



Behaviour Policy
For
The Beckmead Trust

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BEHAVIOUR POLICY

2021

1. INTRODUCTION & GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Promoting good behaviour within The Beckmead Trust requires the set up and maintenance of a learning environment which allows staff and parents to support pupils with ASD, SEMH, challenging behaviour and other SEN vulnerabilities to manage their feelings and their behaviour effectively, both at home and at school.

Some of our young people may also come to us with experiences of insecure attachments to caregivers, traumas such as domestic violence, bereavement and histories of rejection and exclusion. The school uses an approach that understands their behaviour in the context of these factors and helps them realise their full potential by using strategies that work therapeutically with their difficulties. This includes:

- Staff who are trained in supporting pupils to manage their feelings and behaviour so that challenging or passive behaviour associated with autism is brought to a manageable level and pupils can show that they are ready to learn. Pupils who are on the autistic spectrum do not automatically understand rules and boundaries incidentally as non-autistic people do, therefore staff are committed to teaching pupils to learn how to make choices about their behaviour – to choose behaviour that works for you and those around you, rather than to become angry and blame yourself and others
- A nurturing approach that involves caring, consistent, empathic, non-retaliatory and boundaried relationships between staff and pupils
- Recognising that pupils may have early-years needs (e.g. play) that are unmet and need to be provided before they can progress. This may mean providing support which is appropriate to their emotional/social age rather than their calendar age
- Developing pupils' abilities to understand and communicate about their emotions
- Teaching the students how to self-regulate by using specifically taught relaxation and calming techniques, how to monitor their levels of anxiety, and how to return to being 'Just Right' during times of raised levels of anxiety.
- A positive approach with a focus on praising and rewarding good behaviour, recognising and developing strengths and abilities and helping pupils to develop an improved perception of themselves
- Ensuring that pupils always feel wanted and supported despite their behaviour – firm expectations around behaviour without shaming or further damaging self-esteem
- Acting as appropriate role-models for our pupils. Being aware of our verbal and body language as well as our emotional reactions to the pupils and how we respond to them. Being responsible about seeking support when needed
- Harmful online behaviours are addressed using guidance from both the e-safety policy and this behaviour policy.
- Providing good attachments for our pupils whilst being sensitive to and supporting relationships between parents/carers and their children
- Providing opportunities for specialist therapeutic input where needed
- Providing opportunities for pupils to demonstrate maturity and responsibility as they progress up the school
- Having a wide variety of tailored resources including those drawn from external professional organisations such as the Police, Street Doctors and the Substance Misuse Team that are used to engage the students in the range of techniques.

Although we can adapt this approach to our own cultural backgrounds and language styles, it is important that as a staff body we work consistently and in a joined-up way with our pupils and that the approach is used throughout the school.

2. UNDERSTANDING OUR PUPILS' NEEDS

It is important that we understand the meaning behind our pupils' behaviour if we are going to be able to support their difficulties. Our pupils' behavioural difficulties are caused by viewing the world in an autistic manner which often means that others' perspectives are not considered or understood. Pupils who have autism also have difficulties with communication and social interaction which lead to misunderstandings and anxious feelings.

Some pupils may have attachment difficulties with parents/carers and may have developed protective behaviours that have helped them cope with their situations. Typical behaviours include:

- Tantrums
- Apparent rudeness and ignoring of others
- Need to control situations and adults
- Language processing difficulties
- Disproportionate anxiety around changes and transitions
- Insecure attachment behaviours – clinginess, defiant independence, mistrust of adults, ambivalence (clinginess combined with rejecting behaviours)
- Lack of awareness or tolerance of external boundaries and lack of development of internal boundaries – risk-taking behaviours, impulsivity, inability to manage emotions, inability to think ahead and predict consequences, oppositional defiance
- Inability to understand or communicate about their feelings
- Inability to tolerate difficult feelings – projects them into others through challenging behaviour to achieve temporary relief
- Lack of empathy for others (magnified when combined with their handling of the online world).
- When behind an online screen the behaviour of our pupils can become much more extreme due to a number of different reasons including their poor executive functioning and struggles to think through the consequence of their actions.
- Intense envy of their peers.
- Feelings of low self-esteem, critical of self, unable to recognise achievements
- Intense fear of failure, inability to take healthy risks (e.g. in learning)
- Hyper-vigilance – always on the look out for threat, hypersensitivity to insult or perceived threat
- Inability to tolerate “good” and “bad” in the same person – splits people into “good” and “bad” people and changes often who is perceived as “good” and who is perceived as “bad”
- Severe anxieties and panic attacks
- Suicidal ideations

These behaviours can be frustrating and distressing when we are exposed to them daily but it is important that we see them in the context of our pupils' special educational needs and that we do not retaliate against them, i.e. we separate the child from the behaviour. With good support, pupils can learn to manage their anxious, challenging behaviours and to function in a more acceptable and effective way.

It is important to recognise the link between emotional wellbeing / mental health / neurodevelopmental conditions and behaviour. Challenging behaviours can be communications of distress, symptoms of conditions such as PTSD, ASD, SEMH, or ADHD, evidence of attachment difficulties or transference of previous abusive relationships onto relationships with staff. Although behaviourism (rewards / sanctions) plays a role in helping students with their behaviour, all staff have a role in supporting the underlying causes of behaviours too. More detail is given in our separate Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy.

3. ENVIRONMENT

- Effective classroom management displayed by all members of staff. Teacher to ensure that class staff are aware of all planning and where it is kept in the classroom. Effective visual labels to ensure that the learning environment is clearly signposted.
- Classroom Rules – In the first week of each term the students discuss and identify school and class rules which they agree to adhere to. This is discussed on a weekly basis within the PSHE session. During this session the students are able to identify what is working, what can be improved and any action they will take with their class/school team in order to support progress towards the achievement of their personal behaviour target.
- Visual signposting needs to include the following, adapted to the needs of the class group:
 - Timetable
 - Individual work stations
 - Individual supports (social stories, visuals to reduce inappropriate behaviours)
 - Rewards (tokens, individual and class initiatives)
 - Reminders for good behaviour
 - Ignoring Cards for ignoring others' behaviours
 - Learning board (breakdown of each lesson including objectives, activities required to complete lessons, behaviour required to complete tasks); differentiated through symbols where necessary.
 - 4 part lesson structure: Warm up, Listening, Activity, Check.
- The targets from the pupil's IEPs are displayed in the class room. Progress against the targets should be commented on informally on a daily basis and formally on target monitoring sheets at least three times each half term.
- A whole school programme of personal and social education lessons which include focussing on relationships and caring for others. These will run throughout the school and are based on a variety of materials including SALT materials, Forest skills, Social skills lessons and SAFE. These lessons will be differentiated according to age and need.
- All staff are trained in how to manage sensory needs of pupils who have difficulties processing their sensory input. The Occupational Therapist carries out on going training and individual assessments, in order to advise staff on suitable strategies to ensure that pupils have the activity breaks or sensory input that they require to remain alert and focussed. This also includes 'sensory circuits' where the class will regularly carry out a series of exercises agreed with the OT in order to ensure that children are not overwhelmed.
- The classroom is clearly defined to include work areas and a nurture area. The nurture area is a comfortable area where pupils are encouraged to interact socially under the guidance of staff. This is where pupils eat breakfast, are prepared for the day, engage in play and recreational activities, and reflect at the end the day. For younger pupils, there should also be a separate play area.
- Classrooms should be clean, tidy and orderly and pupils encouraged to respect the room and its contents. To facilitate attachment to the class, a sense of belonging and pride in the class can be encouraged by for example:
 - Allowing the class to decide a name for the class
 - Pupils' names on the door
 - Examples of pupils' good work on the walls
 - Pictures of class trips etc on the walls

- Giving pupils class jobs

4. ROUTINES AND DAILY TRANSITIONS

Our pupils find transitions anxiety-provoking and these times are flash-points for challenging behaviour. They need help to cope with daily transitions:

- Use the beginning of the day to prepare pupils for the day ahead – let them know (or remind them) about any changes to their usual routine
- Have clear visual displays of timetables which can be repeatedly referred to. Give older pupils small laminated copies of timetables to carry around.
- Prepare them for ending an activity or lesson by warning them that a break or change is due. Close the lesson/activity in a concrete way – sum up what has happened, achievements etc and what will happen next time. Reassure pupils when you will see them again to remind them of your consistent availability.
- When a lesson change involves a change of teacher, TAs can aid the transfer of attachment this involves by preparing pupils for the change and communicating to the 2nd teacher concerns and successes from the first lesson in front of pupils so they see a visible transfer of care.
- Really praise children who manage movement from one area to another and are in the right place at the right time.
- Make sure, when children leave a room, we remind them about coming back.
- Rehearse younger children through transitions. Predict it all and eliminate the unknown. Tell them what will happen when they return.
- Use the end of the day to go over the day and prepare for the following day. Give advance warning of any changes to routine. Many pupils find leaving the security of school very difficult. Reassure them that you will be there for them tomorrow and are looking forward to seeing them but that it is now time to go home.

5. PROVIDING GOOD ATTACHMENTS

A secure attachment to a caregiver is essential for children's psychological development. Some of our pupils have not experienced this at home. If they experience secure attachments to caregivers at school, this can help them catch up on the development they have missed out on. This cannot and should not replace attachments to parents/carers but can be a vital "top up" if their full attachment needs have not been met at home.

Staff can provide secure attachments to pupils by:

- Being consistent, patient and dependable
- Tuning into their needs – noticing when they are hungry, upset, tired etc and demonstrating care through your responses. Getting to know the child and what they need from your relationship with them.
- Empathising with and understanding their feelings
- Containing their distress/rage – trying to understand the reasons for challenging behaviour and figure out solutions for the child, not retaliating through our reactions, managing our own behavioural responses to challenging behaviour
- Demonstrating unconditional acceptance of the child – disapproving of behaviours, never the child as a person (e.g. "what you said was really rude", not "you are so rude"). Accepting that our relationships with pupils is often one-way to start with – not expecting much back from them

Knowledge of the child's background can help us build good attachments with them. When we understand what they've been through, this can help us put their behaviours into context. When you start to work with a child, reading their file and speaking to other professionals with experience of the child, e.g. school therapists, can help your understanding of them.

6. PROMOTING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our pupils come to our school to learn about social skills and emotions as well as academic learning and it is important that we provide opportunities for this. Certain times should be focal points for this learning, e.g. breakfast, circle time, assemblies, end of day, break time and lunch, PSHE. However, social and emotional learning needs to be embedded throughout the whole day and a part of all lessons.

Activities for practising social skills and learning about emotions:

- Story-reading and story telling
- Circle time
- Forest skills
- Offsite activities that require group work skills such as sailing and BMX.
- Drama / roleplay
- Group musical activities
- Sport and games
- Group art activities
- Discussing films and stories in the news
- Action songs and rhymes encouraging the children to focus on the teacher
- Memory games both auditory and visual
- Speaking and listening activities
- Time for conflict resolution and facilitating apologies after incidents
- Lego club
- Sessions facilitated by external professionals such as Street Doctors, The Police, the Safer Croydon Team and the Substance Misuse/ Sexual Health workers.

Play

Play is vital in children's development and teaches them about their emotional and social world. Children use play to rehearse for real life. It is essential that the children have the opportunity for directed and spontaneous play as part of their personal and social development. Age-appropriate play is just as important for older pupils who may have missed out on early years' opportunities for play and will have missed out on this kind of learning as a result. Boundaries and rules are important in play and these need to be explicit with reminders where necessary. Play opportunities need to be matched to pupils' level of development - pupils may need to engage in supported solitary play before moving onto parallel play (play in the company with others but without much interaction) and finally social play.

Communicating about feelings

Pupils need to be encouraged to communicate appropriately about their feelings instead of acting out their feelings through challenging behaviour. We can support them in this in a number of ways:

- Modelling – talking about our own feelings and emotional reactions This is particularly important for male staff to help overcome gender stereotypes around boys being “allowed” to talk about feelings
- Praising pupils whenever they manage to tell you about their feelings
- Verbalising your thoughts about a child's emotional state (this is communicating their feelings for them before they're able to do this themselves) – wondering aloud (“I'm wondering if you're upset because....”)
- Providing opportunities for emotional communication – ask about their weekend etc

- Make it safe for children to talk about their feelings – normalise their feelings by letting them know that we all have these feelings (“I’m not surprised you’re upset, most children get upset when....”)
- Empathise with their feelings – this helps them feel understood and when we feel understood it encourages further communication

Language

- The school uses a common language in line with the OT advice to describe how they are feeling – high, low or just right. Pupils have verbal or visual supports to be able to identify the state they are in at different points in the school day; they can then discuss or point out what activity could help them to feel less agitated.
- Consistent language describing behavioural expectations are made explicit to all students. A clear choice system is used in order to empower the students in making informed choices in relation to the action they take and consequences they will experience. This is discussed within the context of what works and does not work in life.
- Never say ‘No’, always say ‘stop’ preceded by the students name when referring to a student’s behaviour.
- Say no in answer to curriculum questions.
- Say ‘No’ in relation to unacceptable actions e.g. the rule is “rule is No hitting”.

Choices and consequences:

- When supporting a student in stopping a behaviour always give the student a choice by linking the expectation with the action and the consequence.
 - a) For example ‘The school expectation is ‘no verbal abuse’. You can choose to use verbal abuse and explain why you have used it to the head teacher at lunch time, or you can choose to stop using verbal abuse and go out to play at lunch time.

One choice will be educationally, socially and physically advantageous to the pupils/pupil with an individually positive outcome. The other choice will be a choice which is unacceptable educationally, socially and or physically with an outcome which is less desirable to the pupil.

- b) If further clarity for the student is required (e.g. if student is experiencing upset and information processing is reduced), staff use two hands out, palms upwards and pointing to one palm staff will say, “Name, you can choose (a) and (b) will happen”. They will point to the other palm and say, “or you can choose (c) and (d) will happen”.
 - c) Working in this way requires staff to know what each pupil’s powerful positive and negative reinforcers are. This implies working closely with parents.
 - d) If a pupil refuses to choose, staff will say “Not choosing means you are choosing (c) and (d) will happen.
 - e) The tone of voice used by staff when offering choices will be neutral and assertive.
 - f) For older students or those with the capability tie in the consequences and choices into their longer term reward or goal that they are working towards. This may involve reference to academic goals or aspirations they have.
- If a pupil makes a choice which is not in their self interest, a consequence takes place, such as losing out on play time or special choosing time in class. After this has taken place, the question is posed to the pupil; “Did that work for you?” This encourages good behaviour from an objective, non-judgemental point of view where there is an objective space for pupils to develop an understanding of right and wrong.

- When the pupil has reflected on their behaviour and whether it worked or not Staff will say “What would have worked?” We have to bear in mind that all the above strategies have to be repeated many times. Research shows that pupils with language disorder have to have things repeated to them 1,000 times before they understand them and can use them. Given the social complexity of autism, consistency and repetition of language and approach are even more important.

Clearing up and sorting things out:

- After any upset it is important to support the pupil in identifying the cause of the upset.
- There are three causes of upset:
 - a) You expect something to happen and it does not.
 - b) You want to do something and someone or something stops you.
 - c) You want to say something and you do not know how to say it.
- Staff can then support the pupil in identifying a strategy that will work in clearing up the upset. The pupil will be praised for identifying the cause of their upset and for clearing it up. This promotes a sense of completion and allows pupils to continue with their day with their self esteem intact.
- Staff are trained in using an adapted restorative justice session which uses a visual to prompt reflection on the feelings around an incident and what could have been done differently, as well as better strategies for the next time. This strategy is differentiated by age group and level of functioning.

7. MANAGING BEHAVIOUR

i. Expectations and boundaries

The children need to be faced with clear expectations and boundaries. They will feel safe when they recognize that we all work together for them and the boundaries hold them secure and that the adults are in charge of themselves and the children. Class rules should be clearly displayed and should emphasise “do’s” rather than “don’ts”. Pupils, particularly older pupils, should be involved in deciding the rules.

Abusive language and disrespect is unacceptable and children need to be given the appropriate language and strategies to use. They need to be reminded of the school ethos of respect for yourself and others and dealing with each other in an acceptable manner. If abusive and disrespectful language is not challenged, it becomes accepted and allows for a climate of conflict and hostility to develop.

If a child has become extremely distressed and is out of control and requiring physical intervention, the language used may be regarded somewhat differently. At these times it may be more helpful to ignore any verbal abuse and not to respond to it until the child has gained some level of calm. It is likely that there are other behaviours that need to be addressed at this point and the language is not a priority.

Be in the right place at the right time. This is an important management tool. Children should be taught to always ask before leaving a room and should only visit the place stated. Younger children should also always be accompanied or discreetly monitored by an adult. Older pupils should be given opportunities to prove they can be trusted.

ii. Self-Awareness / Managing Ourselves

It is important that we act as role-models for our pupils. This means containing our own emotional reactions to situations and modelling behaviours that we hope our pupils can achieve. Managing behaviour is firstly dependent on the climate created by the adults

within the classroom and then within the school.

- Use respectful verbal and body language when addressing pupils
- Make positive eye contact and address children with confidence.
- Address children by name and be clear in your message to them.
- Never use swearing or discuss inappropriate subjects in the presence of pupils
- Don't shout or using aggressive body language. Remain calm but confident even (*especially*) when faced with challenging behaviour. We can be authoritative without being aggressive.
- If you are finding a situation too challenging to remain in control, ask for support or for someone else to take over – recognise when you are no longer helping the situation
- Model positive communication with other staff in front of pupils
- Communicate honestly and openly with the children and each other
- Be careful with humour – avoid humour containing playful threats of aggression – often misinterpreted by the child as real aggression

We also need to be clear that we are the adults and it is our job to educate the pupils and look after them when they are in our care. We take charge and although the children are to be included in decision making and in particular in devising their own behaviour targets, it must be clear to them that the adults look after them. This does not mean that we can't be friendly and warm with the children, but that we always combine this with being the adult and boundaried. This requires particular skill with older pupils where this needs to be balanced with allowing them more opportunities for being responsible and independent. The way we do this mirrors how a good parent gradually renegotiates boundaries with a teenager while still remaining the parent.

iii. Dealing with challenging behaviour

The school has an emphasis on prevention rather than reaction. All the elements of our practice should be contributing towards prevention of challenging behaviour arising. When challenging behaviour does arise, the emphasis is on de-escalation.

De-escalation strategies:

- Firstly speak quietly and privately if possible to the child. Remark on a time when they have successfully changed a response. Pick out their strengths and remind them. Remember their individual targets and highlight the rewards.
- Offer alternative strategies (where these have already been agreed with a child so much the better).
- Use time-out or moving to the nurture area, sensory room or soft play room.
- Reiterate your commitment to supporting them and desire to help them.
- Avoid shouting, be aware of your body language and giving the child space
- Use diversion, change the activity to remove pressure
- Wonder aloud about the feelings behind the behaviour – empathise with the feelings
- Don't use threats of sanctions until all other strategies have been used
- Ask for help from another adult if you feel the pupil might be better helped by someone else

Physical Intervention should only be used as a last resort. The child should be given warning prior to a physical intervention. All staff are fully trained in appropriate PI – PRICE training. (Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment).

The following points also need to be adhered to by all staff.

- Physical intervention is used only to prevent injury being caused to any person, including the child himself, damage to property, engagement in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline in the school or among any of its pupils.
- The number of staff involved should be the minimum necessary to safeguard the child and others.
- The force used must be the minimum necessary to deal with the harm that needs to be prevented, i.e. it must be reasonable in the circumstances.

- Staff should only “hold” a child for a maximum of ten minutes. Other staff may need to offer support.
- All children have an Individual Education and Care Plan including a Risk Assessment Form which outline specific considerations for that child in relation to physical intervention. These are updated on a termly basis.
- Staff need to follow a system of recording following any physical intervention. The incident report form needs to be filled in before staff leave their shift. All staff and children involved must read through the report form and sign it. A follow up form is also completed which records the child’s perception of the incident and looks to a resolution.
- During a PI, don’t attempt to discuss the incident – the child will be too distressed to think about it and it may further escalate behaviour. The time for that is later when the child has calmed down. Focus any talking on trying to soothe the child and help them calm. Verbalise your belief in their ability to calm down and turn the situation around. Verbalise your commitment to continue to support them (“I’m here to help you” etc). Don’t retaliate to verbal abuse from the pupil.

A complaints procedure is also in place for pupils and parents. Pupils have the right to complain and if they want to, should be supported in this.

Where possible “timeout” is given for staff and child following a physical intervention. Senior members of staff offer supervision sessions for less experienced members.

Wherever possible time needs to be taken to work through the reasons for “holding” with the child. The experience can be used for addressing issues which cause violent responses and the child can be guided in how to prevent a reoccurrence.

iii. Rewards, Consequences and Sanctions

Clear consequences and sanctions are essential for pupils with ASD, SEMH, challenging behaviour and other SEN vulnerabilities, but the emphasis should be on rewarding good behaviour. Our pupils come to our school with a perception of themselves as “bad” and it is often easy for them to fit into a cycle of behaving badly and being punished from which they can see no hope of escaping. A clear, easy-to-understand and consistent reward system is essential in helping pupils notice and celebrate their own successes and build a different perception of themselves. The system should incorporate the following features:

- Frequent rewards depending on child’s ability to wait and link the reward to the correct behaviour. In addition to weekly rewards, some pupils may need opportunities to gain rewards on a daily or even shorter basis
- For older students or those with the capability using ‘larger’ or long term rewards can be an alternative option to re-engage them. Breaking these down into small steps to achieving the ‘larger’ reward through the common traditional reward systems that they are used to.
- Targets for rewards need to be motivating and realistic. Use of visual tokens to represent reward helps children with ASD, SEMH, challenging behaviour and other SEN vulnerabilities to see that they are doing well and also makes the reward more meaningful if it is personalised.
- Rewards that are earned must be given when they are expected. If not, the child’s trust in adults will not be allowed to develop
- never take away an earned reward as a sanction. This will again damage trust and seem unjust to the child
- Opportunities for public celebration of success (e.g. special mentions)
- Make sure that small successes get noticed and rewarded/celebrated
- **Avoid using time with a favoured adult as a reward** – this contradicts the notion of staff as consistently available attachment figures and can lead to insecurity in the child’s attachment to staff. It can also lead to unbearable feelings of envy in other children

General Rewards

- Individual praise and encouragement (Non-verbal; smiles, eye contact, thumbs up, body language, signing and symbols)
- Break time in a different place/different equipment
- Extra snacks, computer games, time with favourite members of staff. This may be choosing time at the end of the lesson.
- Extra play time agreed with teacher.
- Appropriate positive written comments on work.
- Awarding of stickers and privileges.
- Telling the Head teacher.
- Displaying work
- Public commendations for good behaviour and work in class and assembly
- Positive communication with parents to share success- Parents can be invited by the class teacher in to share in the pupil's success by sending photocopied work home. Use of home school book.
- Teachers will, where possible, reward the pupils with opportunities for curriculum choices.
- Positive calls home.
- Public celebration in assemblies

It is important that any reward system gives students with behavioural difficulties a genuine opportunity to experience being rewarded for their good behaviours. The threshold for achieving a reward needs to be realistic so that their difficulties do not prevent them from ever being rewarded. In other words, reward systems need to be inclusive. If a student is never achieving a reward then the reward system is not working and needs to be adjusted. Having a rolling reward system can be preferable to a weekly system so that a student can take as long as they need to reach a reward threshold rather than having to reach a certain target in any one week which might be too high for them. Another factor to consider is that many students will give up hope if they have to wait too long, so short wait times for rewards are also preferable.

Individual Reward Systems: Pupils have individual reward systems which are differentiated according to age. From stickers to tokens and ticks on a chart, to verbal agreements, pupils are supported through individual rewards organised by the class team, with the support of the multi-disciplinary team, to improve behaviour management of each pupil's needs with individualised reinforcers. These frequently include 'I am working towards...' visual aids. Choosing time for younger students and free time for older students is an effective structured way of supporting individuals with autism who may have a very personal range of reinforcers for positive behaviour.

Debriefing incidents with pupils is essential in helping them to reflect on the consequences of their actions and understand the sequence of events involved. Our pupils act impulsively on their feelings without thinking. We need to help introduce a pause for thought in the sequence so that they can manage their reactions better.

Sanctions need to be applied sensibly and make sense to the child. They should, where possible, be included in the course of the day. Where possible, avoid escalating incremental sanctions, e.g. the constant removal of minutes off break time, as this can become too anxiety-provoking for our pupils leading to hopelessness and sabotage. Wherever possible, include a reparation activity as part of the sanction. Sanctions should be as consistent as possible throughout the school but we recognise that sanctions also need to be tailored to a certain extent to individual needs. Classes for younger children can operate a 'choosing time' system whereby children are rewarded for good achievements and good choices by receiving a short period of activity they choose. These times punctuate the day and occur at breaks between sessions. If a child displays negative and destructive behaviour during a lesson then part of the 'choosing time' will be used in paying back this time and resolving the problem.

To improve consistency of applying consequences to all children throughout the school, the following list offers a consistent framework.

- **Low level disruption:** child may work apart from classmates or pay back time out of choosing time or playtime.
- **Extreme disruption:** paying back time from choosing time or removed from class, miss playtime or part of lunch break. Receive a conferencing session from a staff member and undergo an internal exclusion.
- **Leaving school:** Paying back time and discussion with parents.
- **Dangerous behaviour:** child takes time out of choosing time to discuss with adults, repairs any damage, makes amends. If behaviour considered holds potential threat to well being of others this can lead to fixed term exclusion.
- **Damage to property:** makes good the damage, asked to contribute to replacement if appropriate, writes letter of apology to any persons concerned in own time, parents informed.
- **Violence:** incident if reported in physical intervention book needs to be discussed with child during choosing time or after school. Children encouraged to reconcile differences, make amends, finding an activity that could help injured party.
- **Any incidence of bullying:** logged and both victim and perpetrator take time to discuss the situation and find appropriate ways of resolving negative interactions by finding positive and cooperative activities.
- **Wilful violent attack on member of staff or another child** will result, after discussion with the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School, in an agreed fixed term exclusion.

iv. Positive Teaching

To help boost self-esteem and change how our pupils view themselves, we need to constantly be on the look out for small successes and to recognise and praise/reward these successes - *Catch the children being good*. It is important to remember that we need to notice behaviours that might seem ordinary but are significant for our children. It could be something as simple as a child saying hello back to you when you say hello to him.

Keep language as positive and solution-focused as possible. E.g. focus on what behaviours you want, not the behaviours you don't want.

7.1 Balance of rewards and sanctions

Although sanctions have their place and are at times important, there should be an overall emphasis on noticing, praising, celebrating and rewarding positive behaviours rather than noticing and sanctioning negative behaviours. This balance fits with an ethos of encouraging good mental health and emotional wellbeing and is particularly important for students with SEN. An overly punitive approach can feed into negative cycles of poor self-esteem / negative identity which can result in negative behaviours actually becoming entrenched rather than improved.

8. DIFFERENTIATING LESSONS

The way lesson content is taught needs to be differentiated to meet the special needs of our pupils. This depends on individual needs but can include:

- "Chunking" work into manageable small amounts
- Getting pupils actively involved in learning rather than passive recipients. Using kinaesthetic learning whereby pupils are physically moving as part of their learning (particularly for hyperactive pupils)
- Adapting how we communicate so pupils can understand.
- Picking up on pupils' individual interests and adapting lesson content to include these

If lessons are not differentiated appropriately, pupils may struggle to understand or engage with what is being taught which can lead to challenging behaviour or absenteeism as well as affecting their learning.

9. SUPPORTING MAJOR TRANSITIONS

Our pupils often have histories of loss and abrupt confusing endings. They find major transitions such as changes in staff or changing class hard to cope with and will need support. Strategies that can help include:

- Wherever possible give advance warning, at least 4 weeks
- Support the child emotionally during the preparation – reassure any anxieties, provide opportunities to ask questions
- Where a staff change is involved, give the child a chance to build a relationship with the new staff member before the handover takes place
- Encourage the idea of memory to help them cope with the loss involved. At the end of academic year, create a photo album with pupils celebrating memories of experiences from that year
- Demonstrate a concrete transfer of attachment where handover between staff is involved. Have a meeting with current staff, new staff and child and discuss successes, areas to work on etc
- When leaving school, be honest with pupils. This is a real ending, you won't be coming back. Express your pleasure at having worked with them, let them know you'll remember them, perhaps leave a concrete reminder of you such as a card

Our pupils use all sorts of defences to protect themselves against the pain of loss involved in these transitions and we need to understand those defences. They can include denying any feelings of sadness, pretending not to care, trashing relationships before they end and projecting their feelings of anger/sadness into us through their behaviour.

10. SUPPORTING NON-ATTENDERS

Some older pupils may be persistently absent from school. Sometimes this is partly an expression of natural adolescence in that they are absorbed in peer group activities outside of school and want to separate from the adult-imposed world. Often it is connected to their SEBD, e.g. anxiety about the future / depression, lack of motivation, drug addiction. Sometimes what we are offering them simply does not interest them sufficiently. We need to be mindful of these themes when tackling persistent absenteeism. Beckmead Family of Schools has dedicated Family Engagement Workers who work with persistent absentees and families who are beginning to show signs of struggling with daily attendance at school. Strategies that can be used to support non-attenders include:

- Being proactive – not letting the situation worsen without any intervention. Reach out to the pupil – phone, text or letter. Communicate with parents. Arrange a Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting as soon as possible for other professionals, pupil and family to devise a strategy. If the pupil does not attend, ensure views are incorporated somehow into strategy and send copy to pupil
- Use home visits
- Be positive and encouraging in all communications with the pupil. Don't focus on the absence. Stress your ongoing support and availability for them (they may assume you don't want them back or have forgotten about them)
- If a non-attender manages to come to school, praise them enthusiastically and don't criticise them for the absence. Explore what helped them manage to come and how this could be developed
- Be flexible with timetables – what are they interested in? Are they more likely to engage with a shorter timetable? However, balance this with constant change as this can appear inconsistent – give strategies time to work
- Engage the family – help identify figures other than parents (Sibling? Grandparent? Family friend?) who can support the pupil come to school. Ensure pupil is being rewarded at home for attendance. Ensure regular communication with family
- Identify specialist support that may help with underlying problems – therapy, drugs work etc
- Engage the support of the Family Engagement Worker and follow the school process of monitoring attendance.

It is easy to forget about absent pupils because they usually don't cause as much stress as the ones who do attend! However this is often linked to their own personal narratives about being unimportant and easy to forget about so demonstrating to them consistently that you are thinking about them is an important first step. Above all, don't give up hope and be persistent.

11. WORKING AS A TEAM

It is essential that pupils see us working together as a team. Many are at an emotional stage where they use "splitting" as an emotional defence to give them a sense of control over people. This involves splitting people into "good" people who are unrealistically idealised and "bad" people who are unrealistically demonised. To discourage this, adults need to demonstrate to pupils that they will not allow themselves to be split in this way.

Examples of how we do this include:

- Noticing when a colleague's authority is being undermined by a pupil and openly challenging this
- Sharing information about behavioural incidents with colleagues in front of the pupil (in a way that isn't shaming and recognises any positives and opportunities for turning situations around)
- Adults assigned the "good" role pointing out how adults assigned the "bad" role actually help and support the pupil
- Being consistent as a class team with rewards/sanctions/rules
- Not (unconsciously?) colluding with pupils so that you get assigned the "good" role

It is important that we all work together and share information as appropriate to ensure that we are providing effective joined-up care for our pupils.

12. WORKING WITH NETWORKS AND PARENTS / CARERS

The parents of our pupils are often struggling with their own past and present difficulties that impact on their ability to care for their children. They may be finding it difficult to manage their child's public and unpredictable behaviour. It is important that we build supportive relationships with parents so that there isn't an unhelpful split between school and home. Parents may have had difficult experiences themselves of school and so may be anxious about forming a relationship with the school. We also can only do part of the job at school in terms of helping our pupils progress and it is important to help in whatever way we can to support the relationships between our pupils and their parents. We can support parents in the following ways:

- Find out what is the best way to contact – phone? Email? Text?
- What's the best time to contact?
- How regular? Needs to be regular enough to be of any use but not so that the parent feels overwhelmed
- Ensure that positives are fed back as well as concerns. Mention at least one positive in every contact. Parents need to be given opportunities to praise their children.

- Model positive interactions with pupils in front of their parents. Model giving praise, being respectful, not shouting etc
- Earn parents' trust by doing something concrete for them (e.g. find out about a play scheme)
- Be proactive – use home visits if parent would prefer to coming to school
- Ensure parents are informed promptly and effectively about school information, annual reviews, trips, incidents/exclusions etc. Don't rely on parents reading letters that are sent – follow up with a phone call
- Informal opportunities for parents to visit – opportunities for positive experiences with children at school – Cooking? Celebrations? Parents events within the nurture groups?
- Letting parents know about support services at school – therapy for children and families, GP, parent group, family counsellor.

It is also important that we work professionally and in a joined-up way with pupils' professional networks. These networks can also often become split, particularly when there is a lot of concern around a child. It is easy for one member (often the social worker!) to become demonised and blamed for everything that is going wrong and it is important to bear this in mind in meetings. The staff who work closest with the children should attend network meetings where possible – your input is valuable. If you feel you should attend but haven't been invited ask if you can attend. Network meetings can become negative and hopeless in a way which is damaging for the child – we can help by looking for positives and possible solutions and not colluding with any splitting or unfair scapegoating within the network.

When sharing personal information about a pupil, be careful about what you share. It is important to balance the need to share information with the child's need for privacy. You should discuss with the pupil beforehand what it is okay for you to talk about otherwise you may damage your relationship with them.

13. Recording and reviewing:

All incidents will be recorded on an Incident Form. These forms will be collected daily and reviewed by a senior manager for any urgent actions. Additionally, staff concerns about incidents/patterns/unusual behaviour may be expressed to the Head of School verbally and through a Cause for Concern Form. Incident forms will be collated and analysed using The Behaviour Database tool on a termly basis.

The monitoring process will consider

- The level of incidents across the school
- Patterns of incidents: are they occurring disproportionately with particular pupils, particular teachers, in particular year groups
- The accuracy of recording
- The extent to which approved interventions are being used.
- The extent to which all aspects of this policy have been followed
- Following an incident, consideration may be given to conducting a further risk assessment or reviewing the Behaviour Support Plan. Any further action in relation to a member of staff, or an individual pupil, will follow the appropriate procedures.