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## **Behaviour Principles**

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## Introduction

In the Phoenix School we have high expectations for all our pupils in all areas of school life, including how they behave. Our ethos is based upon a school culture that reflects positive attitudes, values and beliefs, with respect for each individual pupil at its centre. We encourage the self-management of appropriate behaviour and aim to develop self-discipline through praise and reward, in an atmosphere that is caring and respectful. Every member of staff is committed to ensuring that pupils are free to learn in a safe, secure environment. Any incidents of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour are dealt with promptly in a manner that is constructive, with the aim of ensuring that such behaviour does not occur again. At the heart of the policy are the four “Cs” – care, courtesy, consideration and co-operation.

However, given the complex and extreme learning difficulties of our pupils, there are times when some display behaviour may cause difficulties for the individual concerned, for other pupils and for staff. Such behaviour may lead to;

- The lack of participation in appropriate educational activities;
- Isolation from peers;
- The disruption of learning and functioning of other pupils;
- Reduced opportunities for involvement in everyday activities;
- Excessive demands on staff and resources;
- Restricted possibilities for future possible placements;

It is for these reasons that we take a serious, proactive approach to the management of behaviour. It is an approach that has the following aims;

- To increase positive behaviour of pupils;
- To demonstrate good practice in a positive way through:
  - Respecting individual needs and abilities;
  - Having secure and accurate knowledge of the pupil;
  - Knowledge of a range of appropriate behaviour approaches and methods of intervention;
  - Building staff and pupil confidence and trust;
- To provide consistency through:
  - Individual behaviour programmes;
  - Agreed school expectations;
  - Systems of communicating behavioural issues and strategies to all staff.
- To protect the pupil through:
  - Clear guidelines;
  - Agreed practice of measures of control;
  - Constant review;
  - Guidelines of positive practice;
  - Recognition of pupil rights;
  - Agreed procedures for developing behaviour programmes;
  - The involvement of parents and other professionals.



- To protect staff through:
  - Providing knowledge of what practices and procedures are agreed and acceptable;
  - The provision of support, guidance and training;
  - Working within local and national guidelines.

## Aims

In brief, the Phoenix policy is

- To help staff to understand the behaviours presented by a pupil and the means to develop interventions which are practical and effective within the context of the school.
- To provide effective interventions which increase the pupil's engagement in positive educational experiences and lead to increased participation and inclusion in the wide range of school and community activities which are on offer.
- To develop the school's existing expertise and resources and to provide the necessary support and training in order to maintain and effective whole school approach to the management of challenging behaviour.

## Policy

### Understanding Challenging Behaviour

The term "challenging behaviour has become the most widely acceptable way of describing behaviours that previously were termed unacceptable problematic or inappropriate. Challenging behaviour is used to describe a wide range of behaviours which have the common feature of posing social, developmental and educational difficulties. There are clear advantages of using the term "challenging behaviour".

Firstly, challenging behaviour is not something that is a personal feature carried around by a person. It is not characteristic of a person in the same way that epilepsy or, say, spina bifida is. Challenging behaviour describes a relationship between the behaviour displayed by one person and the interpretation placed on that behaviour by another person. Both persons in this relationship contribute to the challenge and both share responsibility for the management of it.

Secondly, the notion of challenging behaviour allows us to place the context and other features, such as the age and gender of the person, upon the behaviour.

Thirdly, behaviour is not, itself, challenging. There is, in one sense, no such thing as a challenging behaviour. There is just behaviour. It is the outcomes and the consequences of behaviour that decide whether it is challenging or not. In turn, these outcomes and consequences are influenced by the values, the skills, the experience etc., of those making the judgement. Moreover, some behaviours which are clearly challenging in one setting are neither challenging nor in any way a problem in another. For example, running around the hall in a PE lesson is encouraged; running



around the classroom is discouraged. A child who refuses to run in the hall presents a challenge. A child who refuses not to run in the classroom presents a challenge. The challenge therefore relates to the context, not to the behaviour of running around.

Finally, it is important to remember that young people with severe learning difficulties who present challenging behaviour are not naughty or bad or stubborn. There are usually very good reasons why the behaviours have developed and why they continue. Finding out why a pupil presents difficult behaviour is part of the challenge we face as staff working in our schools. In finding out why, we often have to examine our attitudes, our expectations and our own behaviours. We have to recognise the relationship between our behaviour and behaviour displayed by a pupil. This is not to say we are the cause of a pupil's challenging behaviour – although sometimes we can be – but to suggest that we ourselves are part of the complex relationships and factors that produce behaviour that is difficult to manage.

### **Guidelines for Intervention**

The following guidelines are necessarily brief and non-specific. All staff in the Phoenix are provided with support and guidance in understanding the causes of challenging behaviour and in developing intervention strategies for individual pupils and students. This support accompanies the regular professional development opportunities that are provided in this area and the annual re-visiting and monitoring of the policy statement.

#### **In brief then:**

- **The situation and circumstances in which specific behaviour appear should be closely analysed. There may be obvious environmental or management issues which trigger the behaviour and which, once identified, may be relatively easily dealt with. For example, the careful structuring of teaching areas to prevent pupils disrupting the work of others. Managing the environment often means managing the behaviour.**
- **Much inappropriate behaviour is the result of problems in communication. Staff need to ask if the pupil is trying to communicate something through the behaviour. Do they want attention? Are they unsure of what is expected of them? Is what is being asked of them unreasonable from their point of view? If we provide pupils with an effective means of communication and we ensure that our expectations are explicit and easily understood by the pupil, then many instances of challenging behaviour are alleviated.**
- **Attempts to eradicate unacceptable behaviour should always be accompanied by the teaching of acceptable behaviour. If the approach to an unacceptable behaviour is to ignore it, then acceptable behaviour should be emphatically rewarded. Similarly we need to make sure we teach an acceptable alternative to a behaviour that is unacceptable. For example, a pupil who pinches to gain attention should be taught not only that pinching is unacceptable but that tapping an arm to gain attention is unacceptable. Focussing on negative behaviour alone is rarely successful.**
- **Consistency of approach is essential when dealing with challenging behaviour. It is a policy of the school that any strategies or programmes are discussed and agreed by all parties concerned. Only then should any interventions be put into operation.**

### **Guidelines on the Use of Physical Restraint**



The management of behaviour that is challenging sometimes requires the use of physical restraint. The following guidelines reflect our positive approach to managing challenging behaviour and are in accordance with Government legislation and LEA guidelines. They reflect the school's commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of all staff and pupils. They promote the best interests of the pupils by emphasising the need to provide pupils who display challenging behaviour with opportunities to behave appropriately through positive behaviour management programmes and through strategies aimed towards the resolution of conflict and the restoration of calmness and order. At the core of the guidelines is the clear statement that **physical restraint is considered as a last resort in order to support pupils in times of crisis.**

The use of physical restraint of force can only be used when it is required to prevent:

- Self-harming;
- Injury to other pupils or staff;
- Damage to property;
- An offence being committed;
- Any behaviour that may prevent the maintenance of good order and behaviour within the school or class.

It is important to remember that the scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual concerned and the nature of the harm that may be caused. The nature and degree of physical intervention will take into account all of the surrounding circumstances, particularly a detailed knowledge of the pupil involved. Throughout, the minimum necessary force should be used. The staff involved in the use of restraint should be trained and familiar in using restraint techniques. In the Phoenix, the approach adopted is Team Teach. All staff receive training by qualified Team Teach instructors, which is updated annually.

With some pupils it is possible to plan in advance a physical intervention strategy. The strategies should be:

- Agreed in advance by everyone concerned, including school staff, parents or carers, other agencies and any advocates;
- Written down and incorporated into other behaviour management strategies that are in place for managing a particular pupil;
- Detailed in describing the procedures to be used, and include a clear date for review and monitoring.

At times, unplanned or emergency physical intervention may be necessary if a pupil behaves in an unexpected way. In such circumstances, staff have a duty of care to intervene and will be expected to respond appropriately. Again, the response should be proportionate to the circumstances. The minimum force necessary should be used, in line with the training received by the staff involved.

Staff should be aware that physical intervention includes the use of seclusion, where a pupil has to spend time alone. This means that time out and withdrawal have to be carefully planned, managed and recorded. The distinction between time-out and withdrawal is important.

- Time-out involves restricting the pupil's access to all positive reinforcements as part of a behavioural programme. The length of time involved should be measured in seconds and



minutes, with the pupil given frequent opportunity to return to the initial setting in a positive manner.

- Withdrawal involves removing a pupil from a situation which causes them anxiety or distress to a location where they can be supported and helped to regain a sufficient level of calmness to resume their usual activities.

Staff should be aware that the use of artificial restraints to manage behaviour is regarded as physical intervention. The use of clothes, straps, belts etc., to prevent a particular behaviour is not permissible without the full agreement of parents and carers and should be introduced only after a multi-agency meeting where the nature of the restraint, the context and the time period should be agreed.

All staff in the Phoenix should be aware of what is regarded whatever the circumstances as unreasonable forms of physical restraint. Examples of this include:

- Holding a pupil around the neck or by the collar or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe;
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- Tripping up a pupil;
- Holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ears;
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground;

Staff should be aware that any of the above behaviours are regarded as inflicting physical abuse on the pupil. Any incidents observed or reported will be dealt with accordingly.

### **Planning, Reporting and Recording**

The management of challenging behaviour and the use of physical restraint needs to be as carefully planned, reported and recorded as all other areas of the school curriculum. It should form part of a pupil's positive handling plan and any intervention should be discussed and agreed by all parties concerned before being implemented.

Whenever physical restraint/reasonable force has to be used, staff need to complete a recording sheet within the handbook as soon after the incident as possible, and certainly on the same day.

Copies of both forms should be kept in the pupil's files, with additional copies given to the Headteacher with responsibility for behaviour.

Staff need to be aware that not completing forms renders them liable to the accusation of using unreasonable force and resultant disciplinary action.

### **Final Thoughts**

In the Phoenix we are committed to providing all of our pupils with positive experiences at all times. This commitment is at the core of our approach to behaviour and discipline. We are guided by the belief:

- That for any lasting change to a pupil's behaviour, they must find value and reward in that change;



- That if a pupil only finds struggle and rejection in their interactions they will learn either to interact only a negative way or withdraw and develop a sense of self based upon withdrawal and lack of support;
- That it is through positive interactions that pupils are able to develop a strong sense of self-worth and value.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Written by: Leadership Team

Date: May 2018

Approved by:

Next review due by: