



Challenging Behaviour and Physical Interventions Policy

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Firwood Staff have contributed to the development of this policy through one to one discussions, class discussions and staff meeting / training.

This policy provides the basis for a positive, consistent approach, which support the aims of the school. All behaviours displayed are viewed as forms of communication and all staff, students, parents and Trustees have a duty to understand the reasons behind the behaviour and to support the student in developing alternative forms of communication and behaviour management strategies.

Background Information

Firwood High is a mixed gender school for students aged between 11 and 19 years, who have ASD, PMLD and complex learning difficulties. Our students come from a large geographical area and are from many different faiths and cultures, and in the majority of cases our students are transported to school by the local authority. At Firwood High School we aim to provide our students with a broad and relevant education. We do this in a positive environment that reflects our commitment and ethos of "**Learning Without Limits**"

Philosophy

This policy follows the agreed 'Challenging Behaviour and Physical Intervention' policy format for Special Schools in Bolton.

This policy has been drawn up to protect students, staff and others within Firwood High School, in line with recommendations in current guidance:

- 1. Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 93)**
- 2. DFE Use of Reasonable Force (July 2013)**
- 3. Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2021)**

School Expectations

At Firwood High School we promote positive behaviour by creating an environment in which students are able to enjoy learning and participate in activities which support the development of the student's social, emotional and moral development. At Firwood High School we believe that the encouragement and reinforcement of good behaviour is a collective responsibility. All school staff have a responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the students and with each other. We believe in order to ensure a caring and effective learning environment is created:

- Good relationships with all students will be established and maintained and be the primary way of encouraging positive behaviour and student progress.
- All students will be treated with dignity and respect at all times
- Good behaviour is rewarded
- Encouragement of independence and self-regulation is evident at all times
- Encouragement of self-awareness and an understanding of responsibility to others within the school community is fostered.

- Where possible students should be aware of the consequences of behaviour which is unacceptable to all and, where understanding is limited, an encouragement of self-awareness and self-regulation is developed.

Physical intervention should only be used as a last resort as part of a dynamic risk assessment or as part of an agreed Behaviour Management Plan for individual students.

Physical intervention that is excessive or is used as a form of punishment is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the staff disciplinary procedures.

Positive Behaviour Management

Firwood High School has a positive approach to behaviour management and all staff:

- Read body language
- Read behaviour and assess the situation
- Intervene early
- Communicate "Talk and I will listen"
- Inform of desired behaviour (verbal, signs, symbols)
- Use appropriate humour
- Display CALM stance and body language
- Talk low, slow and quiet – Use of communication aids where applicable
- Offer reassurance – include positive physical prompts (contingent touch)
- Divert and distract by introducing another activity

This approach rewards students efforts to build self-esteem by, for example verbal praise within the class group, students taking good work to a senior member of staff, school certificates, individual / class reward charts, assignment of responsibility, etc. Parents and other professionals are involved where appropriate to help identify positive rewards that will be of particular significance to individual students.

Students who are known to present with behaviours that challenge will have defined Individual Behaviour Plans.

What constitutes behaviours that challenge ?

Firwood High School considers behaviour to be challenging if:

- The behaviour itself or its frequency, intensity or duration is inappropriate given a student's age and level of development.
- The behaviour presents a threat to the well-being of the young person themselves, other students or staff
- The behaviour constitutes a significant additional disability to the student by interfering with the learning of new skills and/or by restricting access to important learning opportunities for either themselves or others.
- The behaviour causes significant stress to the individual concerned and/or to those who live and work alongside the student, and impairs the quality of their lives to an unreasonable degree.
- The behaviour is contrary to social norms and would be considered to be socially unacceptable, offensive, destructive or disruptive.

Individual Behaviour / Positive Handling Plans

All students will require a basic behaviour plan as this will incorporate the non-negotiables for their individual learning and daily routines that enable them to learn in a positive environment. The non-negotiables and baseline behaviours are recorded, and added to, if challenging behaviours are increased.

Where a student presents concerns any member of staff can ask for a behaviour meeting to be convened to discuss key issues, by arrangement with the class teacher, key stage lead and Head of Behaviour Management. This will be open to all key members of staff unless otherwise stated.

Other Education, Health or Social Services professionals involved with the student may be invited to this meeting, or provided with a synopsis of the outcomes if unable to attend. Parents will be sent a copy of the Behaviour Plan for them to understand the difficulties faced by the school and the strategies that are being introduced to effectively manage the behaviour that challenges. Parents are able to ask any relevant questions and offer strategies that can have a positive outcome.

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will chair the meeting. A record will be kept by completing the "Individual Behaviour/ Positive Handling Plan" pro forma. The Positive Handling part of the plan is only completed where physical handling is appropriate. A risk assessment has been integrated into the form. A signed copy of the plan must be made available for parents to keep as soon as the plan has been agreed by all, staff and parents / carers. This typically happens within days of the plan being written.

At the meeting the following issues will be discussed and agreed:

1. Positive aspects of the students character, his or her likes / dislikes.
2. The specific behaviours that challenge
3. Early warning signs of behaviour
4. Strategies, including rewards, de-escalation, diffusion or distraction.
5. Physical handling issues and where appropriate, completion of the positive handling section of the plan
6. Who is the most appropriate person to share the outcomes of the meeting with staff and parents / carers and will ultimately be responsible for this.
7. Time scale for review.

All relevant staff will be kept informed of the agreed strategies through staff briefings and staff meetings.

Planning appropriate strategies, controlling the environment, setting appropriate expectations etc., should be the way we positively and pro-actively manage behaviour. The use of physical intervention should be avoided whenever possible.

When Physical Intervention is authorised to be used.

The staff at Firwood High School understand that there may be situations where an unexpected response occurs that is likely to result in one of the following:

1. Injury to a person (self or other)
2. Serious damage to property (that can cause harm)
3. Serious breakdown in discipline

In these situations it may be necessary to either use Restrictive Physical Intervention to prevent injury or serious damage to property or to clear a room of students and harmful equipment to enable the student to regulate their own behaviour. In this instance the

student will be observed by members of staff and a senior leader will be requested to be present at the soonest possible time.

Any use of force must only be implemented by trained members of staff authorised to do so by the Head of School and must comply with the above Department for Education documents, this policy and the LA policy, behaviour support plans and any other relevant school policies.

Due to the fact that the very nature of physical intervention means that a dynamic risk assessment has been made to reduce the personal space to intimate space. As a result staff must take every opportunity to adhere to safe covid-19 practices through the use of gloves, masks and clean down protocols where appropriate.

Authorised Staff

Staff will only be authorised by the Head of School if they have completed a course of training that has been:

- Approved by the Trustees Board
- Considered and supported by the Local Authority
- Considered and supported by Health and Social Services
- Approved by the Institute of Conflict Management (ICM)

The following training methods are currently acceptable:

- Team Teach Training

A list of authorised staff is held in school.

Staff at Firwood High School also receive training specific to the needs of the students. STAR Training is delivered by Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHs), when available. STAR training stands for Settings, Triggers, Actions and Results and enables us to develop a greater understanding of the functionality of behaviour. There is also other in house training related to PMLD, ASD and SLD students.

Risk Assessment & Planning for the use of Reasonable Force.

What constitutes reasonable force?

The decision to plan the use of reasonable force in the form of restrictive physical intervention, and subsequent risk assessment, must include reference to:

- The seriousness of the incident; i.e. is there likely to be injury to a person, serious damage to property or serious breakdown in discipline?
- Is there any other strategy that can be used? The relative risk of using restrictive physical intervention must also be compared with other possible strategies.
- The age, cultural background, gender, stature and medical history of the student concerned.
- The application of gradually increasing or decreasing levels of force in response to the person's behaviour, always encouraging the individual to take control of their own behaviour.

Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur occasionally, and these are not to be seen necessarily

as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent “side-effect” of ensuring that student in school remains safe.

Unacceptable practices

These include practices that might expose students or staff to foreseeable risk of injury or psychological distress. Examples include (this is not an exhaustive list) :

- Any form of hitting / slapping
- Withdrawal of food or drink
- Verbal bullying / shouting or persistent criticism
- Any form of holding not included in the Team Teach training.

The distinction between:

DfES / DH guidelines of July 2002 notes the importance of understanding the difference between the following terminologies as explained below. It is important that the correct terminology is used when reporting incidents.

Seclusion

- i) Where a student is forced to spend time alone against their will. This is unacceptable practice.

Time out

- ii) This involves restricting the student's access to all positive reinforcement as part of a behaviour plan.

Withdrawal

- iii) Involves removing the student from the situation which causes anxiety or distress to a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume with their activity.

Use of Reasonable Force in Unforeseen and Emergency Situations

Planned physical intervention is where an incident is foreseeable. Emergency intervention occurs where the incident cannot reasonably be anticipated. In this situation:

- Diversion or diffusion should be attempted, before using physical intervention,
- Any techniques used must be within the training provided by school.

Where an emergency situation has arisen, a Level 3 incident form must be completed on the Behaviour Watch system. Parents of the student must be informed of the incident and the appropriate response and where necessary a Behaviour Meeting must be held as soon as possible after the incident to ensure future strategies and interventions are co-ordinated and planned.

Post-incident Support

First Aid Procedures

Staff who have First Aid responsibilities are indicated in the Staff Handbook and on signs visible around school and in every class room. The safety of all should always be the priority before, during and after incidents of challenging behaviour.

Staff

As staff working in a school for students with complex learning difficulties and autism, we may expect to come across some incidents of challenging behaviour. However, some incidents are so intense that they can cause considerable and understandable stress and/or injury to staff. Whenever staff are injured or traumatised by an incident, they should not return to the stressful situation until they have been given time to feel calmer and more confident about going back to class. Staff should feel confident about expressing their feelings after an incident and asking for whatever support they feel they need at that time. Accepting help will be seen as a professional strength, not a weakness. This may have a knock-on effect on other staff and classes, the class team involved, etc., but all staff must be willing to support colleagues who are hurt or distressed.

Students

Students should be encouraged to understand the consequences of their behaviour whenever possible, and be supported in this through positive reward strategies. Reward strategies and subsequent visual consequences will be appropriate to the age and maturity of students within a class and take account of individual student motivators. Firwood High School does not advocate one system but expects class teams to develop strategies appropriate to the students within a class.

Students displaying challenging behaviours should be encouraged to take control of their own behaviour as soon as possible. It is vital that all staff working with students who have challenging behaviour make themselves aware of the Individual Behaviour/Positive Handling Plan as this will contain information that helps ensure everyone's safety.

Students witnessing or being hurt by the challenging behaviour of others should be immediately offered support and comfort. They should be offered the opportunity to discuss their experiences with a familiar member of staff, in whatever way is understandable to them. Parents should be informed if a student is hurt or particularly distressed by an incident, but should not be given the name of the student with challenging behaviour unless this has been discussed with their parents first.

Families

Parents should receive an accurate and balanced view of their son/daughter's performance at school. This includes being informed of any serious incidents of challenging behaviour. However this should be balanced if, for instance, the student has produced some good learning that day that parents can also be told about. It is not acceptable to "withhold" information about challenging behaviours from parents because of concerns about causing distress. Parents and carers will be far more distressed if the first they hear of their son/daughter's challenging behaviour is when someone is hurt. Information regarding behaviour in school will be communicated directly to families by members of the class team and not via the passenger escorts.

If families are distressed and require support following an incident, contact with the school Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will be offered. It may be appropriate to hold a specific meeting to discuss the incident further.

Reporting and Recording Incidents

It is very important that incidents are recorded. Recording incidents at the time will provide a true reflection of the events of the incident which may be of use in the future not only to

protect staff from allegations of misconduct, but will help to see any patterns of challenging behaviour and provide information to help understand and reduce incidents.

For Students with Individual Behaviour Plans – Where students are displaying continued challenging behaviour. The incidents are recorded and used to show patterns, triggers, preferred response such as Positive Handling / Restrictive Physical Intervention. The plans are developed by all those who have experience of the student and shared with SLT, all staff who work with that student and parents / carers.

Physical Intervention Record – Each level 2 and level 3 incident is recorded on Behaviour Watch where it is allocated a reference number. Each incident recorded that has required Restrictive Physical Intervention is then also recorded in a bound and numbered book as required by OFSTED.

At Firwood High School we use a system called Behaviour Watch to record incidents of challenging behaviour. As part of this recording system we split behaviour into two levels. Completing a level 2 or level 3 incident report on Behaviour Watch, is dependent on the severity of the incident.

Level 2 incidents

These incidents are those that are of a lower level of severity and can be more of a sensory nature e.g. biting, hair pulling, and throwing objects

Level 3 Incidents

These are challenging behaviours where the student is considered to be in crisis and where his / her anxieties have peaked. In this case staff may have had to clear a room to protect other students and staff from being injured or if a Physical Intervention has taken place.

Behaviour reports should record the situation (date, time, location, staff involved), give a factual account of the incident using non-emotive language, which de-escalation strategies have been used as well as specifying any physical intervention techniques and any information around what may have triggered the behaviour (if known).

Multiple Incident Record

Where incidents are so frequent that continually completing forms becomes impractical a multiple incident record can be used to provide the date/time, duration and type of holding. This information can be recorded in a simple list in the incident description box on Behaviour Watch (e.g. the Multiple Incident Record). This system aims to make recording more manageable and prevent under-recording of incidents. However, this is only acceptable when working within an existing Positive Handling Plan.

Bound and Numbered Book

The records of use of Restrictive Physical Intervention are sent to the Head of School and Head of Behaviour via an automatic email. The Head of Behaviour then records the information of the incident at the end of every week in a bound and numbered book.

Accident / Incident Forms

Where a member of staff has been injured they need to complete and 'Accident / Incident form' with a member of the Senior Leadership team where they will be offered the opportunity for a debrief meeting.

Monitoring the Use of Force

The use of physical intervention will be monitored by the Assistant Head Teacher responsible for Behaviour Management and this information will be shared with the Head of School and SLT.

Responding to complaints

It is hoped that conflicts can be resolved informally wherever possible. However, it is possible that the use of physical intervention techniques can lead to allegations of either inappropriate or excessive force. If the complaint relates to the use of force, the matter will be investigated in accordance with Dept for Education / LA policy guidelines.

Staff Training

The Trust consider the following training to be appropriate:

Team Teach 6 Hour "Foundation" course (see www.team-teach.co.uk)

Firwood High School has a number of members of staff who are trained at Team Teach instructor level (intermediate 5 day course). Woodbridge Academy holds a Team Teach Area Operating Licence which means tutors are able to provide requested training to staff throughout the academy and other schools within Bolton LA. They may also be asked to support other tutors from Bolton schools in delivering training within Bolton LA.

New staff will be trained as soon as possible after their appointment; this may be with staff from other schools across the LA.

Staff will be updated as per the current recommendations of Team Teach and will be provided with opportunities to practice their skills (e.g. staff using "caring C" to escort students around school where necessary, practice skills at staff meetings, etc.).

As a direct result of Covid-19 restrictions training will be amended to fit with LA, DFE, Public Health England and Team Teach guidance.

Ethnicity & Equal Opportunities

Our policy is designed to be culturally appropriate and inclusive of all children. We will aim to avoid any form of racism, sexism and homophobic, transgender or bisexual bullying.

Partnership with Parents

At Firwood High School, we strive to build and maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect and dialogue in which the needs of children are paramount. We believe firmly in the need for involvement of parents and carers in the education of their children at Firwood.

Monitoring the Policy

The Trust is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

Dissemination of the Policy

The Executive Head Teacher, Trustees, Head of School, SLT and all school staff members and health professionals will have access to this policy. Copies are available in school for parents on request.