



Braidburn School

Relationships, Learning and Behaviour Policy

January 2024

Purpose

This policy/procedure document is based on City of Edinburgh Council Policy and Procedure and the views of our learning community.

In Edinburgh, every child or young person, irrespective of identify, background or ability is part of a positive learning community where they feel:

Belong, contribute, learn, are supported, and help others ¹.

Every child at Braidburn School should feel secure; nurtured, valued, included, and supported within our learning community. Our aim is that every child is present, participating, achieving, and supported¹.

This policy and procedure should help to establish and maintain positive relationships and mutual respect resulting in a positive learning community and a supportive, restorative ethos.

Scope

All staff in our learning community are covered by this policy and procedure. It encompasses:

- Whole school approaches and expectations
- Responding to distressed Behaviour
- Professional Development

Definitions

Family: Describes those considered to be related to the child by birth, affinity, choice or close personal ties and who can be contributors to the wider care and wellbeing of the child.

Parent/s: Describes any person who has parental responsibilities and any person who has custody of a child, including foster carers and a parent who shares custody of a child.

Children's rights: are protected by the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Children and Young People Act 2014. There is a shared understanding that these rights are unalienable entitlements which cannot be taken from children. These rights are not dependent on the child accepting certain responsibilities or on them feeling or behaving in a certain way. Children's rights will not be withdrawn as a consequence of behaviour.

Physical Intervention: Describes a range of approaches, which include restraint and also strategies where restrictive holding is not used, such as physically guiding an individual away from a harmful situation. Restorative practice: Describes a council wide way of working based on shared values including working with families collaboratively, listening to what matters to children and families and building on strengths. This way of working together has a clear focus on shared and meaningful outcomes. A restorative approach that many schools use is the facilitation of restorative conversations between those involved in incidents that undermine positive relationships. Restrictive

1. Included, Engaged, Involved in Edinburgh Policy and Edinburgh Learns Inclusion Framework

Physical intervention: Is justifiable only when a child or young person is at risk of inflicting serious physical harm on themselves or another individual. In some special schools, due to the frequency of incidents, staff are trained to use planned physical intervention in the form of CALM this is not the case in mainstream schools or early years settings.

The rights of the child: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out the fundamental rights of all children and young people. The UK ratified the UNCRC in 1991. The Scottish Government and the Council use the UNCRC as a framework to ensure that we consider children's rights whenever we take decisions, and to help guarantee every child a good start in life with a safe, healthy and happy childhood.

Policy Content

Every child and young person has the right to a high-quality education. Positive relationships are fundamental to enable effective teaching and learning to take place. We have adopted the following key principles to create a caring and supportive learning environment:

- An ethos that values positive, restorative and respectful relationships and promotes shared values.
- An inclusive and safe learning environment which supports children and develops their skills.
- Recognition that all behaviour is communication; and that understanding what is being communicated, and the underlying needs of individual learners, is crucial in terms of assessing/meeting children's needs and finding solutions.
- A diverse and holistic approach towards meeting the needs of learners so they can be the best they can be.

Implementation

Whole School Approach

Good organisation, lesson planning and preparation will help to create the supportive learning environments.² Flexibility, choice and an individualised approach will also help to support learner needs and promote positive relationships and behaviour.

However, even in these conditions, we understand that children and young people will present with behaviour that challenges or can be difficult to interpret. We understand that the purpose of behaviour is to have needs met; and that children and young people may display a range of distressed behaviours to communicate they have unmet needs. The school uses approaches and strategies which are designed to help prevent and de-escalate difficult situations and identify and support individual support needs.

The school team recognise that children and young people at Braidburn, all of whom have complex additional support needs, require:

- ✓ Unconditional positive regard

² CEC CIRCLE / Up, Up and Away resources include tools for Inclusive Learning environments.

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- ✓ Responsive support to emotionally regulate
- ✓ Regular routines
- ✓ A timetable in a format they understand
- ✓ Visual supports for each activity
- ✓ A balance of activities – with access to preferred items and time to relax in a way they choose
- ✓ Developmentally appropriate, functional activities that are well supported to ensure success
- ✓ To build relationships with a range of adults through strategy and consistency
- ✓ An expressive communication system in a format they understand which is available to them at all times
- ✓ Sensory supports
- ✓ Adults to be clear, predictable, consistent, and calm at all times

The school team recognise that children and young people at Braidburn need these things because:

- ✓ They are at an early developmental level and need an adult to regulate their emotions until they have developed the ability to do this themselves.
- ✓ They don't have the ability to behave differently until you teach them to
- ✓ They can struggle to functionally communicate.
- ✓ They need to know what is going to happen and what they should be doing to feel secure.
- ✓ They need to trust that their timetable and supporting adults are predictable – so everything on the timetable must happen in some way.
- ✓ They can need extra support to be successful.
- ✓ They need to know their behaviour doesn't impact or determine what happens.
- ✓ They need to know adults can keep them safe – and that adults determine what happens.
- ✓ They can have sensory processing difficulties – and can be over/under stimulated.

Positive approaches to supporting behaviour

We understand that positive approaches to supporting behaviour focus on relationships, skills building and restoration appropriate to individual learners, rather than the implementation of punishments. We recognise that punishments can break relationships and trust.

We are committed to supporting children and young people through consistent use of a range of positive strategies that can support positive outcomes.

The following strategies highlight a range of **proactive** measures that can often be helpful when introduced in the context of an appropriate physical environment at Braidburn. Staff within all class teams (and 'buddy teams') are also familiar with specific strategies identified as key supports in individualised planning documents.



- ✓ Appropriate timetables and visual supports.
- ✓ Expressive communication supports – that are always available to learners.
- ✓ People and tasks that are predictable – with clear expectations.
- ✓ Reduced spoken language – avoiding the use of abstract language.

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- ✓ Specific directions – and an awareness that giving spoken, signed, or visual instruction alone does not necessarily mean a child will understand or process what you are saying.
- ✓ Deliberate pauses between gaining a learner's attention and giving verbal direction. Use their name first to get their attention.
- ✓ Avoidance of rephrasing instructions.
- ✓ Processing time.
- ✓ Avoidance of '*do what I say*' language – e.g. instead of '*stop talking*' use '*good listening*'.
- ✓ Adults who do not demand compliance. It is the role of supporting adults to make activities happen - and to ensure children experience success.
- ✓ Awareness that some learners may need adults to help them finish an activity at a different pace than expected.
- ✓ Decisiveness and predictability when challenged. Avoid engaging in 'power struggles'.
- ✓ Awareness that supporting learners is never about winning and losing.
- ✓ Saying what you see to support emotional regulation e.g. 'I see you are angry.'
- ✓ Remembering that functional language is more important than manners.
- ✓ Being specific when offering praise.
- ✓ Being empathetic and supportive.
- ✓ Building in sensory activities to meet need.
- ✓ Acknowledging triggers and plan accordingly.
- ✓ Building in preferred activities. Divert or distract to preferred activities, where required, while also making the timetable happen.
- ✓ Remembering that children do not seek attention unless it is needed – even if they are seeking your attention in ways that you find difficult!
- ✓ Remaining calm and use a simple, clear, calm tone of voice. Avoid the use of loud or angry tones.
- ✓ Give children help they need in the moment – and support them to be successful.
- ✓ Never use threats/punishments eg '*you won't be allowed go outside if you don't say sorry*', '*you are not getting to go to the school disco because of your behaviour today*'. Punishments are morally questionable – and can inadvertently reinforce distressed behaviours through being predictable. Punishments don't change behaviour as they don't teach new skills and they can break relationships and trust.
- ✓ Avoiding all use of physical intervention unless this is in the context of a dynamic risk assessment where you have identified there is immediate risk to the safety of a child or young person (or adult) – we have a duty of care to respond.
- ✓ Recognising that achievements in a way that is inclusive and kind.
- ✓ Awareness that anything you allow to happen may become established as acceptable – e.g. if you have accessible objects in the environment, you establish that these are ok to access – and you cannot expect compliance from young people who are unable to comply.
- ✓ Understanding that the learners and their needs are supported by appropriate documentation, and that staff supporting must read this.

Responding to distressed behaviour

The school recognises that supporting children and young people with their behaviour requires:

- An understanding that almost all Braidburn learners function at a level well below their chronological years.

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- Acknowledgement that all behaviour is communication – and that distressed behaviour is a form of communicating an unmet need.
- Understanding of the ways in which an individual child's needs and environment might impact on behaviour.
- Identification of known 'triggers' and early warning signs.
- Consideration of the environment, body language, visual supports and language used.
- Early intervention where warning signs are detected, to prevent a situation from escalating
- An understanding that children and young people with a learning disability do not have the capacity to intend hurting another person

Serious Incidents

A Serious Incident is any situation arising in school which results in injury, harm a 'near miss' or the use of physical intervention.

All Serious Incidents are recorded on the appropriate form (*Braidburn School: Serious Incident Form*) Serious Incident forms are discussed and completed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible after an incident, usually at the end or beginning of the school day; but this may sometimes need done immediately following an incident.

When a challenging situation develops the main objective is to reduce the level of arousal or distress. The school uses De-escalation Techniques found in Appendix 2 of the Council's Relationships, Learning and Behaviour procedures. All physical intervention to prevent harm is strictly in accordance with the city of Edinburgh Relationships, Learning and Behaviour Procedure. If a child has been supported through physical intervention from an adult to prevent harm, parents will always be informed, and this will be recorded in pastoral notes.

Building Skills for Relationships

The school team engages with resources and supports that contribute to building of positive relationships and support for behaviour - helping children to build the skills to develop positive relationships. This includes:

- Rights Respecting Schools
- CIRCLE / Up, Up and Away resource
- Braidburn School 'Positive Strategies for Positive Outcomes' document
- Individualised learner plans
- Individual class and learner routines
- Class Team meetings
- Partnership working with other professionals, including onsite Allied Health Professionals and school's Educational Psychologist

Professional Development

We support all staff to develop their skills to support relationships learning and behaviour, this includes but is not limited to:

- Use of the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom resource / Early Years Up, Up and Away resource (online training available)

- Understanding and implementing Edinburgh's Getting it Right for Every Child approach (online training available)
- Implementing strategies outlined in the CEC procedure Relationships, Learning and Behaviour
- Promoting Positive Relationships for learning and behaviour (online training available)
- City of Edinburgh Council Nurture Training
- City of Edinburgh Council Autism Training

Roles and Responsibilities

The **Head Teacher and Depute Head Teachers** have overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy. The provisions of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' are taken into account when working in partnership with children, families, and other professionals in the context of supporting communication and behaviour.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that this policy and procedures are followed. All staff encourage positive relationships and act as role models within our learning community. Staff are familiar with support strategies outlined in relevant individualised learner planning documents and related school documentation referenced within this Policy.

Parents and families are regarded by the school as key partners who are asked to work in partnership with the school. Parents are invited to raise with the school any issues arising from the operation of the policy.

Equalities and Rights

All staff implementing these procedures have responsibilities under **The Equality Act 2010**. Having due regard for advancing equality includes:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Addressing and preventing discrimination arising from disability
- Making reasonable adjustments in relation to the implications of a learner's additional support needs or disability and the impact this may have on their relationships and behaviour.
- Paying due regard to cultural factors that are relevant in ensuring that the school's ethos is inclusive.

Record Keeping

Reflection, evaluation and de-briefing strategies

The school records any incidents of behaviour requiring significant support on SEEMIS. Details will include an interpretation of events by different parties (including the child, where possible), possible

factors of settings, triggers, reasonable adjustments in place, an evaluation of how the incident was managed and 'lessons learned' to help prevent or better deal with a similar incident arising again.

Incidents that have resulted in physical harm or physical intervention being used to prevent harm are recorded on the council health and safety database (SHE portal).

Debriefing sessions follow the reporting of Serious Incidents - to discuss the setting and triggers for behaviours, the action and result of behaviours, the appropriateness of relevant Behaviour Support Plans/Risk Management Plans and any injuries sustained. Next steps/preventative measures are identified and taken forward.

Concerns, Complaints and Complements

It is hoped that our families will be completely satisfied with education at Braidburn School. Feedback is welcomed – and concerns will be addressed as confidentially as possible. Please make any complaints to Cat Weir, Head Teacher, in the first instance.

Self-Evaluation and Review

This policy has been written in consultation with the Braidburn School team. The policy will be published and shared via the school website and Groupcall service.

This policy will be reviewed in October 2024

Related Documents

Scottish Government

- Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000)
- Included, Engaged, Involved 2 (2017)
- Developing a Positive Whole School Ethos and Culture: relationships, learning and behaviour (2018)
- Additional Support for Learning Act (2004) - amended 2009
- Parental Involvement Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- UN Convention of the Rights of the Child
- Children and Young People Act 2014

City of Edinburgh Council

- Edinburgh Learns Framework: Inclusion (2019)
- Included, Engaged, Involved in Edinburgh Policy (2018)
- Relationships, Learning, Behaviour Procedure (2019)
- Managing and Reducing Risk Procedure (2019)
- Preventing and Responding to Bullying in Children and Young People (2019)
- City of Edinburgh Council Equalities and Rights Framework

School

- Braidburn School – Behaviours of Concern: Recording and Reporting

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- Braidburn School – Positive Strategies for Positive Outcomes
- Braidburn School – Serious Incident Form/Guidance for completing Serious Incident Form