

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

POLICY

My Choice School recognises the importance of creating a learning environment in which students feel secure, valued and listened to. We emphasise the need to develop and maintain relationships with our students based on mutual respect. Our students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning environment and their education and to take pride in their work and their efforts and to recognise the work and efforts of others. We endeavour to fully support the emotional and behavioural needs of our students in order to ensure an environment conducive to constructive learning.

My Choice School works with parent / carers of each student and we consider it to be good practice to work closely with parents / carers and professional teams around the child in order to best meet the needs of each student. My Choice School behaviour policy has regard to **DfE guidance Behaviour in Schools – advice for Headteachers and school staff (February 2024)**.

All staff need to have a clear understanding of professional and personal boundaries which are effective when working with our students in small groups or individually. Part of developing practice for staff is forming and maintaining relationships with all students based on mutual respect. A further part of working with all young people is being able to reinforce effective control that is based on good practice. My Choice School's aim is to always operate school in a manner that promotes the welfare, safety and needs of both the young people we care for and staff.

We also take into account the disordered attachments that many of our students present with and base our behaviour management and strategy development on the principles of working with disordered attachment advised by the **NICE guidelines on Children's Attachment: attachment in children and young people who are adopted from care, in care or at high risk of going into care**.

The following is a list of measures or strategies which may be used in our school to create a stable and caring environment.

Control and *discipline* are not viewed as appropriate terms when working with young people. It is imperative that the staff team do not hold the view that we 'discipline' young people. The aim of My Choice is to work with young people to develop self-esteem, confidence and independence skills to enable the individual to achieve their best potential.

The following are also to be applied in conjunction with each individual young person's risk assessments and IEP.

Staff setting clear boundaries.

These boundaries need to be agreed as a team and reviewed regularly in team meetings and individual staff development sessions. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring boundaries are in place and maintained at the school; the Head of Education and Headteacher ensure all boundaries are regularly reviewed and updated. The setting and agreeing of boundaries begins when the young person is first placed, in order to ensure they are clear about what is expected in the school.

Boundaries are reinforced throughout the day to day interactions, this can include what is and is not acceptable (verbal abuse, physical abuse), the use of offensive and inappropriate language, respecting other young people and staff members and respecting the school and contents, including the classroom and grounds. It is important that the young people work with the staff, teachers and Headteacher when reinforcing boundaries, the Student Council provides opportunity for young people to contribute to safety and respect in the school community. The young people registered at My Choice School will have experienced difficulties in recognising and accepting boundaries; it is therefore important to remain mindful that it will take time for a young person to settle into the school and maintain the boundaries set by the staff team.

It is our expectation that parents and carers support school boundaries. They can also be provided in written form and discussed in registration sessions, assemblies, student - teacher meetings and as part of the school day e.g. lunchtimes.

Staff setting clear expectations

It is important that our students are aware of what is expected of them, that expectations are linked with and reinforced by the boundaries set within the home and school. It is important that all staff have the same expectations and support each other to maintain standards.

The school providing clear written routines of the school including times and expectations of attending school.

It is important that the school team agree and regularly review the structure or daily routine within the school and share this with the parent / carers. The timetables must be available to all staff on SharePoint and displayed in the classrooms. A copy should be given to the young people and their parent / carers. This will create consistency and security of expectation.

Challenging the use of inappropriate language

It is important that all staff within the school challenge the young people if inappropriate language is used. This includes swearing, sexualised language and all forms of discriminatory language. This forms the basis of long term work with the young person in order to reduce inappropriate language and provide alternatives for the student. Staff will use the phrase **'that language has no place in this school'**. The immediacy of the challenge will vary.

My Choice School recognises that the language and phrases that young people use are driven by social media and youth culture; this is not always inappropriate and is part of the evolution of language however staff will be vigilant to the use of targeted language, including misogynistic and hate language. This is especially important when students describe their exchanges as *banter*; they must have opportunities to learn and discuss the differing perceptions of language and the potential impact on others. My Choice School also recognises that some of our students have experienced trauma and their language expresses the impact of their trauma. Some students use swear words and sexualised language to mimic environments and adult relationships that are familiar to them. Some students use swear words because they have heard adults use them and have not yet developed a wider vocabulary to express their frustration, surprise or anger. We describe this as contextualised language and at these times the priority may be to address the root cause of the outburst or language rather than the vocabulary itself. The language will always be addressed however sometimes it is better to do so at a later time, without an audience and when the student is more receptive to learning other choices.

PSHE sessions and assemblies are used to educate students about the consequences of inappropriate language, about what constitutes inappropriate language (including the use of slang, street / drill language) and where necessary will provide alternative words and phrases for students so that they may express themselves in a more appropriate way.

On occasion the Community Police Liaison Officer may be used to deliver sessions on the legal implications of using homophobic, racist or sexually aggressive language in order to educate and advise students about the impact of their language on themselves and on others. Safeguarding processes will also be followed if thresholds for Child on Child Abuse or for sexualised behaviour are met.

Challenging young people if engaging in bullying behaviour towards others.

Staff must challenge bullying directly. Teachers and TAs and CSAs will address the issue individually with the young person and parents /carers

are expected to also address the issue at home. Bullying in any form is not acceptable within the school and reference is made to the Anti Bullying Policy. PSHE sessions are also used to discuss bullying behaviour, including the use of language, whether the intention is to bully or not.

Mental Health Interventions can be provided during the school week to support students who are experiencing difficulties with their peer interactions or with their emotional regulation; this can include restorative work and mediation.

Lunchtime activity clubs are available for all students to support and encourage positive interactions across all year groups, using the students' own interests as the starting point for community.

Health and Wellbeing weeks are planned each term and will also encourage an awareness of the impact of actions and words on self and others.

The team and Headteacher agreeing consequences of behaviour which result in damage to the school environment and verbal or physical aggression. This will be on an individual basis and relating to each students age and understanding.

Sanctions may be applied if there is consistent intentional damage to the school environment. If a student damages a small item the expectation is that the student should replace the item however reparation is preferred and financial sanctions are not compulsory. It is more important that the young person understands that items cost money and that inconvenience to others is caused when damages occur. If a larger item is damaged (e.g. furniture, computer, windows, doors or an appliance) the My Choice Maintenance Manager will provide a costing for the repair and inform the Headteacher. A sum may then be agreed between the parent / carer Headteacher for a fixed amount that needs to be repaid by the student. Consequences must be relevant to the student and should not exist purely in financial form; reparation is encouraged and preferred to help the young person understand consequences to their actions. If the intentional damage is regular and the cost significant the Police may be informed. It is not the intention of My Choice to criminalise the young people, however there is a need for appropriate consequences regarding individual actions. Consequences of behaviour and appropriate actions taken will also be discussed with the student's social worker, parents and carers. The Head of Education must be informed of any incidents, sanctions and police involvement.

Acts of physical aggression and assaults on peers or on staff are not tolerated and police involvement will be supported.

Mediation is encouraged and supported, between students and between staff and students in order to repair and reflect.

Restorative Justice is a valuable approach and will be used at all times.

Behaviour management commences at the start of the school day with setting the tone and with maintaining basic school expectations, students are expected to arrive at school with the following expectations maintained:

- Uniform will be worn at school; this can be the school sweatshirt, or polo shirt or white t shirt. Students may wear their own clothes with these, such as jeans, sweatpants, leggings, trainers, trousers, skirts however the clothing must be appropriate. Parents and carers are expected to maintain these standards and students are expected to regularly attend school wearing an item of school uniform. School uniform is provided by the school at no cost to parent / carers and the school points reward system also provides incentive for the students.
- Mobile phones and music devices will not be permitted to create a disturbance in class or in school. Mobile phones and other devices will not be permitted during the school day. If parents / carers wish their children to have mobile phones for travelling to school then these must be handed in to school staff at the start of the day and will be returned at the end of the day. Parents / carers must support the school's intention to develop responsible phone use in students. We do recognise that phones are also the link for students with their significant others. In an emergency students may use the school phone. Parents / carers and the student must sign the Acceptable User Agreement.
- Lighters and tobacco, cigarettes or vapes must also be managed. We are concerned about the vaping increase in all young people, particularly young people who have started to vape and were not previously smokers. Many disposable vapes contain more nicotine than a pack of cigarettes and the sale of vapes to children under 18 is illegal, as is buying vapes for children.
- <https://ash.org.uk/law/youth-access>
- In order to safeguard our students we will not allow vapes or smoking materials at school. If a student arrives at school with a vape or smoking materials, they must be handed in to staff and will be returned **only to parents and carers**. They will not be returned to the student at the end of the school day and will not be returned at lesson break times. Students will not be permitted to smoke or

vape during the school day and students who attempt to do so are at risk of suspension. We appreciate that nicotine withdrawal is extremely difficult to navigate and experience, and parents / carers of students who vape have been provided with advice and support for smoking cessation through the following sites:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stop-smoking-treatments/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-health-services/stop-smoking-support-services>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/stopping-smoking-mental-health-benefits/>
- <https://healthmedia.blog.gov.uk/2024/04/15/creating-a-smokefree-generation-and-tackling-youth-vaping-what-you-need-to-know/>
- Students must bring packed lunch which is balanced, sufficient and healthy. Students may bring in additional snacks but not excessively sugary snacks or chocolate. Fizzy drinks and energy drinks are not permitted. Water is provided by the school and students should bring a refillable water bottle. Snacks can also be provided by school.

Behaviour management also commences at the start of the school day with emotional regulation for each student. My Choice School recognises that transitions at the start and throughout the day are emotionally challenging and students are supported by staff on arrival and during their school day with Zones of Regulation and personal supports and strategies.

All students have an allocated teacher, an allocated classroom and an allocated desk. Each student has a supply of equipment for their own use in class and these may include any items which help them to focus and self soothe. Students are expected to follow the lessons on their timetable and work with their allocated teacher in their allocated space.

Any student who is unable to follow the expectations will have opportunity to discuss their issues with staff and have time out or other individual strategies used to support them to engage. A support plan will be available to support students. Any student who is unable to engage with the school day in an appropriate and safe manner and presents as a risk to selves and others, which has resulted in a serious incident or has the potential to result in a serious incident, may have to return home (suspension) and the following will then apply:

The parents / carers will be requested to discuss the incident with the student, talking through what has happened. This will have already been

discussed with parents and carers by the school so they are fully aware of the difficulties that the student was experiencing. The school will book a Return To School interview for the next day; this will be attended by the student and staff from home or parent / carer. The Return To School meeting will be a reflection exercise for the student so that they can understand the steps to take for the next time and be reintegrated back into their class.

If students are requested to return home then they will be provided with work or a task or a reparative activity to complete (such as writing a letter of reparation).

Sanctions may be applied when necessary and if they are felt to be effective.

At My Choice School, we use a **Restorative Justice Approach** and use the following key questions (if appropriate) when intervening with young people who have been unable to allow us to manage and support their behaviour:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- How were you feeling at the time?
- Who do you think has been affected by what has happened?
- What needs to happen to put things right?

All sanctions are to be agreed by the Headteacher and Head of Education and staff will have opportunity to discuss appropriate sanctions (including suspension) with the Headteacher prior to application. Sanctions are not to be decided upon or enforced by any individual staff member. Sanctions are not to be applied during an incident where a staff member may be emotionally heightened. A more successful intervention is to work creatively and restoratively with the young person following an incident where an appropriate response can be agreed by all.

All sanctions are recorded on the incident form and shared with the parents / carers via CPOMS or email.

All our students bring with them their own unique life and educational experiences and must be treated with respect and dignity.

The following are a list of sanctions that are absolutely inappropriate and forbidden to be used under any circumstances and if were used would be subject to disciplinary procedures:

- Any form of physical punishment or verbal abuse.
- Depriving a student of essential food, drink, a special toy or object.

- Any restriction to visits to or by the child (or denial of other forms of contacts) with parents, relatives and significant others.
- The use of or withholding medication or medical or dental treatments.
- The intentional deprivation of sleep.
- The imposition of fines without meaning.
- Students must never be locked in their rooms or in isolation.
- Restraint used as a punishment.
- Restricted access to school activities or educational visits unless safety is a concern due to challenging behaviours.
- Removal of rewards already earned.

It is policy that the use of force is not permitted, except in circumstances of self-defence or to prevent significant harm being caused to self or to others. Appropriate preventative measure will be permitted in these circumstances using the minimal forces required.

Placing Local Authorities and parent/ carers (where appropriate) should be made aware of this policy before the young person is placed with My Choice and can access all policies on the My Choice School website.

My Choice Children's Homes use **TEAM TEACH** method for physically intervening with young people who are at risk of harming themselves or others or in exceptional circumstances damages to property. TEAM TEACH is

"Training in positive handling strategies through a whole setting holistic approach to managing difficult, disturbing and sometimes dangerous behaviours".

Examples of the aims of TEAM TEACH are as follows:

- TEAM TEACH employs a whole staff holistic approach with a follow up of the post repair, reflect and de-brief response for both staff and service users concerned. Emphasis is on being on "calm" communication and defusing skills that work best for specific individual concerned, acknowledged within the care, behaviour or education plans
- Physical responses are underpinned by values and principles that fit within a culture and ethos of positive educating care. There is an emphasis on individual human rights, responsibilities, choices and consequences
- Strategies are flexible and yet robust enough to make people feel free from fear, safe from harm

- The key message and approach of TEAM TEACH is that 95% or more of all incidents should be managed without recourse to physical interventions.
- The emphasis is on protecting and promoting positive relationships between staff and students.
- TEAM TEACH aims to work together with organisations to safe guard people and services, striving towards restrain free environments where all individuals are free from fear and safe from harm. Where people can all grow, evolve, learn and achieve their potential

Reference: www.team-teach.co.uk

Alongside the aims of TEAM TEACH it is My Choice School's intention for staff to develop and encourage good working relationships with the students. The aim is to avoid the need for confrontation by negotiating wherever possible. When incidents happen it is important that at an appropriate time the student is spoken to by staff and needs to accept responsibility and to either make good the damage through replacement, repair or loss of activity. In cases where violence occurs then additional levels of supervision may be required.

Managing self-injurious behaviours

Some of our students at My Choice School express their emotional distress through self-injurious behaviours. The management of these behaviours and the emotional distress of students is individual to their needs and always in consultation with the team of professionals working with the student, including taking advice from therapeutic support professionals. The response to self-injurious behaviours at school needs to be consistent, non-emotive and needs to ensure that it does not contribute to the continuation of these behaviours through a subconscious reward. The following process is in place at My Choice School:

- All sharps are minimised, secured and risk assessed, the environment is made as safe as possible removing all known opportunity.
- If a student locks themselves into the toilet in distress and with a suspected intention of self-injury, then the staff supervising them will allow 5 minutes before knocking on the door and requesting that the student opens the door.
- All toilets are single cubicle.
- The phrase '**we are concerned for your safety and you need to open the door**' will be used to avoid confusion. If the door is not open staff will say '**we are opening the door**'.

- On opening the door, the welfare of the student will be checked; if they have self-injured they will be taken to the medical room where the injury will be assessed and appropriate first aid provided.
- The student will be provided with a drink and opportunity to talk; they will be expected to return to class after a 15-minute period. If they are unable to return to class and are unable to engage in alternatives provided, then they will be considered to be unable to re-engage with the remainder of the school day and they will be required to return home. Every opportunity will be given to re-engage the student however their welfare and the welfare of others will be considered.
- When the student returns home they will be expected to have a keyworker session, incident reports will be completed by the school and the Return To School process will be initiated.

Managing peer conflict

All students will be introduced to the **Conflict Analysis** process which is used in classrooms to manage peer conflict. It is recognised that our students are frequently in conflict with each other as they are unable to manage their emotions and the complexity of their disordered attachment creates conflict and difficulties with interaction. Many of our students will create conflict in order to recreate the chaos and intensity that they are familiar with in their life experiences.

In any conflict the following stages will occur:

- The fuel
- The spark
- Smouldering
- Fanning the flames
- Stoking the fire
- The blaze

When conflict occurs in class the students will have the stages identified for them and their role in the conflict. They will be taught to recognise the stages for themselves so they can identify their role in conflict and others role in conflict. This will aid to extinguish conflicts before they escalate and will serve to provide a vocabulary for students to express themselves. All staff will use this Conflict Analysis to identify the behaviour of others and to identify their own behaviour, so they do not contribute to conflict in class and can manage themselves in order to manage others.

Guidelines for behaviour management

These guidelines are designed to assist staff in their daily interaction with the student being taught and cared for. It is important that all staff are aware of the expectations of the policies and use these guidelines.

These guidelines are designed to reinforce effective behaviour management that is based on good practice. These include personal relationships and professional relationships. The home and school needs to function in a manner that promotes the welfare, health and safety of both student and staff.

Do:

- Do be consistent.
- Do in any confrontational situations allow a 'back door' through which the child can take.
- Do work to resolution and de escalation, this will include not engaging in argument or attempt to 'win' a situation.
- Do when working with a student you do not know, consult with other staff.
- Do support your colleagues even if you disagree with their actions, unless dangerous or illegal. If unhappy with the situation speak to them later, when the student is not present (before the end of the school day). Any further concerns must be passed on to the Headteacher and the Head of Education.
- Do whenever possible, allow a cooling off period for the student before talking to them about the incident.
- Do be aware of where and what the students are doing at all times.
- Do as often as possible praise and reward good behaviour.
- Do refer to the school points system to remind the student of how well they are meeting expectations during the school day and be clear about what they need to do to continue to meet expectations
- Do impose fair sanctions that relate to the incident, do not go overboard, and if in doubt consult with your colleagues. Examples of sanctions that are permitted include reparation in the form of cleaning or tidying damages caused; loss of paid activity in the evening if school has not been attended for the whole day; loss of TV in bedrooms if school attendance is affected by late nights; paying a reasonable amount for the replacement of school equipment and resources if damaged intentionally.
- Do recognise when a student has reflected and recognises their actions, apologies are often not verbal.
- Do be clear about fixed periods for sanctions and the expected behaviours from the student that will result in removal of the sanction. All sanctions should be recorded on the incident form and communicated to all staff.

- Do be aware if there are any sanctions that need to be carried through from the previous school day.
- Do start every day as a new day
- Do identify any bullying and challenge it appropriately
- Do say NO when appropriate.
- Do accept that you can be wrong, make sure that you apologise when you need to.

Don't:

- Don't allow any situation to tie up the whole staff team, leaving students unsupervised.
- Don't avoid facing a group with its responsibilities.
- Don't rebuff attempts at relationship forming by any student.
- Don't use sarcasm or cynicism as agents of control.
- Don't take actions or words personally
- Don't carry resentment for actions or words directed at you

Rewards and incentives

My Choice School values the encouragement of engagement and positive behaviours through incentives and rewards. This is a preferred strategy and the use of sanction should be minimal and relevant. The teacher will devise a plan for each young person where the young person will receive reward for achieving targets specific to their development and progress. This will be used alongside the School Points system.

My Choice School uses a points system to monitor attendance and engagement in individual lessons and this points system will contribute to the reward Gift Card at the end of each half term. A standard 14 point minimum is used to measure engagement daily however this is negotiable with the Headteacher, particularly for students who may be on a reduced timetable. Additional incentives and rewards are used throughout the school day and week, these are negotiated and agreed with each student and can include:

- Engaging in an activity at school as a result of achieving targets in a lesson or a session
- Engaging in an activity out of school, such as a walk to Arundel, as a result of achieving targets in a lesson or a session
- Provision of specific rewards appropriate to the student supporting hobbies and interests

At the end of every term the student's achievements are recognised and rewarded with Certificates of Achievement, presented to the student on a planned day at the end of term, with a celebratory theme and activities or

games. The end of year is celebrated with activities where students plan with their teacher the activities they would like to participate in as a class or plan for the whole school.

Monitoring

Students' progress is monitored daily to ensure that incentives and strategies are appropriate and effective. The Headteacher and teacher monitor the Record of Points, incident reports, attendance register and lesson evaluations and daily engagement to identify patterns, triggers and alternative strategies. Timetables can be altered to support students who struggle with particular times of day. Appointments and schedules such as CWCF reviews, contact visits, legal and medical appointments are known to affect student engagement and behaviour and these appointments and events are identified and supported through effective planning and communication between the parents / carers and school team and alterations to timetables are made when necessary.

Incident and Physical Intervention reporting procedures

All staff will have access to training however **physical interventions** can be undertaken by all staff and under the following circumstances:

- A student is putting themselves at significant risk.
- A student is putting others at significant risk.
- Continued excessive damage to property.

After a physical intervention has taken place and the situation has calmed it is important to talk through what has happened with the student and check how they are. It is their right to see a medical practitioner within 24 hrs of the incident.

All **incidents** and **physical interventions** will be recorded on **CPOMS** with professionals having access to the reports via this secure system. Parents will receive these reports as emailed PDF documents.

It is the student's right to always have their views listened to. They should be given the option to write their views down and sign and date them. The **Student Voice** form is used and this can be uploaded to CPOMS. The student's comments can also be recorded on CPOMS by the member of staff reporting.

Any other students who have witnessed or been affected by incident also need the opportunity to be able to talk through things with a member of staff.

Staff should also have the opportunity to talk through the incident with the Headteacher (DSL) or Deputy Headteacher (DDSL) or Head of Education (DDSL).

School staff need to make agreement on what action is to be taken regarding incident, with the Headteacher leading and follow this through before the end of the school day. A Restorative approach must always be the preferred approach. Sanctions must be agreed by the Head of Education before being implemented. Sanctions must be relevant and proportionate to the incident and recorded as part of the incident recording.

When a physical intervention has taken place it is essential that all the information is recorded in the report on CPOMS and the **physical intervention form** and **reference** are completed. The physical intervention report must include the following details:

- Student's name
- The date
- The time and location
- Details of behaviour that led to physical intervention
- The restraint used
- The duration of the physical intervention
- The name of the staff members using physical intervention
- The name of any other staff, children or other people present
- The effectiveness of the physical intervention and any consequences
- Any injuries caused to or reported by the child or any other person

If a member of staff has been physically assaulted they need to consider whether they want to press charges and have police involvement. It is all staff members' right to involve the police if they feel it is appropriate. The Headteacher, Head of Education (Annie Murphy), Director (Dawn Ives) and Operations Manager (Debbie Woodgate) along with the student's social worker and parent / carers must be made aware of this.

Following an incident and physical intervention all risk assessments will be reviewed by the Head of Education to identify changes needed or to identify staff training or practice issues in order to reduce the risk of repeat occurrences.

Team meetings should always look at current difficulties and ways of addressing them taking into consideration the needs and backgrounds of the students.

12. The Team Teach Lead at My Choice (Pauline Gunnell, Team Manager East) will be consulted periodically by the Head of Education and

Headteacher for support and advice in record keeping and physical interventions as a quality assurance and safeguarding process.

Policy link:

Safeguarding

Risk Assessment

Behaviour Management

Uniform

Exclusion

Reviewed April 2025

Annual Review due June 2026

