

# Springside School

## Behaviour Policy (Barriers to Learning Policy)



JANUARY 2023

## 1. Introduction

This policy has been written with the UN Convention on Rights of the Child in mind with particular reference to Article 12 (Respect for the Views of the Child), Article 13 (Freedom of Expression), Article 16 (Protection of Privacy) which states:

*'Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.'*

*'Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions.'*

*'Every child has the right to privacy. The law must protect children's privacy, family, home, communications and reputation (or good name) from any attack.'*

At Springside School behaviour means the way in which people conduct themselves which is acceptable to society. At Springside we see this as a barrier to their learning and support learners appropriately. Therefore within daily school life and documents 'behaviour' is referred to as one of the learners' 'Barriers to Learning'.

We believe that the key to this is developing emotional literacy, knowing different emotions, recognising them in yourself and others and knowing how to manage these appropriately. The school strives for everyone within the community to have a growth mindset.

Our policy is written taking account of Government and Local Authority guidelines.

We believe that all people should be valued equally and treated with courtesy and respect. The school believes that it is important to create an environment which promotes and encourages a shared responsibility for ensuring that this takes place.

We believe that to ensure our learners are as independent in their life as possible, the development of their emotional literacy and ability to apply this is crucial. Interwoven throughout the whole school ethos, curriculum and daily school life is work to develop this.

As a special school for learners with learning disabilities and difficulties we have a wide range of abilities to cater for. Many of our learners are working at a level below the level expected for their age and as such expectations regarding their conduct must be modified; profound learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, Autistic Spectrum Conditions, Prader-Willi and many other medical conditions have a direct impact upon how these young people conduct themselves.

Some learners have learned to express themselves and communicate through inappropriate conduct and/or behaviours to gain the attention of a desired individual and in these cases the careful management of their conduct is essential and should be seen as integral part of an individual's Barriers to Learning Plan and Positive Handling Plan.

In other cases, more able learners can display willful behaviour that require a firm and consistent approach commensurate with practice in a mainstream school. Conditions such as ADHD, autistic spectrum conditions, mental health conditions or the impact of medication need to be taken into account regarding the expectations of a young person's conduct and our reactions to this.

Here at Springside we believe that all behaviour is a form of communication. We are always striving to develop our learners to ensure this communication is appropriate and as simple as possible. Nevertheless, there are occasions where our learners require different levels support as they develop these skills.

It is recognised that the school and those who care for the learner outside of school, need to work closely together in order to help learners to learn what is appropriate and acceptable behaviour both in and out of school.

Parents/ carers have a crucial role to play in this partnership, including:

- agreeing the expectations of learner behaviour in the school policy, and encouraging their child/ren to accept the school's expectations for themselves;
- supporting individual behaviour programmes, e.g. assessment, re-enforcement of agreed targets, contributing towards agreed rewards and consequences;
- reporting concerns to school;
- encouraging their child/ren to be successful and praising their achievements;
- adhering to school procedures regarding visitors to school, which are designed to protect learners whilst they are on school premises;
- being informed about interventions such as Water Play and Wilderness Therapy alongside the school's work on Peer Massage, Team Teach and the Th.Inc. room principles.

We take any incidents of inequality, bullying, racism, homophobia or sexism seriously and will investigate and act upon these appropriately. If parents have any concerns, please contact the learner's class teacher or a member of the senior leadership team to discuss them.

In School, the class teacher is responsible for the general welfare and behaviour of individual learners. All staff are kept informed within school of any incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Activities for which a learner can be praised and rewarded will be made known through certificate assemblies. The class teacher has day to day contact with parents regarding individual learners, and this can be through telephone calls, letters home, a home/school book or via email.

## **2. Aims**

We aim to:

- Create an environment in which all learners feel happy, safe and secure enough to express themselves and without fear of making mistakes.
- Promote positive and appropriate behaviour to create a stress-free environment in which everyone feels valued and secure;
- Create an environment in which the focus is on developing the emotional literacy of learners.
- Support the holistic development of learners alongside those who care for them outside of school.

### **3. Objectives**

We will do this by:

- Role modelling the language and actions associated with different emotions.
- Treating all members of the learning community equally with respect.
- Encouraging learners to be as independent as possible in all aspects of their life.
- Using agreed strategies that can be replicated outside of school by those who care for them.
- Having high but realistic expectations of all learners and each other as professionals.
- Supporting learners to develop their emotional literacy and learn how to manage their emotions as independently as possible.
- Supporting learners to develop appropriate ways to communicate.
- Supporting learners to manage their own behaviour and to accept responsibility for it, using a range of appropriate methods.
- Raising learner self-esteem through encouraging and enabling them to recognise and be proud of their achievements.
- Writing Individual Barriers to Learning and Positive Handling Plans as needs arise; these will always either be written in collaboration with or approved by a member of the Leadership Team. These plans also act as a risk assessment and the class teacher is ultimately responsible for ensuring these are up to date, including new behaviours and responses. As a school we now place a greater emphasis on Post Incident Learning, to encourage the independence of learners, in relation to developing their behaviour choices. Where appropriate parents and other professionals will be involved in drawing up this programme and monitoring progress.

- Termly parental progress meetings are arranged to facilitate the sharing of individual plans alongside other pertinent progress information. It is recognised that each learner has different needs and consequently any agreed system of school consequences must be flexible enough to respond to those needs. As a school we do not impose punishments, instead we encourage the application of consequences, this ensures they are directly linked to the behaviour and encourages the learner to learn from this.
- Identifying the main barrier to a learners' learning. This is then matched to which area of learning in the curriculum it fits into and this becomes a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) outcome to ensure we are continually working to remove these barriers and ensure our learners curriculum is focussed around their individual priority area of learning. For example, if a learner finds transitioning a challenge, the staff are required to identify why this is and strategies to support this. This should then be worked on in the learners' PLP and a Barriers to learning plan (BLP) should detail the support required at each point.
- Referring a learner for interventions whereby it is felt they would benefit from an identified intervention to support their progress.
- Writing a 'whole class' behavioural overview outlining any risks staff supporting learners on an infrequent basis may need to be aware of. These staff would not be expected to lead the management of this behaviour but support colleagues.

#### **4. Implementation**

Via meetings all staff are aware of learner needs/difficulties and are consistent in approach to each learner. All staff are to be aware of individual behaviour programmes and help to maintain/fulfil targets where learners are helped across school. Appropriate behaviour is encouraged via praise, rewards and sanctions – in classes and across school. Interventions, consistent approaches, Team Teach and the Th.Inc. Room procedures will be used across school to aid behaviour.

Staff are expected to have a good level of understanding and supporting of 'behaviour'. This is further developed through working with experienced and skilled colleagues, as well as formal and informal CPD.

Staff should use their knowledge to help learners' understanding of their emotions and how to manage them. As a result, we have now developed our behaviour plans, communication passports, recording form for significant incidents and the content of personal learning plans.

Individual Behaviour plans are referred to as Barriers to learning Plans and Positive Handling Plans. These are written as required for each learner. Within school the majority of learners in school will have a Barriers to learning plan. This is a simplified form that looks at their barriers to learning. In this we ask staff to identify what behaviour learner exhibits to communicate, what 'triggers' this, how we think they are feeling at this time and how we can

help them to recognise this emotion and what strategy they can use to manage this emotion. Staff focus on long term approaches that ultimately allow the learner to have strategies they can use themselves without being reliant on adults to intervene to manage these emotions for them.

To further support this the communication passports (the one-page document that shares how learners communicate) now also includes a section on how the learner learns best.

### **School Environment and Ethos**

It is important that the school environment reflects the fact that people are valued. This is achieved by careful attention to wall displays which are attractive, and include learner work and photographs; a welcoming reception area; procedures for ensuring visitors to school report to reception thereby protecting the safety and security of people in school.

It is also important that the school premises are maintained and cared for to a high standard so that learners and staff can feel proud of their school and want to contribute personally to this quality environment.

### **Planned opportunities for celebrating achievement**

All school procedures designed to encourage appropriate behaviour in school, are based on the belief that people wish to be successful in what they do. We want the learners to be proud of themselves for their doing the best they can do. Springside School plans opportunities to celebrate learner achievement, and these include:

- class systems of praise and reward
- weekly assemblies when learners are awarded certificates for achievements
- involvement in extra special events
- Termly progress meetings where parents are invited to celebrate the progress and achievements of learners.

## **5. Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Class teachers will assess learners' behaviour and record in general by identifying the main barrier to a learners' learning; before matching this to which area of learning in the curriculum it fits into and this becomes a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) outcome. These are assessed on an ongoing basis and reviewed at least termly with the assessment lead and parents/ carers.

Barriers to learning Plans and Positive Handling plans are updated as and when required but are reviewed at least once a term by class teachers and their teams.

For learners who receive interventions they will receive an additional assessment to further determine the impact of this.

Class teachers will report to parents via Annual Review Reports, Review Meetings and Parents' progress meetings. If individual needs arise Individual Behaviour Programmes will be written and parents will become involved with this procedure. Parent/ carers views and

circumstances will always be taken into consideration to ensure consistent approaches can be used wherever possible.

For those learners that have previously required physical intervention from staff to keep them and others safe or for those who it is felt this is a foreseeable risk, these learners will also require Positive handling plans.

In addition, following any incident whereby a learner/ adult is placed at risk a Barriers to Learning plan and Positive Handling Plan must be written by the class teacher and class team to detail how they will reduce the risk of the incident reoccurring.

Where a learner has hurt themselves or others or has displayed a behaviour which the staff feel may require support, staff record this on CPOMS.

Staff also record any incidents requiring the use of reasonable force staff on a 'use of reasonable force' form. These are then uploaded electronically to CPOMS.

This information in these forms is used to feed back into the updating of plans to ensure we are continually looking to adapt our support of the learners when incidents occur.

This area, as do many other areas of our work, requires judgment. We do not want staff to spend undue time filling in unnecessary paperwork at the expense of looking after the learners. However, staff need to understand that recording incidents safeguards them as well as the learners.

When recording the use of reasonable force staff will follow these points;

- Record the incident on CPOMS asap.
- Inform a member of the leadership team asap.
- Consider the effectiveness of the learner's Barriers to Learning and Positive Handling Plan (if previously in place) and amend/ write the plan if necessary.
- A record of communication with parents/carers to inform of incident
- A record of medical examination/ first aid (checking for accidental bruising/scratching)

Any incident which could be open to misinterpretation or place staff in a position where they could be vulnerable to allegations should be recorded on CPOMS. If a learner or member of staff is unusually distressed by an incident, or the learner and/or family, has a history of problematic relationships, it is safer for the incident to be recorded on CPOMS.

## **6. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Again, monitoring and evaluation will take place via PLP's, Barriers to Learning and Positive Handling Plans. Class planning meetings will address joint professional discussion on behaviour attended by a member of the Leadership/ Barriers to Learning team if appropriate. School also seek the support of CAMHS and Occupational Therapy to help monitor and support work with learners as required.

## **Addendum to support the safe return of all stakeholders to Springside after COVID-19 Lockdown**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the latest Government guidelines, these are regularly changing. The Government guidelines for social distancing and all health and safety advice override the guidance contained within this policy. For all learners who require Barriers to Learning and particularly, Positive Handling Plans, Government guidance must be considered when these are written. If the use of reasonable force is considered likely and a regular occurrence for that learner this will be considered alongside the whole school risk assessment to decide if they are safe to be taught in school. For learners who display specific behaviours, known to increase the risk of infection to others (e.g. spitting) then additional PPE must be worn and/ or the learner may be educated remotely to reduce the risk to an acceptable level for all.

*Reference should also be made to:*

- *Keeping children safe in education 2022*  
(Department for Education, 2022)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1101454/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2022.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf)
- *Behaviour and discipline in Schools – A Guide for Head Teachers and School Staff*  
(Department for Education, 2022)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1101597/Behaviour\\_in\\_schools\\_guidance\\_sept\\_22.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101597/Behaviour_in_schools_guidance_sept_22.pdf)
- *Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention*  
(HM Government, 2019)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/812435/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812435/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention.pdf)
- *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years*  
(Department for Education and Department for Health, 2015)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)
- *Use of reasonable force*  
(Department for Education, 2013)



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