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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy details the service's approach to positive behaviour management.

Implementation: It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that staff members are aware of and understand this policy and any subsequent revisions.

Compliance: This policy complies with all relevant regulations and other legislation as detailed in the *Compliance with Regulations & Legislation Statement*.

2.0 PRINCIPLES & DEFINITIONS

Options Higford provides for young people with complex needs the vast majority of whom have Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and Severe-Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD/SLD), some have additional learning needs such as attachment difficulties. All have been identified as benefiting from ASC specific and trauma and mental health informed approaches. Our students have difficulties with thinking, social understanding, social communication, flexibility of thinking and sensory issues.

This policy has been designed to promote positive behaviour and ensure that young people are safe and their welfare promoted, whilst respecting the different challenges they face. This is based on the concept of “unconditional positive regard” which was developed by the psychologist Carl Rogers, in that we believe that a complete and unconditional acceptance of each child and young person in the school, of who they are and what they do as a learner with autism and additional needs, potentially including attachment difficulties, is the bedrock of any work to improve behaviour. Unconditional positive regard means accepting that the child or young person is attempting to deal with situations in their lives as best they can.

We concur with the OFSTED guide for Inspectors “Positive Environments where Children can Flourish” (March 2018) which states:

“The foundation of good practice in working with children should be:

- Building relationships of trust and understanding
- Understanding triggers and finding solutions
- If incidents do occur, defusing the situation and/or distracting the child wherever possible.”

Defining positive behaviour

Positive behaviour is that which is appropriate to the situation and does not have a detrimental effect upon the individual concerned or others around them.

Key Principles

- Behaviour cannot be considered in isolation. Behaviour exhibited by children with an autistic spectrum condition and additional needs is often governed by the level of anxiety and arousal that they experience. If a child is feeling frustrated and confused they are more likely to behave in a challenging manner. The home and school environment, the relationships staff have with young people and with each other, the teaching methods, communication support and the behaviour management methods used, all influence young people’s ability and motivation to behave in a positive manner. If a child or young person at Higford displays behaviour that is challenging, it is likely that their environment, including the people around them, is demanding skills that are underdeveloped in them – they are lacking the skills not to be challenging.
- Teaching, promoting and supporting appropriate behaviour needs to be an integral part of routine practice in everyday school life and staff from both home and school should work together to achieve this.
- Behaviour that challenges is often an indicator of poor physical or emotional wellbeing, the starting point for promoting positive behaviour needs to be identifying and addressing the root causes of behaviour.
- Consistency of support throughout the school day for day students and throughout the 24 hour period for residential young people is a key factor in promoting positive behaviour.
- Staff need to work closely with parents to establish a common understanding of children and young people’s behaviour and to agree appropriate approaches to promoting positive behaviour. Good communication between staff from both home and school and with parents is essential for this to work effectively.

Putting these principles into practice

- Options Higford provides a structured environment that allows all young people to know what behaviour is expected of them.
- All children will be provided with an appropriate system to support their functional communication and staff will ensure that this is used consistently.
- The home and school environments will be managed to ensure that as far as is possible the level of stimulation provided for individuals is at a level that meets their needs.
- The curriculum in school provided for each pupil and the way it is delivered will take account of the ways in which he or she learns best and will be differentiated so that what is being taught is at a level that the pupils can access.
- All children will have a Positive Behaviour Support Plan (see section 5)

3.0 EXPECTATIONS FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

We do not have set home and school rules as each young person has a different range of behaviours and differing levels of ability to modify or improve.

At Options Higford we have high expectations for the behaviour of every member of our community. These expectations support and are underpinned by our values and ethos. Our expectations are:

- That young people need to behave as well as they are able to
- That young people will generally demonstrate ongoing improvements in their behaviour
- That young people will learn new skills to meet their needs that they can use instead of inappropriate behaviours

All adults in the service are expected to be familiar with the child's Positive Behaviour Support Plans and should be aware of the best ways of dealing with situations as they arise. Regular training is offered to ensure a consistency of approach.

4.0 SCHOOL LEARNING & TEACHING

The promotion of appropriate behaviour as outlined in our expectations is an essential part of fulfilling our school vision and aims. Effective teaching supported by a structured approach and an understanding of the individual needs of the learner is essential for positive behaviour in the classroom. We provide stimulating, creative and engaging learning experiences at Options Higford which aim to make each young person feel safe and best able to relate to others, regulate and reflect with the support of emotionally available staff.

All students are taught about personal and social relationships through their interactions with staff and other students, during discreet PSHE & Citizenship sessions, and across the whole curriculum. Assemblies and reflection at the end of the day to address issues relating to behaviour, relationships and citizenship. Extended social, leisure and recreational activities provided through the School and Children's Home also offer the opportunity for learning positive behaviours and for these to be positively reinforced.

All adults in the school are expected to model the highest standards of appropriate behaviour in their own conduct around the school and to be emotionally-available adults who can empathise with young people.

5.0 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT PLANS

Many challenging behaviours are closely linked to a young person's communication and learning difficulties and are the best and most powerful way they currently have of getting their message across or getting their needs met. If we can work out the meaning of the behaviour, we are then in a better position to encourage a more appropriate response. The functional analysis of behaviour is used to assist in the development of behaviour support plans. The Info Exchange behaviour recording system is used to help with this analysis.

All young people at Options Higford will have a Positive Behaviour Support Plan. This is developed in consultation with staff and through reference to the behaviour tracking data. It will outline the priorities for their development in behaviour and the strategies to be followed by all staff to support the young person. This includes information on:

- How the environment needs to be managed to support them to behave appropriately;

- The skills they need to be taught to enable him or her to behave appropriately;
- any rewards to be used; and
- Strategies for managing inappropriate behaviour when it occurs.

Positive Behaviour Support Plans are co-ordinated by the Clinical Team and developed in liaison with key staff, parents and other professionals as appropriate. Staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the PBSPs of the children they work with and for implementing these consistently.

6.0 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR REINFORCEMENT

Young people at Options Higford have difficulties with flexibility of thinking. It is important that this is taken into consideration in deciding what rewards it is appropriate to use to reinforce positive behaviour and how these rewards will be given. For some, a reward being given will be seen as part of the routine rather than a consequence of a particular behaviour and not receiving this reward could cause distress. Rewarding activities are often best used as part of a regular routine that the young person will have the opportunity to engage in when he or she has worked through the preceding activities in the routine. Social rewards such as smiles, positive touch, and staff communicating their pleasure at positive behaviour should be used frequently as appropriate if the young person experiences these positively and is positively motivated by them.

For those who have a clearer understanding of cause and effect, have a reasonable concept of the passage of time and are able to delay gratification it may be appropriate to use more formalised reward systems. In some cases, these systems may also contribute to structuring the environment for that young person.

7.0 SANCTIONS

Our young people generally experience high levels of anxiety and have difficulties in relating to others. Many also have difficulty understanding cause and effect. For these reasons, we do not routinely use sanctions as part of our behaviour management as the drawbacks of using sanctions are that if they are not clearly understood they can increase anxiety and damage relationships. However, we would at times allow young people to experience the natural consequences to their behaviour. In cases where sanctions are found to support individuals to develop more appropriate behaviour, they would be used; the sanctions used and the circumstances under which it is appropriate to impose them will be outlined in the student's PBSP. Any sanctions imposed must be recorded in the handover log and the sanctions book.

Permissible Sanctions

The following sanctions are permissible and although they would rarely be used might be considered when a child engages in unacceptable behaviour that is perceived as not a result of his/her autism or learning disability.

- Suspension or withdrawal from a specific leisure activity.
- Requiring a child to rectify damage.
- Requiring a child to contribute to the cost of the replacement of an item.

Within School, although the Law allows teachers to put students under the age of 18 in detention, it is highly unlikely that this would be used as a sanction at Options Higford due to our student's reliance on a set routine.

According to the Guide for Heads and School Staff Behaviour and Discipline (Department for Education, January 2012) to be lawful any sanction imposed must satisfy the following 3 conditions:

- The decision to impose a sanction on a student must be made by a paid member of school staff or a member of staff authorised by the Headteacher.

- The decision to impose a sanction on the student and the imposition of the sanction must be made on the school premises or while the student is under the charge of the member of staff.
- The imposition of the sanction must not breach any other legislation (for example in respect of Disability, Special Educational Needs, race other equalities and human rights) and it must be reasonable in all circumstances.

According to section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to be reasonable the sanction must be proportionate in the circumstances and account must be taken of the student's age, any special educational needs or disability they may have, and any religious requirements affecting them.

Guidance on implementing sanctions

- Staff should ensure that the reasons for the sanctions are clear to the child.
- The sanction should be relevant to the incident.
- The sanction should be carried out as contemporaneously as possible.
- Sanctions should be appropriate to the age, understanding and individual needs of the child.
- Where any sanctions are used students are encouraged to have their responses or views recorded.

Disciplinary Measures (Sanctions) that MUST NOT be used

Regulation 17 Children's Home (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (copies are available in the staff workroom) details the measures of control that must not be used:

'No measure of control, restraint or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (5) shall be used at any time on children accommodated in a children's home.'

Paragraph 5 of this regulation lists a number of disciplinary measures that **must not** be used. Paragraph 6 of this regulation list the actions that staff must not be prevented from taking due to Regulation 17.

The Guide for Heads and School Staff Behaviour and Discipline (Department for Education, January 2012) makes it clear that **corporal punishment is illegal in all circumstances**.

8.0 PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

It is the duty of staff to promote the best interests of children at all times. We start from the premise that staff should work positively and confidently with young people and find the least intrusive way possible to support, empower and keep young people safe. When facing behaviour that is potentially dangerous, staff must act in a measured way, bearing in mind their duty to try to keep children, staff members and themselves safe. The service does not expect staff to put themselves at risk of significant harm. Staff must use their judgement at times, even quite high level behaviour can respond well to low level responses. It is most usually appropriate to start with lower level responses such as positive ignoring, redirection, distraction and move to using higher level responses such as changing staff member, moving to a different location if the student is not responding and as a last resort or if there is immediate danger use physical intervention.

Physical intervention is the positive application of force with the intention of overpowering the other person. This may only be used as a last resort to support a child if it is required to protect the child from causing significant harm to themselves or other people. The amount of force used must be reasonable in the circumstances. Staff have been trained to use PRICE approaches and must work within the framework provided by PRICE. A number of core physical intervention techniques will be taught to all members of staff. The list of core techniques will be reviewed annually to ensure the techniques that are being taught remain appropriate for the behaviours displayed. PRICE is now affiliated with the Restraint Reduction Network and

Options Higford as a school is committed to reducing the need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention in line with current government guidance.

Other techniques may be taught as needed to members of staff working with a child that presents particular behaviours. These techniques will be listed as part of the child's PBSP and be approved by the Local Authority and Parents.

In the first instance staff will use a trained PRICE technique, however there may be occasions when it is not possible for staff members to use a trained technique, in these circumstances where the child is presenting an imminent risk of threat to life/serious harm to the child/young person, staff member or member of the public, staff members may have to physically intervene ensuring that their response is reasonable and proportionate. Any use of non – trained techniques will be reported their line manager as soon as practically possible. This will be reported to the Registered Manager/Head Teacher to review as appropriate, completing the appropriate section of the physical restraint form or info exchange managers sign off for debrief.

Any use of Physical Restraint must be entered in the appropriate restraint book/ info exchange form within 24 hours of the restraint taking place. All incidents of physical restraint will be reported to the child's parents and social worker within agreed time frames¹.

If at any point during the use of a physical Intervention a child displays physiological signs of distress (eg difficulty breathing, pain or discomfort, discolouration of skin tone) the hold should immediately be released and First Aid should be administered if deemed appropriate.

Options Higford will work within the advice provided by the, Department for Education in; *Use of reasonable force, Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2013* and by OFSTED in; *Positive Environments where children can flourish, March 2018.*

Options Higford also adhere to the 'Restraint Reduction training standards, 2019' (BILD) when training staff to use Physical Intervention.

9.0 TRAINING & SUPPORT FOR STAFF

Regular training relating to this policy, methods of behaviour management, and the writing and monitoring of Positive Behaviour Support Plans are provided for staff, both as whole service training and relating to individual young people.

The promotion of appropriate behaviour is discussed regularly by staff in meetings at all levels and strategies agreed for improvement put in place.

10.0 BULLYING & HARRASSMENT

Bullying and harassment are never considered acceptable behaviour and are taken very seriously at Options Higford. As a service, we have a specific duty to tackle any form of negative discrimination. Bullying is not tolerated, including that relating to special educational needs, age, racial, religious or homophobic taunts. Young people at Options Higford may find it difficult to report such incidents, so all staff need to be vigilant on their behalf and are expected to report any incident immediately to senior management.

11.0 LINKS WITH PARENTAL HOME AND THE CHILDREN'S HOME

The partnership between the school, the young person's family home and the Children's Home is crucial for effective promotion of appropriate behaviour. As a service, we will communicate with parents and with colleagues frequently concerning each child's progress and act immediately if there is a concern so that we can work together

to resolve it. Parents will be involved in the development of the PBSP and will agree its contents before it is implemented. Any amendments requested by parents will be carefully considered.

12.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION & REVIEW

Behaviour is regularly monitored and details relating to individuals and their behaviours are promptly logged in our paper based behaviour tracking system and the Info Exchange electronic recording system. Information generated from the system is used to support development of PBSPs, behaviour analysis meetings and teaching and learning.

Should there be the necessity for fixed-term and or permanent exclusions within the school, these are carried out in line with current DFE guidance. Any incidents of racist bullying or harassment are reported to the Headteacher who in turn reports these to the appropriate authorities.

13.0 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Should parents have any complaints concerning the implementation of this Positive Behaviour Policy, they should initially contact the Registered Manager or Headteacher, as appropriate. If the problem is still not resolved, parents can seek a meeting with the Head of Children's ASC Residential Services or the Managing Director of Autism & LD Services.

APPENDIX 1: Guidance on Interacting with Young People

Fundamental to any work we do with young people is for positive and mutually respectful relationships need to be established. This is important because having trusting relationships with others is the basis for: physical and emotional wellbeing; engagement in activities; learning; and positive interaction.

To develop trusting relationships, the qualities listed below need to be present and need to be made evident to the young person through staff members' behaviour and communication.

Unconditional Positive Regard

Each young person needs to be valued and respected as a person in his or her own right.

This basic acceptance and support of a young person regardless of what he or she says or does needs to be communicated to the young person through behaviour, and through non verbal and verbal communication.

Empathy

Tuning into what a young person might be experiencing and acknowledging his or her feelings demonstrates respect and enables the child to feel that he or she has been heard. To tune in in this way it is important to observe and consider the meaning of the young person's responses and communication. Information in the young person's Care Plan, Education file, Young Person's Voice Document, Behaviour Support Plan, and Communication Plan can aid this process. Having an understanding of the impact of the young person's: autism spectrum disorder; learning difficulties; sensory issues; processing speed; and other conditions through attending training, reading and discussion also supports this.

Empathy needs to be demonstrated to the young person in a way that the young person can understand, through behaviour, and through non verbal and verbal communication.

Being Genuine and Trustworthy

Much evidence exists to support the view that human beings of all ages are happiest and able to deploy their talents to best advantage when they have the support of trusted others. Having a trusted other (sometimes referred to as an attachment figure) provides the young person with a secure base from which to explore the world.

Genuineness and trustworthiness need to be demonstrated to the young person through honest, reliable behaviour and consistent communication.

As children with autism spectrum disorder have difficulty with receptive and expressive communication and with social understanding, ensuring that these qualities of relating are communicated to children requires a high level of planning and consistency from staff with regard to their behaviour and communication. Once trusting relationships have been established interaction, communication, and learning can flourish.

How staff can adapt their own behaviour and communication to support positive behaviour:

- Staff need to work on developing positive and mutually respectful relationships with children and young people
- Staff need to make expectations of children and young people clear through:
 - The routines and systems they set up
 - The visual supports that they use
 - Through carefully planned use of non verbal and verbal communication

- Behaviour, non verbal and verbal communication need to give the same message.

Behaviour and verbal and non verbal communication need to be carefully planned to support an individual's understanding. This planning will include the means of communication to be used as well as the specific quality of the communication, such as: the tone of voice; volume; speed of delivery; symbols signs or objects of reference to be used; the number of words to be used and/or, the specific vocabulary to be used. The following recommendations give general guidance and will need to be adapted according to individual need:

Many children with autism spectrum disorder (of all abilities) find it hard to read subtle communication so it is helpful for them if communication is very clear and to the point. They may benefit from non verbal communication cues being slightly exaggerated to support communication.

For example:

- Playful interaction is indicated by facial expression, body movement, using changes in pitch and rhythm (sometimes called a sing song voice), repetition of words and phrases and emphasis being placed on important words.
- Soothing and reassurance is indicated by speaking slowly in a low tone.
- For those young people who respond to clear direction this is indicated by keeping the body reasonably still other than gesture that supports the direction, using a short specific observable direction such as if you are giving a child or young person a direction to sit down say: *'Sit'* or *'Sit on the chair'* rather than: *'Go to your desk'* or *'Please would you sit down now'*. Verbal directions should be said clearly and delivered in a calm firm voice.
- On the occasions where there is an immediate risk of harm and a warning needs to be given it is appropriate to use a louder sharper voice to warn the young person of danger. Using the voice in this way is for warning only not to reprimand the child.

When talking to young people during a behaviour incident or following a behaviour incident it is important to speak calmly, in a gentle voice if giving reassurance or, in a firm voice if directing or redirecting.

Give the young person the opportunity to express their feelings in a more appropriate way, supporting him or her to do so if necessary. Read the young person's verbal and non verbal behaviour and acknowledge the young person's feelings whether or not he or she is able to express them verbally.

When talking about young people's behaviour, whether to the young person, another member of staff, or a parent it is important to separate the behaviour from the person. Even when you are most unhappy about the young person's behaviour you continue to respect the young person. So for example with more verbal children rather than saying to a child who has been swearing: *'You made me unhappy'*, say: *'I felt unhappy when I heard you swear'*. For a young person who is throwing things, rather than saying: *'I don't like being around you when you're throwing things'*, say: *'Throwing things can hurt people. I'm leaving the room to keep myself safe'*. It might be helpful to practice scripts around individual children and young people's behaviour.

GLOSSARY

- Assertive:** Expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways while respecting the thoughts feelings and beliefs of other people.
- Calm:** Still, serene, at peace, smooth, slow: soothing.
- Empathy:** The capacity to recognise emotions that are being experienced by another person.
- Firm voice:** A voice that is unfluctuating; steady; indicating determination or resolution. A firm voice is usually characterised by clear steady speech, a low tone, and slightly raised volume.
- Genuine:** Actual, real, or true: not false or fake: sincere and honest.
- Trustworthy:** Able to be relied on as honest or truthful: dependable and reliable.
- Mutual:** Reciprocal: held in common by two or more people.
- Respect:** Regard for the feelings, wishes, and rights of others
- Interaction:** Relationship between two or more people: two or more people behaving in a way that is oriented towards the other/s.
- Warning:** Communication to signal impending danger; advice to beware
- Reprimand:** A formal expression of disapproval