



Beaucroft's Behaviour Support, Restrictive Physical Intervention and Touch Policy

Introduction

This policy reflects the values, ethos and philosophy of Beaucroft School in relation to behaviour support. It provides guidance on the procedures in place when working with pupil behaviour including, the identification of needs within Beaucroft School, and the organisation of specific arrangements. This policy includes guidance relating to: Bullying, Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI) and touch.

The Behaviour Support Policy is a working document and as such it reflects both the practices that are carried out and those to which the school is striving. The policy is agreed upon by the whole teaching staff and presented to the Governing Body. The document is available for interested parties. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff.

At Beaucroft all staff receive training in behaviour support. This training is called "Dorset Steps" and is adapted from the original work by Angela Wadham of Norfolk Steps. The term "Steps" is drawn from the Norfolk County Council statement on inclusion: "*The process of taking necessary **Steps** to ensure that every young person is given an equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life.*" This statement reflects the philosophy, policy and practice at our school.

This policy has also referenced 'Use of reasonable force-Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2013) and 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings', 2009.

Rationale

At Beaucroft School it is recognised that appropriate behaviour and good order is a necessary prerequisite to effective teaching and learning. Every member of staff strives to develop the whole person, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. This requires teaching an understanding of:

- Right and wrong
- Honesty, truth and fairness
- Respect for others and self
- Importance of positive relationships
- Self-discipline and sense of responsibility.

All the pupils who attend Beaucroft School have complex learning difficulties and other disabilities such as Autism, ADHD and Down Syndrome. This is likely to affect all areas of their learning and functioning, including communication skills and learning the conventions of society. It is recognised that, some pupils require structured support and guidance in order to enable them to live full and valued lives in spite of cognitive, communication, emotional and / or behavioural difficulties. The significant behavioural challenges presented by a small number of pupils mean that, in order to reduce the risk of harm some form of restrictive physical intervention may be unavoidable.

At Beaucroft School, every member of staff shares a responsibility to support pupils to demonstrate behaviours that enable fulfilling relationships and full participation in learning activities. This policy explains the philosophy and practices of the school in meeting the needs of learners who display

behaviours that “challenge” others and increase the risk of harm. It is the duty of all staff to follow all policies, guidelines, reporting procedures, as well as specific individual behaviour support plans relating to promoting positive behaviour.

Shared Values

The Beaucroft Behaviour Support, Restrictive Physical Intervention and Touch policy reflects the shared values, aims and practices of the school. These are expressed in this excerpt from our vision statement: “We meet individual need by engaging a child in learning and empowering young people to be confident, happy individuals.” This statement encapsulates the belief in a collaborative, supportive community where all members learn and develop together, within a culture that reflects positive attitudes and beliefs, and which ensures that everyone is treated with respect and dignity. It is the duty of the staff to provide positive and stimulating experiences and opportunities for their pupils to support them to display pro-social behaviour.

At Beaucroft our values are demonstrated through each member of staff working as a member of a team, sharing achievements, successes, challenges, concerns and stresses. The school’s core values that specifically relate to the support and management of behaviour are:

- believe that everyone has the right to experience success
- value the importance of ensuring that everyone develops a positive and secure sense of self-worth
- believe that everyone has the right to have his/her cognitive and pastoral achievements recognised, rewarded and celebrated
- support our pupils to recognise their successes and achievements and develop a greater self-awareness
- celebrate achievement through a structured reward process that encourages everyone to value their own achievement.

At Beaucroft School we recognise that the learning process is about the quality of relationships and that young people learn better when they have an emotional attachment to the person imparting information, knowledge or who is providing support.

Key areas of learning

The key areas of learning at Beaucroft School specific to the enhancement of behaviour and related skills are:

- Communication
- Personal, Social and Health Education
- Physical and sensory development-Including Physical Education

Progress in these areas will often reduce the need for a pupil to present challenging behaviours. We recognise that some of our pupils have difficulties with:

- Communication.
- Short and long term memory
- Maintaining concentration
- Understanding abstract concepts
- Establishing and maintaining effective and meaningful relationships
- Understanding the effect their actions might have upon others.

When planning and supporting pupils it is important that adults consider that:

- There will always be a reason or purpose behind any behaviour that others find challenging and which can place the young person as well as other people at risk.
- It is the responsibility of those adults working to support the child, to try to understand the motivation behind the behaviour; to try to interpret the behaviour from the child's point of view.
- The child will exhibit their behaviour in order to try and get their need(s) met. Adults planning to support the child must try to find more appropriate means for the child to meet these needs. Within the classroom situation it is probable that the meaning of the behaviour may relate to either: task avoidance or seeking to interact with others.

Supporting pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may have a different perception of the world and its meaning. Their behaviour is a reflection of their difficulties in understanding the complexity of "ordinary life."

- Many will have complex sensory needs
- Many will experience high levels of anxiety.
- Most will encounter difficulties understanding and accepting change.
- The vast majority will experience problems in meeting and communicating basic needs such as hunger, thirst, pain and discomfort.

The way children learn behaviour

At Beaucroft School we understand that children learn behaviour through:

- Their relationships
- Patterning and copying
- Reminding
- Repetition and structure
- Clear and agreed boundaries
- Praise and reward when successful
- Comfort when not successful
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The way we teach positive behaviours

At Beaucroft we teach positive behaviours through:

- Relationships
- Role modelling
- Consistency
- Scripts and routines
- Positive phrasing
- Planning
- Reward and positive reinforcement
- Comfort and forgiveness

Key elements in planning

Dorset Steps provides guidance in assessment and planning which must be followed in planning for individual pupils. It is the responsibility of every member of staff to seek to understand the behaviour of the young person. The key elements to inform such understanding are:

- Think
- Plan
- Respond

Conscious and Subconscious behaviours

An important aspect of the training that staff receive is understanding that some behaviours are conscious (behaviours over which the person has a choice) and others are subconscious (behaviours over which the person does not have full control) and that assessments must identify whether a problem behaviour is conscious or subconscious as this will have an important bearing on planning and practice. In order to assess conscious behaviours, the adult should consider:

- What is the expected outcome of the behaviour?
- What is the motivation to behave anti-socially?
- What is the motivation to behave pro-socially?
- What are the expected consequences?
- How can the adult impact on the young person's beliefs and values?

To assess subconscious behaviours the adult needs to consider:

- Are there medical issues?
- Is it a phenotype behaviour (relating to a genetic disorder)?
- What may be causing anxiety?
- What may be causing confusion?
- What is stimulating the young person?

A Therapeutic Approach

At Beaucroft we recognise that negative experiences create negative feelings and that negative feelings create negative behaviour, whilst positive experiences create positive feelings and positive feelings create positive behaviour. It is the responsibility of every adult at our school to seek to understand the reason why a child is presenting challenging behaviour and change the circumstances in which the behaviour occurs. The Dorset Steps programme provides an assessment / planning tool called "roots and fruits" to assist adults in this area.

Risk assessment

When a child repeats a behaviour(s) that may place themselves or others at risk of harm, the team - led by the class teacher - must undertake an Individual Risk Management plan, using the Dorset Steps planning Tools.

When faced with a challenging behaviour

Any adult seeking to support a child whose behaviour is presenting a challenge can act in a way that can make the situation worse or can calm the situation. It is the responsibility of adults at Beaucroft to follow the guidance provided in the Dorset Steps training to support the child. This can be achieved through one of or a combination of the following as appropriate:

- Positive phrasing e.g.
 - *"Stand next to me"*
 - *"Put the toy on the table"*
 - *"Walk beside me"*
- Limited choice e.g.
 - *"Put the pen on the table or in the box"*
 - *"When we are inside, lego or drawing"*
 - *"Talk to me here or in the courtyard"*

- Disempowering the behaviour e.g
 - *“You can listen from there”*
 - *“Come and find me when you come back”*
 - *“Come down in your own time”*
- Use of a De-Escalation Script e.g
 - *Use the person’s name – “Jason”*

Acknowledge their right to their feelings – “I can see something is wrong”
Tell them when you are there – “I am here to help”
Offer help – “Talk to me and I will listen”
Offer a “get-out” (positive phrasing) – “Come with me and...”

Consequences

At Beacroft adults have the responsibility to use consequences, which have a relation to the challenging behaviour and as a result help the young person learn and develop positive coping strategies / behaviour. Consequences act on internal discipline by creating a learning opportunity directly relating to the anti-social behaviour to the harm caused, that then contributes to the situation.

Consequences may include: completing a task, limiting access to play resources; escorted when moving between classes, assisting with repairs, restorative meetings. The use of constructive consequences must inform planning and practice at Beacroft.

Punishment is seen as a sanction imposed by an adult which does not have a direct relationship with the problem behaviour, as a result punishment can harden and numb the child, produce obstinacy, sharpen the sense of alienation and strengthens the power of resistance. Punishment relies on external discipline.

Punishment is not used at Beacroft School.

Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions

At Beacroft we believe that pupils need to be safe, to know how to behave and know that adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. Only for a very small minority of pupils will the use of restrictive physical interventions be needed. On such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention are used.

All staff need to feel that they are able to manage inappropriate behaviour and to have an understanding of what challenging behaviours might be communicating. They need to know what options are available for managing behaviour.

Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) is the term used to describe interventions where bodily contact using force is used to control or manage a child’s behaviour.

Due to the learning and emotional difficulties of some pupils attending Beacroft School there is a possibility that they may present behaviours that place themselves and / or others at risk of harm, requiring adults to physically intervene in order to reduce this risk. Restrictive Physical Intervention is an act of care and control and may only be used to reduce the risk of harm and never as a form of punishment. RPI must never be used to force compliance with staff instructions.

Staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for RPI through dialogue and diversion. Only the minimum force necessary will be used. Staff will be able to show, when asked, that the intervention used was a reasonable response to the incident. As soon as it is safe the RPI will be relaxed to allow the pupil to gain self-control.

At Beacroft, where appropriate, staff may receive training in restrictive physical interventions, using the Dorset Steps programme (Step Up). The training will be delivered by fully trained and accredited tutors in

Dorset Steps. There may be specific pupils whose complexity of need requires further support. A written audit of need must be undertaken following which support and guidance will be provided by a Steps Tutor.

The use of Restrictive Physical Interventions, either planned or unplanned must always be recorded in the “Numbered and Bound Book” which is located in the Middle School office. If a pupil is identified for whom it is felt that RPI is likely, then a Individual Risk Management Plan must be completed. This must be shared with Diane Makariou, Steps Tutor and parents. The plan will help the pupil and staff avoid difficult situations through understanding the factors that influence the behaviour and identifying the early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours that may be developing. The plan will include: a risk assessment, a record of risk reduction options, techniques for managing the pupil’s behaviour e.g. de-escalating conflict, stating at which point at RPI may be used; identifying key staff who know exactly what is expected; systems for summoning additional support; identifying training needs.

Procedures are in place for supporting and debriefing the student after every incident of restrictive physical intervention, as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times.

Use of Reasonable force-taken from ‘Use of reasonable force-Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies’ (July 2013):

- All staff members have a legal power to use reasonable force
- This power applies to any member of staff and unpaid volunteers and parents where they are supporting pupils
- Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others and from damaging school property
- ‘Reasonable force in the circumstances’ means using no more force than is necessary.

Touch / Physical Contact

Introduction

Touch and physical contact is essential in order to provide sensitive, high quality care and educational provision. Used in context and with empathy, touch supports the development of natural interactions with the young people we teach and care for. This policy sets out the reasons for physical contact between an adult and child. Some elements of touch/physical contacts may relate to Intensive Interaction techniques.

Purpose of touch and physical contact at Beaucroft School

Touch and physical contact may be used for:

- Communication

e.g placing a hand on someone’s shoulder when speaking to them;
to greet someone (shaking hands).

To support early communication e.g sensitively directing / guiding / supporting children in an educational task

- Learning

To assist, prompt and enable interactions with peers and staff. To support engagement with resources and classroom activities.

- Transitions

e.g During changes between activities

- Play

Many play activities naturally involve touch. People of any age who are at an early stage of development are likely to be tactile and physical

- Therapy

e.g massage, sensory stimulation, physiotherapy, rebound therapy, Intensive

Interaction

- Emotional reasons

e.g. to communicate affection and warmth, to give reassurance.

- Purposes of care:

touch is necessary in order to carry out personal care for many

- To give medical and nursing care.

- Physical support to people who have physical difficulties

e.g. transfers in and out of wheelchairs, to guide people between places, rooms or activities

- Protect children and young people from danger by physically intervening.

Guidelines

Staff need to be clear and open about why they are using touch and be able to explain their practice. There must be clarity and transparency in issues of touch.

The use of touch should be discussed openly and regularly between staff. People of any age can want and need physical support / touch. Staff should not cuddle a child front to front. If a child attempts to do so the member of staff should encourage the child to accept a sideways hug supporting their shoulders and upper arm. Sideways hugs should be used to offer comfort, reparation and to show support. If it is deemed that a child would benefit from a front to front cuddle this should be written into a plan that is agreed by parents / guardians and the Headteacher. Staff should also avoid a child sitting on their laps – again if it was deemed that a child would benefit it should also be written into a plan that is agreed by parents / guardians and the Headteacher.

Staff may be concerned about the issue of age-appropriateness; however, the developmental age and emotional and communication needs of the individual are far more important than actual age. While gender and cultural factors have relevance in issues of touch, the emotional and communication needs of the individual are due equal consideration.

Staff should be sensitive to any verbal and non-verbal communication from pupils that might indicate that they don't want to be touched. It should always be considered by staff that for touch to provide positive experiences it should be consensual.

Staff should be sensitive to any changes in the child's behaviour (e.g. overexcitement or negative reactions) that might indicate the need to reduce or withdraw touch; particularly during play or intensive interaction. Significant changes in behaviour should be clearly recorded.

The pupils we support should be given opportunities to touch each other while interacting and playing as would happen naturally for any child or young person. Attention should always be given to ensure that both parties are happy with this.

Staff must be aware of potential hazards in respect of sexual issues:

- staff must be sensitive to the danger of touch being misunderstood and triggering sexual arousal and must be alert to all feedback signals from the person they are working with
- the children we support may occasionally inadvertently touch intimate parts of a member of staff's body when there is no sexual intent or understanding. The member of staff should withdraw without giving significant negative feedback in this situation.

It is *never* appropriate for staff to touch a child's intimate body areas except as part of intimate or medical care (see Beaucroft's Intimate Care Policy).

It is not appropriate for staff to kiss pupils.

If staff are in any doubt about issues concerning appropriate touch or observe any practice that causes concern they should discuss this with the Safeguarding Lead.