

Learning Opportunities Positive Behaviour Policy



If you have any questions about this policy or any other aspects of school life at Learning Opportunities please contact me at the school.

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The Behaviour Management Policy has been written and approved by a team with a range of experience, and will be reviewed annually.

Date Created: July 1995

Previous Review Date: November 2024

Next Review Date: November 2025

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

"Students have the right to be protected from all forms of violence. They must be kept safe from harm. They must be given proper care by those looking after them."

[Article 19, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child]

Under no circumstances will corporal punishment, i.e. any intentional application of force used as a punishment, be used within Learning Opportunities.

No student will have any unreasonable restriction placed upon them with regard to communicating by telephone with their social worker / parent / carer if applicable.

If after conducting a risk assessment, there is a safety issue concerning a student leaving the school premises, they will be prevented from doing so, in accordance with LOC Positive Handling Policy.

Students have a right not to be punished cruelly or in a way that would belittle them...

[Article 37, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child]

Legislative Links & Guidance

Education Act 1996

School Standards and Framework Act 1998

Education Act 2002

Education and Inspections Act 2006

School Information (England) Regulations 2008

Equality Act 2010

The Education (Independent School Standards) (Amended) (England) Regulations 2014

Education Act 2011

DfES Guidance on Use of Reasonable Force (July 2013)

DfE Advice to Headteachers and School Staff; Behaviour & Discipline in Schools (2016)

1. KEY BELIEFS

At Learning Opportunities we believe that:

- students want to behave well
- students can learn to improve their behaviour
- mistakes are part of the learning process
- all staff can learn strategies to support students to improve their behaviour

Staff can support our students by:

- the quality of our relationships with each other and them
- the quality of our teaching
- the scaffolding we put in place

The scaffolding consists of:

- rights and responsibilities
- rules
- routines
- language of choice
- rewards and consequences
- praise and recognition
- reparation

2. KEY BELIEFS EXPLAINED

At Learning Opportunities, we believe that:

students want to behave well. We believe that our students are happy when they behave well and when that behaviour is recognised by staff and their peers.

students can learn to improve their behaviour. Our students often find learning difficult. Learning new behaviour is a task, just like learning to talk or write.

mistakes are part of the learning process. We understand poor behaviour as a mistake which can be rectified. We don't make a judgement about it – instead we support our students to get it right. Practice improves performance.

all staff can learn strategies to support students to improve their behaviour. Most staff have evolved ways of dealing with students' behaviour based often on their experience of being parented or parenting. Developing an understanding of why students behave as they do, maintaining a positive attitude to the child or young person and his/her behaviour, and effective strategies for managing that behaviour is a core requirement of the job. It requires a real commitment to ongoing

professional development. As for the child, constant practice improves performance.

Staff can support our students by:

The quality of our relationships with each other and them

- a) **our relationships with each other** – we provide good models of behaviour at all times for our students, many of whom may have less helpful relationship models in life outside of school.

- b) **the quality of our relationships with our students.** These relationships are crucial. Each member of staff is a significant person to our students. To foster successful, enabling relationships we need to:
 - actively build trust and rapport – they have to be earned; they're not given
 - demonstrate belief in the student – that s/he **can** succeed. Let the student know this
 - treat the student with dignity and respect at all times e.g. by saying 'thank you'; by listening carefully
 - listen respectfully to the student, and make a judgement about how/when to respond
 - enjoy his/her company – have fun together, where and when appropriate
 - hear the message behind the word/behaviour; ask yourself **why** the student is behaving in this way – there will always be a reason; the behaviour is a symptom and a communication
 - keep your word – do whatever you say you will do
 - look for the good in the student – identify it with the child and build on it.
 - apologise if you make a mistake – you are modelling this for the student and you will earn respect
 - name and manage your own emotional reactions to students' behaviour i.e. demonstrate emotionally intelligent behaviour at all times
 - let go of your memory / feelings of a student's previous bad behaviour – it is unhelpful history. Focus instead on getting it right in the future
 - quietly but firmly hold appropriate boundaries for the students. Never let students do whatever they want when this would infringe the rights or comfort of others.

The quality of the teaching we provide

If we are able to meet each child at his / her point of learning, in most cases poor behaviour is likely to decrease and hopefully disappear. To do this we need to:

- accurately assess the students' learning e.g. learning ability, learning style and level of achievement, in order to move them on
- plan to meet the students' range of needs e.g. equipment, seating, groupings, use of TA's
- know what the students **believe** they can do i.e. self esteem, self image and adjust expectations accordingly
- know what motivates each student and use it to help him / her achieve
- carefully plan lessons to ensure that we meet each student at his / her point of learning i.e. the work should be not too easy, nor too hard and we should plan for success
- include the students in the target setting and evaluation process, using appropriate language (self-assessment)
- give the students feedback on progress in a supportive way, focusing particularly on their achievements and what they need to do to make further progress
- praise the students for their specific achievements and their efforts to achieve i.e. descriptive praise for effort and improvement
- actively teach the students positive learning behaviours, so that they know what to do to ensure successful lessons e.g. enter the room quietly, listen to the staff, think before you answer.
- Actively promote that it is OK to make mistakes and that they are a valuable part of learning.

The scaffolding we put in place – by this we mean all the things we do (see below) to support our students to manage their own behaviour successfully

The scaffolding

Rights:

All our students have a right to:

- learn, and to make demonstrable progress
- feel physically and emotionally safe at all times
- be treated with respect and dignity at all times
- express their feelings in an appropriate way (emotional intelligence)

All our staff have a right to:

- teach without undue disruption

- learn how to improve their practice
- feel physically and emotionally safe at all times
- be treated with dignity and respect at all times
- express their feelings in an appropriate way (emotional intelligence)

Responsibilities:

- are linked to rights, and this should be made explicit to our students
- all people at Learning Opportunities are responsible for their own behaviour. Nobody makes us behave badly. We choose how to respond
- we can only change our own behaviour – not that of others. We can't make people do what they don't want to do
- we own our own feelings – others don't make us feel bad, angry etc

Rules support positive behaviour. They should be:

- few in number
- agreed with students
- written in a language the students can understand stated in the positive
- regularly referred to by all staff with students
- regularly reviewed with the students during School Council
- displayed prominently in appropriate areas
- appropriate to the activity / place / age range

Routines support our students by fixing desired behaviours in their minds. They must be explicitly taught – don't assume they know them. For many students we will need to teach routines for many or **all** activities.

The more consistency there is over routines, the easier it is for our students to learn them.

The language of choice

This is part of helping our students to take responsibility for their behaviour. We actively encourage them to choose the right thing to do, by explaining the consequences of their choices, both good and bad.

We use specific descriptive praise when we see them making a good choice – we can never do too much of this.

We link consequences to the choices they make, to help them make the best choice.

This language:

- increases students' sense of responsibility
- regards mistakes as part of learning
- removes the struggle for power
- is positive
- overtly links responsibility, choice and consequence
- helps them to take responsibility
- helps them to manage their own behaviour
- increases their independence

Rewards and Consequences

Rewards

There can never be too many of these. They are part of the 'language' in this school. They include:

- smiles - social rewards
- descriptive praise
- stickers, certificates and Golden Moments
- letters / postcards home to parents
- learning, progress and success - celebrated in our weekly Wonderwall assembly

They are linked to positive choices and achievements. They focus on the specific behaviours we wish to improve. The hope is that as students' progress through the school the motivation becomes increasingly intrinsic and material rewards are not required.

Consequences

1. We do not believe in sanctions or punishment
2. It is important for our students to clearly link a specific behaviour with its consequence.
3. The consequence needs to be a natural consequence, which makes sense to a child.

Reparation means repairing relationships, or 'making good' in some way

We believe that students should always be given the opportunity to repair, and that they want to do this. We do not believe in the concept of punishment, because it focuses the student's mind on the punishment, rather than what s/he did. This frequently leads to students feeling angry

about the punishment, rather than thinking about the effect of their behaviour on others.

We support students to take responsibility for what they have done and to repair it with the other person(s) involved/affected.

Descriptive Praise

If we tell people what it is exactly that we like about what they are doing, we are reinforcing the behaviours we want to promote e.g. 'I liked the way you waited quietly'; 'I noticed how kindly you supported S. Thank you'; 'Thank you for returning to class so promptly', etc.

We are also giving them positive feedback and personal recognition. This raises their self esteem and leads to improved behaviour. We promote the use of descriptive praise at Learning Opportunities.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

General

At Learning Opportunities we all have a responsibility to:

- read this policy
- understand it
- ensure that our practice is in line with it
- be proactive in implementing it
- continually seek to further improve our behaviour management skills
- speak to SLT with any ideas or suggestions in relation to this policy.

Specific

Subject teachers

- quality of teaching and learning in the classroom – ensuring appropriate differentiation (100% good/outstanding lessons)
- classroom climate – ensure that students feel emotionally and physically safe; clear routines, clear expectations; feel that staff are in control.
- best-planned use of teaching assistants and resources, to support learning and behaviour
- ensure everyone has read and understood behaviour strategies and relevant student information
- liaise with the class / department teams over incidents/successes
- follow through with students until incidents are resolved

- monitor behaviour in lessons and adapt approaches to ensure success for the students
- participate in Risk Assessments and other appropriate plans
- keep succinct, detailed records of incidents or improvements, to monitor progress and to establish patterns (the daily log)
- review strategies regularly and request adaptations if not working
- Keep HT informed as necessary
- develop positive relationships with all families to support student behaviour both in school and at home
- attend and engage in relevant CPD opportunities

Teaching assistants (TA's) and other support staff

- to support the teacher, with teaching and behaviour management at all times
- to support the students with their learning and their self-management of behaviour at all times, under the direction of the teacher
- to support the development and maintenance of a positive classroom climate
- to ensure that students manage their behaviour positively during school trips and when offsite
- to complete incident/accident reports as required and as shown in guidelines.
- attend and engage in relevant CPD opportunities

3.2.3 Senior Leaders

- to support teachers and teaching assistants to manage behaviour effectively through continuing professional development – not by doing it for staff
- to support students with understanding the school's approach to behaviour management
- to support parents with understanding the school's approach to behaviour management, and with behaviour management strategies
- to regularly review policy and practice
- attend and engage in relevant CPD opportunities

Students – as individuals, members of teams, members of the school community

- to understand the school's approach to behaviour management as far as possible

- to improve their own behaviour, in line with our policy, so that they develop emotionally intelligent behaviour .
- to support their peers to improve their behaviour, in line with our policy

Parents

- to support the school's approach of positive behaviour management, in line with this policy
- to support their child in learning to manage his/her own behaviour
- to take opportunities provided by the school to further develop their own understanding and implementation of effective behaviour management.

Proprietor

- to approve the school's policy
- to support the school with its implementation

Additional Support

The majority of students at Learning Opportunities respond positively when staff work within standard guidelines. However, a small percentage of our students need additional support to improve their own management of their behaviour.

We do this by:

- working in line with this Policy
- putting in more scaffolding, tailored to the specific needs of each student.

This might include:

- changing the class group / input from the TA / varying the classroom management
- providing a bespoke timetable
- making the routines/strategies more detailed
- providing specific interventions eg. Thrive/Talkabout
- drawing up an Individual Behaviour Plan/Risk Assessment (RA) detailing action to be taken when identified behaviour occurs. This is shared with the student, parent and other staff (for consistency).
- drawing on additional resources from beyond the school e.g. CAMHS
- For advice with particular students, speak to SLT in the first instance

BULLYING – refer to anti-bullying policy for further information

- we do not tolerate bullying
- bullying should **never** be ignored
- parents should be informed if bullying has occurred
- every instance needs to be addressed, in line with this policy, with each student involved taking responsibility for his/her actions, apologising and agreeing to stop/change the behaviour causing concern.

This agreement needs to be monitored by the class teacher / TA to ensure that the bullying has ceased. If problems persist, they should be referred to a member of the SLT

- incidents are reported to the headteacher

RACIST LANGUAGE/INCIDENTS

- Although very rare, they are not acceptable at Learning Opportunities.
- They **MUST** be recorded
- Sexist, homophobic, disability abuse - is not acceptable and should be dealt with in line with this policy

WORRYING/UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR: Child Protection

Staff must immediately report any worrying/unusual behaviour to our Designated Safeguarding Lead. Such behaviour may warrant involvement of parents, Social Services or other professionals.

Physical Intervention – refer to Physical Intervention policy

- should rarely be used, and only after all other interventions have been exhausted
- should **only** be used if the student is putting himself or others in danger and where failure to intervene would constitute neglect or result in a greater risk of harm
- if used, it must be recorded in the school's Physical Intervention Bound Book
 - a Risk Assessment and PHP will need to be carried out – this might apply when an individual student/child needs physical interventions as a part of an on-going behavior management plan.
 - if used, parent/carers need to be contacted before the child arrives home

RESTRICTING LIBERTIES – at Learning Opportunities students may **never** be

- locked up

- left alone / unattended
- deprived of food / drink
- denied access to a toilet

THE 'TELLING' SCHOOL

A Learning Opportunities we encourage students to

- tell a member of staff, if they see/know that someone is doing the wrong thing. We explain that this is how we look after each other – that it's a good thing to do. Any child/staff member who witnesses inappropriate behaviour, and says /does nothing is an accessory to that behaviour, is colluding with the wrong doing and giving permission to the perpetrator to do it. We do not tolerate the concept of "grassing is a bad thing"- instead, we encourage and applaud it.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT – is illegal and is never used at Learning Opportunities

TOUCHING – may be used **appropriately** e.g. a pat on shoulder in a public place. Refer to our Safe and Appropriate Touch Policy.

MONITORING

- we need consistent behaviour management throughout the school, appropriately adapted to the age/ability of the student
- we will observe and feedback to staff on observed good practice and areas for development

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

In order to further improve practice, staff can

- apply to go on individual courses out of school, as part of their individual Continuing Professional Development
- ask for in-house individual development opportunities e.g. by observation and learning dialogues with staff, with identified best practice
- attend whole school, and team training sessions on factors affecting emotions and behaviours
- access consultations with a systemic psychotherapist

In conclusion, if each person in the school is effectively implementing this Policy, we will have a simple yet sophisticated technique for contributing

to our Mission. Furthermore, it will reduce stress levels on both staff and students and contribute to continuing to make it a privilege to work at Learning Opportunities.