



The Park Schools Federation

Behaviour Policy (Engagement and Mood Management)

September 2025

Championing every child.

Nurturing the potential of all, striving to be the best we can be.

Please also see our Anti-Bullying Policy, Touch and Physical Contact Policy, Positive Handling Policy, and Race Equality Policy Documents

The Teacher

“I have come to the frightening conclusion: I am the decisive element in the classroom, it is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather.

As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated; a child humanised or dehumanised.”

Haim Ginott

“...many of the problems of control that arise in the classroom are a direct consequence of the way in which the teacher acts (or reacts) toward the children concerned.... So the teacher must examine closely what is really going on in the interaction that is taking place, and by understanding its nature, modify personal responses as necessary.”

Tim Brighouse

INTRODUCTION

Engagement and Mood management is not a discrete, separate element of school life. All behaviours are communications, all in response to a feeling, experience or stimulus. Everything we do, all our words, actions, postures, planning, organisation, and also what we do not do, contributes to behaviour and indeed mood management. It is therefore crucial that staff consider their own behaviour and what this is communicating at all times, as this is where behaviour management begins.

The reason for having a policy is to focus on that aspect of school life and bring coherence and consistency to the variety of interactions we all have with children every day, to support as positive and safe a response as possible.

We aim to enable all young people to understand and value others, appreciate diversity and develop the skills to analyse and debate issues. We believe that this plays an important role in helping young people to become insightful and more resilient. We aim to facilitate a happy, safe school where laughter, enjoyment and fun is of paramount importance, for everyone!

We believe that for effective learning, teaching an interesting and engaging curriculum, enhanced by teaching a clear programme of SEAL, RE and the development of the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum, including drugs education, is essential to building resilience among young people. This sits alongside our commitment to further develop our anti-racist curriculum and individual support for learners.

Serious incidents, incidents of bullying and/or racism are recorded, categorised and monitored on our information management system – Arbor. These records are reported to the LA and governors where necessary.

The original forms are archived again with a copy of the behaviour policy and positive handling policy and kept in school in a locked cabinet.

Any Engagement and Mood Management (Behaviour Management) policy will only be as effective as the work of the staff who put it into practice. As the Elton Report (1989) points out, there are no simple remedies. It is the totality of the responses the child receives and the quality of teaching and environment that will ultimately affect their behaviour and sense of emotional well-being for good or ill. So any policy has to be applied with humanity, sensitivity and consistency.

SHARED VALUES AND BELIEFS ABOUT BEHAVIOUR

We believe the management of children's behaviour and mood should reflect the values of the school. We choose an approach and procedures which enhance the quality of the adult - child and child - child relationships. This principle guides all our actions and rules. If and when concerns arise, all staff are to follow procedures as outlined in our policy and procedure for complaints.

The formation of healthy relationships is one of our main goals and the basis of much good behaviour and mood management and effective learning. We are always aware that all discipline involves values and we continually strive to find better ways of helping our children to learn more satisfying ways of behaving. **We never sacrifice the long-term well-being of the child to our own short-term well being.**

We state our values clearly. We value:

- the right to feel happy and enjoy our time at school;
- the right to have fun and enjoy each other's company;
- the right to feel safe and be safe in our body and feelings;
- the right to learn to the best of our ability;
- the right to be respected and treated with dignity at all times;
- justice and a sense of fairness;
- the right to reflect and debrief after incidents, sharing feelings in regard to how incidents are managed by staff;
- the right to make reparation;
- equal opportunity and accessibility for everyone.

We believe that:

- pupils who feel safe, valued, cared about and successful tend to respond in a more positive and appropriate way;
- when pupils are treated consistently, they are able to distinguish between desirable and undesirable behaviour, they begin to feel safe and trust in the predictable environment, enabling them to take risks in their learning;
- if the ethos of the classroom and the school is positive, there will be an atmosphere of mutual respect and enhancement of self-esteem in which pupils are behaving in an actively positive manner, and teaching and learning is leading to achievement;
- good discipline can be clear and firm, yet supportive; we describe this as 'firm love'
- when we feel happy and enjoy, we learn far better.

We aim:

- to create a warm, caring, calm and orderly atmosphere of belonging in the school that positively promotes learning and a sense of community;
- to achieve consistency of attitude and response by staff which gives a sense of security and safety;
- to promote and encourage the continual development of all staff in the understanding and working with children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and review our practice regularly;
- to promote in all pupils a sense of self-discipline and an ability to take responsibility for their actions;
- to create a climate of mutual respect between all pupils, staff and visitors and a proper concern and respect for the school environment ;
- to help pupils change their anti-social behaviour that causes them so much unhappiness and to learn ways of behaving and solving difficulties that enable them to feel safe in their ability to manage feelings and control their behaviours;

- to create an environment that is safe, physically and emotionally, for everyone in the school;
- to develop a partnership with parents which recognises and respects important factors in the home life and experience of the child, and through ongoing dialogue supports parents to take a proactive and confident role in the management of their children's behaviour and needs;
- to develop self-aware and organised thinking skills;
- to facilitate an environment of infectious positivity and happiness.

Our key aims are always Restitution not Retribution, Reconciliation not Revenge. Rights and Respect.

PROCEDURES

The school's Behaviour (Engagement and Mood Management) Policy deals with all areas of the children's intrinsic development, alongside the school's safeguarding policies.

Teaching and Learning

Learning is the central focus of all we do. We strive to create the stimulating and engaging environment and the conditions that facilitate every aspect of learning. Routines also give a sense of security and are crucial to the establishment of effective teaching and learning.

- We aim to establish and maintain routines in the classroom and to train staff and children to observe these routines. This helps to maintain boundaries and support the development of good habits.
- We aim to promote positive and appropriate responses, and so prevent many difficulties from occurring by good practice.
- We recognise that well planned, interesting lessons which are well structured and organised, experiential and contextualised to the child are crucial elements of good practice.

Establishing Shared Routines for Teaching and Learning

We recognise that establishing and maintaining simple routines is a powerful way of helping our children to create the right conditions for learning and for changing their negative responses.

Our routines are meant to help the children and be ego-supportive. So we explain their purpose and make sure they make sense to the child; that they help to promote learning and reduce friction between child and child and child and adult. We review them regularly. Here are some of the guidelines we follow for classroom practice:

- We are always on the yard before the pupils come into school to greet them on their arrival in the morning and after other break times.
- We plan learning thoroughly to be stimulating, coherent and well-organised.
- We make sure that those pupils with SEND have a Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan with risk assessments that follow the guidelines, covers learning and behaviour and is up-to-date. These targets are reviewed, agreed and signed by parents/carers termly. T
- We have the work well prepared, including specifically differentiated materials for pupils who need them.
- Each lesson starts with the learning intention and success criteria of the lesson explained and clearly written.
- Each lesson ends with a summary of what has been taught, followed by a self-review and general overview of what has been learned, this will include children self-assessing their achievements.
- We make sure that the room is tidy and laid out thoughtfully and all the materials and equipment are ready for use.
- We display the children's work prominently and attractively.

- We establish positive norms of behaviour.
- We model clear communication and positive interactions between each other and between adults and children.
- We establish and insist on routines for:
 - entering the classroom;
 - putting coats and other belongings away;
 - seating arrangements;
 - explaining the lessons and tasks of the day;
 - distributing and using the equipment needed;
 - giving out work books;
 - listening to the instructions of the adults;
 - stopping work and ending sessions;
 - summarising and reviewing the session;
 - going to the toilet one at a time;
 - clearing up;
 - leaving the classroom.

We have established a system of rewards for all kinds of achievement and positive behaviour. While we recognise the importance and efficacy of rewards, we do not want the pupils to become overly dependent on rewards. We try to move them from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation. We set specific, individualised targets for each pupil to achieve their goals and targets.

Where children have behaviour targets, if they have a ILP they are linked to ILP targets, they are broken down into small, achievable steps and reviewed weekly – for behaviour we want to promote such as:

- making real effort with application to learning;
- producing work of a high standard;
- showing care for another pupil;
- resisting provocation;
- inviting others to join in a game;
- controlling anger and aggression.

Positive letters or phone calls home are excellent rewards and greatly appreciated by parents and children. Our weekly ‘Wow’ Awards also celebrate positive choices. These rewards are clear and understood by all.

In classrooms, teachers operate a class reward system. All classroom systems accentuate the positive and children cannot lose scores they have already gained. Teachers share practices with each other and aim for variety in their approaches. Children work as a whole class to reach 200 points on their class chart. Once a class reaches 200 points, there is a prize draw in Wow Assembly, with a selection of positive experiences the children will enjoy. When a class reaches 100 points, they earn an extra break.

We appreciate that one of the best rewards for a child is **genuine praise**. We praise children for their achievements. We try to ensure that in all our interactions with pupils the number of positive comments far outweighs any negative comments. We are always alert to praise a child at every opportunity **‘catching them doing the right thing’**.

We try to make our praise authentic and precise. We look the child in the eye and say seriously something like, *“Robert, I like the way you did not retaliate when provoked, that shows strength of mind. Well done.”*

We know that excessive or insincere praise devalues the process and confuses the pupil so we avoid it.

Keeping Everyone Safe in Their Body and Feelings

We recognise that the school will only function effectively if both staff and children feel safe and happy. Anxiety and fear block learning so we strive to create a safe and happy environment free of anxiety. The School Rules and the Code of Conduct spell this out very clearly. Effective measures and procedures are used to ensure that safety. The school follows all statutory, government and LA guidelines on safeguarding. (See Safeguarding Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Touch Policy and Positive Handling Policy).

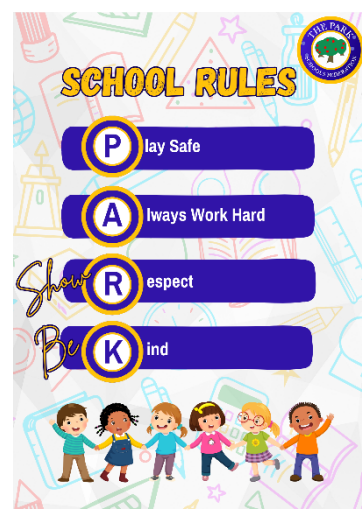
Prevention

We choose preventative strategies, our structure and routine of our school day supports this. We try to minimise the occurrences of challenging behaviour by:

- establishing positive relationships with pupils and parents
- creating a positive supportive climate in the classroom
- being in the class before the pupils arrive
- providing a constant adult presence, never leaving the children unsupervised
- having well planned, meaningful lessons differentiated to meet the needs of the pupils
- making connections with previous work
- ensuring equipment or materials needed are available and in working order
- having well-established routines for behaviour
- teaching the children strategies to deal with anger and frustration
- using social problem solving skills, circle time and mediation.
- using appropriate humour and relationships to ensure all children feel a sense of belonging in their class groups.

Rules

We have a clear set of School Rules and Code of Conduct agreed by pupils, staff, governors and parents. They are stated positively to promote positive actions. The pupils are reminded of these at least weekly and we often quote the rule when it has been breached. As well as school rules, teachers may draw up a contract with the class that harmonises with the school rules. Discussing them with other members of staff helps to avoid inconsistencies. We recognise that some pupils feel the need to test boundaries in their desire to feel safe. Holding to rules and routines is our way to maintain them and provide security and consistency for our pupils.



Promoting Positive Relationships

A positive relationship with the pupil is at the heart of our behaviour and mood management. It is our view that the deliberate, skilful cultivation by the staff member of positive relationships with the children is the cornerstone of all successful behaviour and mood management

Through our interactions with each other, we model positive and respectful relationships for the children. Language and listening skills are key elements in this.

The Recognition and Reward of Achievement

Our pupils especially need to feel that their work or their positive responses to staff and peers are noticed and valued. This helps to motivate them and raise their self-esteem and make acceptable behaviour more likely to be repeated. Often increments in improvement seem small to outsiders but can seem big to pupils. The appropriate recognition and reward of these are central to our practice. We also make every effort to make the external recognition correspond to an internal sense of achievement in the child.

- All pupils get appropriate commendation, praise and rewards for achievements, especially for achieving in line with their own personal targets in learning and behaviour.
- Our weekly Wow Awards also celebrate behaviour choices in the wider community.

Bullying

Bullying is not acceptable behaviour in our school. All the members of the school community, adults and children, have rights and responsibilities towards each other. The school Rules and Code of Conduct give clear guidelines on how to treat others. **(See Anti-Bullying Policy)**

Equal Opportunities

We believe in equality of opportunity for all pupils, including those who behave appropriately and we make every effort to put it into practice at all times. **(See Equal Opportunities Policy).**

Parental Involvement

The school endeavours to make good relationships with parents and carers. The school see the parents/carers as essential partners in the task of education and managing behaviour and attempts to positively involve parents/carers in all aspects of their child's learning and behaviour.

Promoting and Developing Positive Relationships

We recognise that elements of such relationships are:

- ensuring every opportunity is developed to enable communication
- increasing the child's communication with the adult
- increasing the child's responsiveness to social reinforcement provided by all
- increasing the tendency of the child to model the behaviour of the adult.

Modelling in all interactions by all staff is crucial to foster such relationships.

Communicating verbally – we strive to show an interest in the child's work and interest, listening, decoding the language of the child's responses, sharing appropriate personal interests.

Communicating non-verbally - we adopt non-threatening stances, smiles, physical proximity, non-threatening physical touch, awareness of positive postures.

Relating to children in an empathic and positive way – we are willing to engage in activities with the child, maintaining a non-punitive stance. We maintain straight dealing with the child, building trust, giving opportunity to make reparation and by our reflective approach to difficulties.

We recognise and honour without judgement the importance of the child's family system, and their place within and loyalty to these.

We take opportunities to foster positive relationships by using a positive tone of voice, our facial expressions, our reactions to their achievements and difficulties.

We recognise that there are many opportunities in the course of the day to develop this aspect of relationships.

We use touch proactively, appropriately and positively to reassure and calm, provide guidance and support and to model appropriate touch.

We continually reflect on how we respond to individuals on a personal level. We celebrate all birthdays where appropriate within cultural context, valuing each child's place in the world.

DEALING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

General Principles

We recognise the truth of the following quotations;

The Teacher

“I have come to the frightening conclusion: I am the decisive element in the classroom, it is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather.

As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated; a child humanised or dehumanised.”

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1. The routines we establish and the School and Classroom Rules guide all the activities in the classroom. Rules are agreed on and displayed prominently. When these two essentials have been set in place we remind the children of them frequently, perhaps at the beginning of every day, certainly at least once a week. We use preventative strategies outlined in the section on Prevention.
2. We try to be as positive as possible and show empathy with the child e.g. *“You did very well this morning. I know it is difficult for you but I know you can calm down”* etc. Positive feedback is given frequently. We remind children in difficulties of times when they coped well or of good things they have achieved. Or we focus on those who are getting it right and praise them which often has a positive affect on the misbehaving child. Our aim is to catch the pupils who are doing the right thing and tell them.
3. We consciously model strategies for dealing thoughtfully with difficulties.

For instance, when faced with a decision in the classroom the teachers sometimes think out loud *““I’ll have to think about your behaviour, should you have thinking time or time out? That action of yours was very serious. We have a rule about safety and I have to make sure that everybody feels safe. On the other hand, you were very kind to X, but Y will need to know that we are going to protect him and make him safe and take his hurt seriously and we have to show respect for the Rule. What do you think should happen?”* We listen attentively, then say something like *“Okay, you will do thinking time for ‘n’ minutes.”*

4. We are alert to good thinking by pupils and compliment it explicitly, *“I like the way you worked that out, which shows you thought about it.”*
5. We try to remember to concentrate on the primary issue; that is the one that required our response in the first place. We avoid arguments e.g.

Teacher: *Peter will you please put down the rubber and get on with your work?*

Pupil: *But he started it.*
 Teacher: *He may well have, now I want you to get on with your work.*
 Pupil: *You never do nothing about him.*
 Teacher ignores the remark, stands calmly there and encourages him to get on with work.

Before any decisions are made about management, staff carry out a dynamic risk assessment of the developing situation to identify how to best support. In this risk assessment, they may well choose to request support from another member of staff.

6. We make an interventions plan for each pupil and review our interventions. We think of the long term good of the child. We recognise that sometimes it may be necessary to ignore or take no action in order to promote long-term development. This is discussed during sessions by all staff and with parents/carers.
7. Sanctions or consequences are only involved when other strategies have failed and we give the child adequate notice that their behaviour will lead to a sanction or consequence rather than threatening them.
8. We pre-empt a possible negative attitude or response by immersing the child in positivity where this is clearly breaking down.
9. Antiseptic bouncing – where a child is provoking and or creating a negative feeling in the classroom or learning and a possible incident will be pre-empted by the child being given a diversionary task. This may be being asked to take a message to a member of staff.
10. Occasionally we have to employ reactive strategies. Here we are thinking simply of calming or making safe a potentially dangerous situation, e.g. breaking up a fight, preventing a child from damaging him/herself or others properly. While making these decisions, we will be making an ongoing dynamic risk assessment of the behaviour and the situation, and considering how best to pre-empt a potential incident and minimise risk.

“It is the certainty, rather than the severity of the consequence...”

Bill Rogers

There are a range of strategies we use in dealing with difficult behaviour.

- We treat children with respect even when they are misbehaving.
- We ignore inappropriate behaviour when noticing it would cause more disruption or as part of a planned approach. However, this is always followed up at a more appropriate time.
- We avoid talking above background noise.
- We focus on those who are behaving and working well and praise and encourage them.
- We use eye contact or signals to express approval and disapproval initially.
- We have a quiet word with the pupil who is misbehaving, telling them that the behaviour is not acceptable and should stop.
- We describe the effects of the behaviour not the behaviour itself (“when you are making a noise or messing about, the others can’t hear or learn”).
- We support each other by offering help to ensure we work as a team to support a child in crisis.
- If necessary we send for help in good time.
- We sometimes ask that a pupil be withdrawn.
- We are prepared to find the best adult and best conditions to resolve the issue, and prepared to change adults where necessary.

- We allow pupils time to make amends or take time to follow up an instruction.
- We follow up inappropriate behaviour with a pupil on their own where possible.
- We discuss problems and difficulties privately as far as possible.
- We follow the guidelines if restrictive intervention is needed, and only after use of de-escalation techniques.
- We accept that sometimes it is appropriate to show anger. We can thus model appropriate anger to the pupils. We do so in a controlled way and avoid blaming. We give an “I” message e.g. *“I feel very angry that you show little respect for the work I have put into making that worksheet”*.
- We only raise our voices in exceptional circumstances and always in a controlled manner.
- We give opportunities for reparation and restitution when all those involved are ready and without increasing delays.
- We model reconciliation and support these processes as appropriate.

Stages of escalation – 3 is positive handling:

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|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Anxiety, | need for support |
| 2. Defensive / increasing aggression, | need for clear limits, boundaries and choices. |
| 3. Loss of control/ violence, | need for physical intervention to reduce risk. |
| 4. Recovery, | need for a co-ordinated “letting go” process |
| 5. Learning, | need for a structured therapeutic review and forward planning. |

Limit Setting

Limit setting is the first intervention when rules or routines are breached. We use it for all low level misbehaviour, e.g. interfering with others, cussing, using unkind words and or swearing, refusal to work, non-compliance, work avoidance strategies etc.

Stage 1 – We remind the child by signal, facial expression or word that they have broken a boundary and re-direct them back to the task. We stop what we are doing, turn to the pupil and let them know what we want *“Lee, could you get on with your work please!”* We remain calm, we don’t raise our voices, and we make eye contact with the pupil and let them know by our facial expression that we mean business. If necessary, we move physically close and repeat our request showing firmness, not anger. If the pupil gets back to work we thank and praise them, stay a little while and then move on.

Stage 2 - Answering back: we know from experience that all back chat is the same. The aim will be to excuse, evade responsibility, to pretend helplessness, deny, avoid, accuse of not helping. These are all **diversionary tactics**.

We never respond to answering back. We stay calm and insist on our previous instruction. Sometimes the pupil will say *“You won’t help me.”* This is to cover themselves. We don’t get involved in a discussion. We stay calm and insist firmly on the child getting back on task. When they do we thank them for getting back on task, stay a little while and move on.

Limit setting does not always work but it is the best starting point for dealing with disruption.

When we have tried stages 1 and 2 and see it is not working we move quickly to the next technique.

Stage 3 – We give a warning *“I have given you the chance to put things right. I am now telling you that if this behaviour continues there will be consequences.”* Allow take up time for child to internalise and respond to instruction.

We have a variety of consequences. We try to make them appropriate to the misbehaviour e.g. *“Well I see you are refusing to do your work. Okay, since the others are working and you are having a free time it’s only fair that you should do yours during playtime when they are having their free time.”*

Sanctions and Consequences

Our system of rewards is balanced by sanctions and consequences which are accepted as fair and reasonable for the whole community and which are consistently and sensitively put into practice.

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Sanctions and consequences are sometimes needed to deal with serious and repeated misbehaviour. In applying them we also give the opportunity to make **reparation** and to set targets for desirable behaviour. They are used after other strategies have been tried and found to be ineffective. We make every effort to ensure that the imposition of sanctions and consequences is done in a manner that is ‘antiseptic’, e.g. uncontaminated by our own feelings of hurt and inadequacy or by negative feelings towards the child, and avoid shaming the child, and focuses on behaviour. (See dealing with Difficult Behaviour.)

Sanctions and consequences include:

- Initial warning
- Minutes lost from break time to make up for lost learning time.
- Thinking Time– an opportunity to make reparation and reflect how better choices could have been made considering consequences of actions etc. It takes place at break-times or dinner time, sometimes with work not completed available for completion or appropriate to the misbehaviour. Working through a problem verbally and filling in a reflection sheet enables children to find a resolution to their problem. This is supported by a member of staff. Thinking time is given in increments of 1 minute – an upper limit of 10 minutes for younger children (in most cases) – any longer can be counterproductive. We recognise that children need to play and give them every opportunity to do so, keeping Thinking Time to a minimum. Children are automatically given 10 minutes for swearing, leaving the learning area, violence and spitting. Children cannot be given more than 20 minutes Thinking Time at once. Thinking Time can be ‘earned off’, unless given for serious offences (see above), by showing with subsequent choices and responses that reflective thinking has already begun.
If a pupil persistently refuses to do Thinking Time or to observe the rules, the parent or carer will be contacted and reminded that further refusal will lead to possible exclusion.
- Change position of pupil in the classroom.
- Move to partner class.
- Out of the classroom – this may sometimes be necessary to safeguard the learning of others but we use it sparingly recognising that Thinking Time is more effective when it is for short periods.
- Internal exclusions of up to 1 full week can be given.
- Loss of privileges – it is up to each teacher to establish privileges in the classroom e.g. chosen activities, free time, particular responsibilities, or in some circumstances exclusion from an outing etc.
- ‘Check in’ club at lunchtimes to talk through serious behaviour choices and reflect on potential positive solutions.

We also use the following on some occasions:

1. Parent Consultation

Discussion with the parent can result in agreements about sanctions the parent can impose if the school sanctions are not working. A phone call or meeting can sometimes be very effective. So can a letter home.

2. Making Restitution

Children are given the chances to make good, injury or damage e.g. cleaning marks off walls. This can sometimes mean apologising by note or card, making up for work not done in playtime, spending time with the victim of their insults or aggression.

3. Referral to Senior Leader

This is used where a 'change of face' may be helpful and or respite for all children/staff involved with the child's best interests in mind.

4. Exclusion for a fixed period (see the Exclusions Policy)

We use this extremely rarely. We anticipate difficulties where possible and make out a Pastoral Support Programme if a child is excluded twice for fixed terms or is likely to be permanently excluded.

5. Permanent Exclusion (see the Exclusions Policy)

We only invoke this when it is clear that we cannot meet the child's needs and he/she has become a danger to him/herself and to others in the school.

Management of Serious Disruptive Behaviour and Aggression

We use many strategies and options to manage these situations. The selection of specific management techniques depends in part on the personality and character of the individual staff member and his/her relationship with the pupil. No strategy or set of strategies guarantee success. However, the following principles inform and govern our management decisions.

- We remain **objective and calm** in both speech and actions. We recognise that firmness does not require shouting or threats.
- We constantly strive to improve our understanding of the pupils and their behaviour. We know they are often externalising inner conflicts. They do interpersonally what mature people do intrapersonally. They demand the control that they can no longer provide for themselves. We aim to pre-empt physical intervention i.e. restrictive intervention by ensuring the creation of an emotionally containing environment.
- We attempt to see through the behaviour presented by the child to the possible meaning or message being expressed. So we ask ourselves what the behaviour means to help us think and respond appropriately.
- We try to listen quietly and respond quietly to the pupil. We do not overwhelm the child with loud and insistent directives.
- We avoid looking for an immediate solution unless the situation is dangerous when we adopt a reactive strategy. If appropriate we tell the pupil that we will deal with the issues later and we re-direct them back to work. While making this decision we will be making an ongoing dynamic risk

assessment of the behaviour and the situation and considering how best to pre-empt a potential incident and minimise risk.

- At all times, on responding to behaviour, we aim to analyse, not personalise. This way we stay flexible for as long as possible and avoid escalating the confrontation, and we use help script for colleagues and clear communication to support each other in this.
- We try to maintain positive attitudes that are constructive. We remind the child of previous good behaviour or similar situations that they dealt with well, progress they have made and how they made it.
- We always remind the pupil of options and consequences. We do not issue directives or threats that are unachievable.
- We are very aware that often the natural biological response to acts of violence is to get angry at the aggressor. However, we recognise that it is not the rational or most effective response. We school ourselves to resist the biological response.
- We use a range of diversionary strategies. The more unusual are likely to be the most effective. Humour is a powerful tool when used sensitively, to pre-empt a crisis.
- Involving other people in a non-threatening way can divert the confrontation and reduce the aggression and is a strategy we often use.
- It is sometimes necessary to remove the child from the situation. We try to do this in a neutral way, that is uncontaminated by negative or hostile feelings. Our message is **'we care about you too much to let you be out of control/hurt anybody/hurt yourself/break.....'**
- We always promote physical safety and do everything possible to prevent physical injury to everyone.

Keeping Positive

"There is neither good nor bad but thinking makes it so."

Shakespeare

In some schools and care settings the ration of directive or negative comments to positive ones can be unbalanced, sometimes with four directive comments to every positive one – this is not the case at The Park Schools Federation. It takes a deliberate effort to reverse this damaging ratio, but the effects can be marked. Giving accurate feedback is important but there is no evidence that upsetting people has any beneficial effects. Honest feedback can be structured to keep the mood positive. The 'PIN' acronym stands for Positive, Interesting and Negative. It suggests the order in which feedback should be delivered. When providing feedback at The Park, we begin by talking about several things young people like, moving on to interesting features, before finally referring to any negative aspect and suggesting how it can be improved. At The Park Schools Federation we always try to praise before prompting.

Keep Smiling

Smiling may be a good habitual behaviour to develop. Smiling triggers an automatic response in other people, causing them to smile in return. It also makes other people feel subconsciously better disposed towards the person who is smiling. It communicates confidence and openness and also stimulates the production of natural opiates and boosts the immune system. At The Park, we truly understand the importance and impact of smiling.

Treats

Treats can have a positive effect, especially if they are unexpected. These are not the same as the contingent rewards used to train animals to perform a range of impressive tricks. For example, when dolphins are being taught to leap through hoops, the trainer may begin by throwing a fish as the dolphin swims near the surface. As it swims near the bottom of the pool there is no fish. The next time the Dolphin happens to move towards the surface the trainer throws another fish, and so on. Gradually the dolphin begins to swim up to the surface more often and is soon leaping out of the water through hoops. This is called behaviour shaping through contingent rewards. At The Park, treats are not a necessary reward for doing anything in particular. They are a deliberate attempt to change the mood. Sometimes even dolphins seem to lose interest and stop playing. Experienced trainers abandon conditional rewards when the dolphins lose interest. They may take a break then throw a whole bucket of fish into the pool. This unexpected treat changes the mood in the pool and the dolphins start playing again, so the behaviour shaping can resume. There is a place for random unexpected treats in every environment, especially when the communal mood has become blocked.

Fear of Failure

"To change one's life: Start immediately. Do it flamboyantly. No exceptions!"

William James

Some people are disabled by the fear of failure, which prevents them from taking risks when they are presented with opportunities to learn new skills or form new relationships. People who have been hurt in the past when they tried something new, learn not to risk failure. Instead of feeling excited at the prospect of a new opportunity or a new relationship they experience anxiety at the threat of being hurt or humiliated once more. Some children have been repeatedly failed, hurt and humiliated. They find it increasingly difficult to commit to a new relationship. Instead, they test new relationships to destruction, or sabotage their attempts to learn a new skill, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy and reinforcing their suspicions of new people and new things. When an experience has been painful in the past, people respond to similar situations with anxiety. That is why some children often respond to judgemental praise by destroying the piece of work being praised.

Inducing Moods

People can be guided towards more positive emotional states. Guided imagery involves asking a person to remember or imagine that they are in their favourite place, or recall the best day of their lives. By mentally adding sounds, colours and smells the image can be made stronger and the feelings evoked more powerful. This exercise can bring about positive mood change, but only if the person can be persuaded to try out the exercise. Like all other forms of exercise, mental gymnastics takes effort and practice. It is not enough just to join the gym, you have to go and do some work. By practising and working on the positive image, people can create a tool to help them change the way they feel when they are under pressure.

Mood Resources

At The Park Schools Federation, we build up a collection of books, music and videos that put us all into a good mood. If polishing up happy memories improves the way people feel then it might be we

encourage children to keep photographs, audio and video recordings of positive experiences, our photographs around school support this. Physical exercise is a proven method of changing the way people feel. It stimulates the production of endorphins. Just raising the arms in the air can increase blood flow to the brain. Sometimes a change of scenery helps too. It makes sense to encourage physical exercise and invest in the equipment which encourages people to do it. At The Park, we encourage our young people to do something, rather than just sitting and wondering why they are not feeling better.

Summary

Our Engagement and Mood management training is designed to minimise risk and help young people to build and maintain positive relationships. At The Park Schools Federation, staff receive clear guidance and regular training so that they are more likely to be both confident and competent at supporting the young people we care for. Confident staff can reassure people who are anxious, offer boundaries and choices when people challenge, with safe and effective physical intervention strategies as a last resort. We can also help people to learn how to better manage their own feelings and therefore their behaviour by providing opportunities for support, reflection and repair. The Park Schools Federation is a safe setting without fear. It is a place where staff go to work not expecting to be hurt. It is a place where children, young people and adults know they will be positively cared for. It is a place of safety and security, providing for some a contrast with the chaos, confusion and instability they may have experienced elsewhere. For some people a teacher can become a pivotal person in their lives. How our staff respond to our children, as opposed to the behaviour, can build the bridges which lead to positive change.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

See The Park Schools Federation – Positive Handling Policy.

- *‘Guidance on the use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff Working with Children and Adults who Display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorders’* Issued by the Department for Education and Skills and the Department of Health, July 2002.
- *‘Behaviour in Schools’ DfE – February 2024*
- *Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance – 2025*
- *KCSIE 2025*
- *Policy Guidance For Positive Behaviour Support – Including Physical Interventions (Derbyshire County Council)*
- *React UK Positive Handling Manual*

This policy was implemented by the Governing Body in December 2025.