



**St George's**  
School Edgbaston

# LOWER SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Revised: May 2020



## **COVID-19 Adaption of the Behaviour Policy**

This half term the children will be following a new set of agreements informed by Government guidelines for health and safety in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The aims, ethos, expectations and responsibilities of the Behaviour Policy still remain the same, however some behaviours will now have to be viewed differently during this time.

We will not be using the marble jar, house points or the Buddy Board as rewards due to infection control measures; instead, teachers will award ClassDojo points in line with the online learning curriculum.

We are sharing these new agreements with parents so that you can support your child with understanding the importance of following these expectations to keep the children and staff at St George's safe.

If a child is not able to follow these agreements, or continually fails to follow the agreements, they will not be able to continue their learning in school as it essential to protect the well-being of all of the children, the staff and wider families.

The following agreements will be shared with your children, and must be adhered to in the school environment.

### **Article 24 – We have a right to be healthy.**

We will respect this by:

- Staying 2m apart using the visual markers in class, around class and on the playground.
- Washing my hands regularly for 20 seconds as indicated by my teachers and on my school timetable.
- Following the 'Catch It, Bin It, Kill It' approach to stop the spread of germs.

### **Article 28 – We have a right to an education.**

We will respect this by:

- Listening to instructions from adults at all times and listening to the views of others.
- Working quietly and respectfully in my given space by following the voice scale.

- Only using resources labelled for me which must be kept in my work space.

**Article 29 – We have a right to the goals of education.**

We will respect this by:

- Using kind words and actions to all children and adults
- Being sensitive to the feelings of others
- Treating each other and the school property with respect

Any concerns over a pupil's behaviour will be discussed with the parents. Our priority is to keep all staff and pupils safe. Any decisions made will be based on the health and welfare of the pupils and staff.

## **Rationale**

**This policy applies to pupils in the EYFS, KS1 and KS2.**

Discipline is a key feature of school life about which there should be a clear, shared understanding between the Head Teacher, staff, parents, pupils and Trustees.

Our overriding aim is to equip children with the values, discipline and integrity to be ultimately responsible for their own behaviour and the impact they have on others.

Good behaviour ensures a safe environment in which children can feel secure and therefore be successful in their learning. It promotes high standards of social skills (good manners, empathy, perseverance, resilience and confidence), reflecting the shared values of the school and encourages social development and good citizenship. We encourage our children to be good citizens and to develop the strategies needed to deal with situations in everyday life. This policy is written to promote an open climate where people feel able to share and talk about issues both positive and negative.

**Aim:** We want our school to be a happy, safe place where children feel valued, and can thrive educationally, emotionally and socially. Good behaviour helps these things to happen. We want our children to be self-disciplined, independent and to show consideration and respect to others. Therefore, we encourage children to take a growing responsibility for their actions and to sort out any difficulties in a peaceful way empowering them with valuable life skills.

**Ethos:** At St George's Lower School we believe that everyone should feel SAFE (physically and emotionally), SECURE (comfortable in their environment at all times), and as a result will be SUCCESSFUL (able to achieve their full potential).

The following principles are key to successful implementation of our policy:

- Children have the right to learn, and teachers the right to teach
- Most children prefer to make 'good choices' and be successful in school. All pupils are able to adhere to a set of clearly defined and consistently applied rules, with the exception of a few pupils who have specific problems and will need additional support
- The staff of this school are required to follow the policy which encourages a positive approach to behaviour management, by using the systems, rewards, and remembering that verbal praise is critically important

- St George's School is a Rights Respecting School and supports the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; these articles were considered when writing this policy:
  - **Article 2:** You have the right to protection against discrimination
  - **Article 14:** You have the right to think and believe what you choose and also to practise your religion, as long as you are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights
  - **Article 19:** You have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated
  - **Article 23:** Children with a disability have the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible independence, and to play an active part in the community
  - **Article 28:** You have the right to an education
  - **Article 31:** You have the right to relax and play

Successful implementation of the policy achieves a balance between recognition of good or poor behaviour, responsibility, mutual respect, shared values and trust.

## **Expectations and Responsibilities**

We are aware that the whole school community has a part to play in encouraging appropriate behaviour both in and out of school. We support pupils in developing self-discipline through giving them increasing responsibility and independence as they go through the school. Pupils are expected to take increasing responsibility for their actions.

**Teaching and non-teaching staff** identify and praise good behaviour as well as implement consequences. Stickers, rewards and certificates are presented for good behaviour in school. Teachers liaise with parents, when it is necessary, to keep them informed of their child's behaviour (both positive and negative) to ensure a constant and positive dialogue is maintained between home and school.

**Teaching Assistants (TAs)** work closely with class teachers in implementing the behaviour policy. During the normal class teacher's absence from the class for PPA, or due to illness, they play a key role in ensuring that normal standards of behavioural expectations are maintained. They will be pro-active in reminding children of expectations if / when necessary, following the rewards and sanctions appropriately and seeking the advice / support of colleagues if necessary. If a child is frequently

choosing to break the school rules during their teacher's absence the TA should report it to the HT / Phase Manager. Strategies will then be put in place to address this issue e.g. lesson by lesson behaviour chart. Reduced expectations should never be accepted by any member of staff.

### **Positive Staff Behaviour**

Staff who make a point of showing care, concern and respect for all pupils individually, regardless of an individual's reputation, tend to have few difficulties.

Staff will:

- Be calm, good humoured, confident and trusting
- Treat all pupils as special by showing concern for them, both personally and in terms of school progress
- Make time to talk to all pupils both in and out of lessons
- Treat pupils, as they would like to be treated
- Make expected behaviours explicit
- Create a set of agreements with pupils (Class Charters) and uphold them very firmly, but fairly and with sensitivity
- Use praise to guide rather than criticism. Particularly recognise and praise pupils who are having difficulty in consistently upholding the promises made on the charters, yet are making a concerted effort
- Avoid labelling, shouting at, confronting or criticising pupils. Explain firmly but without annoyance what is wrong and how they must behave
- Use de-escalation strategies
- Use restorative practice as a means for conflict resolution

Members of the St George's Lower School i.e. everyone who works in or visits the school are expected to treat others in a polite, respectful and well-mannered way:

- Pupils to each other
- Teachers to pupils
- Staff member to staff member
- Pupils to any members of staff or adult helpers
- Visitors to staff or pupils

### **Positive Pupil Behaviour**

- Respect for others

- Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour in an age appropriate manner
- Children are expected to join staff in creating a caring, mutually supportive ethos where everyone is valued
- Children should know and understand the expected behaviour, rewards and sanctions of the discipline policy

### **Parents / Carers**

Parents / Carers form part of the school team, and we ask for their support in dealing with, and in improving the behaviour of their children. Parents / Carers may be asked to regularly visit their child's class teacher to monitor progress, or to support a reward system at home based on improvements in school. We believe that by working in a positive partnership we can set a good example for the children in our care and provide a safe, structured system allowing them to develop self-discipline and good behaviour.

### **Equal Opportunities**

This policy must be applied equally and fairly to every member of the school community.

There is a shared commitment to oppose offensive / racist / sexist remarks for both pupils and staff.

The school will regularly review sanctions applied to particular groups e.g. gender, race, SEN.

### **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

Children who experience difficulties in managing their own behaviour will be treated sensitively, according to their needs, in close co-operation with parents and if relevant, external professionals. For some children with behaviour difficulties this may be as a result of an underlying condition that means they find behaving appropriately difficult – for example, children on the autistic spectrum or with ADHD. For other children it may be a result of environmental circumstances such as a lack of routine, boundaries or consistency. It may also be a result of neglect, abuse or early childhood trauma.

For a child with challenging behaviour this is a form of special educational need. In the same way as any other SEND, it is the teacher's responsibility to constantly reflect on their own practice – giving consideration to why a child might be behaving in a particular way, and the best way to support them in making more appropriate choices. The SENCo and SLT will support the reflective process.

For a small number of children the behaviour policy will not necessarily be applied in the normal way, and adjustments will need to be made. Each child will need individual consideration before strategies are implemented, examples of possible strategies are:

- Having one target that is the focus – possibly linked to a behaviour chart or an Individual Support Plan
- Teacher choosing the “battles to fight” and choosing to ignore other low level behaviours, as long as they aren't impacting on other children's ability to work or a teacher's ability to teach

This does not mean that children are allowed to “get away with things” – poor choices are still challenged and dealt with - it is simply that a different approach is being taken, due to them having a special educational need.

Parents of children with behaviour difficulties will be regularly contacted – and as with our normal practice, for both positive messages as well as keeping them updated on their child's progress.

Other children in the class will recognise that the child is being treated in a different way. In the vast majority of cases they will intuitively understand what is happening and why. However, if the class teacher feels it is necessary they can hold a circle time, in the child's absence, to explain.

Children with longer term behaviour difficulties will be entered on the SEND register at the appropriate stage and an IEP (Individual Education Plan) will be written to address their behaviour needs.

## **Autism and Behaviour**

People with autism often experience high levels of anxiety, which if not managed appropriately can result in behaviour that can be challenging. People with autism also experience difficulty communicating their needs effectively which may lead to

high levels of frustration. People with autism can behave in ways that hinder their access to opportunities, restrict their social inclusion and adversely affect their quality of life. Working with families to enable the children and young people we support to learn to behave appropriately in different situations is central to achieving our aim of their acceptance and inclusion.

We understand that challenging behaviour has a communicative intent. We recognise that the ultimate function of all behaviour is to get needs met. People with autism may have different needs and more limited means of achieving those needs. We have a duty to protect and keep safe the individual concerned and the other people around him or her, including other staff.

St George's School aims to teach and promote the skills necessary to meet the needs of all individuals to enable them to change the behaviours that tend to stigmatise and isolate them. We promote a non-aversive approach to behaviour support. Young people learn effectively if they are motivated and positively reinforced. We therefore aim to establish environments where praise and encouragement are the norm. We will assist the young people to learn by using their interests and preferences as motivators wherever practicable. In addition to tangible rewards which will be very individual, positive reinforcers such as praise and encouragement, will be used to reinforce appropriate behaviour. Depending on the preferences of the individual we may also use more public rewards, such as celebrations of success.

Negative reinforcements and punishments are not successful with most people with autism as we can never be sure that they make the right connection between their behaviour and the negative reinforcement. However young people learn from experiencing the outcomes of their behaviour, the natural consequences. Providing the individual is well aware of the likely consequences of the behaviour and has the ability to make a choice, this is not a punishment or a sanction, but is a consequence of his or her behaviour.

As a school we aim to understand the underlying factors causing behaviours (see Appendix 2), in order to respond positively, consistently and effectively; providing structures and strategies to empower the individual to manage their own behaviour, promote emotional regulation and independence, enhance communication and socialisation and raise self-esteem.

## **Principles of Management**

Teachers must make the code of conduct explicit to pupils and carry it out consistently e.g. to repeatedly state the need to:

- Treat others with tolerance and respect
- Use names when addressing another person
- Give eye contact
- Stop work and pay attention when spoken to
- Care for resources and property
- Respect and follow classroom routines, school systems and rules
- Wear uniform wherever possible
- Come properly equipped for lessons

Expectations should be reasonable, fair and consistently demanded.

Teachers must have positive expectations about their ability to maintain classroom behaviour e.g.:

- Be authoritative
- Expect to receive respect / silence / attention
- Be assertive
- Don't speak until everyone is listening
- Demand courtesy and respect for all
- Never accept less than an individual is capable of

Teachers must take a clear leadership role in the classroom whilst developing a supportive ethos e.g.:

- Have high expectations – demand and expect positive outcomes
- Identify with their class – 'my class / our class'
- Respond to the good and bad news of class members

Teachers should adopt the following stance in the classroom:

- No child will prevent me from teaching for any reason
- No child will prevent another child learning for any reason
- No child will behave in a way, which is not in its best interest, or in the best interests of others for any reason

## **Teachers Need to**

1. Set clear classroom targets  
E.g. the appropriate time scale for work, correct classroom behaviour (all relative to the pupil's ability), agree a Class Charter with the pupils
2. Set effective limits  
E.g. for going out to the toilet or to wash equipment or visit another class, for maintenance of room and equipment and children's access to it (see Classroom Checklist Policy)
3. Give effective, positive support  
E.g. use rewards in the system, approach children positively, remember the daily fresh start, convey genuine care and liking for the child while rejecting specific behaviour

## **Senior Management Responsibilities**

Teachers can properly expect support from Senior Leadership and parents e.g. When a child is brought to the office a member of SLT will:

- check limit setting consequences have been followed through
- investigate the matter fairly and thoroughly
- expect information from the class teacher
- give a warning or contact home straight away if violence is involved
- contact parents for a second incident in one term where there is clear evidence and the system has been used, or where violence has been used
- meet parents, involve them, seek their support
- consider implementing an Individual Provision Plan
- introduce a home / school report book where appropriate
- involve other agencies
- exclude if necessary

Pupils and staff in Reception – Year2 will be supported by The Key Stage 1 Phase Leader and Head of Lower School.

Pupils and staff in Years 3 – 6 will be supported by The Key Stage 2 Phase Leader and Head of the Lower School.

## **School Charters**

At the start of each year the children work with the teacher to create a set of agreements to be followed within each class. Using the United Nations Rights of the Child articles (UNCRC), a set of promises are agreed on for the classroom. Class charters are created to help children understand that they have rights, how important it is to have rights and to develop their own sense of responsibilities. Working closely with the children to create expected behaviours empowers them to know and understand how they can respect themselves and others. They are better able to articulate when the agreements are not being followed, and to say how they have stopped another child from having their rights respected. The charters should be designed with the children and prominently displayed in every classroom. They should be frequently revisited to enable new starters to know and understand what the agreements are, and so that they clearly understand why each particular promise has been chosen. Every child should sign the charter to signify that they agree with it and will abide by it.

## **Practical Implementation of the Policy**

### **Rewards Systems**

- Verbal praise – personal, one to one, to a group and also shared with a class
- Children, individuals, groups or the whole class, will be rewarded marbles for their class through general good behaviour, acts of kindness, empathy and resilience, including displaying and sharing good work ethic. Each class will have the opportunity to be rewarded up to 100 marbles. Once children have collected 100 marbles the whole class will be able to vote to choose one of three rewards offered by the class teacher/s e.g. extra break time / games activities, free time in class or DVD

#### **NO MARBLES SHOULD EVER BE REMOVED FROM THE JAR**

- Name on the 'Happy Side' (praise may not be removed once earned and must be left for the remainder of the day). This can be for good behaviour e.g. ready on the carpet, tidied table quickly with no fuss, or, for a good answer during class discussion etc. Each day is a fresh start, and the board cleared at the end of each teaching day
- Award of a House Point (these can NOT be taken away). This should be recorded on the individual's house point card. Each child has a house point card copied onto paper corresponding to the colour of their house. These

could be stored in the “celebration” area of the classroom e.g. hanging from a washing line, each set of house cards pegged together on a table top

- When a child gets 10 house points they will be awarded a sticker from their class teacher
- When they get a full card (30) they are presented with a gold certificate in our weekly celebration assembly, and their card is entered in the end of term draw. They will also get a ‘George the Dragon’ token which feeds into the House Point system
- Send good work to the HT, Phase Leaders for praise and reward
- Encourage children to acknowledge / value each other’s efforts
- Invite parents to regularly share individual children’s achievements
- Talk to the child’s parents and let them know the positives
- Postcards are sent home from teachers for particular effort or good work
- Mention in assemblies for: good work, good behaviour, extra effort, sporting achievements or outside school achievements
- Children are identified as “Star of the week” and receive a certificate, a mention in the Friday assembly and have their name and photo displayed on our Star of the Week board. Teachers choose a child each week who has worked particularly hard in a given area, made notable progress, met a target, shown great effort, behaved particularly well etc.
- ACE award winner – Always Child who is an Example to everyone- voted for by the children at the end of each term. Children are presented with special certificate in our Academic Awards Assembly, have their photo displayed for the following term and receive an agreed treat. Parents are encouraged to join us for this assembly so that they too can celebrate their child’s success.

## **Sanctions**

If a child chooses to break the School Charters the following will happen:

1. A warning will be given and the unexpected behaviour identified
2. If the behaviour continues, the child will be presented with an orange token – The child should be encouraged to display the appropriate behaviour to get the token removed as soon as possible. Be clear about your expectations e.g. “Next time I look over at you I expect to see you working quietly, so that you are not interrupting the other people on your table.” Other members of the class should be encouraged to help them achieve this. The teacher should look for the earliest opportunity to remove the token

3. Should the behaviour not improve the token is turned over to red. If it has occurred before break or lunchtime, the pupil will miss 10 minutes of their playtime. During this time, they should be supported by a member of staff from their class to discuss the negative behaviour and how they could have turned it round. As every day is a fresh start, should the behaviour occur in the afternoon, the child will be sent to the Phase Leaders room WITH WORK. This will be for a maximum of 20 minutes. The incident is logged on CPOMS. Parents will be informed. A standard letter is sent home for repeat offenders.
4. For more serious behaviour incidents the pupil will be sent to the HT and their name and the behaviour is logged on CPOMS. A standard letter is sent home for repeat offenders, and parents will be invited to discuss.
5. Loss of privileges may be imposed – for instance the loss of a prized responsibility or not being able to participate in a non-uniform day (sometimes referred to as ‘mufti’ days)

No warning will be given and you will be sent straight to the Head Teacher if you:

- Hurt someone else
- Destroy property
- Prevent a lesson from taking place

Consequences must be calmly and consistently applied in a manner, which avoids:

- confrontation
- loss of control by an adult
- humiliation of the child

### **The Severe Clause**

**Wilfully is the key word** e.g. An incident which after careful investigation of the facts reveals a deliberate act of: physical aggression, proven theft, vandalism, serious disruption of a child’s learning or bullying behaviour of any kind, would be dealt with under the severe clause.

If a child wilfully:

- Inflicts physical harm on another child
- Has been bullying another child
- Overtly refuses to do as they are told

- Prevents the class from functioning (Prevents the teacher from teaching or a child from learning)
- Is racist
- Destroys property or steals

They are sent straight to the HT/Phase Leader. Consequences will be identified by the HT/PL depending on the nature of the offence. It is vital that the teacher carefully interprets 'refusal to do as they are told':

- Does the child understand what was expected?
- Was the instruction clear?
- Is the task appropriate for the child's ability?

The HT/PL will contact parents if they feel it is appropriate. If an incident is very serious, or repeated, the school reserves the right to exclude a pupil for a fixed term (which can become permanent) or impose an internal exclusion, where the child remains with the HT/PL (see Exclusions Policy).

### **Persistent Poor Behaviour**

If after several days a child is persistently making poor choices the HT OR PL may take the step of placing the child on a Conduct Log and their behaviour in both structured and unstructured times will be recorded and monitored. Parents will be informed and kept abreast of progress.

When a pupil shows that they are capable of making consistent good choices i.e. most records in the log celebrate positive behaviours, the Conduct Log will be withdrawn.

A crucial element of the school disciplinary philosophy is:

*'Each day is a fresh start'*

### **Using Reasonable Force**

The Children Act 1989 makes clear that in any decision involving a child the paramount consideration must be the child's welfare. Paramount means it should be the first thing people think about, and it should take precedence over all other considerations. For that reason staff need to carefully consider what is in the best interest of the child, both in the short term and the longer term.

In exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in the best interest of the child, and the use of reasonable force may be required to achieve this. St George's Lower School acknowledges that physical interventions which use varying degrees of reasonable force are only a small part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management. On very rare occasions it may be necessary to restrain a child.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives examples of the types of circumstances in which use of reasonable force may be legally defensible.

- Self – injuring
- Causing injury to other children, staff, parents and visitors
- Causing significant damage to property

The paramount consideration is for staff to work in the best interests of the child. Reasonable force will only be used when no other effective alternatives are available and all de-escalation strategies have been employed.

**Under no circumstances can corporal punishment be used or threatened.**

A person will not be taken to have used corporal punishment (and therefore will not have committed an offence), where physical intervention was taken for the purposes of averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child), or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary.

### **Children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs**

Behaviour is not classified as an SEN. If a child shows consistent unwanted behaviours, the class teacher will assess the child's needs, taking into account family circumstances and the child's known history of experiences. If the child's behaviour is felt to be a response to trauma or to home-based experiences (e.g. bereavement, parental separation) we may complete an Early Help Assessment with the family, and support the child through the process of regular meetings which identify desired outcomes and how these outcomes can best be achieved.

If parents and school are concerned that the child may have mental health needs, parents can ask their GP or school for a referral to Forward Thinking Birmingham (formally CAMHS) or other specialists. The school is unable to refer to a Community Paediatrician, but can support parents with this process, for example, by providing a report from school.

If the child is felt to have long-term social, emotional or mental health needs, for example with anger management, the school offers a range of social skills interventions. These are generally delivered by trained teaching assistants who develop good, trusting relationships with the children. Outside agencies may be contacted if this is appropriate.

All children's behaviour is responded to consistently in line with our Behaviour Policy, reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate individual needs.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. We will actively investigate any allegations and, if there is cause, work with both the bully and the victim to improve their social interactions and skills (see Anti-Bullying Policy).

## **Bullying**

Bullying can have a dramatic and long lasting impact on the lives and emotional well being of children. School takes incidents of this kind very seriously.

### **Understanding of Bullying and the Forms it can take**

With bullying so frequently mentioned in the media young children often have difficulty identifying bullying and the many forms it can take. Our PSHE curriculum provides many opportunities for children to discuss these issues and their experiences in depth and to ensure that children are clear about the nature of bullying.

### **People Involved in the Prevention of Bullying**

Prevention of bullying is seen as a whole school issue and therefore the responsibility of everyone; staff, parents, trustees and children to report any incidents.

### **Protocol for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying**

Staff awareness is vital. Staff must report and watch over children who suddenly have a change in their behaviour or their work, show a loss of appetite, or have several unexplained absences.

Staff are aware that any incidence or possible allegation of bullying is referred as a serious matter to the SLT immediately.

Children are encouraged to act in groups to report behaviour that worries them. Code words are given to ensure that senior staff know to respond to immediately if children have a reoccurrence of any bullying. Classes may be asked to write anonymously giving details of who and when.

Whenever possible a very open approach will be taken as any incident will be seen as a whole school issue and responsibility. During the investigation children who may be the victims of bullying will be made to feel safe and care will be taken to ensure that they will not feel vulnerable during this process.

Parents will be involved regardless of the outcomes.

Where bullying is found to be long standing children involved will receive fixed term exclusion.

### **Supporting Children who have been Bullied, and those who have been the Bullies**

Depending on the nature of the bullying incident children will be made to feel safe and as confident as possible by sensitive use of pupil groupings, the temporary removal of the 'bully' from the playground.

School will work closely with parents and arrange that any slight concern be reported to the Head / PL.

Work will take place during the classes circle time to explore what has happened, how it happened and preventative measures. The class will be involved in supporting a victim of bullying.

Children who bully usually do so for a variety of reasons, and the rehabilitation of the child is just as important to prevent a reoccurrence of this behaviour.

Strategies used include, a support plan drawn up with the class, behaviour charts to reinforce positive behaviour, development of play skills with designated staff.

### **Playtimes and Dinnertime Routines**

Teachers and assistants on duty must use the playground and Lunchtime Charters to support behaviour at this time.

Those staff supervising lunchtime will be able to use the same rewards and a series of sanctions. The consequences of choosing not to obey the rules are:

1. A verbal warning
2. Standing next to the supervising adult for five minutes
3. Removal from the playground to HT / PL

## **Behaviour out of School**

In line with guidance set out in “Behaviour and Discipline in schools” DFE January 2016, the school reserves the right to discipline children for poor behaviour choices out of school, including cyberbullying.

The guidance states that, subject to the behaviour policy, teachers may discipline pupils for: misbehaviour when the pupil is: taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity or:

- travelling to or from school
- wearing school uniform
- in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school
- misbehaviour at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, that could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school
- misbehaviour at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, that:
  - could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
  - poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public
  - could adversely affect the reputation of the school

Once again the “severe clause” applies, and any incidents that fall into this category should be referred to the HT/DHT immediately. At the end of lunchtime a member of staff from duty team should ensure that the class teacher is quickly and confidentially briefed and the incident is recorded on CPOMS.

**To be reviewed July 2021  
or as and when statutory  
guidance / legislation changes**

## **Appendix 1: SPELL**

SPELL is The National Autistic Society's framework for understanding and responding to the needs of children and adults on the autism spectrum. It focuses on five principles that have been identified as vital elements of best practice in autism, and emphasises ways to change the environment and our approaches to meet the specific needs of each person.

The SPELL framework recognises the individual and unique needs of each child and adult and emphasises that planning and intervention be organised on this basis. The SPELL framework can be applied across the autism spectrum, including Asperger syndrome.

SPELL stands for **Structure, Positive** approaches and expectations, **Empathy, Low arousal, Links**.

### **Structure**

Structure makes the world a more predictable, accessible and safer place. We can support people on the autism spectrum in creating structured environments using **visual information**. Structure can aid personal autonomy and independence by reducing dependence (e.g. prompting) on others. Environments and processes can be modified to ensure each person knows what is going to happen and what is expected of them, reducing **anxiety**.

### **Positive (Approaches and Expectations)**

We must seek to establish and reinforce self-confidence and self-esteem by building on natural strengths, interest and abilities.

Expectations should be high but realistic and based on careful assessment. Assessments should be made from as wide a perspective as possible and should include a view of the barriers in accessing opportunity. For example, many people on the autism spectrum may have difficulty with verbal **communication**, leading to an underestimation of their ability and potential. Conversely some may have a good grasp of speech but this may mask other needs.

Many autistic people may avoid new or potentially aversive experiences, but through the medium of structure and positive, sensitive, supportive rehearsal can reduce their level of **anxiety**, learn to tolerate and accept such experiences and develop new horizons and skills.

## **Empathy**

We must try to see the world from the standpoint of the autistic child or adult, knowing what it is that motivates or interests them but importantly what may also frighten, preoccupy or otherwise distress them. This is a key ingredient in the 'craft' of working with people on the autism spectrum.

Making efforts to understand, respect and relate to the experience of the autistic person must underpin our attempts to develop **communication** and reduce **anxiety**. The quality of the relationship between the person and supporter is of vital importance. Effective supporters are calm, predictable, good humoured, empathetic and analytical.

## **Low Arousal**

Approaches and the **environment** need to be calm and ordered in such a way so as to reduce anxiety and aid concentration. There should be as few distractions as possible, paying attention to noise levels, colour schemes, odours, lighting and clutter, for example. Some people may need more time to process information, especially speech. Clear information should be given in the medium best suited to the individual with care taken not to overload or bombard.

Some people may seek out **sensory experiences**. This is best achieved with an approach where the input can be regulated.

Low arousal should not be confused with 'no arousal'. It is of course desirable that people are exposed to a wide range of experiences but that this is done in a planned and sensitive way. It is recognised that for the most part the individual may benefit most in a setting where sensory and other stimulation can be reduced or controlled. Supplementary relaxation and arousal reduction therapies, multi-sensory rooms, music and massage, sensory diet etc. may be helpful in promoting calm and general well-being and in reducing anxiety.

## **Links**

Autistic people, their parents or advocates should be seen as partners. Recognise the benefits of sharing information and working alongside the individual, their families and other professionals. Open links and communication will reduce the risk of misunderstanding, confusion or the adoption of fragmented, piecemeal approaches. Create and maintain links between the individual, their wider support networks and the community.

## **Appendix 2: Factors that Affect Behaviour**

Factors that affect behaviour include:

### **Anxiety**

The behaviour exhibited by people with autistic spectrum disorders is largely governed by the level of anxiety and arousal they experience. If an individual is feeling frustrated and confused they are more likely to behave in an inappropriate manner. The low arousal approach described in SPELL is effective in reducing anxiety in people with autism. The SCERTS framework provides strategies for developing the ability to recognise and manage feelings.

### **Theory of Mind**

Due to neurological differences people on the autism spectrum may have difficulty understanding other people's thoughts and feelings which may lead to students not understanding how their behaviour affects others.

### **Communication**

Difficulties with communication, particularly social communication are key. We will seek to reduce the likelihood of inappropriate behaviour by ensuring that each person has a functional communication system, that those supporting the person individualise their communication system and that our expectations of each individual are appropriate.

### **Environment**

We will seek to sensitively and imaginatively manage the environments for the young people we support to reduce sources of stress and thereby reduce the need for behavioural difficulties. The structuring of physical environments as recommended by SPELL and Division TEACCH have been shown to be effective in reducing anxiety and improving people's behaviour by helping them make sense of their environment.

### **Sensory Differences**

People on the autism spectrum are likely to have difficulty modulating and processing all types of sensory information, this can lead to hyper or hypo-arousal. Hyper-arousal results in high levels of anxiety, whilst hypo-arousal can result in passivity and under-responsiveness. We will establish any sensory differences that may be limiting an individual's opportunities and arrange to reduce or remove the source of difficulty wherever possible.

## **Emotional Regulation**

Young people with autism often experience high levels of anxiety, over-stimulation and emotional dysregulation that can compromise quality of life. They may not understand the nature of the emotions they experience let alone what causes them. Young people must learn coping strategies to maintain the optimum level of emotional arousal in order to attend, engage or learn. Equally staff must recognise the signs of dysregulation and recognise behaviour (such as rocking) which is actually part of the child's coping strategy if they are to respond appropriately and support the child's emotional regulation. The SCERTS model places significant emphasis on monitoring physiological arousal and developing appropriate and functional emotional regulation skills to achieve homeostasis (the optimum level of arousal).

## **Individual Provision Plans (ISPs)**

An Individual Provision Plan (ISP) may be put in place to assist in the management of a pupil's behaviour. We use the term support as we recognise most behaviour results from unmet needs and therefore we focus on the support to meet needs not the behaviour causing concern. The intention is for people to increasingly be responsible for managing their own behaviour.

Wherever possible pupils and their parents will be involved in the development and implementation of their individual support plans. Positive expectations have a positive effect on the behaviour of others. Every pupil is of equal value and deserving of the same respect.

IPPs clearly identify behaviour(s) that are barriers to learning and positive interaction for the students, the alternative behaviour(s) that serve an equivalent function, the modifications to the environment that the students need, and pro-active and reactive strategies for managing challenging situations.

Individual support plans can only be effective if those following them, including the child and parents, have ownership of them. Class teams will be involved in their development and implementations. All staff must be fully informed of relevant procedures in order to ensure continuity across all settings and training must be available to address their needs.

All IPPs should be written in line with the following principles:

- The school will use planned, agreed and risk assessed approaches to support challenging behaviour
- All young people in our school will have person centred support programmes that are appropriate to their needs, abilities, skills and knowledge
- ISPs are drawn up by the staff who know the person well with advice from other staff and professionals when appropriate. Families and where appropriate, the young person will be consulted on these plans
- All ISPs identify motivators (likes), triggers (dislikes), proactive strategies and reactive strategies. General support strategies are given as well as specific strategies for all frequent known behaviours. The ISP should be clear and functional to ensure that consistency of behaviour support is achievable across different settings and with different staff
- The staff team will use functional analysis or motivational assessment to inform strategies and interventions identified in the ISP. All strategies used will carefully monitored. Data will be collected to evaluate the effectiveness (or otherwise) of any strategy used
- Each student's ISP is reviewed as and when required according to individual need. The relevance and effectiveness of each ISP will be assessed at least termly and modifications made as necessary

Before completing an ISP:

1. **Identify the behaviour(s) be specific:** when identifying the behaviour be very specific, you should always be able to answer yes or no to the question "Is the behaviour occurring now?"
2. **Prioritise:** is an intervention necessary? Not all behaviour difficulties can, or need, to be tackled at once. Behaviours which endanger the child or others are always priorities
3. **Assess the behaviour:** you need to identify when, where, with whom and how often the behaviour occurs. What appears to cause/maintain the behaviour? Think carefully about the environment(s) in which the behaviour is likely to occur. What important results does the behaviour achieve for the students? In what situations does the behaviour never occur?
4. **Identify what the pupil needs to learn:** how can the pupil communicate the same thing and / or regulate their emotional state in a more acceptable way?
5. **What motivates the students?** Effective re-enforcers are integral to the teaching of new skills