



Promoting Positive Relationships & Understanding Distressed Behaviour Policy

Rationale

“All behaviour is communication...children and young people particularly Additional Support Needs or disabilities may display anxiety or distress though behaviour that presents to adults as challenging.” (No Safe Place, 2018)

Research has shown that a positive ethos based on mutual trust and respect has a positive impact on improving learning and behaviour (The Scottish Government and Scottish Advisory Group on Behaviour in Schools – SAGBIS, 2012)

Where children and young people feel safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included, they are more likely to develop self-confidence and resilience.

Staff Responsibility

All staff have a responsibility to be proactive in Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour particularly in relation to the Health and Wellbeing component of Curriculum for Excellence including:

- Establishing open, positive and supportive relationships
- Promoting a climate in which all children and young people feel safe and secure
- Modelling behaviour which promotes health and wellbeing and encouraging it in others
- Being self-aware
- Using learning and teaching methodologies which promote effective learning
- Being sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each child and young person

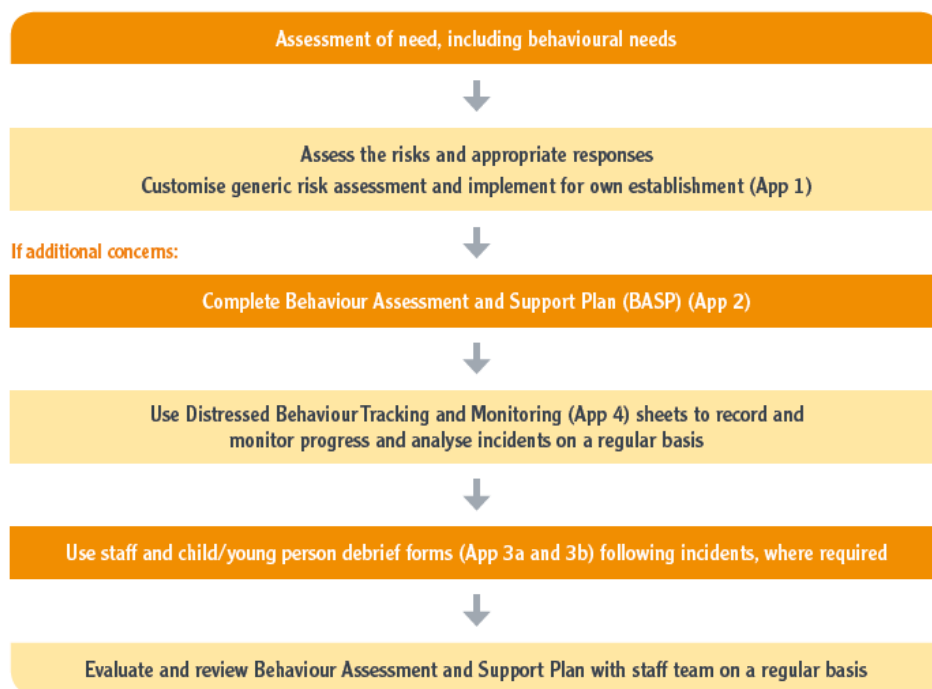
“better relationships, better learning, better behaviour” (2013)

Staged Intervention

St. Patrick's Primary school recognise its responsibility to keep everyone safe and also acknowledges that some children and young people can, for a variety of reasons, present significant concerns in relation to their behaviour.

There is evidence to support that early identification of behavioural needs, linked to early and appropriate intervention, can substantially reduce the risk of persistent difficulties, disruptions and possible exclusion from education.

The following process should be implemented to achieve early identification and support:



If the behaviour or the health and safety concerns are not fully addressed by measured within the generic risk assessment, a Behaviour Assessment and Support Plan (BASP) may be completed to reflect the child or young person's particular needs. Where a pupil's behaviour is causing concern consideration should be given to involving Psychological Services in a school assessment of the pupil.

De-escalation Techniques

Where children or young people are displaying signs of anxiety, tension or distress they should be dealt with empathetically. It is important for staff not just to respond to the behaviour, but to consider the feelings and needs behind the behaviour. Seeking an explanation for the signs of tension or distressed behaviour may often be helpful in preventing a situation reaching a crisis point. It is important to recognise that external factors, such as feeling unwell or circumstances at home or school can lead to heightened anxiety and distressed behaviour. To help prevent situations from escalating, unacceptable behaviour should be addressed in a calm, firm manner. It is essential to maintain a controlled, calm atmosphere.

The de-escalation strategies used can often be helpful in diffusing a situation. The strategy used with take into consideration the child or young person's age, stage, level of understanding, any relevant medical information, knowledge of the child or young person and our working relationship with them.

Strategies that could be used include:

- Seeking to understand what the child or young person is communicating by the behaviours
- Talking quietly and calmly to the child or young person
- Allowing children and young people time to think, and to make a choice
- Giving children and young people the opportunity to explain their perspective – active listening
- Redirecting attention to positive activities

- Providing personal space
- Removing others from the vicinity
- Setting limits in a non-confrontational way
- Planned ignoring of inappropriate low level behaviour and positive reinforcement of acceptable behaviour
- Allowing time out
- Involving another adult who has a positive relationship with the child or young person
- Using restorative conversation as an opportunity to repair relationships
- Allowing each day to be a 'new day'

Managing Crisis Behaviour

All staff within St. Patrick's School will follow procedures outlined within SLC Guidelines for Establishments – Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour.

Reporting Incidents

In the first instance distressed behaviour must be reported to the management team for action, support and investigation. This may also be recorded in the pastoral notes. (SEEMiS)

Operating procedure A30 will be followed to report violent incidents.

Duty of Care

As detailed in the Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour Managements Arrangements, it is only acceptable to physically intervene with a child or young person where the member of staff reasonably believes in all the circumstances that if he/she does not physically intervene with the child/young person, the child/young person's actions are likely to cause physical damage or harm to that child or young person or another person.

Members of staff should avoid physically intervening with children and young people unless that intervention is reasonable, appropriate and necessary in all the circumstances. Any physical intervention should use minimum possible force for the shortest possible time appropriate to the circumstances. The use of physical intervention should be a last resort for staff.

Section 16 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 establishes that where anything is done for reasons which include averting –

- a) An immediate danger of personal injury to; or
- b) An immediate danger the property of, any person (including the pupil concerned)

those actions are not to be taken to be corporal punishment (corporal punishment being unlawful if given by, or on the authority of, a member of staff to pupil).

The decision as to whether it is reasonable, appropriate and necessary for a member of staff to physically intervene with a child or young person in any circumstances must be taken by staff on a case by case basis, always having regard to the duty of care that they owe.

Debrief forms

Following a distressing incident, it is essential that an immediate discussion takes place to check on the care and welfare of the member of staff and child/young person.

Management will ensure that appropriate support is provided to employees who are involved in distressed behaviour incidents.

A debriefing discussion should also take place with the child/young person to promote positive, child-centred approaches.

South Lanarkshire Council

South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources' approaches for establishments on promoting positive understanding behaviour are set out in the following documents that are followed within our establishment.

- Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour – Approaches and Strategies for Understanding and Dealing with Distressed Behaviour Poster
- Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour – Distressed Behaviour Management Arrangements
- Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour – Supporting Documents

These reflect the key policy drivers of the Scottish Government including:

- Getting It Right For Every Child
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Included, Engaged and Involved, Part 2: A Positive Approach to Preventing and Managing School Exclusions (2017)
- The Education (Additional Support for Learning)(Scotland) Act 2004, as amended
- Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research (2012)
- “better relationships, better learning, better behaviour” (2013)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act, 2014
- Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People (2017)
- National Improvement Framework
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991)