

Addendum to the Behaviour for Learning Policy

Behaviour Support and Management of Students with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC)

Agreed by Governors: January 2018

Amended: June 2021

Next Review: June 2023

Committee: Inclusion

Background and Rationale

JCoSS is an inclusive school which welcomes students with a range of learning needs. As well as approximately 50 students in the Pears Special Resource Provision (PSRP), there are a similar number of students with ASC in the main school, presenting with varying degrees of complexity.

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools must make reasonable adjustments to avoid disadvantage to those with protected characteristics, including disabilities. An autism spectrum condition (ASC) is a disability as it is 'an impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. It is also a spectrum condition: students with ASC share certain characteristics, but it will affect individuals in different ways.

This document, intended to be read alongside the Behaviour Management Policy, sets out how the school's behaviour policy will be adjusted to take account of the needs of students with ASC, and offers guidance on managing the particular needs of this group of students.

Philosophy

- We note a clear distinction between the behaviour of students who can behave but choose not to, and behaviour which is driven by a student's disability.
- We acknowledge that students with ASC may at times behave in ways that seem socially inappropriate or difficult to manage. This is true of all students, but those with ASC face additional challenges understanding and managing social expectations, and in interpreting other people's intentions accurately
- We understand that environmental factors (human or natural, present or remembered) might affect those with ASC differently to other people, as do responses which misunderstand their needs
- We recognise the need for responses to these behaviours which are well-judged, informed by accurate and full understanding of ASC, and have realistic expectations of students.

Strategy

The school is committed to the following actions:

- Ensuring that students are supported to understand the social world and their place within it.
- Promoting positive behaviour and de-escalating behaviours that challenge for all students, but particularly for students with ASC.
- Training staff in the PSRP in the Team Teach holistic approach with values of de-escalation, reducing risks and promoting positive behavioural support.
- Protecting and maintaining students' dignity in times of crisis.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of the specific needs of the students they may encounter during the day, via Pen Portraits and, when relevant, EHCP
- Encouraging staff to seek support from specialists within the school to maximise students' access to the social and academic curriculum and during unstructured times.

- Ensuring that behaviour plans, when needed, are based on preventative, proactive and reactive measures and are regularly reviewed and amended.
- Taking full account of ASC in determining sanctions for behaviour where these are required
- Creating a team approach among staff supporting students with ASC, to ensure the provision of a structured learning environment

Repertoire of responses

The strategies below are often helpful for all students, but are particularly appropriate in responding to students with ASC. Further examples are provided in the school SEN Handbook which is provided to each new member of staff when they join JCoSS.

- Ensuring that students know what is expected of them and reminding them frequently.
- Engaging calmly and respectfully with students, especially when distressed or dysregulated, by listening carefully, responding quietly and adopting a non-threatening physical stance.
- Using humour when appropriate to diffuse situations and distract from the immediacy of a situation.
- Having a clear structure to the day or lesson, with a visual timetable individualised to each student's needs and levels
Teaching structured lessons, with continuity of practice and visual prompts and cues
- Minimising disruption to routine, where possible talking through or visually representing changes in advance
- When possible, organising the learning area with clearly defined 'zones', and setting up a quiet, distraction-free corner for the student with ASC (and others) to use
- Remembering that students may not understand facial expression and figurative language, explain clearly in black and white terms or represent visually;
- Using concrete apparatus and visual signs to back up verbal and written instructions
- Using the student's name to cue them in at the start of a conversation or when giving instructions: – they may not understand that 'everyone' or 'Group 2' includes them
- Making explicit links between old and new learning
- Remembering that the student may find it hard to see the 'big picture' and may focus on fine details
- Being clear and firm about expected behaviour and applying rules consistently, but also understanding a student's limitations. In line with the key principles of social mapping, it can be helpful to talk about 'expected' and 'unexpected' behaviour, which is dependent on the given social setting.
- When possible, allow students with ASC to use ICT: computers are less emotionally demanding than people, which can allow students to rest from the demands of social interaction
- Deploy agreed communication systems, as developed with Speech and Language Therapists (SALT)

Parental Involvement

The school's philosophy is grounded in working in partnership with parents. We acknowledge the additional demands and responsibilities of parents of students with ASC. It is important that parents are confident that school staff understand ASC and their child's specific needs, and that measures are in place to meet those needs.

- For students with more complex needs, parents will be involved in personalised planning and target setting as well as agreeing support strategies to respond to situations and challenges as they occur.
- PSRP and Learning Support staff will provide regular and timely communication with parents, so that they can support the school effectively and feel reassured that appropriate provision is made for their child.
- Parents of students with EHCPs will be fully involved in the annual review process.