



# Triumph Learning Trust

Aspiration - Collaboration - Innovation

## Positive Handling and De-Escalation Policy

### Policy Details

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## 1. Introduction

To support those children within mainstream school and within our Enhanced Resources Bases who demonstrate dysregulated behaviour we follow our relational approach to behaviour and manage their behaviour through the use of de-escalation strategies. Children who need support in self-regulating and need a co regulator to support them to manage their behaviours need consistency of routine and predictability, staff will use visual communications to ensure that all children understand our expectations and routines.

Triumph Learning Trust acknowledges that these children have core difficulties in communication, personal social and emotional development, recognising emotions and staying regulated and that a more specialised approach may be required to manage both their behaviour and well-being, and the wellbeing of the staff who teach them. Behaviour Policies continue to apply and should be read in conjunction with this one. This policy references experienced staff who we have deemed as having had the right training qualification (Team Teach/equivalent) and whom we judge to be able to effectively apply the Team Teach/equivalent skills, who are a Teacher or a support staff member who has at least 1-year experience of working with children who display dysregulated behaviours and who have been Team Teach/ equivalent trained in de-escalation strategies and safe handling.

## 2. Aims

To support a child in their ability to regulate their behaviour within a calm and supportive environment, maintaining care and support for the child and the staff members. In supporting a child, we will always promote de-escalation strategies and techniques.

Raise the level of positive behaviour

- Have a shared understanding of what is/is not acceptable behaviour
- Promote and reward positive behaviour
- Develop a common, consistent approach to dealing with unacceptable behaviour, where staff, children, parents and carers work together to achieve an atmosphere of respect, both for each other and the school environment.
- To outline protocols and guidelines advocated by Safer Handling when involved in incidents of challenging behaviour or pupils in crisis.
- To ensure that staff are trained and supported to deal with challenging behaviours and to understand the measures they should take, to keep both themselves and the child, safe.
- Safeguard staff, children and visitors in Triumph Learning Trust schools
- This policy extends to maintaining positive behaviour, both within school and off-site activities.

## 3. Behaviour Support Plans/Expectations

Each child who needs it will have a specialised behaviour plan tailored to their specific needs, written in conjunction with the parents/carers, staff and any third-party agencies who are involved with the child. These plans are shared with all staff who work with these children and are regularly reviewed, and updated in order to support the child. We will ensure that systems used with specific children are consistently followed at all times.

#### **4. De-escalation Strategies**

All incidents will be dealt with in line with the responding and calming guidance in the relational behaviour policy.

Following guidance, the following interventions will be used to minimise behaviours.

##### **Minimising low level behaviours:**

- Read the behaviour and body language
- Intervene early to remove source of frustration
- Offer reassurance including positive physical prompts
- Explain clearly what is happening and what will happen next
- Communicate – “talk and I’ll listen”
- Use appropriate humour
- Display calm body language
- Talk low and slow and quietly
- Divert and distract by introducing another activity or topic.

##### **Minimising medium behaviours**

- Continue above strategies
- State desired behaviour clearly
- Use distraction to focus on something positive
- Set clear enforceable limits
- Offer alternative and options
- Offer clear choices
- Give a get out with dignity
- Assess the situation and consider making the environment safer and getting help
- Remove the audience
- Guide the elbows towards safety

### Interventions to minimise high level behaviours

- Make the environment safer
- Move the furniture and remove unsafe objects
- Guide assertively- hold or restrain if absolutely necessary
- Ensure face, voice and posture are supportive and not aggressive
- Change of face if needed.

### Examples of recovery responses

- Support and monitor
- This may not be a good time to touch as this may provoke a return to crisis
- Give space and time
- Insulate from sources of frustration
- Look for signs that the person is ready to communicate

## 5. Procedures for recording and managing challenging behaviour

- Utilise individual information from the child's behaviour plan to ensure interest levels are high and motivating activities are available with the child's curriculum
- Remove other children from the environment to remove the audience for the behaviours
- Praise children when they are doing the right thing
- Make timetable adjustments
- Ensure the Total Communication Environment at the child's communication level: ensuring the child can predict the daily environment reducing anxiety
- Give choices where possible, including staff working alongside
- Make changes in the environment to keep the child safe
- Use strategies from training in order to de-escalate situations and support children's needs.

## 6. Safe Touch and Positive Handling

All staff who work within the Resource Bases and with children across school who find it hard to regulate their behaviours have had specialist ASC training and from the Complex Communication Team. In addition to this, staff have also had training to equip them to de-escalate situations and where needed use positive handling to support a child. The Trust also employs additional support staff to help support SEN children across a broad spectrum, including 1:1 support, breaktime supervision, support in the classroom etc. These support

staff are put on a programme of training and support when they begin working for the Trust. The Trust expects that where these staff are not yet experienced or trained, they will not attempt to manage highly dysregulated behaviour themselves, and will always move themselves away from the child, monitor from a safe distance and call for assistance. They can support experienced staff to help with de-escalation techniques, move other children away from the dysregulated child, call for assistance or support in monitoring from a safe distance.

In some situations, Safe Touch is also needed to support children in a positive way. Safe touch, used to calm, soothe and regulate a child's emotions, is a needed developmental experience. The brain does not develop neuronal pathways to initiate calming and self-soothing unless and until this safe emotional regulation has been experienced within a positive relationship with a significant adult. Where children have had insufficient experience of safe touch and calming regulation, this may be a priority to help their brains to develop access to thinking, judging, evaluating and choosing mechanisms.

**Safe Touch may be used in the following ways:**

- To calm and comfort a distressed or upset child,
- To help regulate emotions when a child is feeling angry or frustrated,
- To reassure and calm an anxious or worried child,
- To support a child with low self esteem
- An Thrive intervention targeted to support social and emotional development

**Some strategies that may be deployed are:**

- Holding hand, hug or reassuring touch if a child is upset or distressed,
- Use of hand massage, modelling deep breathing or a rub on the back for an anxious or angry child,
- Providing sensory input such as deep pressure hug/massage, support with sensory movements e.g. crab walking/pushing/pulling activities/yoga.

This list is not exhaustive and the trained professionals will use their professional knowledge and opinion to deploy the correct strategies. They may also deploy strategies advised by specialist external agencies e.g. Occupational Therapy.

The positive behaviour management strategies develop and promotes, emphasise team building, personal safety, communication, and verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques for dealing with challenging behaviour which reduce the need for physical intervention. As a last resort, positive handling techniques are used to resolve conflicts in ways that are safe, and which provide opportunities for repair and reflection for everyone involved. Training develops acceptable and authorised responses to disruptive, disturbing, angry and aggressive behaviours in a manner that maintains positive relationships and provides safety for all, helping reduce the number of serious incidents involving physical

controls, and raising the awareness of the importance of recording, reporting, monitoring and evaluating all incidents involving positive handling. See the Positive Handling Policy for more information.

## **7. Exclusion and Suspensions**

For some children with high levels of additional needs, there may be occasions when their behaviours are unsafe and require leaders to reduce the child's amount of time in school, or in particular circumstances, to suspend the child from school for a fixed period, whilst changes to provision are made. Any amendments to practice will be communicated with parents prior to the child returning to school. In support of the child we may introduce a transitional timetable whilst these amendments become embedded practice and routines for the child.

## **8. Training and Support for Staff**

The wellbeing of the staff who support children with high levels of additional needs, both in our Resource Bases and in the main schools, is of paramount importance to us and we acknowledge that the challenges they face can be a cause of stress and anxiety and physical harm. To minimise the risk of harm to staff, when dealing with children displaying dysregulated behaviours, the Trust has developed a Dysregulated Behaviour Risk Assessment which is communicated to staff and forms part of their expectations, when managing these behaviours. Only teachers or experienced staff, who have had training, will attempt to manage the behaviours of a child who is highly dis-regulated. Teachers (or the most experienced trained staff member available) will always take charge of the situation and stay with the dysregulated child, whilst other support staff evacuate classrooms/areas, where necessary. Wherever possible, staff will work with another colleague when supporting a child with dysregulated behaviours. Support will be requested and the situation will be monitored from a safe distance until support arrives. Physical intervention will only ever be used as a last resort, where there is significant danger to the child or to other staff. This will should only be carried out by experienced and trained staff.

**We support the staff in every way we can including:**

- Ensuring that all staff are trained.
- Creating a safe culture where staff are empowered to proactively take care of their own wellbeing and safety.
- Providing PPM clothing and equipment, to protect the body from physical harm.
- Providing an additional dedicated space, with an outside area that children can be taken to.
- SLT can be called to offer extra assistance, whenever required.
- Time out is encouraged to be taken, particularly after a highly challenging incident has occurred.
- Staff are listened to by SLT and supported as much as possible.
- A dedicated staff well-being space that can be used at any time.

- Regular meetings to discuss specific incidents – what happened, what can we do to manage these moving forward?
- Review and update individual behaviour management plans as required
- Training for staff in strategies and management of specific types of behaviour is given and refreshed regularly.
- Electronic system for reporting incidents, which are monitored.
- Counselling is available for staff at any time.
- Regular supervision of staff.
- The school is on an Occupational Health for incidents where assaults, including bites which break the skin, have occurred
- Reporting incidents.

**If behaviours do not improve, despite intervention then leaders will:**

- Hold meetings with parents and external agencies to discuss behaviours
- Consider a reduced timetable, to allow the child to be successful
- Discuss behaviours through the Annual Review of an EHCP
- Call an Early Annual Review of the child's EHCP to discuss whether placement is still appropriate.