

Behaviour Strategy

Education Department

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Wrexham County Borough Council Education Department

Behaviour Strategy

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1. Introduction

1.1 Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC), in active collaboration with all stakeholders, recognises the crucial role education has in raising the aspirations of children and young people and is committed to improve the life chances of all learners by removing barriers to educational attainment.

1.2 The promotion of positive behaviour is one of the keys to improving the learning, attainment and opportunities of children and young people as well as enhancing their wellbeing. The council acknowledges that most children and young people do not experience difficulties in moderating their behaviour at school and are able to make the most of the educational opportunities made available to them. A small number of children and young people, however, find it challenging to positively engage in their learning and often display these challenges through inappropriate behaviour. These children and young people who display inappropriate behaviour and/or whose attendance is poor are vulnerable to poor educational outcomes and limited future life chances and require additional support through a person centred approach.

1.3 A coherent strategy to improve the behaviour and attendance of these children and young people is necessary in order that more achieve within Wrexham's education system and ultimately improve their life chances. In order to achieve, a genuinely person-centred, collaborative and strategic approach to flexible learning pathways should be promoted e.g Enrichment opportunities, work experience, access to small groups for specific support.

1.4 WCBC is committed to keeping exclusions as low as possible and will support and challenge schools where appropriate. It has made improving pupil behaviour a key priority in its Children and Young People's Plan. The aim of this Behaviour Strategy is to set out the Authority's overall approach to promoting positive behaviour and improving attendance. In addition, it outlines arrangements to support schools/settings and individual pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

1.5 WCBC promotes a graduated approach to Behaviour (see Appendix A).

2. Aims of the Behaviour Strategy

2.1 To enable all schools/settings to create a truly inclusive ethos and a learning environment where each child can actively participate and where positive behaviour can flourish.

2.2 To secure and protect the entitlement of all children in Wrexham - especially those considered to be vulnerable - to suitable, full-time education regardless of any challenging behaviours they may display.

2.3 To enhance the ability of schools/settings to identify and engage at an early stage those children and young people who are at risk of becoming disaffected and disengaged from learning and who display this disengagement and disaffection through challenging behaviours or persistent absence from school.

2.4 To develop the ability and capacity of schools/settings to work in partnership with each other to share information and effective practice.

2.5 To develop a collaborative framework between schools for working with children and young people at risk of exclusion.

2.6 To ensure consistency across Wrexham, so that a child/young person experiencing behavioural difficulties is able to access the same level of support regardless of setting.

3. Key Principles

3.1 This Behaviour Strategy is underpinned by a number of key principles which are:

3.2 To secure and protect the entitlement of all children in Wrexham to suitable full-time education. Regardless of the behaviours they may exhibit, every child has this entitlement and it is the shared duty of all stakeholders to work collaboratively in order to ensure this.

3.3 All stakeholders demonstrate a commitment to meeting the emotional and social well-being of those with challenging behaviour within mainstream schools wherever possible.

3.4 Behaviour occurs in a context and the creation of a calm, orderly and respectful learning environment reduces the risk of more serious incidents occurring.

3.5 Approaches that are based on punishment, that focus on the negative, and where staff view behaviour in isolation, take the behaviour personally and believe it is intentional, do not get to the root of the issue. More appropriate responses provide clear and rational consequences for challenging behaviour, look at the child/young person behind the behaviour, focus on their positive

characteristics, understand and address the underlying issues. Remaining calm, open-minded and reflective can help staff to avoid taking challenging behaviour personally.

3.6 Understanding the causes of challenging behaviour is key. Behaviour is a form of communication and may stem from issues such as a mental health problem, issues in the home, bullying or relationship problems, bereavement, learning difficulties, social communication difficulties or speech and language difficulties. Early understanding of the root causes of the behaviour means that timely and specific support can be provided. Being aware of ACE factors (Adverse Childhood Experiences) can help.

3.7 Behaviour is learned, can change and improvement can be secured. Children and young people's behaviour can be affected by a range of factors and any interventions should be underpinned by the belief that positive change can happen. Improvements in behaviour may be small and gradual, expectations need to be realistic and any strategies should be given plenty of time to be trialled and to be embedded.

3.8 The behaviour should be seen as the issue, not the child/young person. It is crucial that the child/young person who exhibits challenging behaviour is neither blamed nor stigmatised. These children and young people often face multiple and complex challenges that need addressing through a holistic, person-centred approach.

3.9 Flexibility and creativity are vital. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to behaviour management. Instead, responses need to be bespoke, flexible and designed to fit the needs of each individual child at that particular time. It may be necessary to implement alternative strategies if tried and tested ones have not been effective over a period of time. Whilst clearly defined protocols and procedures are important, these should not be allowed to limit the development of creative solutions. Innovative thinking and a constant search to develop new ways of engaging children and young people whose behaviour is deemed to be challenging should always be encouraged (See The Graduated Response-Appendix A).

3.10 All schools/settings should adopt a person-centred approach with children and young people viewed as active participants in the process. In addition, the views of parents/carers should be listened to and they should be involved from an early stage.

3.11 When devising policies and strategies for behaviour management, the views of parents/carers should be listened to. In addition, the views of

governors, teachers, support staff and other professionals should be listened to and considered.

3.12 If a school/setting demonstrates that it is struggling to meet the needs of a child or young person who displays challenging behaviour, his/her placement should be reviewed and additional support should be given through the Graduated Response (see Appendix A).

3.13 In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to seek an alternative placement through the Managed Move procedure. Schools and settings should follow the appropriate procedures in these circumstances. (See Managed Move policy)

3.14 If a child or young person has had one or more fixed term exclusions adding up to more than 15 days in any one term, the a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) should be completed. See 'PSP Guidance for Wrexham Schools 2018-2019' for further advice around organising effective PSPs.

3.15 It is recognised that, in exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary for a school to permanently exclude a child or young person and schools/setting should follow the appropriate procedures in these circumstances. However, wherever possible, alternatives to exclusions should be sought without significantly compromising the needs and entitlements of the wider community and the focus should always be on preventing exclusion and maintaining the child or young person's placement.

4. Expectations of Key Stakeholders

4.1 Council Members. It is expected that elected members of the Council will:

- provide leadership and vision
- secure resources to meet statutory requirements
- monitor and evaluate the work in relation to Behaviour Support

4.2 Local Authority. It is expected that the Local Authority will:

- provide guidance and advice to schools and other learning settings
- promote high expectations and standards
- establish practice which secures education for excluded learners and those at risk of exclusion
- provide exclusion and attendance data for schools on a regular basis to schools
- set appropriate, challenging and achievable targets in relation to behaviour
- work collaboratively with other agencies and stakeholders

- monitor, evaluate and report progress to members and stakeholders
- adopt models of service delivery that generate effective outcomes
- develop, review and monitor the effectiveness of services and provision which support behaviour and attendance
- continue to facilitate efficient and effective support and by utilising expertise in specialist provisions

4.3 School and WPRS. It is expected that schools and WPRS will;

- provide a broad and balanced curriculum which allows all learners to thrive
- establish and sustain consistent practices which promote an environment which is orderly and conducive to learning
- explore, promote and engage in a range of learning styles to meet individual need
- work in partnership with the local authority and other stakeholders in addressing behavioural or attendance issues
- promote positive relationships with parents, learners, staff and the wider community
- have in place a clear set of strategies, rewards and sanctions which should be consistently implemented by all school staff
- effectively provide for the emotional wellbeing of all its learners and have dedicated curriculum time to teach the social and emotional aspects of learning (eg. SEAL programme)
- follow the Graduated Response (Appendix A) to ensure appropriate, timely and targeted support for children and young people who display challenging behaviour
- strive to reduce the level and need for Fixed Term and Permanent exclusions

4.4 Parents and Carers. It is expected that parents and carers will:

- meet their legal obligations by ensuring that their children attend regularly
- be prepared to engage and positively support the school and their child's learning
- inform schools/settings of any circumstances which may impact on the child's behaviour

4.5 Learners. It is expected that learners will:

- attend school regularly and arrive punctually
- behave in an orderly manner
- participate in educational opportunities in order to achieve their best

- respect and help others
- adhere to school rules and procedures
- participate fully in the life of the school

4.6 Stakeholders and other Agencies. It is expected that stakeholders and other agencies will:

- adopt arrangements which enable and encourage collaborative planning working, sharing of information and service delivery
- agree protocols which clearly set out roles, responsibilities and expectations in a transparent and collaborative way

5. Supporting learners through the Graduated Response

5.1 As has been acknowledged, an overwhelming majority of learners in Wrexham are able to access and benefit from the educational opportunities offered to them by their local school. On the other hand, a small minority - often for complex reasons - experience difficulties which mean that these opportunities cannot easily be accessed.

5.2 Special emphasis should be placed on protecting the educational entitlement of vulnerable groups of children and young people - in particular children with ALN/LAC, as evidence strongly suggests that children from these groups are more likely to be at risk of exclusion than their peers.

5.3 In order to protect a child's entitlement to suitable, full-time education, schools and settings should follow the Graduated Response, as outlined in detail in Appendix A.

5.4 The Graduated Response is designed to guide schools/settings through the process of managing increasingly challenging behaviour displayed by a small minority of children and young people. It is not an exhaustive list and schools/settings may draw on established, successful strategies previously used with children/young people who display these behaviours.

Further reading

Behaviour in Wales. Good practice in managing challenging behaviour. (Estyn, 2006)

Exclusions from School and pupil referral units. (Welsh Government Circular No 081/2012)

Inclusion and Pupil Support National Assembly for Wales (No 2013/2016 March 2016)

Practical approaches to behaviour management in the classroom (Welsh Assembly Government, 2012)

Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (2002)

When the adults change, everything changes (Paul Dix, 2017)

Useful websites

www.aceawarewales.com – website detailing Adverse Childhood Experiences

www.home-education.org.uk/articles/wc/wc-nbar-origional-review.pdf - an independent review of behaviour and attendance conducted on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government

www.nurtureuk.org/nurture- UK charity aiming to raise the profile of nurture, providing training opportunities and information regarding the setting up of Nurture Groups in schools

www.traumainformedschools.co.uk – an organisation committed to improving the health and wellbeing and ability to learn of the most vulnerable schoolchildren in the UK

www.pivotaleducation.com - an education training consultancy, working across the whole of the UK and internationally. The leading Behaviour Specialists in the UK