

# **Bowden House School**

## **Behaviour Management/Positive Handling Policy**

Bowden House School aims to provide a supportive, educational environment for students who present with social, emotional and mental health difficulties which might have impacted upon their ability to learn in a mainstream setting. There is a whole school approach to actively promote improvements in educational attainment, attendance and achievement together with the development of positive social skills. The staff will engender 'equality of opportunity' to maximise educational and social potential to enable its students to develop the necessary skills to approach adulthood with a range of qualifications and confidence so that they make a successful transition from school into the world of work; further education/training and to become responsible members of the community. The school recognises the need to incorporate models of acceptable behaviour; to clearly define expectations of positive behaviour amongst its students and where measures are taken to address unacceptable behaviours, these are reasonable, proportionate and understood by all concerned. **Standard 12.1 requires that 'The school has and consistently implements a written policy on managing behaviour, including promoting good behaviour. This policy includes:**

- **measures to combat bullying (including cyber-bullying) and to promote positive behaviour**
- **school rules**
- **disciplinary sanctions**
- **when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and recorded and managed**
- **arrangements for searching children and their possessions'.**  
(National Minimum Standards 2015).

This Policy also complies with The Education Act 2011 '**Helping teachers maintain good discipline**' and applies the Positive Handling Guidance DoH/DfES Joint Guidance for Restrictive Physical Interventions (2002) and the DfE guidance for the Use of Reasonable Force (2012).

Bowden House School will promote positive behaviour through clear, effective policies and procedures that embrace the essential ethos and values of the school. These include:

- Behaviour Policy
- Behaviour Management/Positive Handling Policy
- Positive Handling Plans
- Anti-bullying Policy
- School Rules
- Screening/Searching/Confiscation Policy
- Complaints Policy

Bowden House School considers that within any social situation there are limits and standards of behaviour which are a necessity and the school has designed a 'Behaviour Checklist' which outlines expectations within the school and care setting and whilst each student will have his own 'level of need and understanding', they are determined as the School Rules for all students:

- **respect others, their space and their belongings**
- **wear your school uniform during the school day**
- **arrive on time and stay in class – there is always someone there to support you**
- **think before you act – this makes for a safe and happy school**
- **try not to use offensive language**
- **do not bully. Any form of bullying(including cyber-bullying) will not be tolerated**
- **do not bring your 'mobile 'phone into school**
- **do not smoke – Bowden House is a no-smoking school.**

Additional and individual expectations within the classroom and/or groups within the care setting should be negotiated between the staff members and the students which should reflect:

- each student's history prior to admission to the school
- the student's patterns of behaviour and the 'triggers' that cause negative behaviours
- the level of understanding of each student
- the student's response and possible actions towards 'authority'
- the student's responses to their peers.

Bowden House School makes every effort to ensure that all rules are applied fairly and consistently and appropriately reflect the responsibilities of the students ([see Student Handbook](#)). The students are given the opportunity to be involved in the decision making process as to whether the rules are fair and appropriate and review them in the School Council and/or Tutor group sessions as it is agreed that any set of rules are more effective when they are owned and accepted by those using them.

Bowden House School strives to build self-esteem and increase the awareness of its students to the needs of others. Abusive, racist or sexist comments are unacceptable and will be challenged. The school believes that all those who live, learn and work in the school have a responsibility to treat others as they would wish to be treated and the staff will work in an anti-discriminatory manner to achieve this.

Primary prevention is achieved through effective Team-Teach training to develop 'staff expertise in working with (students)...who present challenging behaviours' (DoH/DfE RPI Guidance (Prevention)). Each student has his own Individual Learning Plan which includes regular target setting to improve behaviour and Risk Assessments which outline the level of risk depending upon the activity or behaviour. All staff are familiar with the ILP and any related Risk Assessments which should be reviewed on a regular basis and amended accordingly. In addition and in compliance with the DoH/DfE RPI, each student has a Positive Handling Plan which details:

- any known medical conditions, e.g., diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, etc
- Trigger Areas – common places/times known to lead to Positive Handling
- Trigger Behaviours – behaviours/situations known to lead to Positive Handling. Such information will enable staff to be aware of environmental factors and the potential hazards that may be

prevalent; if there is a physical stimulus that is provoking the student's responses that can be removed and whether the physical boundaries provide sufficient security

- is the student known to assault staff, peers or damage property
- Preferred Supportive Strategies - effective supportive strategies known to defuse situations or behaviours
- Preferred Positive Handling Strategies - effective responses/holds
- Success Criteria – what strategies can be developed to avoid holding situations?
- Recording the Incidents Involving Reasonable Force on BehaviourWatch
- Evaluation/de-brief – Resolution Meeting, etc
- Names of all involved.

It is recognised that many of the students of Bowden House School find difficulty in managing their anger. The reason(s) for this could include that they have:

- been victims of abuse or neglect
- felt or feel a sense of rejection
- low self-esteem
- not experienced consistent levels of care and attention
- difficulty trusting adults
- medical conditions, i.e. ADHD which contribute to their poor behaviour
- frequently experienced periods of failure throughout their educational career.

In addition to the above, some students may have been or are involved in criminal activities including alcohol or drug related incidents; acts of vandalism and assaults on others and actions that have brought them to the attention of the Police and the courts.

### **Strategies for avoiding incidents:**

All staff, through regular Team-Teach and Advanced Team-Teach training, possess the skills to adopt effective strategies to defuse potential instances of conflict or aggression. Addressing situations in their infancy can be invaluable in managing potentially extreme behaviours. In line with the DoH.DfE RPI Guidance, secondary preventative strategies are applied when 'primary prevention has not been effective'. These measures include:

- **communication/verbal advice and support.** Early intervention needs to be assertive but non-confrontational. If students are spoken to in the mode of 'critical parent', a negative response is likely. Awareness of tone of voice, body posture and eye contact is important as communication needs to be non-threatening, calm and assured. Staff should attend to a student when they are showing signs of agitation/distress/anger and support/advise them according to the situation
- **affection** - for the angry student whose behaviour is rooted in their insecurity as it is important that they feel accepted and respected as individuals. **Reject the behaviour not the person** by showing that you care despite the difficulties

- **distraction/redirection** – is the action of diverting the student's attention from a potentially inflammatory situation to something in which he has an interest
- **reassurance** – is about supporting, comforting and encouraging a student in a situation in which they might be feeling helpless, vulnerable, possibly defenceless and exposed to a risky environment
- **planned ignoring** – at times, highly provocative and attention seeking behaviour can be ignored to good effect. The skill is knowing when to ignore and when to intervene. Good practice is based upon Risk Assessment
- **time out** – this is to allow a student 'space' on their own; to move to a different environment with time to calm down and consider their actions. The student is more likely to calm down without the attention of an audience
- **withdrawal** – which involves removing the student from the situation which causes anxiety or distress to a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities. This could be in a Quiet Room; with the Headteacher or the SLT Office
- **humour** – possibly the most effective and most commonly used strategy. Although self-explanatory, staff should make sure the humour is used in the right context for the particular student
- **calm talking stance** – staff should endeavour to maintain a calm, confident and objective approach in conflict situations
- **negotiation/being objective** – the ability to listen and talk to students and come to an agreement by setting limits and offering options. This will allow a 'back door exit' from the situation that will help keep their pride and dignity in tact as well as that of the staff member(s) involved
- **transfer adult** – if there is an incident where the adult present is seen to be aggravating the situation, it should be assessed as to whether moving the adult out of sight might defuse the situation. This should be done, if possible, leaving enough staff to control the situation
- **success reminder** – remind the student of a previous occasion when they successfully managed a volatile situation of a similar nature. If they are feeling particularly low, look to remind them of something they did in the past that made them happy/proud/feel good
- **support through daily routine** – a bored student is more likely to present with negative behaviours and therefore a strong daily routine of active engagement in the classroom and in social times, reduces their need to act out inappropriate behaviours
- **physical intervention** – is an approved management strategy but should be used as a last resort when all of the above strategies have been exhausted.

The aim of the staff of Bowden House School is to provide an environment that is safe and secure and through a 'whole school approach' to behaviour, be able to minimise the need for Positive Handling. However, any situation that threatens the safety of the student, his peers, the staff team or the fabric of the school, will be responded to in a method that is appropriate, reasonable and proportionate. The aim is to limit the damage to those concerned and enable the student to recognise the possible need

for reasonable force and how he will be supported in acknowledging his anger; how this affects others and the strategies that will be put in place to help him manage his negative behaviour.

The 'Use of Reasonable Force 4/2012' Guidance is aimed at Governing Bodies, Headteachers and staff in all schools. The Key Points are as follows:

- school staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action
- suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force
- senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

When can reasonable force be used?

- to prevent students from hurting themselves or others and from damaging property when all other strategies have been used
- to enable staff members to use their professional judgment when deciding whether or not to physically intervene whilst taking account of individual circumstances

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- remove a disruptive student from the classroom or an activity outside of the school day, where they have refused to follow an instruction
- prevent a student behaving in a way that disrupts a school event; a school trip or visit
- prevent a student leaving the classroom where allowing them to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student or to stop a fight
- restrain a student at risk of harming themselves.

#### **The purpose of Permissible Forms of Restraint is:**

- to restrain the student who has lost his self-control and hold him until anger passes and self-control is regained
- to alleviate the significant risk that students are exposing themselves and/or others to by being 'out of control'
- to demonstrate to the student that adults are able to support and manage what appears to be uncontrollable anger using the minimum amount of force necessary to contain the situation.

#### **Escorts and Interventions**

If a situation develops that requires physical intervention and where the adult(s) need to assume control, staff should be aware of their surroundings and ensure that they do not apply an escort or method of reasonable force where there is limited space, e.g., on the stairs or where they expose themselves or the student to unnecessary risk of injury due to the environment.

The staff of Bowden House School are trained in the Team Teach method of Care & Control/Positive Handling which aims to 'promote the least intrusive positive handling strategy and continuum of graded and gradual techniques with an emphasis and preference for the use of verbal, non-verbal de-escalation strategies being used and exhausted before Positive Handling strategies are utilised' (Team-Teach aims and course objectives). Details are given below of the escorts and interventions that can be applied when all other methods of Behaviour Management have been exhausted. The staff team is aware that any reasonable force is only to be as a last resort after all other trained avenues have been used. On-going training for all staff includes an annual refresher course for basic Team Teach/Positive Handling; an annual refresher course in Advanced Team Teach/Positive Handling and half-termly review sessions for both the Teaching and Care staff teams with the Team Teach Instructor. These review sessions provide the opportunity for staff to reflect on incidents that they have been involved in and to explore other strategies that might have been more effective.

All situations should initially be managed by staff with the minimum degree of reasonable force, whenever possible. There will be occasions when gentle guidance/removal from a situation is all that is needed. Application of the Caring Cs is an unobtrusive method where the staff member(s) have 'open palms' placed on either side and above the student's elbow with their body sideways onto the student. This guide is not a hold or a restraint as the student can move away freely, if they wish.

**Single Elbow Hold** – this is a more determining/supportive escort aimed at removing a student from an area or situation to avoid further escalation or involvement. This is carried out by two members of staff.

**Double Elbow Hold** – This can involve one or two members of staff (one each on either side) to add greater purpose in removing a student from an area or situation. This hold would be applied if it were considered that the Single Elbow Hold would be ineffective or pose a risk to the student or others in the vicinity. This hold should NOT be applied in a seated position.

Staff are taught that they can de-escalate a situation by moving down from a higher level escort to a lower level prior to releasing a student

**The Wrap** – This hold is a medium level strategy and staff undertaking this hold should be aware of the height of the student as there is the risk of being head butted. Therefore this hold should only be carried out on students lower than head height. This is a single person hold which should be carried out in front of a witness, whenever possible.

This hold can allow a student to be taken to a chair if his behaviour escalates or he attempts to kick back on the staff member's shins

**The Shield** – this is a more robust single person strategy, useful for moving a student over a relatively short space. As in any single person move, where possible, carry out in front of a witness.

**Front Ground Recovery** - if the above strategies prove ineffective or the situation suggests that a student could cause serious harm to himself, others or is causing/likely to cause significant damage to property, those staff who have been trained to the advanced level of Team Teach can apply this level of restraint. There should be a minimum number of 3 staff holding the student with a further member of staff acting as observer who will check and respond to any distress; difficulties with breathing,

placing a hand on the top of the shoulder to reassure the student that efforts will be made to release from this position at the earliest opportunity. After the incident the student will be checked by a suitably qualified member of staff, where possible, independent of the incident.

The DoH/DfE RPI (Risk Assessment) clearly defines the risks involved in applying 'restrictive physical intervention' and the staff through Team-Teach training, are skilled in taking the appropriate steps to minimise the risks of injury, pain or distress to both staff and students in line with the Guidance.

**Standard 12.5 requires that 'All children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss with a relevant adult (who was not directly involved) within 24 hours, incidents of restraint including reasonable force, they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by'. Standard 12.6 requires that 'A written record is kept of major sanctions and the use of any reasonable force. Records include information in Appendix 2 (use of reasonable force).The record is made within 24 hours and is legible. Children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records. The school regularly reviews any instances of the use of reasonable force and examines trends or issues to enable staff to reflect and learn in a way that will inform future practice'. (National Minimum Standards 2015)**

The school complies with this requirement with a process that provides support, supervision, repair and reflection for all involved. The Education Team holds a Resolution Meeting between the staff member(s) involved, a senior manager and the student to review the incident: what could have been done differently? What was learnt from the situation? How to move forward and whether a sanction should be imposed.

The Heads of Care meet with those involved to discuss the incident; explore what lead to the restraint; share alternative strategies to enable the student to manage their behaviour in the future to avoid being held and if a sanction is applied, assist the student to understand why this was imposed.

All staff should record any incident requiring physical restraint on BehaviourWatch under:

➤ Positive Handling

Information should include all those involved; the date/time and if more than one member of staff is involved, their individual account should be recorded to give a full picture of the situation.

Police involvement may be required if there is a particularly violent incident that cannot be contained by the staff; if a student or member of staff is assaulted or significant damage is caused to the school/residential accommodation as a result of the incident. In these situations, staff/students can exercise their right to press charges upon the student concerned and the school has a duty of care to support them in their decision. The parents/carers, Social Workers/Guardians, etc must be informed if any student is arrested by the Police.

Students and staff need to be protected from any form of physical violence and the school believes that it is important that both staff and students recognise that most behaviours have consequences.

Whenever there is a need for a consequence to any given situation either within the school setting or beyond the school gate, it is vital that the sanction is:

- understandable to the individual concerned
- directly related to the incident
- individualised – there should not be a prescribed tariff of offences and sanctions
- as close to the episode as possible
- seen to be fair.

### **Examples of acceptable sanctions include:**

- the temporary restriction or withdrawal of privileges such as leisure activities
- loss of points
- make-up time
- close supervision at break times
- IT, vehicle, sports equipment ban
- internal exclusion
- fixed term exclusion
- permanent exclusion

No consequences should involve or lead to, the humiliation of a student and staff should ensure that he is able to retrieve his dignity and self-respect after the imposition of any sanctions.

Whenever a sanction has been applied, it is important that it is discussed fully with and is, as far as possible, understood by the student. Details of the incident and the sanction should be recorded on BehaviourWatch.

### **Punishing poor behaviour**

(Behaviour & Discipline – DfE Advice for Headteachers and school staff : January 2016).

What the law allows: to be lawful, the sanctions (including detentions/make-up time) must satisfy the following three conditions:

- the decision to sanction a student must be made by a paid member of school staff or a member of staff authorised by the Headteacher
- the decision to sanction the student and the sanction/detention itself must be given on the school premises or while the student is under the charge of the member of staff. **This includes imposing a sanction for poor behaviour outside school, e.g. school activity/visit or away from the school buildings without permission (refer also to Strategies for avoiding incidents – Page 3)**
- it must not breach any other legislation (for example, in respect of disability, special educational needs, race and other equalities and human rights) and it must be reasonable in all the circumstances

This Behaviour Management/Positive Handling Policy is aimed at providing a framework for guidance for both staff and students. It is also intended

to offer direction for staff on how they should best respond to difficult and aggressive behaviour in addition to the formal Team-Teach training.

Compliance with this Policy will demonstrate that Bowden House School will consistently provide a safe and caring environment allowing and enabling its students to mature and develop to their full potential.

January 2018

**School:** Bowden House

**Policy:** Behaviour Management/  
Positive Handling Policy

**Agreed:** Spring Term 2018

**Responsibility:** Governors

**Review Date:** Spring Term 2020

**Signed by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors

**Date:**