

BASTON HOUSE SCHOOL



BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Summer 2011

Definition

Promoting good behaviour within Baston House School requires the creation and maintenance of a learning environment which allows staff and parents to support pupils in managing their feelings and their behaviour effectively, both at home and at school. It requires that all staff are committed to supporting pupils learning to comply with rules and boundaries expected in education settings and in the world outside. It requires a 'no blame' culture in which 'what works' is what is promoted rather than making self and others wrong. The reason for this is that pupils with autism do not learn or understand the rules and boundaries incidentally as non-autistic people do. If they are burdened with being made wrong by those of us who do understand, their anxiety levels can rise and their ability to process information can break down. We wish to provide clear rules and boundaries and the tools to keep them within an environment where pupils can, over time, learn to develop thought processes and to be able to decide on appropriate courses of action.

Aims

1. The staff at Baston House School aim to ensure that pupils' emotional needs are met.
2. The staff at Baston House School aim to work co-operatively with one another and with parents to use consistent language and responses to challenging and inappropriate behaviour from pupils. This approach ensures an experience of security, trust and autonomy in the learning environment.
3. They aim to provide a consistency of approach which allows pupils to experience and learn clear rules and boundaries and respond appropriately to them.
4. Staff aim to use their training in order to support pupils to make choices about their behaviour and shift the behaviour to one which works.
5. In requiring pupils to make choices about their responses to their own behaviour, staff aim to encourage self reflection and personal responsibility in behaviour management. This supports the development of independence skills.
6. Staff aim to support pupils in clearly identifying what is the cause of their upset. This will support pupils in communicating clearly what has upset them, discussing it, making an effective choice about how to deal with it and putting right any negative results of behaviours which do not work, resolving the situation with whoever has been affected and then moving forward.
7. Through structured teaching programmes staff will help to develop pupils'/students' understanding, knowledge and skill relating to relaxation and calming techniques. The specific teaching programmes enable the pupils/students to learn how to relax, monitor their levels of anxiety and how to return to well being during times of raised levels of anxiety and after extreme upsets.

8. Staff aim to promote the achievement of keeping the expectations of the school by rewarding individual pupils for making choices which work and acknowledging achievement.

9. Through clear communication and supportive structures and expectation pupils learn to take responsibility for their learning and to actively participate within the teaching and learning process. Pupils can learn that they need to comply with reasonable adult requests whilst at school. Parents will be supported in achieving these goals at home.

Guidance/Examples of good practice:

1. i. Each student has an individual Behaviour Support Plan. All staff have access to student's Behaviour Support Plans and this ensures clarity and consistency of approach.

1. ii. The Behaviour Support Plans clearly state strategies employed to manage challenging and inappropriate behaviours that are identified within a behaviour risk assessment. Student behaviour is identified and the consequent staff action and language is stated. Guidance about specific support structures (e.g. individual work stations), rewards and choices (e.g. choosing time or personal organisation checklist), requirements for possible time out of class and any possible need for physical intervention is clearly stated.

1.iii.The Behaviour Support Plan document is discussed and reviewed with the parent/s or carer/s of each student and is agreed and signed by the parent/s or Carer/s, Pupil Support Worker, Group Tutor and Principal.

1. iv. Consistent language describing behavioural expectations are made explicit to all students. 'School Expectations and Consequences' or 'Classroom rules' are clearly displayed within each classroom. These are reviewed at the beginning of each term within individual class groups. A clear choice system is used in order to empower the students in making informed choices in relation to the action they take and consequences they will experience. This is discussed within the context of what works and what does not work in life.

1. v. Baston House School offers a Home/school service to parents. This service ensures that students are supported within a 24 hour curriculum for managing behaviour and experiencing clear rules and boundaries within school and home.

2. i. Try not to say 'No' when referring to a behaviour; always try to say 'stop' preceded by the students name when referring to a student's behaviour.

- Say 'No' in answer to curriculum questions.
- Say 'No' in relation to unacceptable actions e.g. the rule is "rule is No hitting".

2. ii. When supporting a student in stopping a behaviour, always give the student a choice by linking the expectation with the action and the consequence.

- a) For example "The school expectation is 'no verbal abuse'. You can choose to use verbal abuse and explain why you have used it to the Principal at lunch time or you can choose to stop using verbal abuse and go out to play at lunch time".

One choice will be educationally, socially and physically advantageous to the pupils/pupil with an individually positive outcome. The other choice will be a choice which is unacceptable educationally, socially and or physically with an outcome which is less desirable to the pupil.

- b) If further clarity for the student is required (e.g. if the student is experiencing upset and information processing is reduced), staff use two hands out, palms upwards and pointing to one palm staff will say, e.g. "John, you can choose (a) and (b) will happen". They will point to the other palm and say, "or you can choose (c) and (d) will happen".
- c) Working in this way requires staff to know what each pupil's powerful positive and negative reinforcers are. This implies working closely with parents.
- d) If a pupil refuses to choose, staff will say "Not choosing means you are choosing (c) and (d) will happen.
- e) The tone of voice used by staff when offering choices should be neutral but assertive, objective, non judgemental, holding the boundaries and rules and supporting consequences without opinion about the student as an individual.

3. i. If a pupil makes a choice which is not in their self interest such as losing out on play time or special choosing time in class. After this has taken place, the question is posed to the pupil; "Did that work for you?" This relates back to the premise that in our environment there is no right or wrong there is only what works and what does not work. This encourages good behaviour from an objective, non-judgemental point of view where there is an objective space for pupils to develop an understanding of right and wrong.

- a) X behaviour (e.g. taking turns) works because (people feel they are liked, and that they have a contribution to make to the team).
- b) Y behaviour (e.g. not taking turns) does not work because it makes people feel as if they are not liked and that they are not part of a team. In a team we must use empathy. What does empathy mean?
- c) How does X behaviour makes you feel and how does Y behaviour make you feel?

- d) How do you think X behaviour makes A feel and how do you think Y behaviour makes A feel?

In autism empathy and understanding of others' feelings is often absent or incomplete. Being aware of caring for and considering others is vital to developing this as a social skill.

3. ii. When the pupil has reflected on their behaviour and whether it worked or not staff will say "What would have worked?" We have to bear in mind that all the above strategies may need to be repeated many times. Research shows that pupils with language disorder may need to have things repeated to them many times before they understand and can use them. Given the social complexity experienced by people with autism, consistency and repetition of language and approach are even more important.

4. i. A '3 strikes then out' type of strategy, with clarity about consequences, will be promoted throughout the school. For younger pupils, a 'Traffic Light' alternative may be more suitable.

4. ii. Suitable sanctions might include the loss of a preferred activity in its entirety or part thereof.

4. iii. Short, break-time or after-school detention/make-up time periods (in agreement with parents/carers) may be effective.

4. iv Current Rewards and Sanctions.

Rewards

Stickers,

Achievements slips for good work (children tick them off for a big prize)

Effort slips

Notes home

Star of the week and other certificates e.g. most improved.

Thumbs up sheets for computer time or playtime

Sanctions

Time out using a timer

Thumbs down (the children need 8/10 for their reward at the end of the day)

Time off of choosing/playtime

No computer time at the end of the day

Time with Senior Staff to do their work if they have hurt someone or something has been particularly severe.

A note/phone call home

Afterschool detention

Also children collect stickers for completing work. Each sticker during the week is 3 min of golden time. Any unfinished work goes in a tray to be completed during golden time. Any missed stickers means 3 minutes loss of golden time.

Policy written Autumn 2010

Reviewed May 2011

Next Review Autumn 2011