



Behaviour Support Policy & Procedures

Introduction

Young people who access Trinity Specialist College often have multiple and complex needs. Anti-social behaviour may well be a feature of their lives to date. Trinity Specialist College's Behaviour Support Policy is based on the concept of positive reinforcement. At the heart of the Policy is the principle of respect for oneself and others, involving a range of strategies and techniques which are supported by verbal and non-verbal positive communication. The approach is exemplified by an ethos of non-physical intervention.

What is this policy about?

Positive Behaviour Support is a set of techniques that reinforce a person-centred and value led approach to understanding and supporting people's behaviour. The purpose of this is to improve quality of life by reducing the frequency and intensity of students' behaviours.

Trinity Specialist College recognises that students can use a variety of behaviours to communicate. Positive Behaviour Support teaches us that behaviour has meaning and that understanding the meaning and causes of behaviour can lead to positive change.

Trinity Specialist College staff are challenged to understand how students communicate and how to respond in a way the person can themselves understand; creating communication, dialogue and relationships with each of the young people Trinity Specialist College supports.

This policy is relevant to behaviours which we find challenging or those behaviours which society finds different and sometimes unacceptable. This policy explores behaviour as challenging in the context of behaviour as communication, as well as behaviours which may be caused by mental health issues or associated learning disabilities. Some behaviours can also put the person or those around them at risk.

This policy aims to be proactive whilst also acknowledging that some behaviours may require physical interventions to be used as a last resort or when there is an imminent unacceptable risk or danger.

Trinity Specialist College now prefers the term "Behaviour Support Needs" as opposed to the previously used term "Challenging Behaviour".

"Challenging behaviour" should not be used as a label to describe a person; behaviour may be described as challenging, but people should not be described in this way.

General

Behaviour is best described as: 'anything you can recognise a person doing'.

Trinity Specialist College staff are reminded it is the things people do that can be challenging it is not the person who is challenging.

A student's behaviour might be:

- A method of communication
- An expression of an emotion or personal state
- A form of self-stimulation
- A habit
- An indication of a physical health issue, a mental health issue or pain or discomfort
- The only option available to the person at that time
- Due to an incomplete understanding of the impacts of their behaviour or of social or cultural norms
- A way to cope with a situation that they cannot otherwise control
- A potential indicator of abuse

Whenever possible, the student should be fully consulted and involved throughout the development, review and implementation of any programme of behavioural support.

Decisions about how to respond to a person's behaviour require careful consideration, through a multi-disciplinary team approach. If you are concerned about a person's behaviours then you have a duty to discuss this with your manager.

Physical intervention techniques must only ever be used as a last resort or where there is an imminent risk or danger. These techniques should only be carried out by trained staff. Any interventions and support plans must also always be the least restrictive necessary and must always use the minimum amount of force for the least amount of time.

Trinity Specialist College will not tolerate the use of punishment with any supported person.

The most important principle is that behaviour support plans should appropriately support both the person who is displaying a particular behaviour and should also promote the safety and welfare of all other people who are present at the time.

Practice

Behaviour as Communication

Many students use behaviour as a means to communicate. Behaviours can be a way of communicating 'no' or expressing dislike, unhappiness or boredom as some examples. It is essential for staff to know what service users are communicating and to be able to respond in an appropriate way to avoid situations escalating.

Actively Supporting People

Trinity Specialist College's approach to behaviour support is also based upon the idea of actively supporting people. The purpose of which is to enable people to engage in meaningful activities and social interaction, to make choices and explore new options and relationships. This means that instead of doing things "for" students, we should actively support them to engage in everyday life and develop their own opportunities and skills.

Trinity Specialist College services must focus on the rights and needs of every student. It is important that any interventions to support or change behaviours, take into consideration the holistic needs of that person. Effective behaviour support can only take place in a stable, secure and sensitive environment that is conducive to learning and promotes informed choice, dignity and respect. As part of this approach, it is critical that the student's past history, cultural background, health needs, sensory triggers, communication skills, abilities, choices, preferences, aspirations and motivations are all investigated and considered.

Early Intervention

Always try to:

"Listen" to what the student is trying to communicate verbally and non-verbally. It is acceptable to ignore the behaviour but you should never ignore the person.

Always aim to problem-solve and attempt to resolve the situation with the person or on the person's behalf. Offering positive choices can help facilitate this, as can 'limit setting', e.g. "When we've finished this, then we will be able to..." or "If you help me clear all this away, then we can..."

Know the signs of anxiety for the students you support, so that you can engage with them before their behaviour escalates and a crisis situation develops. Remember, anxiety can manifest itself in ways that are not always obvious; for example, a student becoming silent and withdrawn can be a sign of anxiety and a pre-cursor of things to come.

Know and avoid triggers to anxiety where possible. Provide appropriate levels of structure, predictability and direction if this is what the person needs.

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Consider the environment and what might help to calm the situation. Some examples include: encouraging the person or others to move to a different area; decreasing environmental noise; removing potentially dangerous items that could be thrown.

Attempt to reassure, distract, divert or redirect the person from what is causing them to become anxious. For example; offer an alternative activity that they usually seem to enjoy.

Consider your own behaviour, your body language and how you are communicating. Remember that everything you say and do impacts in subtle ways that can cause the situation to quickly escalate. This process is called 'the integrated experience'. When working with a young person in crisis always stay calm. Adopt the supportive stance. Do not crowd the person who is anxious or bombard them with ideas, instructions or questions. Avoid confrontational postures or facial expressions. For example, avoid standing with your hands on your hips or with your arms crossed. It is always better to downplay an incident rather than overreact. It is also important to respect the student's personal space.

Risk assess any activities that are planned. It may be appropriate to modify a planned activity or wait until the person seems calmer before beginning it.

Environmental Change

Trinity Specialist College accepts that some individuals may find it easier to calm if staff offer the person an opportunity to spend some time on their own giving them the opportunity to withdraw from an activity or environment. The Lindridge has two safe spaces which can be used for this purpose but there is also the garden area. Other rooms or quiet areas can also be utilised. This must however be the person's own choice or part of an agreed behaviour support strategy. Staff should always encourage the student to return and engage at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

Trinity Specialist College will not accept the use of "seclusion" or "time out" techniques where an individual is isolated alone against their will.

In addition, use of restrictions such as locked doors (locking the person out of an area) will only be accepted when it can be clearly shown to be in the best interests of the person or for the safety of the student or other students and staff.

Physical Intervention

Trinity Specialist College has a strong commitment to the BILD Codes of Practice (2015)

Physical Intervention is when a staff member:

- Restricts a service user's ability to move part (or all) of their body; or
- Causes part (or all) of a service user's body to move

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Techniques which enable individual staff to safely avoid or block attempted strikes and/or safely remove themselves from a grab (disengagements) are preferable to techniques which involve limiting or restricting the movement of a service user through continued holding.

Physical intervention techniques can only be used by a member of staff who has been trained to do so. If any physical intervention is used this must be recorded on a Behaviour Incident Form and logged in the bound significant Incident/restraint record book.

Last Resort

Physical intervention should only ever be used as a last resort or where the young person is putting themselves or others at immediate or imminent risk). This means that you should only use it if there are no other immediate alternatives or if all other strategies have been tried and all of them are unsuccessful.

Being restrained physically can be very unpleasant for both staff and students. It might make students feel humiliated or abused, and may also undermine relationships. In addition, restraint techniques could carry greater risks for people with medical problems, physical disabilities or difficult histories. Known factors should be Risk Assessed as part of the behaviour support plan.

Staff are permitted to use “reasonable force” to prevent:

- Injury to themselves
- Injury to another person or persons
- Damage to property where there is a clear risk of accidental injury occurring
- Self harm/injury

The risks associated with using physical intervention must not be greater than the risk of not intervening.

Any form of Physical Intervention must:

- Involve the least amount of restriction possible
- Involve the minimum amount of force necessary
- Be used for the minimum time necessary
- Not involve the touching or holding of throat, chest, eyes or genitals and not involve holding a student in a physically or sexually threatening manner
- Not involve any policy which restricts breathing or impacts upon the airway through

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pressure being placed upon chest or back e.g. holding a person on the floor or sitting on them

- Not involve any policy which involves intentional pressure being applied against joints
- Not be designed to cause pain
- Be conducted in as dignified a manner as possible by staff using recognised techniques in which they have been trained
- Be appropriate and proportionate in light of the risk posed.

How do we determine the need for a Behaviour Support Plan?

The behaviour support manager should be informed as part of the initial assessment process and prior to the offer of a service to any student who presents with a history of behaviour support needs.

Where staff teams identify that behaviour support is needed for a particular student who is already receiving a service, their Teacher/Tutor should seek a referral to the Behaviour Support Manager.

Referrals should be made where:

- The individual is presenting an identified risk of serious physical or psychological harm to themselves or others
- Physical interventions are being used when supporting the individual
- The individual is taking behaviour modifying medications
- The person is at risk of exclusion from their service or from participation in social settings or community facilities
- The person requires a disproportionate amount of management support time without successful resolution occurring
- The person is moving into or within a Trinity Specialist College service

Staff teams and individuals might require support with behaviours of the following types:

- Physical strikes or grabs (e.g. slapping, pinching or kicking others etc.)

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- Self injury (e.g. biting own arms, banging head on walls or pulling own hair out etc.)
- Property damage (e.g. smashing things, tearing things or ripping clothing etc.)
- Repetitive behaviours that significantly impair opportunities to engage in other activities
- Offensive communication or touching (e.g. abusive, discriminatory, invasive, intimidating, threatening or offensive gestures, actions or touching etc.)
- Undignified behaviour or hygiene risks (e.g. undressing in public places, spitting, smearing faeces)
- Uninformed compliance or passivity (e.g. doing whatever is asked of you)

Support and Monitoring After an Incident

This section applies to all types of incident not just physical intervention

Students:

1. Check if any students have any injuries. Treat any injuries and document as required.
2. Provide emotional support to the students who were present (including the individual who showed the behaviour) along with encouragement to communicate about what happened and why, if this is appropriate.
3. Re-establish trust and communication as soon as possible.
4. A behaviour incident form should be completed and sent to the Behaviour Support Manager. A parent form should also be completed and sent home where appropriate.
5. Take steps to restore the relationship between the student and the member of staff concerned.
6. Monitor the student for the rest of the day for signs of distress.
7. The Behaviour Support Manager should conduct regular reviews of the frequency, duration and type of physical interventions that are being used. This is to ensure that all appropriate attempts are being made to de-escalate situations before they reach the point where physical intervention becomes necessary.
8. The Behaviour Support Manager should produce a monthly report to trustees that gives a breakdown of behaviours and shows who was involved, what happened and how they have been managed.

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Staff:

1. Following a difficult situation, managers and colleagues should, whenever possible and if appropriate, offer those involved a short period of quiet time to recover.
2. Managers should also give the staff member an opportunity to review and discuss what has happened. This is intended to be a form of personal support offering the staff member an opportunity to learn from the incident and identify further support or training needs.
3. A regular programme of support to staff should be available in cases where they are working in particularly challenging situations or environments, including a rota of staff to avoid the same staff always having to deal with the most complex situations. It is the Behaviour Support Manager's responsibility, in consultation with the staff team, to determine situations where this may apply.

Responsibilities

Trinity Specialist College will not tolerate the use of punishment by its staff in the management of behaviour. In this context, punishment is when a staff member tries to force a service user to comply by threatening them or intentionally providing an unpleasant outcome if they don't comply. This would constitute abuse. Staff have a responsibility to report any such practice to their manager immediately.

Where Trinity Specialist College is not the sole and primary provider of support services to an individual, we will liaise with others to enable a consistent approach to be maintained across settings, provided that these do not contradict the principles of this policy.

Staff

Staff must:

- Attend MAPA (The Management of Actual or Potential Aggression) training within the first 6 months of their employment.
- Attend MAPA Refresher Training every 12 months.
- Be familiar with students behaviour support plans and risk assessments.
- Provide support and suggestions to their colleagues at all times including querying each other's practices where necessary.
- Keep appropriate records on all incidents of behaviour and use of physical interventions, including the completion of an ABC form for each incident that occurs.
- Give careful consideration to what they wear (jewellery and clothing). For example, if staff are supporting a person who might pull hair, staff should tie their hair back.

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Likewise, if staff members are supporting a person who might try to scratch wrists and arms, they should consider wearing long sleeves etc.

Behaviour Support Manager

The Behaviour Support Manager will:

- Ensure that behaviour support guidelines and a physical intervention risk assessment are produced for Trinity Specialist College staff supporting any individual with identified behaviour support needs. These can only be created or have their content updated by consultation with the Behaviour Support Manager.
- Ensure that behaviour support guidelines and the physical intervention risk assessments are reviewed and updated at a specified frequency and at least annually.
- Ensure staff are supported and de-briefed appropriately following an incident of behaviour.
- Review recorded incidents of behaviour and physical interventions. Consideration should be given to any points of learning including early intervention possibilities.

Outcomes

- Students are supported positively and consistently at all times and are engaged in their day to day activities.
- Early intervention is prioritised and incidents where physical intervention is used are kept to an absolute minimum.
- Students communication support needs are understood, students are listened to and responses are appropriate.
- Students are safe and can trust their staff.
- Staff have relevant up to date training, and the potential for injury is minimised.
- Behaviour support, interventions and restraint are monitored and appropriate actions taken where needed.

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