

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Behaviour Policy

General Behaviour Management Strategy

The approach used by BeyondAutism Schools to teaching and understanding behaviour is based on the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). Behaviour analysis studies events in an individual's environment in order to understand and explain behaviour. All behaviour is considered to serve a function for that individual. We feel that without a good understanding of what this function is, effective behaviour management is not possible. Monitoring and recording behaviour and its environmental context, reveals patterns in the events that act as antecedents (triggers) or consequences for the behaviour. This aids in understanding what function the behaviour serves for that individual.

The safety of the pupil and those around them will always be of paramount consideration.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide a **consistent and personalised approach** to behaviour, underpinned by the principals of ABA/VB
- **Explain** what we understand about the behaviours of our students and how we support them to manage these
- Summarise the **roles and responsibilities** of different people in the school community with regards to supporting the ABA/VB approaches
- Outline our system of how we **reinforce positive behaviours** and work systematically to reduce 'problem behaviours', through celebration, rewards and consequences

Legislation and Statutory Requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

It is also based on the [special educational needs and disability \(SEND\) code of practice](#).

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils

- Sections 88-94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which require schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate pupils' property

Our Understanding of Behaviour, Underpinned by the Principals of ABA

The most common functions of behaviour are:

- **Escape** – Does the antecedent frequently trigger behaviour that allows the person to escape from the antecedent stimuli? E.g. taking a headache tablet, running away when presented with a task.
- **Avoidance** – Does the behaviour frequently allow the person to avoid certain stimuli? E.g. refusing to go to school.
- **Access to objects or activities** – Does the behaviour frequently result in the person gaining access or continuing to have access to objects or activities that he/ she prefers?
- **Access to Social Reinforcement** – Does the behaviour frequently allow the person access to attention from another person/persons (whether this attention is positive or negative?) Behaviour with this function would seldom or never happen when the person is alone or when nobody would be able to notice.
- **Access to Automatic Reinforcement** – Does the behaviour induce internal sensations the person is likely to want to repeat? E.g. adrenalin rush, physical stimulation, feeling full.

If behaviour enables the pupil to access one of these functions, then the behaviour is more likely to occur in the future. In other words, it has been reinforced.

In our teaching, we are aiming to create new behaviours or shape and increase existing behaviours. The most effective form of reinforcement for this is access to social reinforcement, objects or activities. In dealing with inappropriate behaviours that we may want to decrease or eliminate, we need to determine which consequences are acting as reinforcement for the behaviour. We need to eliminate the reinforcement for that behaviour and teach new behaviours that will allow the pupil to access that reinforcement more appropriately.

Basic Process of Using ABA Intervention with Challenging Behaviour:

- Build rapport and identify what is motivating for the pupil (pairing).
- Identify the pupils' behavioural deficits and excesses.
- Select behaviours (of social significance or benefit to the individual and their family) to be targeted (using specific definitions).
- Identify the function of those behaviours.
- Identify appropriate alternative behaviours.
- Develop an Individual Behaviour Plan comprising proactive (antecedent and skills teaching) and reactive (reinforcement and consequences) strategies.
- Teach using effective teaching methods.
- Take objective data.
- Make adjustments to teaching/strategies using the data.

Proactive Plans

Also referred to as antecedent interventions, designed to increase appropriate behaviours and decrease motivation or need to engage in challenging behaviour.

Primary Prevention

Behaviour monitoring will frequently allow one to identify antecedents that are likely to trigger challenging behaviour. In some cases, it is possible to change the context in which challenging behaviour is likely to take place.

Strategies for doing this include:

- **Enriching the environment** – ensuring that the pupil's environment provides a high level of social reinforcement and stimulating activities, thus eliminating the need (or motivation) for inappropriate behaviour.
- **Changing the Nature of Preceding Activities** – for example, reducing level of difficulty and building this up again gradually, introducing frequent breaks or variety in tasks, creative timetabling for example having a highly motivating activity following a difficult activity or not moving from a highly motivating activity to a difficult activity.
- **Eliminating particularly aversive events** – for example stimuli that a pupil has a fear or aversion to such as physical contact, noise, dogs etc. and re-introducing these gradually and systematically.
- **Eliminating or reducing internal antecedents** – for example, hunger, pain, fatigue, illness.
- **Making choices** – teach pupils to make choices about what is happening in their day

Teaching Alternative Behaviours

Once the function of an inappropriate behaviour has been determined, it is important to teach a more appropriate means of accessing reinforcement. These are some examples of possible replacement behaviours to teach:

- **Escape/ Avoidance behaviour:**
 - Make learning fun so the pupil enjoys being taught.
 - Increasing tolerance of demands gradually,
 - Requesting a break, communication, making choices.
 - Tolerance of aversive situations, strategies to reduce aversive nature of situations
 - Communication related to aversive situations, where appropriate to the pupil, understanding emotions and internal events.
- **Self-stimulatory behaviour:** play skills, social skills, learning skills (e.g. staying on task) and self-regulation.
- **Access to objects/ activities:** Requesting objects and activities, learning to wait, learning to accept that sometimes they can't have what they want, and learning to share or take turns.
- **Attention:** Social skills including learning that you can't always have someone's attention, play skills and being able to occupy own time

Reactive Plans (Behaviour Reduction Strategies)

Behaviour incidents are recorded in the form of ABC charts and Incident Records. If a pupil behaves in a certain way a number of times, an individual behaviour plan can be drawn up, based on a functional assessment of this data.

Individual Behaviour Plans

- Behaviour plans are based on observation, analysis and behavioural data. The efficacy of these plans is also determined using this information.
- Behaviour plans are aimed at ensuring a consistent approach across the staff team.
- All behaviour plans are discussed with parents, to ensure that parents are kept informed. Information about the occurrence of behaviour at home can be shared and a consistency of approach can be facilitated. Behaviour plans will be sent home for parents to follow. All behaviour plans require general signed consent from parents. Behaviour plans which involve a specific consequence intervention will require a more in-depth consent form.
- Regular communication between staff and parents aims to ensure a consistency of approach and sharing of information between home and school.
- Interventions detailed in behaviour plans will be aimed at limiting the amount of harm to the pupil or others and limiting the amount of reinforcement resulting from the behaviour (therefore decreasing the likelihood of future occurrences.)
- Target behaviours are continuously monitored and are reviewed on a regular basis

Baseline Assessment (new pupils)

- The baseline assessment period for new pupils is 6 weeks
- During this time, ABA supervisors will be completing a thorough analysis and assessment of the pupil's skills and behaviour.
- This process consists of a functional assessment (gathered through direct observation, ABC data, and interviews with parents/ information from their previous settings/reports) and where necessary a more in depth analysis whereby potential specific causes for behaviour are assessed.

Amending/Updating Existing Plans

- Behaviour plans are working documents which may be amended by the ABA Supervisor or ABA Consultant based on the data, observations of the pupil and on-going analysis of the impact of interventions.
- Changes or amendments to plans should be recorded as they are made (this may be in the form of handwritten notes) and then updated formally when a behaviour review is due.
- If a new intervention is to be included or an existing intervention is discontinued a behaviour plan change form should be completed.
- Changes should be communicated with parents and where necessary the consent form reviewed.

The following are the most common behaviour reduction strategies:

- **Extinction** – the identified reinforcement for a particular behaviour is identified and withheld. E.g. If the behaviour is deemed to be aimed at avoiding a particular task, the staff will insist on completion of the task. This is usually accompanied by a skills teaching element and associated reinforcement e.g. teaching the pupil to do their work.
- **Withdrawal of reinforcement** – a reinforcer that is already present is removed for a brief period of time
- **Differential reinforcement of Alternative behaviour** – pupil is reinforced for engaging in a functionally equivalent appropriate behaviour e.g. asking for a break instead of running away.
- **Differential Reinforcement of Other Behaviour** – reinforcement is delivered for the absence of the inappropriate behaviour and the occurrence of any other appropriate behaviour
- **Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible Behaviour** – the pupil would be reinforced for engaging in a behaviour which is incompatible with the inappropriate behaviour e.g. sitting at the table rather than standing up or walking with their hands in their pockets instead of swiping objects.

For some pupils it may be appropriate to practice the things they find most difficult in order to teach an appropriate replacement behaviour e.g. if the pupil finds it difficult to wait, then practice waiting throughout the day for achievable periods of time that gradually increase rather than avoiding the triggers. These are referred to as contrived sessions and progress within them is tracked against naturally occurring responses.

The Use of Specific Consequence Interventions

Strategies based on extinction and the reinforcement of appropriate behaviour are the preferred interventions. At times, however, it may not be appropriate to withhold the reinforcement for some behaviours e.g. dangerous or self-injurious behaviour. In other cases, the reinforcement may be internal e.g. self-stimulatory or self-injurious behaviour and therefore cannot be withheld. **Only when it is not possible to withdraw the reinforcement and the inappropriate behaviour is considered serious enough** i.e. likely to cause harm to the individual or others or interfere significantly in the child's opportunities for learning/access to the community, are consequence interventions considered. These strategies may also be employed if **other strategies have been unsuccessful at reducing a particular behaviour or range of behaviours.**

All specific consequence interventions should be approved by the ABA Consultant.

Specific consequences are divided into two categories – those which refer to the removal of something that is already present and those which refer to the presentation of something as a consequence for a behaviour.

Types of Specific Consequence

- Response Cost – loss of a specific amount of reinforcement e.g. a token being removed
- Bonus response cost – additional reinforcement is made available that can be removed if inappropriate behaviour occurs e.g. losing your extra computer time

- Time out from reinforcement –the opportunity to access reinforcement is withdrawn or access to reinforcers is lost for a specific period of time
- Reprimand – a verbal reprimand is given after an inappropriate behaviour
- Response blocking – physically intervening as soon as the person begins to emit the behaviour to prevent them from completing the response
- Contingent exercise/effort – following an inappropriate behaviour the pupil is required to complete a response/task that is not related to the behaviour e.g. being asked to do a less preferred task
- Overcorrection – following an inappropriate behaviour, the pupil person is required to complete the appropriate behaviour a number of times e.g. throwing a puzzle on the floor may result in having to pick up three puzzles or aggression in response to a task may result in having to complete that task a number of times.

Monitoring Specific Consequence Interventions

Alongside in class monitoring by the ABA Supervisor, data for consequence interventions is monitored weekly by the ABA Consultant, who will flag up any changes over a two-week feedback a hypothesis. If the data continues to be of concern the ABA Consultant should follow up on this matter.

Guidelines for use of specific consequence interventions

- All plans involving a specific consequence intervention should be discussed with and approved by the ABA Consultant. Initial implementation should be overseen by the ABA Consultant or a BCBA as directed by the ABA consultant
- A verbal discussion should be had with parents when an intervention is being considered and verbal consent to analyse the effectiveness of a potential intervention should be obtained. Notes should be taken on all trials.
- Written consent should be sought from parents before the intervention is formally introduced and training provided to staff
- Baseline data should be taken
- Anyone implementing the procedure should be specifically trained and observed implementing it themselves
- Data for the intervention should be monitored by the ABA supervisor and the ABA consultant. Upon initial implementation, a reduction in the target behaviour should be observed quickly (if no or little change within 2 weeks then terminate the intervention)
- If appropriate, parents should be shown how to implement the intervention safely to mitigate the risks of the behaviour increasing at home whilst reducing at school (behavioural contrast)

Associated Risks

There is a risk that specific consequence interventions could:

- Be used unnecessarily, that is when other less intrusive methods could achieve the desired outcome
- Become routine, rather than exceptional methods of management

To mitigate these risks, it should be communicated to all involved that specific consequences should only be used where other more positive strategies have failed or when the behaviour presents a serious risk to the individual or those around them. Least restrictive options should always be considered first.

Supervisors should plan for and aim to mitigate the possible side effects of specific consequence interventions

- May evoke an aggressive or emotional reaction
- May result in escape and avoidance
- An increased rate of the problem behaviour in other settings (behavioural contrast)
- Modelling undesirable behaviour to the pupil

Self-injurious Behaviour

Pupils may engage in forms of behaviour that cause harm to themselves (e.g. biting, hitting, and scratching). When this occurs, the function of these behaviours will be analysed as described above. These forms of behaviour should be monitored specifically to ensure that interventions are not increasing those behaviours. Extra consideration will be made surrounding the use of extinction due to the greater risks associated with a temporary increase in behaviour.

Bullying

Although our children and young people have complex needs and due to their Autism, it is recognised that they may not fully understand or be able to engage with social situations in a neuro-typical way, we still are vigilant against any targeted behaviours between students, which could be regarded as bullying.

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Bullying can include:

| Type of bullying | Definition |
|---------------------------|---|
| Emotional | Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting |
| Physical | Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence |
| Racial | Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures |
| Sexual | Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching |
| Direct or indirect verbal | Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing |
| Cyber-bullying | Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites |

Details of our school's approach to preventing and addressing bullying are set out in our **anti-bullying strategy**.

Positive Intervention

This policy should be read alongside the positive intervention policy.

The safety of individual pupil's and those around them is of paramount concern, therefore the use of positive handling may be considered reasonable, proportionate and necessary to the risks posed by problem behaviour.

If the strategies described above result in an increase in behaviour that requires the use of positive handling, then consideration of whether the intervention should be discontinued should be made by the ABA Supervisor and ABA Consultant.

The Use of Seclusion

Seclusion is defined as:

'A person being forced to spend time on their own against their will'.

If there is immediate and significant risk of harm to the pupil in question, other pupils or staff that cannot be mitigated through behavioural strategies, team teach de-escalation techniques or restrictive physical intervention then a dynamic risk assessment may suggest emergency seclusion. This should be considered as a last resort. The pupil should be

supervised at all times. A member of the school leadership team should be informed as soon as possible.

Seclusion is not a long term behaviour strategy

Exclusion

As an Independent Special School, who specialise in this area, we have developed robust systems of behaviour management, monitoring and reflective practice in order to reduce problem behaviours, underpinned by the principals of ABA.

Although we have the right to use formal exclusion, it is highly unlikely that it will reach this stage, as we would have exhausted every other possibility and would have involved key stakeholders, such as the parents and local authority to ensure that the best interest of the child is met.

This would follow the process of multi-agency Team Around the Child meetings and Best Interest meetings, where we would identify the provision with parents and the local authority, that would best meet the child or young person's needs and reach their outcomes.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The BeyondAutism Schools governing body and Charitable Board of Trustees is responsible for reviewing and approving the written statement of behaviour principles that underpin our work.

The BeyondAutism Schools governing body and Charitable Board of Trustees will also review this behaviour policy in conjunction with the Head of School and monitor the policy's effectiveness, holding the Head of School to account for its implementation.

The Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for reviewing this behaviour policy in conjunction with the BeyondAutism school's governing body and Charitable Board of Trustees, giving due consideration to the school's statement of behaviour principles. The Head of School will also approve this policy.

The Head of School will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deal effectively with socially unacceptable or problem behaviour, and will monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure rewards and consequences are applied consistently.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the behaviour policy consistently
- Modelling behaviour, through positive interactions, underpinned by the principles of ABA
- Providing a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of all students
- Recording behavioural data, including incidents, using high quality methodologies

The Middle Managers of the school (Supervisors, Instructors and Teachers) will support staff in responding, reviewing and debriefing and senior leaders will offer further support and guidance on more complex behavioural incidents.

Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Work in close partnership with the school, offering information that will benefit the tutors and class staff and reinforce a positive attitude towards school for their child or young person
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the supervisor promptly

Students

All our students are unique individuals and as we work with them (and all the adults that support them), we expect improvements in their social understanding and behavioural topography (the profile of their behavioural patterns).

As our policy, processes and procedures are underpinned by the principals of ABA, we look to ensure our students are supported towards an appropriate and achievable level of independence and as part of this, have high expectations of their behaviour in school, around the buildings, with others and in the community. Their personalised behavioural monitoring supports this on an individual basis.

Student Support

The school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent pupils with a protected characteristic from being at a disadvantage. Consequently, our approach to challenging or problems behaviours is differentiated to cater to the needs of the pupil.

We use a range of professionals to support in further understanding problem behaviours and share this with parents, local authorities and wider stakeholders as appropriate. This is also referred to in our SEN report.

Transitions can present a potential a challenge for our students and a significant amount of work is undertaken on managing these micro-transitions or macro-transitions and all strategies are personalised to individual students, underpinned by the principles of ABA.

Training

Training for staff is ongoing and extensive, covering a variety of levels from induction through to competence and mastery. Middle Leaders work in partnership with the ABA Consultant to design training packages, based on the work of Vince Carbone, and this is delivered as requisite packages for all staff. In addition, as a functional communication community, the staff within the school are all given Makaton training. More advanced training is found through the RBT and BCBA courses, which are part of the mastery training programmes at degree or masters level.

Monitoring

This behaviour policy will be reviewed by the ABA Consultant alongside the Senior Leadership team, BeyondAutism School's governing body and Charitable Board of Trustees. At each review the policy will be ratified and approved.

Related Policies

This policy is linked with The Safeguarding Policy

Last reviewed: October 2018

Next review date: October 2020

Review group: Full Governing Body