

The Potteries School

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POLICY: Behaviour Management			
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THE POTTERIES SCHOOL: BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

THE POTTERIES SCHOOL

The Potteries School is an Independent Special School within a residential provision situated near Abermule, Mid Wales. The learners attending the school are both boys and girls in residential placements. The Potteries School provides a safe environment in which young people are supported in all aspects of their daily life to achieve learning and life skills such that they can address their needs and move on to become effective members of society.

PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

At The Potteries School we aim to:

- Empower young people to participate in their own education
- Help young people to learn to enjoy education
- Provide a safe, secure learning environment
- Help young people to achieve their potential
- Help young people to develop the skills for positive social interaction
- Provide opportunities that compensate for earlier missed experiences

THE RIGHT WAY

The Right Way PRINCIPLE	THIS MEANS:	ORGANISATIONS WILL:
EMBEDDING	Putting Children's Rights (UNCRC) at the core of planning and the delivery of services for children and young people	○ Make links to Children's Rights (UNCRC) in their plans. ○ Agree on a structure of how they make sure children's rights are taken into account at all levels of decision making. ○ Make sure that leaders and staff have a good knowledge of children's rights (UNCRC), and help them understand how it can benefit their work.
Equality and NON-DISCRIMINATION	Ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to be the best they can be and that no child has to ensure poor life chances due to discrimination	○ Make sure staff have up-to-date knowledge of the Equality Act and receive training to increase their awareness of different groups of children and young people's needs. ○ Give information to children in a language or format appropriate for their age, culture, or ability. ○ Analyse data and consider which groups of children are not accessing your services, and why - can use our a children's rights impact assessment.
EMPOWERING children and young people	Giving children the knowledge and confidence to use their rights and hold organisations and individuals that affect their lives to account	○ Give children the information they need to influence decisions that affect them (e.g. simple language reports). ○ Involve children and young people by giving them the opportunities/ training/ information they need to influence decisions that affect them. ○ Build relationships with groups of young people to allow them to regularly give ideas and feedback. E.g. youth groups/forums.
PARTICIPATION	Listening to children and taking their views seriously (as guaranteed by Article 12 — UNCRC).	○ Develop clear targets to listen to children and young people from marginalised groups. ○ Involve children directly in the design, monitoring and evaluation of services they receive (this can include involving children in recruitment of staff). ○ Adopt Wales' National Participation Standards for Children and Young People, to make sure when children participate, their experience is a quality one.
ACCOUNTABILITY	Organisations and individuals should be accountable to children for the decisions and actions which affect their lives.	○ Publish an accessible annual update showing how they've worked towards making children's rights a reality. ○ Feedback regularly to children in a suitable format. ○ Provide children with accessible information on how to provide feedback about services or to how to make a complaints and hold staff to account.

THE LEARNERS

All young people at The Potteries School experience emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Often these difficulties accompanied by other difficulties for learning such as dyslexia, ASD, ADHD and attachment problems.

Most of the learners have had interrupted histories in education and care. There are a wide variety of abilities on admission, with some learners operating at a very low level of literacy, numeracy and cognitive ability, while others are quite proficient learners. All have fragile self-esteem and place a low value on themselves as learners. They all demonstrate difficulties with authority and a lack of trust in adults. They experience difficulties in forming and maintaining positive relationships with other Learners and thus have limited ability to work cooperatively, in groups or in the classroom. The learners who attend the Potteries School are:

- Resident at the Potteries Care Home
- Aged between 10 and 18 years of age
- Both boys and girls
- On a placement of up to 39 weeks for assessment
- Under voluntary accommodated, full care or interim care orders
- From placing authorities in the U.K.

Statements of Special Educational Need for the learners predominantly focus on their Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs, however these are often accompanied by a range of other educational differences and a disrupted educational history ensuring learners needs and associated learning plans are very complex. The range of difficulties experienced by the learners often leads to them experiencing great difficulty in accessing education and this can be manifested in a high level and complexity of behavioural expression. It is therefore critical that the school identifies these needs in order to provide a safe, structured and positive learning environment for each individual in which to engage and make good progress.

INTEGRATED MODEL

Embedded in the daily operation of The Potteries School are a number of defining concepts relating to integration and consistency, which determine a safe and supportive environment for all our learners.

Integration

It is essential that in order for young people to feel safe and secure in their learning and residential environment, the school provide a level of consistency in working practices across all aspects of daily life. This can only exist if a degree of integration is developed across all staff and operational structures; such that all staff are working towards the same goal and young people can expect a similar response in any given situation. It is accepted that every individual personality may approach or respond to a situation slightly differently but that the outcome must remain the same in order for consistency to exist. .

Ownership and the Positive Environment

Young people can only engage in their learning environment if they find the experience a positive one and can accept some ownership of and responsibility for the place in which they come to learn.

Young people will not be able to take ownership of an environment that does not stimulate or offers negative reinforcement of behaviours and seeks to reinforce learnt stereotypes of past educational experiences. All the young people attending education at The Potteries School arrive with a wide range of experiences of other educational establishments, many of which were not positive. Often as learners elsewhere, schools have struggled to manage them effectively or understand and meet their unique needs. Whilst this is not the fault of many of these schools, often being simply because the learner does not meet the model for which that school was intended, the learner struggles to engage in the learning environment provided, resulting in episodes of behaviour, discipline and exclusion. As a result the learner suffers from decreasing self-esteem and motivation to learn, eventually regarding themselves as “unteachable” and becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy across subsequent school placements. Therefore, in order for the school to re-engage its learners in learning it must be understanding and accepting of their needs and work to provide its young people with a positive educational experience in which they feel safe, supported and encouraged to participate, learn and achieve.

It is also essential that the learner enters a nurturing environment in which they feel safe and supported; an environment in which negative behaviours such as bullying and aggression are not tolerated yet positive behaviours and progress are praised and rewarded. It is essential to provide an environment in which learners can develop appropriate and trusting relationships with the teaching staff and peers and are encouraged to communicate their thoughts and feelings without fear of being disregarded. It is essential to provide an environment in which learners can rediscover that learning is a process in which they can engage and achieve without fear, no matter what their ability, and that it is stimulating and fun. Finally, it is essential that learners come to school knowing that if the day does not go as expected they are always welcome to return to try again, without fear of rejection.

Positive regard, positive reinforcement and assertive discipline

The Potteries School promotes equality and positive regard for all learners. Positive regard for the individual is supported by all members of the staff team and reference to stereotyping actively discouraged and challenged. It is imperative that recognition is given to the individual personality of all learners so that appropriate ways of working can be identified and developed. Staff must provide positive role modelling at all times, with learners and each other, in order for young people to identify with what is culturally acceptable within the school and in order for the unacceptable to be challenged consistently.

Whilst a system of appropriate boundaries and methods for intervening with behaviours exists within the school, emphasis is given to the positive reinforcement of appropriate or progressing behaviour through praise and reward, such that the learner identifies these occasions with success and achievement. Inappropriate behaviours are challenged in such a way as to allow learners to reflect on what they have done, take responsibility for their actions and consider alternatives. The Potteries School does not seek to provide a punitive regime and, whilst on occasion interventions have to be initiated in order to keep young people safe, time for reflection and discussion should always be considered a part of the process in order to support the behaviour of our young people.

The Potteries School operates a model of “Assertive Discipline” in which the personalisation of requests to learners is absent, preventing transference of or disassociation from behaviours that are being challenged. This gives the learner no other option but to take ownership of their

behaviour, the responsibility for their course of action remaining with the individual. Non-personalisation of the way in which challenges are made also allows staff to target the behaviour and not the individual, allowing the maintenance of positive regard and removing any personal bias that may exist in the learner-teacher relationship.

The strength of a learner-teacher relationship should never be underestimated when supporting learners in managing their behaviour and an essential aspect of the teaching staff role is to develop strong, trusting and appropriate relationships with the learners who attend the school. Engaging learners in learning takes a wide variety of skills and experiences, but paramount to all is the ability to communicate effectively with young people. Positive regard for the individual allows teachers to build relationships with learners equally but inevitably there are those with whom the staff member finds it easier to relate. It is important that teaching staff are supported in developing these relationships and are allowed to utilise them effectively when teaching and challenging behaviour around the school.

GENERAL LEARNER MANAGEMENT

In order to maintain a basic level of overall expectations and behaviour support within The Potteries School, a consistent system of general learner management techniques underpins the more individualised programmes in place for learners.

Expectations

The Potteries School has a set of five basic expectations applicable to all classroom and learning areas. These expectations are also extended to other aspects of the school day including break times and lunchtime. The points rewards systems used in the school day is also linked to the set of expectations, determining the points achieved by learners during lesson time. The expectations are listed below:

1. Arrive for lessons on time
2. Show respect and tolerance towards others
3. Make some effort to learn
4. Do the work set
5. Stay in class

Classroom Management

In order to help reluctant learners engage in education there is a need for attention to social order and physical structure within the classroom to provide an appropriate environment in which to learn. A chaotic classroom will inevitably lead to a chaotic learning experience. At the Potteries School we operate basic principles of classroom management.

- The classroom is free of clutter and mess
- Learners work is well organised, easily accessed and regularly marked
- Appropriate resources for the lesson are organised and on hand prior to start.
- Lessons adhere to agreed format
- Learners are expected to enter the room in a calm manner

- Learners are made aware of 'time out' areas
- Assertive Discipline is used challenge unwanted behaviour
- A points reward system is used to encourage and praise desired levels of engagement
- Lesson objectives are on the board for all lessons
- The teacher controls the working environment and dictates the lesson structure
- Learners remain quietly in their seats waiting for direction on when they should leave
- A 45 minute lessons runs 5-35-5 basis using the beginning to settle and present starter activities and the last 5 minutes to give a plenary and reflect on the points for the lesson

In order to keep young people safe and to maintain their focus on learning it is important to consider the physical space available in the classroom and use it to best advantage. Within the classroom the teacher defines the learning space for each young person and helps them to maintain this space over time. This allows the young person to know where they are expected to be for a lesson and can take some ownership of this learning space. It also helps them to understand how it feels when others invade that space and transfer those feelings to how others might feel when they do the same. Organisation of the room prior to the class entering, by placing a learner's work, resources and materials in the expected place strengthens this expectation and allows the young person to experience consistency in the teacher empowering them to maintain their work area.

At times young people are unable to utilise the correct skills to maintain in control and regulate their emotional level. The results being that they are unable to remain engaged on the learning taking place and will often disrupt the learning of those around them. Once other strategies have been exhausted it may be appropriate to direct the young person to an alternative physical space where they can have the opportunity have time out and then to re-engage in the tasks required.

Structure of the school day

Whilst many learners at The Potteries School respond well to a consistent structure to their school day, they have often struggled to maintain this in a more mainstream school environment. Often this is to do with their ability to engage and concentrate over extended periods of time, along with their skills to engage socially with peers or participate in larger group settings. The routine of the school day, the timetable and length of lessons have been considered to provide an appropriate structure in which our learners might better engage.

All lessons last for 45 minutes, a length of time in which it is possible to engage learners in productive work, provide a variety of activities, but not too long that they can't maintain their level of motivation. This also allows 6 different opportunities in the school day in which to have a fresh start and engage. .

It is important that the structure of the school day is appropriate to the needs of the learners who attend the school; offering opportunity to engage in a variety of social situations, offering a wide range of curriculum subjects and activities, offering timescales within which learners can manage to remain motivated and offering periods in the day in which they can relax a little and process thoughts and feelings that may have arisen. By being proactive in designing an appropriate structure to the school day we can allow learners a greater opportunity to invest and engage, thus reducing the likelihood of reactionary behaviours requiring another level of intervention.

Incentives, Rewards and Sanctions

The Potteries School operates a points system that encourages learners to work towards an agreed level of points that equates to a reward. The reward television privilege over the weekend. Achievement of 80% of class points results in two days privilege, 60% one day.

EXCLUSIONS

Although The Potteries School feels that exclusion is often a counterproductive tool for use with young people who have experienced rejection from education in previous school placements, there are occasions where the actions of a young person lead to no other alternative in order to keep them, and those around them, safe. The school does not take the decision to exclude lightly. Exclusions are also governed by very strict guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government defining a process that must be adhered to should an exclusion take place.

Reasons for Exclusion:

The decision to exclude a learner should be taken only:

- In response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy and
- If allowing the learner to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the learner or others in the school.

Acts that will likely result in exclusion:

- Acts of threatened or actual deliberate physical violence against students and staff.
- Acts of extreme or constant disruption leading to serious instability in the class or school group.
- Acts of drug or alcohol misuse whilst on school premises or supplying drugs
- Extended periods of non-cooperation in the school routine involving or leading to previous acts
- Acts of sexual abuse or assault
- Acts of general, sexual, racial, or homophobic bullying
- Possession, use or threatened use of an offensive weapon

The extent and time-basis of exclusions will be decided by the Headteacher and will be mediated by the length of time required to ensure all parties are safe from harm. This policy was reviewed on 04/03/2024 and now comes in line with the WAG guidance included in this policy:

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/exclusion-from-schools-pupil-referral-units.pdf>

MANAGING THE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Whilst it is essential that comprehensive planning and assessment is carried out and all documentation in place and communicated in order to provide an appropriate and consistent education package for the individual, there are always occasions where the behaviour of a young person must be challenged directly in order that they, and those around them, are kept safe.

Directly supporting and challenging the behaviour of young people can be done in a variety of ways, some subtle some more overt. It is important to remember that the previously described structure encompassing the school day, and systems in place to identify the needs of the learner form the first level of behaviour support. In getting these systems right the school works to lessen

the fear and anxiety of the individual, demonstrates that it can keep them safe and helps them access education positively, so building self-esteem and learning confidence. As challenging behaviour is often a reaction to an uncertain situation, a young person seeking to gain some control or attention, or a young person expressing that they feel unsafe; by removing or lessening some of these trigger points the likelihood of learners expressing themselves through challenging behaviour decreases.

Being proactive with early intervention

Unwanted behaviour in the classroom occurs across a spectrum from low level, persistent disruption through to violent assault and self-harm. Often, not being proactive in challenging behaviour early enough leads to an escalation that becomes much more difficult to diffuse and manage. Structure, boundaries and expectations all seek to provide a clear definition of what is acceptable and should provide a framework from which to address the behaviour of young people. Knowledge of the young person's needs provides a key to the appropriate methods and tools to be applied. Early intervention within the classroom or around the school relies on staff being organised, vigilant in their supervision and appropriate in their initial level of intervention:

- Always challenge the behaviour and not the individual (assertive discipline)
- Praise appropriate responses and choices
- Allow the young person to take responsibility for their actions
- Allow the young person the opportunity to explain their actions
- Initial intervention should be early but low key
- Offer the young person alternative choices – the “way out”
- Diffusion and distraction early on to refocus the young person on task is vital
- Be clear and assertive in your expectations of young people
- Constant reminders and praise to the class or individual often keep focus on learning

Whilst this list is not exhaustive or applicable to every situation it delivers a constant message in that continual reminder or early intervention can manage lower level behaviour appropriately without it escalating, and without recourse to more restrictive interventions.

Sanctions

All sanctions enacted are recorded on the BehaviourWatch database. Sanctions are employed to encourage learners to resume their learning in a cooperate and expected fashion and are not to be seen as punitive or a threatened attempt to coerce some form of obedience.

At an initial level, the sanction may include deduction of class behaviour points or removal of the reward system. For issues with more gravitas, this may be followed up by formal discussions about how to modify behaviour in order for effective learning to take place.

RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

At times there is a need for staff to physically intervene as a situation deteriorates to a point where the safety of the young person and those around them is brought into doubt. Refer to the school Physical Intervention policy 2023.

THE USE OF FORCE TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN PUPILS

There are occasions when the restraint of pupils is necessary. The powers of teachers and other staff on the use of reasonable force to restrain pupils are clarified by DfEE Circular 10/98 and Welsh Office Circular 37/98.

Teachers and other persons who are authorised by headteachers to have control or charge of pupils, may use 'reasonable force' to prevent pupils from:

- committing a criminal offence, whether or not the pupil concerned has reached the age of criminal responsibility;
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property, including their own property; and
- engaging in any behaviour which has a negative impact on maintaining good order and discipline at the school or on other pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in the classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.

The Government's advice, contained in the above-mentioned circulars, also applies to teachers who have responsibility for special educational needs, including those in special schools and pupil referral units.

COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS

It is the right of every young person to be able to make a complaint about something that has happened to them, and this includes any grievance they may have about the initiation, method or outcomes of any process of behaviour support occurring in the school day.

A young person may wish to make an informal complaint or make use of the formal process, as documented in the Complaints Policy. All complaints should come through the Headteacher in the school day. A young person may ask a member of staff to advocate on their behalf, but the advocate must still come to the Headteacher.

Whilst the details of an informal complaint are not formally recorded, a log note is made of the complaint and its nature. The Headteacher will make enquiries and seek resolution of the matter without recourse to the formal procedure.

If a young person wishes to make a formal complaint this is recorded in the "Complaints Book" held by the Headteacher and a formal investigative procedure is followed and recorded, with timescales for resolution agreed.

Should a complaint contain information that the Headteacher considers a child protection matter the Local Safeguarding Children Board will be notified immediately along with the placing authority representative for that young person and full child protection procedures will be adhered to.

It is the right of every child to have access to an Advocate should they request. The advocate is able to help and empower the young person express their views and wishes where otherwise they might find it difficult to be heard. Should a young person request such representation the school has a duty to ensure that this happens.

REVIEW

This policy and procedures will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure continued compliance with The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014, the Independent School Standards (Wales) 2024 and relevant guidance issued by the DfE and Welsh Government.

This document will be next reviewed on 11/08/2027.