationships are crucial to support children in their learning and to develop positive behaviour. Staff invest in relationships ensuring they are based on mutual respect and trust.

Staff responsibilities:

- To treat all children fairly whilst recognising that each is an individual.
- To have a sound understanding of each individual's needs and learning styles.
- To have high expectations of our young people.
- To communicate clearly in a way that is accessible to the individual.
- To focus on the positive, to celebrate and praise acceptable behaviour.
- To have a clear approach to supporting behaviour and to consistently hold appropriate boundaries.
- To create a safe and secure environment in which children can develop their self-esteem and feel confident to practise and make mistakes in a supported environment.
- To be a good role model modelling the behaviours we want to see.
- To form good relationships with parents and ensure regular communication to encourage commonality in aims and approaches.
- To reflect on the functions of behaviour to ensure the effectiveness of planned intervention and to encourage more socially appropriate ways of getting needs met.

- To seek support and work alongside wider professionals to problem-solve and plan support.
- To commit to the learning, development and sharing of skills through ongoing CPD.

Communication

Behaviour is a form of communication, supporting children to communicate is vital in aiding positive behaviour. Use of individual's preferred methods of communication should be the paramount consideration at all times.

We have a total communication environment, staff should communicate in a way that the child understands including visual cues, symbols, signing, objects of reference, PECS etc. **(More information can be found in the Communication Policy)** It is important that staff allow appropriate time for processing information and responding. Effective communication, enables children to access learning and get their needs met with minimal frustration, which could otherwise be displayed as negative behaviour.

We have a strong emphasis on positive behaviours and the behaviour we want to see. For example we use 'good walking' as opposed to 'no running' or 'kind hands' as opposed to 'no hitting.' By giving positive feedback we reinforce the behaviours we want to promote without drawing attention to the negative behaviour.

Staff will give specific praise. For example 'good sitting' or 'good walking' as opposed to 'good boy/girl.' Specific praise makes it clear to the individual what it is they are being praised for and raises the probability of that behaviour occurring again. Specific praise and positive reinforcement should be delivered often with minimal feedback for negative behaviours, continually highlighting the behaviour we want to see.

Staff will reflect as a team on the use and effectiveness of their communication strategies and also have the opportunity to consult with the Speech and Language Team in school. Effective strategies and supports can be shared with parents to support communication in the home environment and wider community.

Sensory needs

Many of the children at The Birches, particularly our autistic pupils, have specific sensory needs. Sensory differences can affect behaviour and learning. Children who have issues relating to sensory processing may result in increased anxiety levels and therefore an increase in the likelihood of displaying challenging behaviour. These needs must be met in order for children to be in the best regulatory state to access learning.

Staff will have access to training on sensory processing/sensory diets to support them to ensure that where appropriate effective strategies are implemented during the school day. Classes are able to make direct referrals or meet with the Occupational Therapist to problem-solve behaviours. Staff are committed to implementing programmes written by external professionals to aid behaviour management strategies.

Environment

At The Birches School we recognise the important part that the environment plays in promoting positive behaviour. We strive to create safe, supportive and structured environments enabling children to respond positively with the world around them. A positive classroom environment will be created with careful attention to layout, levels of distraction, groupings of children, pace of lessons and matching learning tasks to pupils' abilities, taking into account individual learning styles. Class teams will adapt their environments to the needs of the pupils in the class.

Our children are heavily supported by routines. Structured routines need to be explicitly taught. Many of our children rely on the consistency of routines to reduce anxiety over what will happen next. Staff will support individuals with routine and structure in a variety of ways e.g. class timelines, first and then cards, portable timelines, checking systems.

Curriculum

The school curriculum and ethos promotes independence, communication, choice and inclusion. Pupils are given a myriad of opportunities for personal growth, for the promotion of emotional wellbeing and the development of emotional intelligence.

Specific teaching to support pupils' self- management of behaviour and emotions:-

- A curriculum that provides a range of highly motivating, engaging activities, such as: Sensory circuits, music therapy, signing choirs, high quality outside play equipment, rebound therapy, outdoor activities in the woodlands, including John Muirs etc.
- Use of social stories.
- Social Use of Language Programme – To support social skills such as good listening and turn taking.
- Sensory Integration programmes.
- Sensory circuits.
- Use of regular individualised supportive feedback focussed on achievements and next steps.
- Zones of Regulation – teaching understanding of emotions and providing pupils with a tool box of strategies to help self-regulate.
- Visually presented pupil self-evaluation systems across the day to reinforce and reward positive behaviour.

Parents

At The Birches School we believe that the best outcomes are achieved when school and parent/carers work together to maintain a consistent approach and when communication is open and information shared. We encourage parents to foster good relationships with school. Children behave well when their needs are well met across a variety of environments.

Strategies for addressing behavioural, sensory or communication needs are shared with parents/carers via the home school diary, termly reports, Personal Plans, discussions with class staff, meetings, reports from SaLT/OT, parents evening and via the EHC process. Parents/carers are encouraged to contribute to the writing of the behaviour support plan to create a consistent approach.

Bullying

Bullying can be defined as persistent action, criticism or personal abuse with intent either in public or private, which humiliates, intimidates, undermines or demeans the individual involved. Bullying is not tolerated at The Birches School. All instances of Bullying must be recorded. Where instances of bullying are discovered they will be addressed with the pupil and parents and carers informed. Further work on relationships and caring about others will be taught via the PSHE curriculum.

Celebration of positive behaviour/rewards

Staff will place greater emphasis on celebrating and rewarding positive behaviour as opposed to attention and sanctions for negative behaviours. At The Birches we will celebrate and reward by:

- Frequent use of specific praise, catching good behaviour as it occurs.
- Use of pupil self-evaluation -The Birches will create appropriate learning strategies to enable pupils to self-assess their performance and behaviour in order to promote positive outcomes through the use of reward systems.
- Symbolic rewards e.g. stickers, certificates.
- Choice of a motivating activity e.g. bubbles, riding the bikes.
- Individualised reward systems.
- Special jobs/responsibilities.
- Communication with parents/carers via home school diary, in person or a phone call to share achievement.
- Acknowledgement in the weekly assembly with a certificate from the assembly leader and recognition from staff and peers.
- Use of Wow assembly to celebrate termly achievement.

Good practice strategies to support positive behaviour and de-escalation

- Clear expectations that can be understood by the learner
- Role model positive behaviours
- Use of positive options/choices
- Use of limited language supported by visuals e.g. 'first...then....'
- Use of visual strategies to reinforce desired behaviour.
- Use of symbols to communicate need to change behaviour, reminder of acceptable behaviour
- Opportunities for flexibility in activities and access to sensory supports.
- Share positive behaviour with parents/carers.

Consequences/Sanctions

Wherever possible we encourage negotiated sanctions through staff to pupil debrief or discussion. Timing is essential and sanctions should only be used when a child is calm and in control of their emotions. Sanctions must not be punitive. They can be tokenistic if that will support the child. They must take into account the level of understanding of the child. They can be used to promote the concept that actions have logical consequences. Parents will be informed of any concerns with behaviour.

- A nonverbal signal (shake of head, use of visual systems).
- Not earning behaviour token e.g. smiley face or star.
- Supervised time out (short periods, one or two minutes, otherwise it ceases to be time out) to allow pupil to calm or access a strategy to regulate.
- A private verbal reminder of unacceptable behaviour.
- Repetition of task if necessary.
- Removal from scene of disruption.
- Isolation within classroom, removal from class to an alternative supervised area.
- Withdrawal of a privilege e.g. loss of a small increment of time or loss of whole break time.
- For health and safety reasons a natural consequence of not attending an activity e.g. swimming or off site visit
- Informing and discussing with parents if necessary.
- Behaviour contract.

Unacceptable sanctions

- Food and drink must not be withdrawn i.e. Lunch/pudding
- A pupil must not be regularly withdrawn from educational activities
- NO PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IS ACCEPTABLE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES

Exclusions

An exclusion from school will only be considered under exceptional circumstances, when all other strategies and procedures have failed and after full discussion with parents and the relevant agencies. This can give time to put in place appropriate plans in order to address an incident and safely reintegrate a pupil back into school at the earliest opportunity. Where possible they will always be followed with a re-integration meeting with parents.

Behaviour Support Plans (BSP)

For pupils who need support in developing appropriate behaviours a behaviour support plan (BSP) will be put in place. The BSP will outline the pupils' strengths, triggers, behaviours and how the pupil should be supported by staff. It is vital that these plans are followed consistently by all staff. BSP's must be reviewed on an annual basis. However they are working documents so, plans should be reviewed more frequently if needed, especially if a pupil is going through an unsettled time or changes in patterns/types of behaviour are observed. Plans are written by the team around the child and shared with parents. Team members will sign the plans, plans will be monitored by the behaviour lead.

Physical intervention

At The Birches, we constantly strive to create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents arising that may require physical intervention. De-escalation techniques should be used wherever possible to diffuse a situation and prevent an incident from occurring. Individual's strategies will be recorded in their BSP. However under specific circumstances the use of physical intervention may be necessary. These include:

- Self- harm;
- injury to pupils or staff;

- damage to property;
- an offence being committed;
- any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline within the school or among any of its pupils.

A physical intervention will only be used if it is reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary. Any intervention will be for the minimum amount of time. All incidents will be recorded on IRIS. (More information can be found in the Positive Handling Policy).

Monitoring

All behavioural incidents are logged onto IRIS (electronic recording system). Monitoring of incidents will take place on a regular basis (usually weekly via IRIS) by the Behaviour Support Lead and the results used to inform planning to meet individual pupil and school needs. Iris analysis is used by class teams to support planning interventions as well as assess effectiveness of strategies. Analysis is used to feed into SLT meetings on a half termly basis to highlight trends in behaviour and pupils/classes needing additional support. To safeguard pupils and ensure transparency, the Head teacher will present a regular summary of incidents to the Governing Body.

Debrief

Staff will use an appropriate time following an incident to debrief with the child using an appropriate method of communication. School is committed to ensuring that learning opportunities are created for children that allow them to 'own' and take responsibility for their behaviour at a level appropriate to their stage of development. In addition Positive Listening and Learning (PLL) procedures are in place to ensure that appropriate support is provided and recorded for staff and pupils, and that following an incident pupil/staff relationships are rebuilt and repaired to ensure that a positive learning environment is maintained. Pupils who may be distressed by events can be offered the following support:

- Quiet time taking part in a calming/sensory activity
- Quiet time away from the incident/trigger
- Resuming their usual routine/previous activity as soon as possible, especially for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Condition.
- Positive Listening and Learning time with a member of staff to "discuss" the incident, using a symbol debrief sheet or other alternative or augmentative forms of communication (AAC) where appropriate.

Following a serious incident staff are encouraged to debrief. This may be informally with support networks in school or staff can request a formal debrief verbally or via IRIS. Formal debriefs are recorded. Staff should ensure that they are fully recovered from an incident before resuming their duties and colleagues are encouraged to seek and offer support where it is deemed necessary.

Behaviour support group

A Behaviour support group is available to support colleagues in formulating the best approach to supporting pupils with behaviour that may challenge. The group is made up from a cross section of the school community and provides a supportive forum to share

ideas and strategies. The Behaviour Support Group is the body that shapes policy and promotes good practice across the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Positive Handling Policy.

Policy Information and Review

Review frequency: Every 3 years

| Date | Version | Changes made | By whom (name and role) | Due date for next review | Reviewed & Ratified by Gobs. (sign and date) |
|-----------|---------|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| June 2014 | | | SLT | June 2016 | |
| June 2017 | 2 | Split policy into behaviour support and positive handling policy. Updated staff information and inserted values and current strategy with changing population with the loss of the SEMH unit | Dani March AHT | June 2020 | |
| July 2018 | | <i>06/07/18 The Policy Ratification Committee has met and requested that all current statutory policies are ratified for one year only whilst an appropriate cycle of ratification is implemented. Policies will then be approved for their full length of term either through the Full Governing Body or one of the committees following an agreed plan of ratification.</i> | | | |
| Feb 2019 | 2 | Dates changed for ratification purposes – policy is the same just the dates altered | F Shah DHT | Feb 2022 | |