

PRIORY WOODS SCHOOL AND ARTS COLLEGE

BEHAVIOUR POLICY



Adopted by: Priory Woods School

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INTRODUCTION

At Priory Woods we aim to:

- ❖ Create an environment that is warm, free from inhibiting pressures yet has the capability to be challenging, thus providing the best conditions for learning and development
- ❖ Provide conditions that ensure dignity, promote self reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community (United Nations 1989)

Behaviour management at Priory Woods should be addressed proactively not reactively, prevention is better than cure. Discussions about difficult behaviour should, where possible, focus on questions such as ' how can we ensure it does not arise?' and 'can we understand what is causing this child to behave in this way?' rather than rushing to discover ' what we can do when this behaviour occurs?'

This document is intended to provide guidance for staff and inform parents and visitors about the processes, attitudes, organisational structures and strategies that contribute to the development of an ethos that encourages good, appropriate behaviour.

Prior Woods School Physical Intervention Policy provides a graduated response to physical intervention and guidance on dealing with challenging behaviour.

CREATING A POSITIVE ETHOS AND AVOIDING PROBLEMS ARISING:

THE WHOLE SCHOOL LEVEL:

The role of the SMT

- ❖ It is vital that the SMT understand that any decisions taken relating to organisation and curriculum may affect the school ethos.
- ❖ The SMT need to be responsive to the concerns and ideas of staff to facilitate two-way communication. Regular meetings are therefore important.
- ❖ Staff should feel free to raise issues informally without fear of being judged, coerced or intimidated.
- ❖ The SMT should provide advice and support in specific situations relating to childrens' behaviour

It is part of the role of senior and experienced members of staff that they set an example in their attitude and behaviour towards children and other staff (respect and

support being the key) and that they communicate the school's philosophy sensitively and effectively to other members of staff

The role of the whole organisation

- ❖ Creating a consistent and calm approach will help prevent the need for reactive measures to be taken
- ❖ Pupils with SLD, Complex and PMLD need at all times to have their own individual special needs borne in mind - be flexible
- ❖ How can we show we respect the pupils and ensure that they retain their dignity during the course of a school day?

Examples:

Give the child time to greet people when coming into school each day

Lunchtimes should be pleasurable and free from pressure to eat quickly; respect dietary needs and likes / dislikes

Opportunities for free play in appropriate environment; chance to let off steam

Organise end of day to prevent boredom, frustration and waiting around

The role of parents

- ❖ A shared understanding and dialogue between school and home about behaviour and other issues is extremely important. Parents are involved in discussions regarding behaviour and consulted when a Positive Handling Plan is written and implemented.
- ❖ Opportunities for parents to discuss problems and successes with staff exist at annual reviews, coffee mornings, workshops, social events, fund raising events etc.
- ❖ Home /school diaries should be used consistently and fairly.

The role of the environment

- ◆ The environment should be pleasant, well decorated with abundant evidence of the valuing of pupils' work and art
- ◆ There should be adequate facilities that provide the children with opportunities for enjoyment, success and space to let off steam.

- ◆ Areas should be available throughout school that allow pupils space to reflect and calm down. There should also be areas that allow staff to use physical intervention techniques safely.
- ◆ The School Development Plan should include ongoing premises development targets.

The role of the curriculum

- ❖ A lot of behaviour problems can be caused by an inadequate curriculum; for example by frustrating able children, providing too few opportunities for success, or boredom.
- ❖ At Priory Woods, we therefore aim to provide a curriculum that is stimulating and challenging but also enables every child to succeed.
- ❖ Issues such as self-esteem, caring for others, right and wrong, self control, respect for ourselves and others need to be explicitly dealt with and not assigned to the 'hidden curriculum'. To this end we have a Thrive, PSE, Citizenship and RE curriculum that ensures that the development of a positive ethos is covered consistently throughout school.

The role of rewards and celebration

- ❖ A child is less likely to display difficult behaviours if his / her self esteem is high and if their achievements (behavioural, academic or other) are recognised and celebrated.

The role of rules

- ❖ It is important that we provide clear behavioural boundaries and guidelines within which our pupils operate.
- ❖ However it is equally important to remember that when working with children with severe learning difficulties to remain flexible. Over rigid application of a 'rule' to some children may create more difficult behaviours than it was designed to avoid.
- ❖ All staff must take a flexible approach determined by the individual needs of pupils. This should be communicated effectively through class, key stage and staff meetings so that consistency of approach is ensured.

Our Golden rules:

- ◆ Be kind and helpful
- ◆ Be gentle
- ◆ Listen
- ◆ Be honest
- ◆ Work hard
- ◆ Look after property

The rules are statements that encourage the children to be adopt a range of positive behaviours and attitudes.

CREATING A POSITIVE ETHOS AT A CLASSROOM LEVEL

Classrooms are complex environments, often crowded and noisy. At Priory Woods they contain pupils with a wide range of abilities and a variety of special needs. Staff teams can be as large as four. Teachers have the responsibility of delivering a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum. It is easy to understand that within such an environment conflict, confrontation, frustration and challenge can occur. It can be minimised if consideration is given to a number of issues.

Organisation:

- ❖ Grouping: where possible avoid combinations of pupils that can be troublesome.
- ❖ Timetabling: be aware that different activities demand different standards of behaviour and self-control from children (and staff!). Some children may need a period of time to calm down between an exciting, physical, active session and one demanding more controlled, calm behaviour. There is little point in subjecting a child to an activity or situation that you know will cause frustration or emotional difficulty for them. It may never be possible to avoid every such situation but at least the additional problems faced by the child can and should be recognised.
- ❖ Furniture and equipment: many difficult situations can be avoided if careful consideration is given to how the classroom is arranged.

Teamwork:

- ❖ All class groupings have at least two members of staff. It is therefore important that these teams work well in order to ensure that a consistent approach to behaviour is taken.
- ❖ Reward systems used for groups / individuals should be commonly understood and consistently applied.

- ❖ Staff should feel confident enough to voice their feelings and suggestions without fear of recrimination or ridicule and should feel confident that their views will be taken seriously by the team. This will reduce tension and promote consistency and good relationships between staff.
- ❖ The relationships between staff / staff and staff /pupils are of paramount importance; the children will learn civility, respect for others, sympathy, consideration much more easily if they are given continual good examples and role models.

Curriculum:

- ❖ The whole school curriculum allows the style of delivery and exact content presented to individual children to be determined by the class teacher and their support staff. This freedom to differentiate and change style and technique of delivery can, if used sensitively, help reduce feelings of failure, frustration and boredom, all of which can lead to behaviour problems.
- ❖ Children with severe learning difficulties often have repeated experiences of not understanding, misunderstanding, failure, frustration and confusion, all of which can lead to a lowering of self esteem and behaviour problems. It is vital that teaching styles and content are chosen to minimise this.
- ❖ Children need the experience of success and the joy of learning new skills within an environment that is nurturing and reduces the fear of judgement and failure as much as possible.

CREATING A POSTIVE ETHOS AT AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- ◆ The importance of the place of every member of staff in creating an environment that reduces the likelihood of bad behaviour cannot be overemphasised.
- ◆ All staff have a duty to show children that they are liked, respected and welcome.
- ◆ Staff should set challenging but realistic expectations of behaviour.
- ◆ They should demonstrate by their own example appropriate ways of expressing their emotions. A calm, consistent approach and a sense of humour are important qualities that help to reduce tension and promote a sense of confidence and security in children.
- ◆ Pupils with autistic features often exhibit behaviours that require an individual response, which acknowledges their inability to cope with changes and their difficulties in understanding and responding to sanctions and rewards.