

New Horizon Academy: Behaviour Support Policy

INTRODUCTION

At New Horizon Academy we educate with purpose: to provide our pupils with the tools they need to become independent, achieve economic well-being, contribute to society, and always strive to do their best.

We provide a vibrant environment for the education of children with moderate and severe learning needs who are in the care of New Horizons Care Limited. We will be responsive enough in our teaching approach to consistently meet our pupils' needs and prepare them for the ever-changing world. For this reason, we have drawn up this policy which aims to:

- promote good behaviour, self-discipline, and respect.
- regulate the conduct of pupils.

REGULATIONS AND RELEVANT GUIDANCE

- **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**
- **Behaviour and discipline in schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff**

SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy summarises our commitment to supporting young people to understand positive behaviours using effective strategies to reduce the need for physical intervention, or where unavoidable support staff and young people to reflect upon the incident and develop more effective strategies for the future.

OUTCOME

Pupils enjoy sound relationships, interact positively with others, and behave appropriately. Pupils are assisted to develop socially acceptable behaviour through encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff response to inappropriate behaviour.

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1. Encouraging and Rewarding Children

Also see: Flowchart on Encouraging and Rewarding Success.

Whilst pupils bring their own values and behaviours to school, staff play a key role in influencing future behaviours.

The culture of the school, generated by the staff, is crucial.

A restrictive, unsupportive, discouraging and punishing culture will result in instability, hostility, and possibly severe disruption.

Where pupils live in homes or attend schools which have clear, fair boundaries, where they feel safe, encouraged, and appropriately rewarded, they will thrive and do well. Such schools will also experience less instability and disruption.

At New Horizon Academy we will create our own culture, and follow the guidelines below:

- Listen to and empathise with pupils, respect their thoughts and feelings, and take their wishes into consideration.
- Look for things that are going well, or any step in the right direction, and appropriately reward it.

- Use rewards in a creative and diverse way, specific to pupil's needs, capabilities, and interests. This may mean that children are rewarded with toys, games, activities, or monetary rewards.
- Ensure that all 'tangible' rewards are accompanied by use of 'nontangible' encouragement and support - demonstrating to pupils that they have done well. Such 'nontangible' rewards include praising, smiling, appropriate touching (e.g., pat on the back; high five; hugging - with consent from the pupil).
- Know that pupils usually benefit, early on, from rewards which may appear to outweigh that which is expected. This is normal; over time rewards can be more relevant as children's self-esteem and skills improve.

For example: pupils who have few social or life skills and whose self-esteem and confidence is low may require forms of encouragement and reward which are intensive, frequent, or even excessive to help/remind them that they are doing well and appreciated.

- Bear in mind that some pupils cannot tolerate praise as it undermines the low perception, they have of themselves. For these children smaller more specific praise is needed.

Over time, as pupils achieve what is expected, such rewards should be reduced, or children should be expected to achieve more for the same or a similar reward.

2. Planning for Success

Also see Flowchart on Encouraging and Rewarding Success.

Where behaviour is the cause for concern it is critical that plans are established to manage and hopefully change the behaviour.

Consistency is the key, where staff manage behaviour inconsistently, little if any progress will be made; it may result in more disruption.

Where staff work together, improvements will be made.

The setting of objectives or expectations must not be ad hoc or unplanned. It should be part of a strategy, depending on pupil's assessed needs, interests, and capabilities.

Planning is critical; particularly where children's behavioural needs are complex or where behaviours give rise to serious concern, such as violence, drug or substance misuse, and self-harming or bullying.

Upon admission, Headteacher will draw up Behaviour Support plans and Risk Assessments which are designed to address any behavioural difficulties and notify staff how to manage them.

Behaviour Support Plans/Risk Assessment should summarise how behaviours should be managed, including the strategies that will be adopted in managing the behaviours; they should also state how acceptable behaviours will be encouraged and promoted.

These strategies can include therapeutic Interventions, physical Intervention, disciplinary measures, and other measures; for example, the use of incentive or reward programmes charts etc.

Pupils should be involved in the drawing up of Behaviour Support Plans/Risk Assessments and should understand the relevance of them; though this may not always be possible, for example, where the pupil has severe learning disabilities.

Pupils should also be capable of achieving what is expected; maybe with help or support from an adult or mentor, which may include another pupil. Unrealistic expectations can set a pupil up for failure and therefore not support the child's positive holistic development. Expectations placed upon pupils should never be beyond their capabilities; start small and encourage steps in the right direction.

Over time, pupils should be encouraged and supported to acquire the skills and level of responsibility and freedom which is within their capabilities and understanding; in turn, this will improve their self-image and confidence.

If pupils are capable of it, they must be involved in monitoring and reviewing their plans - and in agreeing new objectives and strategies.

3. Reminders and Reprimands

3.1 Reminders

Whilst it is critical to notice and reward acceptable behaviour, it is also important to manage unacceptable or disruptive behaviour in the same, positive, and consistent, manner.

Matters of concern must be raised and discussed with the pupil, with a view to giving them a fresh start - with support and encouragement.

If misbehaviour is persistent or serious, other strategies may have to be adopted; but minor or non-persistent behaviours should result in staff reminding or cautioning children.

Reminders and cautions should be clear and to the point, with clarity about:

- the behaviours which are unacceptable.
- the impact or influence that the behaviour is having on the pupil or others.
- clarity about what is accepted.
- help, advice, and encouragement to put things right; and
- A Fresh Start with no recriminations or further reminders.

Staff should employ a range of non-verbal and verbal techniques to show their disapproval; but they must avoid moody looks and public scolding.

Any step in the right direction must be approved of and rewarded whilst mistakes or problems should be openly discussed and strategies for change identified and encouraged.

The overall strategy should be to help the child do well.

3.2 Reprimands

Where behaviour is persistently or seriously unacceptable, it may be appropriate to reprimand pupils.

However, reprimands may only be used in the following circumstances:

- If pupils can behave acceptably and, preferably, understand what is expected.
- Where pupils have persistently or seriously failed to do as required/expected.
- Where nothing else can be done to change the behaviour; for example, by encouraging and rewarding acceptable behaviour rather than noticing and reprimanding unacceptable behaviour.

If it appears that a reprimand is justified, it should preferably be delivered in private, on the spot or as soon after the misbehaviour as possible.

Reprimands don't have to be loud but the person delivering them should appear 'in charge' or 'in control' and it should be said with feeling, with the staff member stating clearly what is wrong, how s/he and others are affected by the misbehaviour and - critically - what should be done to put things right.

The person delivering the reprimand should provide the pupil with an opportunity to explain but should not necessarily expect an apology. However, there should be clarity for the pupil that improvement is expected - and as necessary the adult should discuss what support and encouragement will be given to put things right.

An effective reprimand is over and done within a few minutes - and then the pupil should be given a fresh start.

4. Disciplinary Measures

4.1 Guidance on use of Disciplinary measures

Before imposing disciplinary measures, adults should do all they can to support and encourage pupils to do well.

If pupils do not behave acceptably, strategies should be adopted that are encouraging and rewarding.

Rather than noticing and imposing a disciplinary measure for misbehaviour it is always better to notice and reward good behaviour - or any step in the right direction.

If children continue to behave in unacceptable ways, they should be reminded about what is expected and given further encouragement to get it right.

Where disciplinary measures are used, they must be reasonable & the minimum necessary to achieve the objective. Also, there should be a belief that the disciplinary measure will have the desired outcome - increasing the possibility that acceptable behaviour will follow.

If disciplinary measures are imposed, adults should apply the following principles:

- Disciplinary measures must be the exception, not the rule, the last resort.
- Disciplinary measures must not be imposed as acts of revenge or retaliation.
- Think before imposing the disciplinary measures; don't apply it in the heat of the moment.

- Disciplinary measures may only be imposed upon pupils for persistent or serious misbehaviour; where reminders and reprimands have already failed or are likely to fail.
- Disciplinary measures should only be used if there is a reasonable chance, they will have the desired effect of making the point and in reducing or preventing further unacceptable behaviour.
- Before applying any Disciplinary measure, make sure the pupil is aware that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and, if possible, warn him/her that disciplinary measures will be applied if the unacceptable behaviour continues. This is to be undertaken in a supportive manner to act as a prompt as oppose to a threat.
- It is the certainty not the severity of disciplinary measures that is important.
- Disciplinary measures should only last as long as they need to; this allows the child the opportunity to make a fresh start as quickly as possible.
- There should be an opportunity to earn back some or all the privileges lost because of the disciplinary measure, the pupil should be fully aware of what is required to achieve this, for example positive behaviour.

4.2 Approved Disciplinary Measures

The following restrictions, if placed upon a pupil, are deemed to be a disciplinary measure, and must be recorded as such:

- Confiscation or withdrawal of a telephone or mobile 'phone to protect a child or another person from harm, injury or to protect property from being damaged.
- Loss of privileges – for instance the loss of a prized responsibility or not being able to participate in a non-uniform day (sometimes referred to as 'mufti' days).
- School based community service or imposition of a task – such as picking up litter or weeding school grounds; tidying a classroom; helping clear up the dining hall after mealtimes; or removing graffiti.
- Extra work or repeating unsatisfactory work until it meets the required standard.
- In more extreme cases temporary exclusion.

4.3 Non-Approved Disciplinary Measures

The following disciplinary measures are non-approved, which means they may never be imposed upon children:

- any form of Corporal Punishment, i.e., any intentional application of force as punishment, including slapping, punching, rough handling and throwing missiles.
- any disciplinary measure relating to the consumption or deprivation of food or drink.
- any requirement that a child wear distinctive or inappropriate clothes; Unless for sporting purposes connected with his/her education or with any organisation whose members customarily wear uniform in connection with its activity.
- the use or withholding of medication or medical or dental treatment.
- the modification of a child's behaviour through bribery or the use of threats.
- any disciplinary measure used intentionally or unintentionally which may humiliate a child or could cause them to be ridiculed.
- the imposition of any fine or financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum by way of reparation.
- any intimate physical examination of a child.
- the withholding of aids/equipment needed by a disabled child.
- any measure which involves a child in the imposition of any measure against any other child, or the disciplinary measure of a group of children for the behaviour of an individual child.
- swearing at or the use of foul, demeaning or humiliating language or measures.

5. Physical Intervention and use of reasonable force

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, all staff members, and any other person whom the Headteacher has given the responsibility to be in charge or in control of students may use reasonable force to prevent pupils:

- committing an offence,
- injuring themselves or others,

or

- damaging property, and
- to maintain good order and discipline during teaching sessions and otherwise.

Use of force should only be used as a last resort.

The school does not encourage the use of force and it will be used rarely. There is no definition of when it is reasonable to use force, as every situation is different and will have to be judged by the staff member in charge at that time. The degree of force used will be the minimum needed and proportional to the situation.

All incidents involving the use of force will be recorded in a bound, page-numbered significant incident book by staff involved as soon as possible after the incident and copies will be given to the Headteacher. Parents will be informed of the incident although, lawfully, the school have the right to not inform a parent if they decide it is inappropriate to do so.

Under usual circumstances, only staff who have been trained to an appropriate level may use Physical Intervention. However, in an emergency, those not trained may be required to hold a young person to keep them safe if the risk of doing so is less than the risk posed by the young person. At New Horizon Academy we will make sure that all staff receive “Team Teach” training when they join the school and the regular updates. This training expands on the justification for using physical interventions; the meaning of significant injury; serious property damage and more.

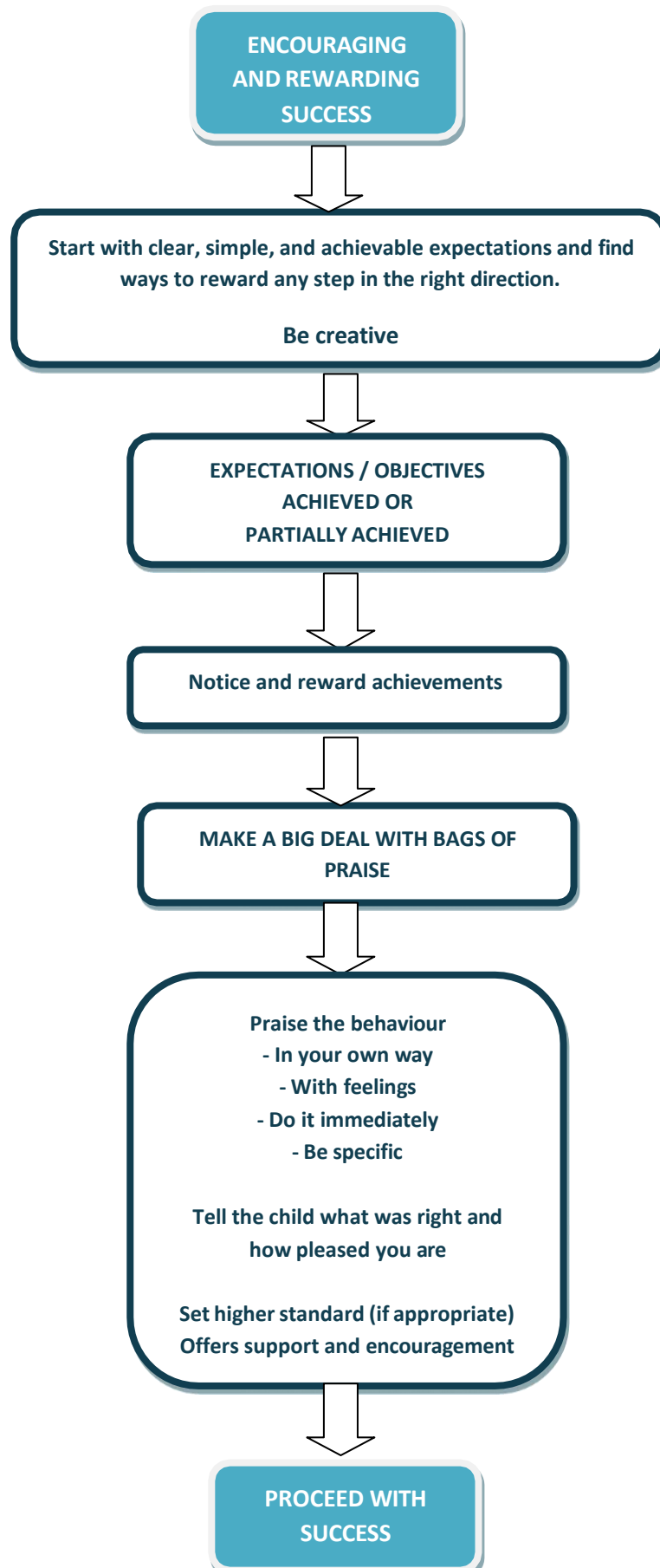
Physical Intervention techniques used should:

- not impede the process of breathing or restrict the airways
- not intentionally inflict pain or suffering
- avoid vulnerable parts of the body, e.g., the neck, chest, and sexual areas
- avoid hyperextension, hyper flexion, and pressure on or across the joints
- not employ potentially dangerous positions

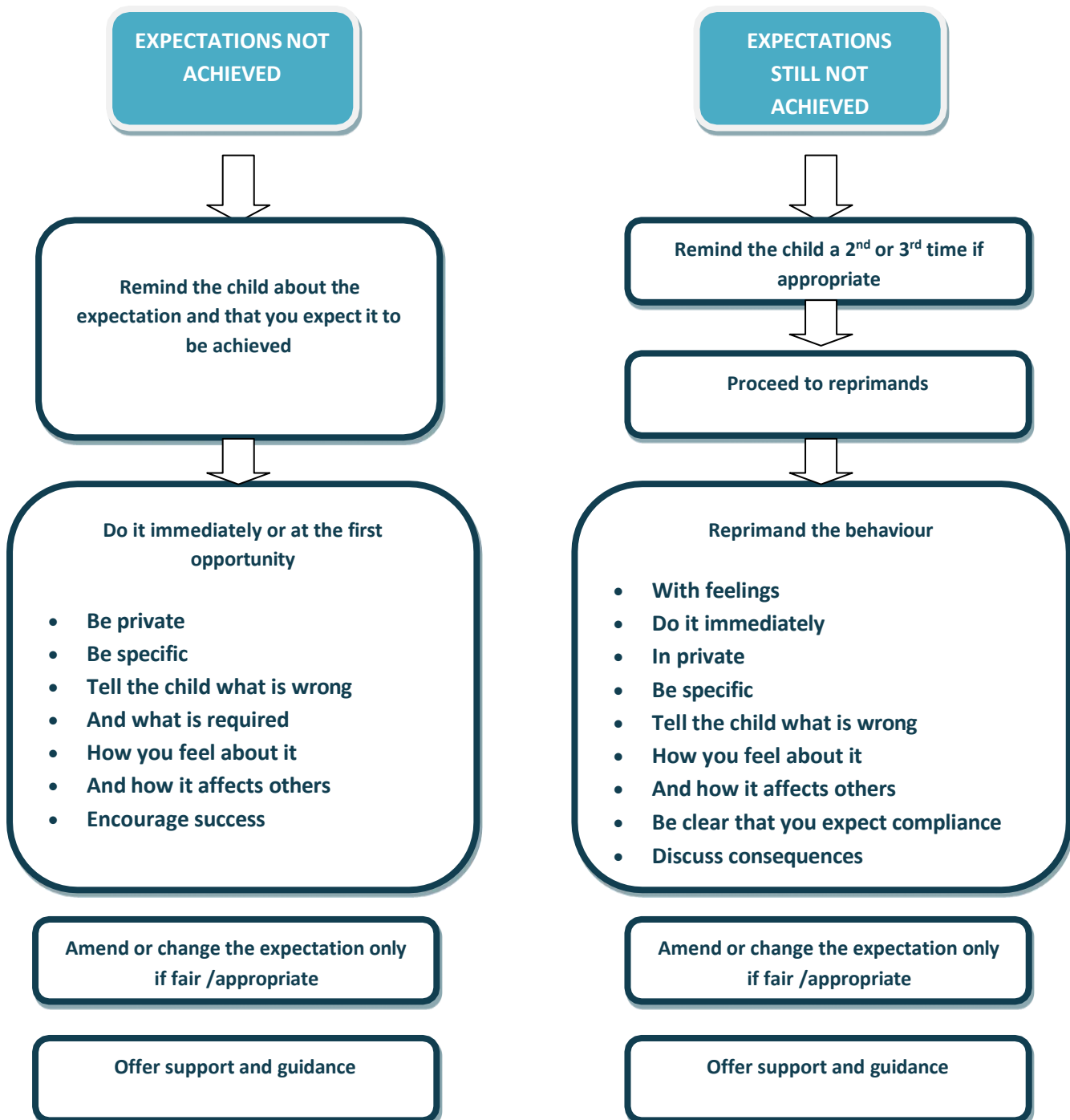
Record keeping

- All critical incidents will be recorded
- Each record will include actions taken including reprimands, disciplinary measures, or physical interventions
- Incidents will be categorised to make it possible to analyse trends and identify any on-going issues

6. FLOWCHART: Encouraging and Rewarding Success



7. FLOWCHART: Reminders and Reprimands



This policy will be reviewed annually, in response to relevant changes in legislation or from what we learn from specific incidents.

Policy reviewed by Katie Davis (Headteacher) November 2023

Policy next to be reviewed November 2024