

Reviewed: August 2023

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Introduction

The key role of The Northumberland Pupil Referral Unit is to support children who are displaying significant and complex behavioural, social, emotional and mental health challenges that results in them being unable to attend mainstream provisions. We strive to meet the needs of all pupils and enable all pupils within our care to make progress. All children have a right to learn and all teachers have a right to teach. In order to ensure that this occurs, our ideal is to use positive, preventative behaviour management strategies. An individual's behaviours will be prioritised through planned intervention and adherence to the guidance within the policy, to ensure that the consequences for behaviour are specific and limited.

Northumberland Pupil Referral Unit is clear in the expectation that all staff will maintain a duty of care and promote the best interests of all pupils. Alongside an ethos intrinsic to the school that children are supported and encouraged to demonstrate positive behaviour, there is a recognition that there will be situations when teaching staff will be required to exercise reasonable control to prevent a high risk situation escalating. Everybody is responsible for the safety of our pupils and there may be occasions when it is necessary for all trained staff to intervene to safeguard the welfare of a child where their behaviour places themselves, other pupils or adults at risk. (See Positive Handling Policy).

Where negative or inappropriate behaviour occurs there is a clear, fair and consistent set of strategies to follow.

In conjunction with this, we recognise that the quality of teaching, assessment and monitoring are essential in producing high standards of behaviour, as is working with parents/carers and other agencies.

Aims

Our overall aim in the management of behaviour is to create an environment of mutual trust and respect, where children's self-esteem is raised and they learn how to make progress.

Our priority is to promote positive behaviour by:

- Creating an atmosphere in which children feel safe and secure, both physically and emotionally
- Ensuring High Quality (Quality First) teaching.
- Providing provision of a stimulating, challenging and relevant curriculum matched to individual needs
- Developing a sense of self-discipline and helping children take responsibility for their actions and develop their emotional regulation skills
- Increase a children's understanding of the relationship between actions and consequences

- Strengthen their emotional literacy and increase their feelings of self-worth
- Helping children develop social skills and build resilience
- Dealing with unacceptable behaviour promptly, fairly, consistently and in a structured and predictable way
- Working cooperatively and collaboratively with parents/carers and other professionals

The Behaviour Policy reflects and underpins the ethos, principles and philosophy of Northumberland Pupil Referral Unit. The staff and pupils regularly discuss the standard of behaviour expected of all who use the PRU. Formal rules within the PRU are few in number and are based on the ethos of promoting mutual respect for all those using the PRU. A clear and consistent system of rewards and consequences are in place and made clear to all staff and pupils and parents.

This Policy and our behaviour management strategy are written with these core beliefs and aims in mind:

- **A consistent approach to behaviour management:** Behaviour is addressed as a whole school issue with clear and explicit boundaries. Certainty and inevitability will be created around the process (consistency). Behaviour management strategies and consequences will be applied on a continuum from least to most intrusive.
- **Clear and defined leadership:** SLT take a lead role in supporting the maintenance of expected behaviour standards and are effective at sharing their expertise to improve behaviour. They will be skilled at communicating with a range of staff and pupils; monitoring and identifying training needs; and responding to higher level/frequency of behaviour.
- **Quality classroom management, learning and teaching:** Teachers will plan and prepare lessons which are lively and challenging, and engage and motivate pupils to learn. Good quality teaching and learning is an intrinsic part of positive behaviour management, rather than using 'quick fix' approaches; Teachers have key responsibility in lessons to provide a quality learning environment and differentiated, inclusive curriculum. They will operate the agreed behaviour management system, using a rising hierarchy of responses. The school recognises that effective teaching and learning and consistent classroom management are critical to promoting good behaviour and limiting opportunities for disengagement amongst pupils. Guidance and support for staff in these areas is provided via class staff de-brief, feedback on regular lesson observations, monitoring of pupil progress and targets.
- **Use of behaviour strategies and the teaching of positive behaviour:** All staff will be positive role models and constantly reinforce the behaviours we are striving to promote. Ways to handle situations will be embedded in all teaching but will also be explicitly taught and identified during whole school and individual CPD at least once per academic year. Opportunities will be in-built into the structure for pupils to learn from situations as they arise, for example through class discussions, restorative justice or circle time.
- **Staff development and support:** All permanent staff will be provided with Team Teach training which will be refreshed routinely as required. Coaching observations will be used to identify areas for development or highlight areas of expertise that can be shared amongst colleagues. Good practice will be recognised and mutual support encouraged. Regular supervision will be provided by the by the SLT as necessary.
- **Liaison with parents and other agencies:** We are committed to engaging with parents/carers and building an honest partnership. We ensure parents/carers understand their own responsibilities in respect of their child's behaviour and support the school's behaviour policy. In return, we offer support to parents by making ourselves available to listen, helping with ideas and strategies to manage difficult behaviour at home and

signposting to other agencies. Parents/carers are involved right from the beginning of a pupil's referral to the school and throughout the whole process. Communication with parents/carers is frequent and is done through telephone calls and regular review meetings. Other professionals are involved on a needs basis. The school 'promotes' the concept of a team around the child (or family) when appropriate.

- **Managing pupil transition:** A structured reintegration process is in place to manage children's transition from the PRU to mainstream or special school. Schedules are both gradual and personalised to the child's strengths.
- **Rewards and consequences:** At the PRU, our ethos is that the reward and sanction approach is not effective in motivating pupils to reflect on their actions or behaviours. Current research emphasises the negative implications of giving vulnerable individuals sanctions. However, we place a strong emphasis on the positive reinforcement and "catching children being good" i.e. the vast majority of the interactions are focused on what people do well, rather than the mistakes they make. There is an emphasis on the systematic teaching of behavioural and social skills (and learning through play in lower school). All staff focus on proactive prevention and behaviour management strategies along a continuum (least to most intrusive). Nevertheless, there is accountability when boundaries are crossed.

De-escalation Strategies

All permanent staff have under-taken Team Teach training. The emphasis of this training is heavily towards de-escalation techniques. To this end we always endeavor to prevent escalation of high-level behaviour. The following list is some of the techniques used by the staff at Northumberland Pupil Referral Unit:

- Calm voice
- Calm stance
- Respect for personal space
- Reminding children of their successes
- Reminding children of their choices
- Giving children time to think about their choices
- Using a sand timer so children 'see' the time available
- Offering child access to an alternative adult (when appropriate)
- Offering an option of going to a thinking area (outside of class, intervention suite)
- Offering an option of 'a thinking walk', typically outside

This list is not exhaustive and individual staff will bring their own personal skills and qualities to each situation.

The promotion of positive behaviour

Staff work as a team to promote and model the desired behaviours expected of all pupils. They use a positive approach reinforcing appropriate behaviours. They ensure that pupils are aware of and have a clear understanding of the expectations of behaviour. Staff provide situations where social activities enable pupils to further learn and practice appropriate behaviour e.g. breaks and lunch times.

Staff act as mediators by encouraging children to reflect on their actions and words to learn to resolve conflicts amicably and look for shared solutions.

Staff work as a team to support each other and pupils by:

- recognising achievements
- using specific praise for success
- help with problem solving
- addressing unacceptable behaviour swiftly and consistently

Regular formal and informal staff meetings ensure all staff are regularly informed about issues general to all pupils or specific to individual pupils, thus enabling a consistent and shared approach to behaviour management from all staff.

Staff work hard to build positive relationships with all pupils. This is essential in order that pupils feel secure in the knowledge that relationships with staff will remain positive and respectful following incidents of

inappropriate behaviour thus enabling the pupil to “get back on track” and move on. To this end it is also important that staff foster the belief in pupils that it is “ok” to make mistakes and that they can be part of a learning process and not the end of the world. Staff are proactive. Pupils are taught and regularly reminded that they are responsible for managing their behaviour through the choices they make. Conversely they are encouraged to understand that they are responsible for the consequences of the choices they make.

Consequences

As stated above, we always aim to focus on the positive, but there will be times when poor behaviour occurs and so there has to be a clear, logical, well planned structure for dealing with such situations.

It is essential that all children, parents and staff understand this framework and its consequences. At all times the intention of the policy is to keep all members of our school community safe, stop unacceptable behaviour and allow for the pupil to recover, to learn from mistakes and take responsibility for their choices and to modify his/her behaviour.

Each member of staff must operate within the framework and there is an expectation that the Teacher and HLTA/Learning Support Assistants are responsible for a large part of the classroom behaviour management. Children must not be removed from classes for trivial reasons or sent out to work for unnecessarily extended periods of the lesson. *However*, when students do persistently disturb the progress of their peers or make the working conditions of the teacher unacceptable or unsafe, or are involved in a one-off serious event, then the responsibility for the behaviour management moves to Senior Leadership level.

Staff should use their skills and expertise to reduce conflict and incidents where consequences are needed. Whilst the consequences outlined below and the level of support given to pupils will resolve most situations, they may not be appropriate to resolve problems of violent/abusive behaviour.

Intervention Rooms

These are the smallest learning spaces in the school and is commonly used for 1:1 teaching sessions, small groups work, therapeutic intervention support sessions and meetings. Intervention rooms are purposefully sparse and less stimulating than the main learning areas to allow for such flexibility. We aim to use these spaces positively and not as a negative consequence for behaviour. It provides pupils with time to reflect on incidents and discuss positive steps to move forward.

On rare occasions, upon the agreement of the Headteacher, a child may be taught in the intervention room in isolation from their peers but under the supervision of a member of staff.

The intervention room will only be used to isolate a child in the following circumstances:

- ~ as an alternative to a fixed-term exclusion
- ~ to keep the pupil safe from deliberate harm
- ~to prevent deliberate harm to others
- ~if all other efforts to prevent disruption to the orderly running of the school have been unsuccessful

A child will only be taught in isolation until it is evident they are safe to return to class without further disruption.

A child working in the intervention room will still be able to eat school dinner and use the toilet and have routine breaks.

Structure of consequences

For the structure to work it is essential that consistency and flexibility work in harmony: **When a particular misdemeanor takes place an identified consequence or range of consequences must follow. The identified consequence is not open to negotiation or debate. This is the key area of consistency.** Once the consequence has taken place it is up to the member(s) of staff concerned to decide upon an appropriate ‘follow-up’ strategy with each child’s case being viewed in an individual sense. This is the key area of flexibility’.

Initial strategy for addressing low level behavioural incidents

All staff will use the same type of language, reinforce expectations and remind the pupil of their choices and potential consequences. Staff must ascertain that the pupil knows what is expected of them by repeating the instruction clearly and checking for understanding and clarifying what happens should they choose not reach those expectations. Staff must use a range of low level behaviour management strategies and allow the child one minute to consider their choices before proceeding if necessary.

Staff should never attempt to embarrass, ridicule or provoke pupils.

Deflection, humour, distraction and limited short term planned ignoring are all possible strategies to avoid conflict and de-escalate negative interactions.

Consequences

Pupils sometimes need consequences for their actions. This prepares them for living in a wider community and promotes self-awareness and self-regulation.

Consequences are agreed with pupils and personalised for their individual needs. SLT discuss consequence ladders with group teachers to ascertain the most effective strategy for their learners. These actions are then clearly recorded on Risk Assessments and/ or All About Me documents to ensure consistency. This approach is necessary due to the range of age groups and individual needs of learners. A "one size fits all" policy would be ineffective and unachievable. All behavioural incidents will be logged on CPOMS daily to provide a detailed record of behaviour for each pupil.

Serious incidents

Staff will produce a detailed report (serious incident proforma) of the incident including the build-up to the event. The Head and SLT will discuss the matter with all parties involved and consider the evidence before making a decision about an appropriate consequence and how amends should be made. The outcome will be recorded in detail and discussed with parents/carers.

Such consequences may include:

- **Loss of playtime/outdoor activities:** may occur following any behaviour which the Head Teacher deems to pose a significant risk to the welfare of other pupils and staff.
- **Withdrawal of access to the school IT system:** if the pupil misuses it by, for example, deliberately accessing an inappropriate website, in breach of our Acceptable Users Policy signed upon admission.
- **Exclusion from off-site activities:** exclusion from off-site activities is an extremely serious consequence which we expect to use very rarely. It will only occur following any behaviour which the Head Teacher deems to pose a significant risk to the welfare of other pupils and staff.
- **Financial recompense:** parents/carers are expected to agree to support this consequence, applied in response to deliberate damage to school property, or damage as a result of reckless behaviour. Parents/Carers will be made aware of this upon admission and will be contacted for recompense should the need occur.
- **Fixed-term internal suspension:** Internal Exclusion is an extremely serious consequence, which we expect to use very rarely. It may occur following a serious threat of danger which poses a significant risk to the welfare of other pupils, or repeated high-level disruption of teaching and learning when the pupil has chosen not to respond to less intrusive consequences.
- **Fixed-term external suspension:** This will always be a last resort and only evoked when all else fails. The school will strive to avoid exclusion at all cost.

Protocols

Referral to the Headteacher or SLT is **to be used for emergency purposes only**, whereby the continued presence of the pupil will significantly prevent the lesson from progressing or the pupil involved is refusing to adhere to the exit strategy of the class.

Staff should avoid calling for support in the first few minutes of any lesson. Normal classroom teacher's sanctions should apply, particularly for pupils who arrive late.

In the main, SLT should only be used for the following:

- repeated refusal to comply with school rules
- offensive language/behaviour towards staff
- refusal to adhere to the 'remove' procedure of the relevant group
- issues related to potential/actual violence
- drug (including alcohol) concerns
- students removing themselves from lessons

Any of these incidents may result in the pupil being withdrawn from lessons for a period of time. In some circumstances it may be necessary for the pupil to be sent home.

Staff requesting the use of SLT are **expected to deal with the original incident** and to document it. The use of SLT is not an end in itself and must be followed up by an appropriate consequence and documented. If it is not – nothing has been done to deal with the issue and in most cases it will continue to reoccur in the future because the child has seen that nothing has happened to them.

The Behaviour Policy is underpinned by consequences. There are consequences, applied on a sliding scale (see above) Pupils may be directed to leave a classroom if their behaviour is becoming disruptive to teaching and learning and spend time with support within an intervention suite.

Parents and pupils are informed on their pre-admission visit of the occasions when physical intervention may be necessary in the PRU. Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgment of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances. All permanent staff at the PRU have regular Team Teach training and are skilled in their use of both de-escalation strategies and knowledge of how to hold a child in a way which minimises risk of harm to the child and themselves.

However, the emphasis for addressing inappropriate behaviour is one of support and prevention rather than punishment. Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility for their actions and the choices they make. Staff remind pupils of the expectations of behaviour and of the consequences for actions including the consequences that will apply.

Consequences applied depend on the severity of the behaviour the pupil is displaying. Where teaching and learning is being disrupted the pupil may be isolated from peers for a short period of time or until they are ready to return and behave appropriately; where work is not being completed then this may need to be completed during break times or after school.

In extreme or very difficult cases where all strategies tried by PRU staff have failed to impact positively on the behaviour of a child then fixed term exclusions would be used to enable PRU staff to consult with other professional agencies e.g. Educational psychologists, educational welfare officers, CYPS etc and parents in order to formulate the best way to support the child and address their needs. A meeting will be arranged with parents/ carers and pupil on return from a FTE to discuss and address the incident/ s relating to the exclusion to identify ways forward to prevent a repeat of the behaviours.

FTE should only be used if there will be a positive impact on the pupil receiving this consequence or it is unsafe to have the pupil on site.

The ultimate sanction of Permanently Excluding a pupil would only be used in the most extreme circumstances when every other strategy had failed or when the safety of others in the PRU were at risk. The decision would be made by the Headteacher in consultation with other staff and the Management Committee.

Searching Pupils suspected of having Prohibited Items

All Northumberland PRU students are scanned upon arrival to the site each school day. This is used as a safeguarding mechanism. Students are requested to place all mobile phones and drinks in a sealed envelope which is stored securely on site and returned to students at the end of each school day on exit from the site.

If it is suspected that a pupil has brought a serious 'prohibited item' into school the pupil will be asked to hand such item over to a senior member of staff, in the presence of an additional member of staff as a witness. If the child refuses to hand items over the pupil will be asked for permission to search their bags and outdoor clothing. Should the pupil refuse then the Head reserves the right to search bags and outdoor clothing without consent. This job may be delegated to another member of staff by the Head and will always take place in the presence of an additional member of staff who will act as a witness.

If staff have good reason to believe that a pupil may be carrying prohibited items about their person, and the pupil refuses to co-operate with staff by handing items over, then the school reserves the right to use reasonable force whilst a search takes place. However, if it is suspected that the pupil is carrying illegal items, a weapon or any other dangerous item, likely to cause harm to staff or the pupil during a restraint, then the search will be conducted by the police to reduce risk of harm.

Prohibited items which can be searched for are:

- 1) Knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items; and
 - 2) Tobacco and cigarette papers, vapes, fireworks and pornographic images,
 - 3) Mobile devices, hand held technology, Smart Watches,
 - 4) Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property.
- This is clearly shared with parents' carers during induction.

Violence and bullying behaviours

Physical and verbal aggression is totally unacceptable. Everyone at the PRU has the right to feel safe and secure and all incidents of violence will be dealt with bearing this in mind.

Northumberland Pupil Referral Unit have adopted an educational approach towards bullying behaviours. Our aim is to educate pupils and remove a culture of blame.

Parents/carers will always be informed if their child has been physically aggressive towards other pupils or staff or if they have been involved in a bullying behaviours incident. (*see Anti-Bullying Policy, August 2022*)

Parents/Carers

Parental support for the behaviour policy of the PRU and their encouragement of their child to adhere to it is an important part of making positive changes in their child's attitudes and behaviour allowing for successful full time reintegration into their mainstream school/ next educational provision. Parents/carers are invited to attend with their child for an initial visit prior to placement at the PRU where the aims and objectives of the placement are discussed. At this meeting all parties are made aware of the behaviour policy of the PRU, the physical restraint policy and expectations PRU staff have of parents/carers and the expectations they have of PRU staff. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the PRU whenever they need or want to with any concerns they may have. Parents/carers are involved as early as possible to share in solving problems as they arise.

Staff work together as a team to ensure the PRU feels welcoming to pupils and all visitors. Pupils' work is displayed promoting a sense of value and pride. Pupils are encouraged to take care of the building by keeping rooms tidy and looking after equipment.

Staff work hard towards ensuring our pupils want to attend the PRU and participate in the teaching, learning and social activities offered to them both whilst they attend the PRU and on return to their full time educational placement, be that mainstream or a special school.

UNIFORM (see Uniform Policy, September 2023-24)

Pupils are expected to wear the full uniform of Northumberland PRU. School shoes or all black trainers, including soles and laces, can be worn. If a pupil arrives with incorrect uniform this may result in the pupil being isolated from their peers during teaching and social times.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum is differentiated for individual pupils according to need and may be through content, delivery, support or expected outcome. All teaching and learning takes place within and supports the ethos of the PRU. Staff expectations of pupil behaviour and quality of work are high and realistic and reflect understanding of individual emotional needs especially relating to self-esteem/self-confidence.

Classroom management reflects this and all undesirable behaviour is dealt with quickly and consistently by staff who remind pupils of the choices they have and the consequences these bring.

Policy will be reviewed annually.

Approved by the Headteacher, Mr R Carr	Date: 3rd August 2023
Approved by the Management Committee Chair, Mr G Reiter	Date: 25th September 2023
Last Reviewed On:	17th July 2023
Next Review Due By:	July 2024

Consequence Ladder

For violence/behaviour and associated risk that can no longer be managed at the PRU.

Several fixed term exclusions will trigger a referral to the Management Committee Placement Panel.

Exclusions issued by the SLT will be from 1 to 5 days, dependent on severity of incident.

Students who have to be removed from classes for **complete refusal, persistent swearing at staff** etc, are subject to isolation or fixed term exclusion.

Each class should have an agreed protocol for removing students to the intervention rooms. TA intervention/coaching/mentoring focused on returning the pupil to lesson/class.

Staff should aim to keep pupils within lessons/classroom, looking at seating arrangements, de-escalation and behaviour management strategies.

Usual teacher strategies employed in the first instance to refocus pupils causing a disturbance.

Level 7

Permanent Exclusion/
termination of
placement

Level 6

Referral to
Management
Committee Placement
Panel

Level 5

Meeting with parents

Level 4

Phone call to discuss
incident

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1