



Title	B4 Behaviour Policy
Purpose	To ensure Trustees, Local Governors and all staff follow a behaviour policy that enables the school to be a safe and supportive environment for all staff and students.
Relevant to	Trustees, Local Governors, All Staff, Students, Families.
Responsible Officer	Deputy Head Teacher (T&L)
Introduced	10/2006
Modification History	03/2008, 06/2015, 06/2018, 06/2021
Related Policies	A22 Special Needs Policy A2 Accessibility Plan, A11 Exclusion of Pupils, B3 Assessment, Recording and Reporting, BSET Pol.20 health and Safety Policy BSET Pol.21 Equality Policy BSET Pol.25 Physical Intervention Policy.
Date due for review	06/2024
Relevant committee for review	Local Governing Body
Approved	28/6/2021
Filed as	B4 Behaviour Policy Vs6 0621

1.0 Rationale and Ethos

1.1 At Oak Lodge School, we recognise that all forms of behaviour should be interpreted as an act of communication. Form tutors, subject teachers and teaching assistants will work together with the school counsellor, pastoral manager and senior leaders, linking with families, the wider community and multidisciplinary support services, to provide the best possible guidance and support for the students in our care.

1.2 We prefer the term 'Behaviour Support' as opposed to 'Behaviour Management' as we consider **all aspects** of a young person's behaviour as a guide to understanding behaviour, not just distressed behaviour that presents a challenge. We believe that rather than trying to stop or inhibit behaviours we interpret them as a signpost to an unmet need or other communicative function and provide support.

1.2 We are guided by the National Autistic Society's SPELL philosophy (**S**tructure **P**ositive **E**mpathy **L**ow Arousal **L**inks). We aim to support individual needs and provide opportunities for all students to increase their independence, develop communication and reduce anxiety, whilst maintaining a calm, safe environment. The values of the SPELL philosophy are central to our ethos and ensure we adopt a low arousal positive and non-confrontational approach, with empathy for and understanding of each young person as an individual. Low arousal is the cornerstone of any behaviour programme and including those for specific positive handling techniques. Some people may perceive a low arousal approach as allowing control, or giving in, however in crisis, our goal is to reduce distress and not teach a lesson.

1.3 SCERTS We have adopted a low arousal approach to understanding and responding to behaviour by subscribing to the Social Communication Emotional Regulation Transactional Support SCERTS® Model Prizant, Wetherby, Rubin & Laurent, 2007. SCERTS provides us with a holistic way to focus on teaching **Emotional Regulation** to support our students to regulate arousal and maintain a calm-alert state. We seek to reduce the likelihood of unconventional behavior by providing each student with a functional communication system and keep our expectations of their communication appropriate to their developmental stage. We seek to sensitively and imaginatively adapt the environment to reduce sources of stress. We will establish programs that seek to reduce or remove the source of sensory over stimulation that may increase anxiety. We recognize the signs of emotional dysregulation and respond by providing essential **Transactional Supports** that will be either learning support such as visual systems or interpersonal support from a member of staff.

1.4 Autism Students with an autistic spectrum condition are likely to have marked differences in social reasoning in comparison to their peers and therefore are unlikely to manipulate situations, lie or have intent or empathise at a level we might expect. For such a young person, behaviour should not be interpreted through intuition, based on understanding of 'typical development' we need to adopt an autism perspective and understand neurodevelopmental differences. It is important to remember that for many autistic individuals, being in a school environment can bring many challenges that generates anxiety, distressed behaviour may be a reaction to anxiety and an attempt to control a situation or person, regulate emotions or communicate fear or frustration. It is also not uncommon for the behavioural repertoire of an autistic person to be learned through a history of interactions between the autistic individual and the environment and therefore may take some time to change. Sensory

sensitivities account for a significant proportion of behavioural meltdowns in autistic people, which can adversely impact their quality of life and well-being. It is for this reason we provide an inclusive approach to autism, as we understand the underlying triggers are environmental and not within the child or young person. Autistic students often experience 'fight or flight' experiences, which are often wrongly misinterpreted as challenging behaviour or intentionally manipulative.

2.0 Monitoring and Recording Strategies to Support Behaviour

2.1 To enable consistent, highly personalised behaviour strategies for students as they develop cognitively, emotionally and socially, the school has an established system of documentation. Recording documents provide the structure for all staff to support a calm and safe environment through reflection, analysis and collaborative planning that promotes better understanding of behaviour.

Omitted Personalised Learning Plan section as they are no longer used.

2.3 Behaviour Support Plan

The behaviour support plan is intended to inform individualised approaches and provides all staff with key background information and strategies to reduce anxiety and support learning. The Behaviour Support Plan (**see Appendix**) is drawn up in discussion with class teams initially during their team meetings, then reviewed by members of the leadership team. For those students who exhibit exceptionally harmful behaviour consistently, specialist advice is available from members of the Senior Leadership Team that have relevant specialisms and the Pastoral Manager. Further advice may be sought from the Barnet Educational Psychology (EP) Service. The schools link Educational Psychologist is Amanda Ryzman. Staff at Oak Lodge receive mandatory training in de-escalation and positive handling strategies in line with Barnet Policy. See [BSET Pol.25 Physical Intervention Policy](#) BSPs are stored in SharePoint at the following location; https://bsentrust.sharepoint.com/sites/plp_scerts so that all staff are able to access. Hard copies for each student should be kept in a student information folder in each classroom and shared with staff **before** they begin working alongside that student, so they are clear on the current support plan and there is consistency of approach.

2.4 SchoolPod System

The school has invested in a web-based system for recording behaviour of students; this system also serves to recommend a student for a merit for effort in their work and attitude to learning. SchoolPod provides a tool for both recording and analysing behavioural patterns. All members of staff have access to the SchoolPod system through a password protected user account. This means that no confidential or personal information relating to behaviour need be stored on any personal computer or device, as SchoolPod is a cloud-based application.

3 types of report slip are available to staff using SchoolPod:

File Note: This slip is used to describe a significant incident of disruptive behaviour. Drop down menus are included to speed the process of recording student(s), staff, victim (if any), date, time and location. There is also a box to complete a description of the incident. Additional sections provide tick boxes to enable categorisation and monitoring of behaviour type, antecedents, contributing factors and teacher action. There is also a section to record student comments if appropriate. A recent addition to the file note system on SchoolPod is the 'transactional supports' category. It is essential that this is completed, as in most cases behaviour will escalate in the absence of transactional supports as it is likely the student will have few regulatory strategies without them. By failing to provide essential supports, we are limiting the strategies that a student can use to help them return to, and maintain a well-regulated state of arousal. For example, if a student is not able to predict a change and we have not provided a schedule (SCERTS task engagement board/ folder) then they may have a delayed reaction to that change. Another example might be that a student does not have a system to understand how to breathe and calm himself down, therefore in the absence of someone explicitly teaching them and demonstrating in a visual way, our students will continue to exhibit extreme anxiety and hit out at staff.

PI Slip: Where an incident has had to be managed using positive handling techniques, a PI (Physical Intervention See [BSET Pol.25 Physical Intervention Policy](#)) Slip is recorded rather than a File Note. It follows a similar layout to a File Note, but with additional sections to record the type of staff interventions and acceptable physical holds used to manage the incident. Behaviour Support Plans (BSP's) exist to advise staff on appropriate positive handling procedures to be used with individual students. PI slips will be reviewed in relation to each associated BSP to review any changes that maybe required.

Tools built in to the SchoolPod system enable staff to undertake sophisticated monitoring and analysis of behavioural patterns of individuals or groups in order to continuously review and improve practice, or to provide advice on further intervention from outside agencies or multi-disciplinary teams.

2.5 Rewards

Merit award systems continue to be used in the school, usually in the form of merit stickers in a home/school diary. The application of any reward system will be appropriate to the cognitive understanding and needs of the individual or class group. For individuals with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) we do not advise using external rewards to shape or modify behaviour as this method of reinforcing positive behaviour is known to generate anxiety. Individuals with ASC are often not able to regulate arousal or inhibit negative behaviour when control is external to them. External control that we may impose e.g. losing preferred activities or time, is thought to suppress appropriate emotional expression, leading to the individual trying to establish more control. Similarly, group rewards like coins for a whole class will likely not be intrinsically motivating or immediately tangible for the autistic student. Preferred activities and special interests should form part of their regular daily routine and not be contingent on good behaviour.

3.0 Other measures to support a positive environment

There may be occasions whereby despite dynamic adaptations we are not able to make enough changes to the provision required to meet needs. We use fixed term exclusions rarely and only as a last resort. If it becomes necessary to implement a fixed term exclusion at any point after a period where we are unable to identify any further support or intervention for the student, we may need to question if Oak Lodge School remains suitable, however there are a number of steps we take prior to this point.

3.1 Professionals' Meeting

A professionals' meeting may be arranged when staff have on-going concerns about a student's behaviour that may indicate a general loss of wellbeing, or the onset of mental health concerns. The meeting may include the form tutor, Pastoral Manager or an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Art Psychotherapist, educational psychologist, or social worker. A clinical or educational psychologist may attend where a referral has been made to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The meeting aims are to provide the student and family with support to promote positive outcomes and may result in further referrals or re-assessments to health, social or educational support services. For some students, serious concerns about the appropriateness of the school placement due to increasing episodes of harmful behaviour will be discussed in liaison with the Local Authority Principal Educational Psychologist.

3.2 Internal Exclusion

An internal exclusion refers to where a student may need to be taught for most of their educational program in an adapted and separate space for a short period of time to lower arousal and offer respite for the individual's peers. Where persistent and inappropriate instances of physically harmful behaviour are carried out towards staff or students that are deemed intentional this will feature as part of weekly reviews by the pastoral team. The decision to implement an external exclusion will be made in collaboration with the senior leaders and the pastoral manager. Where internal exclusion is necessary to safeguard the well-being of the school community parents and carers will be informed setting out the reasons and the plan for the period of internal exclusion.

It may also be the case that a student's capacity to self-regulate their behaviour is compromised and their presence in the classroom becomes temporarily incompatible with the education of others. In the event that it becomes necessary to withdraw a student to work in a separate space for a period of time parents should be informed of such a measure being undertaken. Learning activities will be provided for the student, who will be supervised by one or more members of staff according to the level of risk presented.

3.3 External Exclusion

Formal fixed term exclusion may be imposed, where a student has exhibited persistent challenging behaviour over a period of time, resulting in a serious health and safety risk to the school community. It is usual that a high frequency of contact will have been established with the student's family prior to such a measure being imposed. However, the school will comply

with existing statutory regulation and ensure that a formal letter is sent home, detailing the reason for external exclusion and provide learning activities that may be undertaken in the home. During the period of exclusion, the team who works with the student is offered time to establish the basis for a successful re-integration into the school environment.

3.4 Permanent Exclusion

The school does not wish to permanently exclude any young person with a Special Educational Need and will work with the student's Local Authority to seek a planned move to an alternative placement, where it believes it has exhausted the range of behavioural support strategies and reasonable adjustments that can be made within the limit of available resources. Nevertheless, the school's right to permanently exclude will be applied in the most extreme circumstances, where agreement cannot be reached with a Local Authority, in order to protect the health and safety of all school users and to maintain a positive environment for learning.