

Policy	Behaviour Policy
Last reviewed on	December 2024
Next review date	December 2025
Approval level	Governing body
Ratification Date	10.12.24

Therapeutic Behaviour Policy

Wheatfields therapeutic behaviour policy should act as the plan for the majority of children. In addition to this, some children may require a Therapeutic Plan or a Risk Reduction Plan to formalise strategies that differentiate from the main policy. Others may need a more flexible approach at times of anxiety and change or in specific circumstances. The therapeutic approach prioritises why the child is displaying anti-social or dangerous behaviour(s) and how they are feeling. It seeks to support change through the use of a restorative approach.

Our policy is underpinned by the principles of **Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking**.

Positive experiences create positive feelings.
Positive feelings create positive behaviour.

Aims of this policy and the therapeutic approach at Wheatfields Primary school

- To promote the inseparable link between teaching, learning and behaviour.
- To improve staff confidence in applying a therapeutic approach within their class dynamic
- To support the inclusion of all pupils
- To ensure the environment remains positive for all learners
- To reduce suspensions and avoid permanent exclusions
- To provide consistency for all adults at Wheatfields with how best to support pupils
- To provide pupils with what they need to succeed in their learning.
- To model and promote pro-social behaviours

How we teach positive behaviour at Wheatfields

We teach behaviour by:

- Investing in relationships with children at the start of their school journey - children should want to do something because of the quality of their relationship with you. The more you know about the child, the more therapeutic you can be.
- Not using external discipline: this is when behaviour is controlled by threats or bribery, etc. External discipline is controlling behaviour.
- Supporting children in creating internal discipline by prioritising pro-social behaviours, offering supportive feedback, recognition, comfort and forgiveness. Internal discipline is teaching behaviour to create change, not simply suppressing the behaviour.
- Being positive role-models, this is essential – for example: we have to model to children how to 'play nicely' by playing with them
- Offering consistency, not equality. We see the child as an individual and take that into account when making any decision
- Having clear routines which reassure children and help them to be successful. We are flexible with our thinking always referring to individual circumstances.
- Prioritising pro-social behaviour: praising the positive behaviour of someone near the target child, giving more attention to the child when they are exhibiting pro-social behaviour not anti-social or dangerous behaviour. It is used extensively to provide children with a model of more appropriate behaviour.
- Offering rewards (dojo points, verbal praise) and positive reinforcement, this should be given freely and unexpectedly, **not as a form of bribery or consequence.**

- By giving feedback and recognition when something has not been asked for. We don't just celebrate the things that are expected but celebrate the attempt too.
- Displaying comfort and forgiveness. We do this to ensure the child understands that they are not a 'bad child'. We do not leave children to sit in 'shame' but use opportunities to support the child in learning and moving forward
- Ignoring unsocial and low-level behaviours. We give time for unsocial behaviour to stop –we do not give attention to these behaviours. We use distraction as a way of helping the child move away from these undesired behaviours.
- Using positive language to tell children what we would like to see, not what we don't want to see e.g. *Please walk* rather than *don't run*
- Using a restorative justice approach. We follow up the behaviour, it's impact and consequences at the appropriate time, **after** regulation has taken place and we provide strategies for further occurrences. Restorative approaches refer to a range of methods and strategies which can be used both to prevent relationship-damaging incidents from happening and to resolve them if they do happen. We offer the child an opportunity to sit with an adult and discuss the incident, allow time to reflect, model empathy and offer support to the child.
- We support the development of children's internal discipline from external discipline. We use an approach based on self-direction and self-motivation to replace control measures such as bribery, punishment and control.
- We do not use emotion charts publicly, traffic light systems or names/marks on the board. We firmly believe that shame is a damaging emotion that can have far reaching negative effects on children's emotional development. Sometimes children truly cannot change what is being shamed. We all make mistakes despite our best efforts, and some children are more sensitive or introverted than others. Shaming may make children feel like they cannot change, it can affect their self-esteem in ways that can become ingrained and permanent. Rather than motivating them, it may make them feel like they aren't capable.

'You can't teach children to behave better by making them feel worse. When children feel better, they behave better' Pam Leo

Parents/carers should be assured that all staff follow this policy and apply the rationale behind it in all situations. Children and their parents/carers will not be explicitly made aware of the educational or protective factors that have been put in place for other children demonstrating anti-social or dangerous behaviours.

Please see the appendices and supporting documents for more information on how the policy is applied, responsibilities of stakeholders and definitions of behaviour.