

Behaviour Policy

Aims

- To identify behaviour that is typical of children with specific learning difficulties so that it is not seen as misbehaviour
- To address such behaviour appropriately to reduce its impact
- To help children gradually to overcome behaviours that might be seen as negative in mainstream settings so that by the time they leave they can behave in a manner that is acceptable in a mainstream class room
- To apply rewards in preference to sanctions to motivate children and raise self esteem and confidence
- To differentiate rewards and sanctions according to the age and stage of the child
- To set out a clear framework of rewards and sanctions so that children know what to do to receive rewards and what will happen if they behave poorly
- To ensure that the policy is clear to children, staff and parents to ensure consistency and clear expectations for behaviour
- To communicate with parents if their child's behaviour is outstandingly positive or if there is cause for concern

Background

Fairley House is a school for children with specific learning difficulties (spld): dyslexia and/or dyspraxia or specific language impairment (SLI), sometimes combined with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity (ADHD) or pragmatic difficulties. It is widely acknowledged that spld causes:

Frustration, anxiety and low self esteem leading to an emotional overlay and behaviours, such as work avoidance or failure to take risks, which might involve:

- being unduly quiet, not participating
- being disruptive to distract attention from the task in hand
- asking to leave the room
- "thinking"
- lengthy searches for materials
- failure to attempt the task or little work produced

We aim to reduce these behaviours by:

- setting manageable tasks
- giving targeted support
- raising self-esteem
- giving positive feedback verbally or through marking
- a high level of staffing
- a calm and nurturing ethos
- high expectations for each child, with appropriate support to achieve them

Specific learning difficulties in themselves result in behaviours which may cause problems in the classroom, but which are not deliberate misbehaviour.

Dyslexic children may:

- have poor listening skills and memory, resulting in apparent disregard for instructions
- literal interpretation of language resulting in inappropriate responses
- Word finding difficulties resulting in slow responses that lack fluency, both orally and in writing

Strategies for dealing with these behaviours include:

- chunking instructions and presenting information visually as well as verbally
- teaching children how to listen
- teacher sensitivity to what has been misunderstood
- allowing time for the child to formulate a response

Dyspraxic children may:

- have low or poor muscle tone, resulting in fidgeting
- have low stimulus level, necessitating regular movements and postural changes. These present as unnecessary fiddling, tapping, rocking or even humming or chanting.

Strategies for dealing with these behaviours include:

- Specific instruction in good sitting and good listening and encouragement to increase the amount of time children can manage this.
- Seating advice from an occupational therapist e.g. use of wedge or Dycem.
- Occupational Therapy/PE to strengthen muscle tone
- OT provided objects to fiddle with rather than fiddling with everything that comes to hand
- setting a baseline, for a given behaviour then setting targets, negotiated with the children for reducing occurrences below the baseline.

SLI children may:

- Not understand what is required
- Not be able to explain clearly what they want to say

Strategies for dealing with these behaviours include:

- Simplifying explanations
- Support from a speech and language therapist
- Alternative means of communication such as drawing a picture rather than writing or talking

Dyslexic and dyspraxic children and those with SLI may:

- process slowly resulting in withdrawal, inattention, poor understanding of cause and effect.

Strategies include:

- giving 1 instruction at a time
- Reminders for good sitting and good listening to gain attention before the teacher speaks

ADD/ADHD

Children are only admitted to FHS with these conditions if they can be managed effectively by behaviour modification and/or medication. However, there are times, for instance when medication is wearing off, that the following behaviours may be seen:

- hyperactivity/hypoactivity
- impulsivity
- lack of concentration/attention
- disruption

Strategies include:

- a short period of 'time out' e.g. outside the office or in a designated spot in the classroom

Pragmatic difficulties

- lack of understanding of boundaries for behaviour
- inappropriate register in speaking to an adult
- lack of social awareness
- lack of understanding of another's view point

Strategies include:

- explicit teaching of interpersonal skills
- teacher explanations
- use of the peer group to support the child

Code of Conduct

Fairley House School has a clear Code of Conduct (**GOAL Rules** for the Junior Department, **Expectations** for the Senior Department). The behaviour policy has been regularly reviewed by the whole staff and amended when necessary. There are core principles which apply across sites but different rewards and sanctions (see Junior and Senior Policies). **All rewards and sanctions for each child are logged in an internal database** so that a record of individual conduct is kept and so that patterns can be discerned, particularly for misbehaviour.

Under section 131 of the School Standards and Framework Act corporal punishment is prohibited. Corporal punishment does not in any way fit the ethos of the school. The emphasis should be on encouraging good behaviour through rewards, raising self esteem and motivating and teaching children to behave well. Sanctions should never involve corporal punishment and should never humiliate or frighten children. Acceptable sanctions are those set out in the Behaviour Policy.

Rewards

- Should be applied liberally
- For younger children should be immediate
- Should be applied fairly to all who deserve them and not reserved for those the teacher wishes to encourage
- Should be concrete (e.g. recorded in the diary, a sticker for younger children)
- Be recorded

Sanctions

It is the aim of the behaviour policy to circumvent or prevent trouble by, for example:

- interesting teaching
- avoiding confrontation with children
- pre-empting problems if possible e.g. separating children who are having a disagreement
- making polite requests to children
- providing a clear structure for what is expected (e.g. the going home procedure)
- reminding children of the rules regularly e.g. by rewarding a child who is following the rules
 - Should follow a reminder and warning for low level misbehaviour (talking at the wrong time)
 - Be immediate for serious misbehaviour (e.g. violence)
 - Be applied fairly and consistently
 - Be recorded

The role of the class teacher/form tutor

- Takes a special interest in each child in the class/form and provides good pastoral care, including being an advocate for the child if necessary
- Has good communication with parents through phone, email, diary or personal contact
- Is the key person who keeps parents informed if behaviour is concerning
- Liaises with other members of staff who may have concerns

Mentoring for children

Children requiring additional use of the pastoral system may be appointed a member of staff as a mentor. Regular appointments are made for the child to discuss any problems.

Interpersonal skills

Where particular aspects of behaviour cause concern, such as regular difficulty with social interaction, friendship problems or pragmatic difficulties, interpersonal skills may be included in the IEP. Sessions may be run by an Occupational Therapist or Speech and Language Therapist or may be in the classroom led by the class teacher and a therapist working together.

Bullying - We do not permit bullying in any form and reports of bullying are always investigated and addressed. Sanctions may need to be given to bullies and are set out within the Behaviour Policy.

See Anti-bullying Policy for further details

Timetable monitoring

If there is considerable concern about a child's behaviour s(he) may be issued with a blank timetable to carry to all lessons, so each teacher can record a comment. This often has the effect of modifying behaviour, but if not, it allows us to monitor exactly what is happening.

Alternatively, a specific target may be set and its success monitored through the timetable system. A clear target such as 'Put hand up to answer question' would only need a tick and initials to indicate success. However, some targets may require a comment. The timetable will have explicit instructions for teachers at the top.

At going home time, the Head will see children's timetables and award a star or credit for a good day or targets met. Timetables are normally sent home for parents to initial each day to encourage home-school liaison. Parents are normally informed when a child begins timetable monitoring.

Occasionally this system operates without the child's knowledge. In this case, staff put comments into a timetable blank on the computer, rather than the child carrying the timetable from lesson to lesson.

Self-monitoring – A suggested strategy for children with ADD, ADHD is to ask the child to self-monitor his or her attention against a rating scale, aiming to match the teacher's rating. Self-monitoring is intended to increase the child's awareness of his or her own levels of attention, with the ultimate aim of improving attention.

Circle Time – Circle Time operates as a class meeting in every class as part of the PSHEE curriculum. Part of the Circle Time philosophy is to offer children Golden Time (a free choice of activities) weekly as a reward for good behaviour. Golden Time is offered to children in the Junior Department. It is recommended that Circle Time is held weekly at the start of the year to help the class to gel. Frequency of sessions thereafter is at the discretion of the class teacher. This initiative follows whole school INSET in January 1998, with 2 follow-up consultations by the Circle Time Organisation with demonstration Circle Times. The school also has Circle Time books and resources in the staff library. The purpose of the meeting is to try to find solutions to problems, or to celebrate successes. Withholding a proportion of Golden Time can also be an effective sanction and is linked to the yellow card system (Juniors).

Circle of Friends

Circle of Friends is a strategy that can be used where children are unpopular and have no friends. It is often initiated by an Educational Psychologist (EP), but is continued by a teacher or assistant. The child's and parents' agreement are sought first. A meeting is held of the child's class without the child present by the EP. Children's empathy is engaged for the plight of being friendless. Children are asked to list positive qualities of the child and behaviours they engage in which discourage others from friendship. A group of volunteers (circle of friends) is asked to befriend the child and to help them overcome negative behaviours. A weekly meeting is held to discuss progress, led by a teacher or assistant. Alternatively, the whole class may become the circle.

Fixed term exclusion

If children have been unresponsive to lesser sanctions, the Principal reserves the right to exclude the child, usually for a day or two but longer in special circumstances such as the need for medication to be reviewed. Exclusion is unusual and rarely enforced because of its disruption to the child's education. However, against this must be balanced the disruptive effect of the child's behaviour on the education of other children. A typical reason for exclusion is violence against other people. It tends

to have a salutary effect with the child usually returning in a more positive frame of mind.

Parents are notified in writing of a child's fixed term exclusion and of their right of appeal to the governing body. The letter will identify the reason for exclusion and its length. Parents are expected to accompany their child to school when he or she returns, for a meeting with the Principal. The child is expected to express remorse and to discuss ways of improving behaviour. The discussion should be solution focused and should include ways school can help prevent problems. Agreed solutions should be communicated to all staff within the Senior or Junior Department so that they can help implement them.

Any fixed term exclusion would be recorded in the school's Record of Sanctions for Serious Disciplinary Offences and all related correspondence retained.

Permanent Exclusion

The school reserves the right to permanently exclude children in the case of persistent disruptive behaviour affecting the education of other children. Prior to permanent exclusion a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) will be devised to try to avoid permanent exclusion. The PSP is devised in a meeting between the Principal/Educational Psychologist or Head of Department, parents and the child. The meeting will make clear the risk of permanent exclusion. The PSP is likely to incorporate measures proposed by the whole staff in a meeting about the child. It will be put in writing for parents and staff and will incorporate clear targets for the child and strategies for staff. The child's response to the PSP will be regularly reviewed, at first weekly, when possible in a meeting between the child, parents and the Head of Junior or Senior Department. There should be good communication with parents where a child is at risk of permanent exclusion, by phone or email. If the child is unable to meet targets and continues to exhibit disruptive behaviour, a meeting will be held between the Principal and parents with permanent exclusion as a possible outcome. The exclusion will be notified to parents in writing and is subject to appeal to the governors. In accordance with the complaints procedure, appeal could go beyond the governors and be heard by someone who is not involved with the school. Any permanent exclusion would be recorded in the school's Record of Sanctions for Serious Disciplinary Offences and all related correspondence retained.

How do people know about the policy?

The Heads of Junior and Senior Department go through the policy with new members of staff to ensure it is understood. If the policy is amended following review, a revised copy of the policy is given to all members of staff. New parents are told the main points of the policy at The Welcome Programme in July or when their child enters. The Parent Guide contains the main points of the policy. The policy is available to parents and prospective parents on the website. Teachers ensure that all children in their class/form know the rules and how the system of rewards and sanctions works at the beginning of the year and if new children start during the year.

Autumn 2003, September 2005, January 2008, December 2009