



Medeshamstede Academy Behaviour Protocol

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Medeshamstede Academy Behaviour Protocol Statement:

The purpose of this protocol is to provide our whole school community with information, strategies and legal requirements regarding how Medeshamstede approaches behaviour.

At Medeshamstede Academy our shared purpose and values reflect that every child has a right to be treated with respect and dignity; belonging to a community that understands their needs and provides them the right support.

The Academy teaches skills, and structure the environment, so the students within the academy are supported to achieve standards of behaviour compatible with a safe, caring and positive environment. It is essential that the academy supports students to develop behaviours which are functional, socially compatible, dignified, effective and respectful of others.

The Academy promotes positive behaviour through the Academy Values of 'Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Reflection'

The academy aims to ensure that:

- Every student learns in classrooms free from distractions, including disruptive and disturbing behaviour;
- Every student develops their social skills and friendships, particularly during breaks and lunchtimes, without being subjected to any form of bullying;
- Good behaviour, hard work and effort is encouraged and rewarded;
- Students will develop a progressive awareness of right and wrong and act accordingly;
- Students will learn to make choices about their behavioural responses, and aware of their responsibility and accountability for one's own actions and their impact on others
- Staff will ensure that self-esteem and 'get out' strategies support choice making.
- Children and adults have a sense of belonging, feel safe, secure and valued
- Unconditional Positive Regard should be practiced and reinforced at all times

Our Students

Students who attend the academy have Autistic Spectrum Disorders. Classrooms are structured on the principles of TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication related Handicapped Children) in an attempt to respond to the needs of autistic students. These principles include:

- Instructions that combine visual and verbal content to give greater clarity and understanding
- Environments and activities that are structured to reduce anxiety and promote independence

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TEACCH is a fundamental framework which aims to enhance the life of individuals with ASD and their families. TEACCH training and intervention reduce risks associated with behaviours of concern, aggression and violence. Through this framework we aim to understand the connection between learning styles, developmental stage, challenging behaviours and evidence based practice to develop and implement behaviour interventions

Within our culture of autism, we aim to teach appropriate social skills and coping strategies to help the individual understand and accept boundaries of reasonable behaviour.

Through the curriculums of:

- Social Thinking® (Michelle Garcia Winner)
- Zones of Regulation® (Leah M. Kuypers)

We support the students to regulate their emotions, promote independence, enhance communication, social skills and raise self-esteem. We recognise autism as a life-long difference and understand the unique learning styles and characteristics of children with ASD.

We seek outside agencies and draw upon their expertise this might be through referrals, CPD or professionals modelling practice.

Managing Inappropriate Autistic Behaviour

Inappropriate behaviour may be exhibited by students with autism for a variety of reasons:

- They may not understand the social context, leading them to seek attention inappropriately
- They may not understand the language used
- They may not have the cognitive skills to complete or understand the task set
- They may be affected by a range of sensory stimuli, from more than one sense
- They may be affected by internal body feelings that they are unable to explain verbally eg tiredness, hunger, pain, unhappiness, anxiety
- They may be unaware how their actions are affecting the feelings of others
- They may be socially unconnected and not respond to praise or the need to please
- They may have difficulty remembering in sequence and become anxious with changes – preferring to do things in a familiar routine
- They may focus on specific detail or materials, becoming off-task and non-productive
- They may be driven by fixed interests and routines which override the expectations and conventions of others
- They may be unable to regulate, or put limits on their own behaviour, leaving them open to danger and a possible danger to others
- They may be echolalic or echopraxic and unable to inhibit copied routines.

All these factors may result in raised levels of anxiety and frustration. Behaviour displayed may vary from noisy disruption to inactivity; from temper tantrums and verbal outbursts to apparent lethargy and passive non-compliance. We seek outside agencies and draw upon their expertise this might be through referrals, CPD or professionals modelling practice.

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Best Practice for Positive Behaviour Support:

We acknowledge that every student is unique and will respond in different ways to different situations and approaches. However, Medeshamstede ensures that all staff are consistent with expected classroom management strategies and areas of good practice which will impact positively on all students.

- Consciously noticing positive behaviour and giving genuine comments of specific praise
- Limiting use of 'lots' of language
- Always allowing for appropriate processing time
- Having a good working knowledge of each student's individual targets for behaviour
- De-brief times to review of individual students' behaviour management
- Working as a team to ensure a structured and visually organised learning environment
- Being explicit and clear about intentions; having clear, consistent expectations and success criteria, visually communicated to students
- Planning to prepare students for changes in routine well in advance
- Giving responsibility, wherever possible, to promoting student independence
- Keeping calm to reduce tensions
- Active listening and paraphrasing to communicate understanding of what has been shared and what next steps will be taken in order to address a problem
- Positive relationships
- Always being consistent with strategies and ensuring the team is fully informed of approaches for Behaviour Management Plans
- Knowing students well and providing for individual learning styles
- Being firm but **always consistently** fair
- Awareness of behavioural needs of all students, equally quieter, less vocal students
- Avoiding the use of sarcasm

Positive Behaviour and rewards

Rewards

We may use fixed interests as rewards for positive behaviour, even if these are not traditional educational/learning activities. We may also utilise these times to teach play and social skills eg turn-taking.

Positive behaviours can be reinforced with clear specific verbal/visual feedback. Each class has a reward system suited to the needs and motivators of that particular group or individuals.

Types of Reward

Rewards for behaviour are clearly given as rewards for positive behaviours, linked to demonstrating the Academy Values of 'Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Reflection'. Dojo points are given as rewards and acknowledgement of demonstrating these Academy values and a value of points may earn a physical reward.

For some students, the concept of a clear finish is sufficient reward to positively complete an activity.

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For others, the learnt routine of – first you work, then you play – choose - is equally rewarding.

Other rewards may be:

- Tangible rewards – particularly in group situations where intrinsic motivation may not initially be high, but anxiety brought on by social proximity and strange surroundings may be high.
- Intrinsic rewards – individual strengths and interests incorporated into tasks.
- Positive reinforcement – verbal and gesture, Dojo points.
- Social reinforcement – praise, recognition that catches students being good .
- House Competition rewards –The reward system may offer a group reward such as a chosen ‘out and about’ or special time/party in school.
- Competence rewards – Principal certificates, swimming certificates, sports certificates for achievement.
- Academy Star of the Week/Term

The TEACCH Philosophy and PRICE Principles: (Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment)

The TEACCH model and PRICE Principles focus on identifying the function of the behaviour and working with the student to replace inappropriate behaviour.

Staff must try to unpick the function of the behaviour and replace or adapt this behaviour so that it is more acceptable and appropriate.

The functions of the behaviour could be the desire for

- **social attention:** behaving in a particular way is a *reliable* way of gaining attention.
- **sensory:** behaving in a particular way is a *reliable* way of satiating a sensory need.
- **avoidance or escape;** behaving in a particular way is a *reliable* way of escaping from or avoiding a particular activity.
- **tangible;** behaving in a particular way is a *reliable* way of gaining access to preferred items or activities.

Staff must try to unpick the function of the behaviour and replace or adapt this behaviour so that it is more **acceptable and appropriate**

By teaching new skills, engineering the environment whilst skills are acquired, adding structure and visual clarity, most challenging behaviours can be reduced or adapted.

The process for changing behaviour is cyclical:

1. Collect history/data/observe all behaviour to obtain a picture of the child.
2. Consider child’s individual deficits of autism in relationship to the problem.
3. Decide on one change, linked to the function of the behaviour.
4. Trial.
5. Review.

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If a child continues to display behaviour patterns which are dangerous to themselves or others or are highly intrusive to a positive learning environment, it may be necessary to monitor triggers and set up specific interventions. Such interventions would be monitored and discussed with parents and other professionals, including Educational Psychology Services.

The TEACCH model, and ethos of the academy, addresses antecedents first and the function of the behaviour. Appropriate behaviours are taught and reinforced. We focus on 'the positive' and refocusing negative behaviour to behaviour that is more appropriate but linked to the function of their behaviour.

Restrictive Physical Intervention: PRICE (Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment)

Our academy PRICE instructors train staff in positive behaviour support and restrictive physical intervention in line with the PRICE Safe schools programme. This involves strategies to manage behaviours of concern, de-escalation and diffusing skills and restrictive physical intervention for use as a last resort. As a school we recognised that unmet needs will impact on children's ability to engage and learn. Each pupil has a Pupil Profile written by the class team with input from EHCP, parents, students and professionals where appropriate, some students will also have a Behaviour Management Plan. Members of staff at the Academy all receive regular CPD in strategies which support children's SEND needs from Academy staff and outside professionals.

New staff are trained in PRICE during the term they arrive as part of their induction and this is refreshed yearly. Existing staff have their training refreshed yearly on a rolling programme and instructors also have their training refreshed in line with PRICE requirements. As an Academy we recognise and follow the standards of the restraint reduction network.

The use of restrictive physical intervention is a last resort and all staff are trained to effectively de-escalate challenging situations and this will be used. Physical restraint methods will only be used by staff with PRICE training and as a last resort where de-escalation techniques have failed or cannot be used.

Physical Intervention

Physical intervention is kept to a minimum and is viewed as a last resort. As long as safety can be maintained, the policy is to step back from a child displaying aggression, giving space and time for them to regain control.

Approach to the use of reasonable force

The academy recognises that there are times when physical contact with a student may be necessary, for example, giving first aid. If a student is in distress or needs comfort or calming down. It also recognises that there are some students for whom touching is unwelcome because of their special needs or personal history.

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Reasonable Force

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teaching staff - at some point in their career that involves a degree of physical contact with students.

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent students from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder. All members of teaching staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. It is unlawful to use force as punishment.
- Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a student to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in these circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- The term 'control' means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom. The term 'force' is used when it is necessary to restrain a student.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two students are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- Academy staff will always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the student.

The circumstances in which reasonable force might be used:

- remove a student from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a student behaving in a way that disrupts an academy event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a student leaving the classroom where allowing the student to leave would risk their safety, or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a student from physically attacking another student or a member of staff
- restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

This school adheres to the PRICE principles for physical intervention, which adheres to the Restraint Reduction Network. We aim to reduce reliance on physical intervention and only using minimum force for the shortest time. Physical restraint methods will only be used by staff with PRICE training and as a last resort where de-escalation techniques have failed or cannot be used. We aim to manage at least 95% of instances without the need to restrain or physically intervene.

Searching and confiscation without consent:

Principals and authorised staff can use force as is reasonable, given the circumstances, to conduct a search for the following prohibited items;

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol

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- Illegal drugs and paraphernalia
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- E-cigarettes
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury (physical or psychological) or damage to property.

Staff will always give student the opportunity to volunteer any prohibited items and support them to identify the dangers related to the items or situation. Where a member of staff reasonably suspects that a student is in possession of a prohibited item and the pupil refuses to cooperate with a search of their person or of their property, the Academy may treat this as a disciplinary matter and apply the appropriate consequence.

The Academy follows the DFE's guidance on searching and confiscation when disposing of prohibited items. (Searching, screening and confiscation – Advice for Headteachers, school staff and governing bodies, July 2022)

Any cigarettes or e-cigarettes confiscated in the Academy may be destroyed.

Sanctions

All classes will establish group expectations for stop behaviours. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for and understand their own emotions and actions; and how their actions impact others. Within each class base there are a variety of structures to support the teaching, learning and implementation of this.

However, sanctions as a method of discipline or changing behaviour with autistic children are not generally considered successful unless alternative behaviours are encouraged and planned for carefully – to change a behaviour you must offer an alternative behaviour or the child may then create their own.

Social pressures may not be effective because of lack of social empathy and relatedness. Consequences are not effective unless the child is able to make the connection between the deviant act and the consequence.

Post-Incident Resolution with Students

Not all of our students have the skills for verbal resolution of a situation and even those who struggle to tell you what they should have done, or could have done, differently can rarely regulate sufficiently to put it into practice when under pressure. However, some may students may cope with discussion afterwards as part of learning new coping skills.

As a general rule even for our verbal students we work on the rule of minimal language and minimal discussion. A student should be calm before returning to any group and monitored carefully afterwards.

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Staff may also need recovery time and should cover for each other to give recovery time after an incident where needed.

Recording an Incident

The incident report is to be completed by the persons involved in the incident. This will be shared with the Learning Mentor for Transition and Readiness to Learn who will then record the incident on CPOMS.

The incident report is to be factual and must include:

- *Antecedent – Events leading up to the incident Behaviour How did the students behave?*
- *Consequences – How did staff intervene? How did the students respond? How was the situation resolved?*
- *Injuries – Student(s) and staff*
- *Witness - All witnesses must read and sign the record to ensure that this is an accurate account of the incident.*

Parents/carers will be notified of the incident and the information recorded within the incident form on the day of the incident. If parents/carers would like a copy of the incident report then they must request this and it will be sent to them via email.

If a student has requested time alone then staff should report on CPOMs and discuss with parents.

Parents are welcome to visit the academy to discuss any aspect of their child's behaviour with the class team and/or leaders.

Our aim is to involve parents in all areas of their child's education and in the management of their behaviour, so that behaviours can be managed as pro-actively as possible. Behaviour management plans should reflect a student's Education, Health and Care Plan. Arrangements should detail behaviours displayed, their triggers, and strategies proposed for managing them. Details for positive handling plans and behaviour management plans will be discussed with parents at review meetings and their signature of support sought when review reports are subsequently circulated. Plans will be regularly reviewed and updated particularly after an incident as this document needs to reflect accurate and clear practice.

We believe that the more the academy and home work together, the better understanding we will all have of the child in order to reduce that child's anxiety and support the child in making their own decisions about behaviour

Behaviour Monitoring

Behaviour monitoring and analysis is carried out monthly by the Designated Safeguarding and Behaviour Leads. Staff look at individual cases and actions as well as trends in classes, phases vulnerable groups or whole school concerns.

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Staff Responsibilities

The core to all the teaching we do is to manage behaviours to reduce confusion and anxiety, whether it is through TEACCH visual structures, or PRICE strategies. We can thereby create a calm working atmosphere where learning can take place. It is therefore the responsibility of all staff members to:

- Familiarise themselves with all policies relating to behaviour and safety, together with our documents outlining the principles of TEACCH and PRICE, as well as seeking clarification from a senior staff member if necessary.
- Engage in TEACCH and PRICE training and take responsibility for regularly practising these principles and techniques with other staff members (Registers and copies of certificates are available for inspection in the DSL office).
- To follow safety procedures to protect both themselves and others. This includes completing risk assessments, filling in internal incident forms promptly for any incident involving aggression or potential danger eg running off, and completing the necessary incident forms where injury has occurred to either adults or students, (accident record in the academy's medical room) as well as recording on individual records.
- Complete a school 'Injury at Work' form in Smartlog, our Health and Safety Recording platform.
- To alert other staff members of potential incidents and to summon assistance, where necessary.
- To support and seek support from other team members with the management of behaviour.
- To make themselves aware of any specific strategies for dealing with individual children (particularly high risk behaviour children) through the Pupil Profiles and Behaviour plans. Due to the nature of autism spectrum conditions management of behaviours often have to be pro-active rather than prescriptive. What works one day may not the next. Staff need, therefore, to use their professional judgement and knowledge of individual students when dealing with each issue to avoid getting into negative spirals.
- Our students need our help to manage their behaviours and keep anxiety at a low level and this sometimes means going back a level in communication skills, work tasks and expectations to enable them to then move forwards

The health and safety of all the students and staff must always be paramount and, therefore, the safe management of all the students is a shared responsibility of all staff members.

Suspensions:

In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to temporarily suspend a student if his/her behaviour consistently presents a threat to the safety of him/herself or others.

The academy considers that suspension is an absolute last resort and the over-riding philosophy is to ensure that individual placements are successful. We aim to overcome difficulties as quickly as possible with minimal effect on students' learning and the learning of others. Should these circumstances occur an Interim Review will be called to discuss the situation and draw up an action plan to support the child in their behaviour and to manage the anxiety. Should unacceptable behaviour continue it may lead to permanent exclusion.

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The Principal may consider it necessary to suspend a student where there is:

- Persistent and/or disruptive behaviour unrelated to the student's SEND, where a wide range of strategies to modify the student's conduct has been attempted without success, OR
- an incident which has been deemed to place academy staff or students in considerable danger.

All suspensions are monitored by the Education Director on a half-termly basis. Where a suspended student is due to sit an external examination, suitable arrangements will be made to ensure this happens.

Actions Taken Following a Serious Incident:

- The student is kept under direct Senior Leadership Team (SLT) observation during any investigation
- Written details of the incident are collected from those involved before any decision is made
- The parent/carer is telephoned by a senior member of staff to outline the incident
- The Local Authority SEN team will be informed, as our students all have an EHCP.

Fixed-Term Suspensions:

Once a decision has been taken to initiate a suspension:

- Parents are informed via letter (email and paper copy) outlining the incident and the length of the fixed-term suspension, which can be up to five school days. The parents' right of appeal is highlighted in the letter
- A reintegration meeting is set up for the parent/carer and student to attend on return from suspension, with a senior member of staff.

Following this meeting:

- The student is reinstated or further sanctions are decided upon
- The student may be placed on report
- Staff, parents and, where appropriate, the student will agree their PBSP and corresponding Risk Assessment will be reviewed to work together to find the best way to support the student to manage their own emotions and behaviour.
- Where appropriate, an apology is given to the member or staff or other students involved
- A record of the suspension and meeting is kept in the student's file.

Decision to Permanently Exclude:

Incidents which may lead to a permanent exclusion could include:

- Violence, including threatened violence and sexual assault
- Selling/supplying drugs on school premises
- Bringing a knife or other weapon onto the site
- Persistent, malicious disruptive behaviour including open defiance and refusal to agree with school policies which prevents other students from learning or presents a health and safety risk to themselves and others.

Where students are permanently excluded the exclusion letter will be accompanied by documents

The report will include:

- A profile sheet including basic information about the student
- An overview of the case including a detailed account of the reason(s) for the Exclusion
- Confirmation that the current DfE exclusions guidance has been adhered to
- Where relevant, details of any behaviour modification strategies that have been used
- An indication of how the sanction applied is consistent with the school's Behaviour Policy
- Alternative sanctions that were considered (if applicable)
- Assurance that the relevant DfE guidance for students with SEN, a disability, or in the case of a Looked After Child, was considered before the decision to exclude was taken

- That in reaching the decision, equal opportunity legislation was complied with.

The Permanent Exclusion Report;

When the Principal seeks to permanently exclude a student, the Academy Advisory Council must set up a Disciplinary Committee to review the case.

In advance of the Disciplinary Committee, the Principal will prepare an exclusion report which explains why the student was excluded.

Safeguarding

At Medeshamstede Academy, we have a Safeguarding Policy and Procedures that are available to all parties. The Designated Senior Leads for Safeguarding review and update these policies and procedures, in-line with any new legislation or recommendations, annually. Staff members are expected to read and record that they have read this policy.

Equal Opportunities

Everyone has the right to work in a safe, healthy and happy environment. We strive to enable all our students and staff, regardless of ability, ethnicity, religion, gender or orientation to participate fully and happily in the life of the school. We believe that our behaviour management policy upholds the dignity and maintains the safety and well-being of all.