Behaviour Management Framework

The following framework outlines our approach and rationale to managing behaviour, it should be read in conjunction with the positive handling and safeguarding policy.

Please note that anyone working at Cornerstone Learning CIC should only use touch when it is educationally or therapeutically valid.

Which Behaviours Should We Aim to Reduce?

We would aim to reduce those behaviours which are diminishing the quality of life (e.g. access to food, drink, health, family relationships, friendships, leisure and exercise, education, emotional well-being) of the child or their family, or significantly impacting their ability to learn. Where there may be a number of behaviours, these would be prioritised in collaboration with parents, and up to three chosen. Often where behaviours have the same function, targeting three will in fact address others.

What is our Starting Point when Selecting Interventions?

The starting point when selecting an effective intervention to address a target behaviour, is to determine the function of the behaviour for the child (what the child is gaining from the behaviour), and then match the intervention with the function.

What are the Possible Functions?

Research to date (e.g. Iwata et al, 1992) suggests all behaviours can be categorised by the following functions:

Function	Also Viewed as
Attention Access to Tangible Items	*Social Positive Reinforcement*
Avoidance Escape	*Social Negative Reinforcement*
Self Stimulation (sensory)	*Automatic Positive Reinforcement*
Pain	*Automatic Negative Reinforcement*

Some researchers also suggest that it is useful to look at many behaviours as ineffective communication, and that it is helpful to predict what the child is trying to communicate so this can be taught/prompted.

Finally other researchers suggest separate functions (or at least useful subdivisions) of:
Mand or Control (difficulty following instructions/all on own terms)
Request for choice or Protest at removal of free operants (difficulty transitioning)
(Bowman et al, 1997, Fisher et al, 1998)

How can the Function be Most Accurately Predicted?

The function is predicted through careful and consistent recording of the target behaviour using ABC data and other appropriate measurements (e.g. frequency, interval, etc), and subsequent analysis by a BCBA. It is important that the whole team is well trained in carrying out this recording.

While Functional Analysis is the most accurate predictor of function, staff should not do these unless they are trained as it involves actively provoking the unwanted behaviour, which has ethical and safety issues.

Proactive and Reactive Interventions

Any strategy for a target behaviour should combine Proactive and Reactive interventions.
Proactive – aim is to reduce the likelihood of the unwanted behaviour occurring in the first place. Acts by manipulating Motivating Operants (MOs) and Antecedents (SDs)
Reactive – given the unwanted behaviour has occurred. Aim is to reduce the future likelihood of the unwanted behaviour occurring again. Acts by manipulating Consequences

How are Proactive Interventions Selected?

Once the function of the behaviour has been identified, the BCBA will select relevant proactive procedures which are the least intrusive, while still effective in reducing the likelihood of the behaviour. The following list gives examples of Proactive Intervention types:

<u>Non Contingent Reinforcement (NCR)</u>

Sometimes referred to as 'enriching the environment'. Reinforcement linked to the function of the target behaviour is provided at set intervals (based on frequency of current non desirable behaviour). Although the reinforcement is delivered non contingently (i.e. not related to what the child is doing at the time), be careful not to accidentally reinforce undesired behaviours – i.e. if saying 'well done for playing nicely' every 10 minutes, and the child is climbing up the bookshelf, wait till they are back down before giving the reinforcement!

- *Example 1:* Child seeks attention. Schedule in 5 minute activity with child every hour, providing lots of positive feedback.
- *Example 2:* Child seeks tactile stimulation. Schedule 1 minute feely bag activity every 20 minutes.

Manipulating MOs

Motivating Operants (MOs) relate to the fluctuating strengths of particular reinforcers and punishers, or "Why is this consequence acting as an effective reinforcer for this person now?" (McGill, 1999).

It can be defined as 'an event or stimulus condition that momentarily alters (a) the value of consequences that act as types of reinforcement or punishment, and (b) the probability of behaviors that have been previously associated with such consequences. In short, an MO changes how much you "want" something and how hard you will "work" to get it' (Michael, 1982).

Sometimes MOs themselves can create challenging behaviour, e.g. if anyone was denied food for 7 days and was very hungry (MO) the cake shop window may now act as an SD for window breaking behaviour as the reinforcer (cake) has strongly increased in value!

Therefore staff should aim to increase the MOs of appropriate reinforcers (e.g. by ensuring reinforcers are restricted out of sessions), decrease deprivation states (e.g. by ensuring adequate food, drink and sensory input) and decrease the MOs for any punishers (e.g. close window to reduce sound of lawn mower if sound sensitive). Changes to the teaching style or environment such as intermixing easy and hard tasks (reducing escape MO), using timers and other visual strategies (reducing Control MOs), having sensory breaks etc can also make a big difference. These are not exhaustive examples and will be child specific.
See Chapter in Applied Behaviour Analysis by Cooper, Heron and Heward, or Langthorne, P. And McGill, P. (2009). A Tutorial on the Concept of the Motivating Operation and its Importance to Application, *Behavior Analysis Practice 2(2): 22–31.*

Teaching Appropriate Alternative Behaviours
E.g. Communication
Often the inappropriate behaviour can be viewed as ineffective communication. Therefore proactively increasing the fluency of the child's communication, and specifically teaching the relevant alternatives to the unwanted behaviour is highly

beneficial. This may include pointing, break cards, signing 'no' at early stages. This would be even if the communication is negative (e.g. I don't like this, I want you to go away) if this is preferable to the behaviour. All new appropriate communication would be honoured initially and then can be linked to contingencies.

Other examples would include teaching Play skills and Social skills

Manipulating SDs

SDs act as a trigger that reinforcement is available. Therefore by reducing SDs that trigger negative behaviours (e.g. if child likes tipping, not having bucket of bricks on show) and increasing SDs for wanted behaviours (e.g. having toy choice shelf, having PECs book clearly in sight), behaviour can be manipulated.

How are Reactive Interventions Selected?

Once the function of the behaviour has been identified, a BCBA will select the reactive procedure which is the least intrusive, while still effective in reducing the behaviour. The following list is arranged with least intrusive methods first.

Procedures involving reinforcement

DRA (Differential Reinforcement of Alternative Behaviour)

Reinforcing desired behaviour 'B' while ignoring (extinguishing) undesired behaviour 'A'. Used to teach appropriate alternative behaviours.

Often behaviour A can be viewed as an inappropriate form of communication. Therefore the most ideal alternative behaviour to teach as an alternative is often appropriate communication. This is specifically known as Differential Reinforcement of Communication (DRC)

- *Example:* Child takes mother's hand, screams and tantrums when he/she wants something. Ignore this behaviour and teach the child how to ask for things appropriately.

DRI (Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible Behaviour)

Reinforcing a behaviour that is incompatible with the undesirable behaviour.

- *Example:* Reinforcing toy play, a behaviour incompatible with gazing and hand flapping.

Extinction

Removal of all reinforcement for a particular behaviour.

- *Example:* If the function of screaming is to get sweets, then withholding sweets when the child screams will put the screaming on extinction.
- If the function of the behaviour is attention then attention for that particular behaviour would be removed. *Example:* If the child tantrums for attention treat the

child exactly as if the behaviour is not occurring. Do not raise your voice or change inflection in the voice to acknowledge that you hear the child crying. Avoid even the smallest changes in body language (e.g. facial expressions) when a child is engaged in tantrum behaviour (many children are able to pick up even the smallest of cues). Don't give eye contact or say "No" as this negative attention is still attention.

- Easiest in theory but difficult to implement because parents and therapists have to fight the natural urge to either comfort or quieten a child who is crying.
- Will often result in an *Extinction Burst*. This is an increase in the intensity of the behaviour before it begins to reduce (as the child tests the boundaries).
- May be difficult to use at school where it is impossible to ensure that the behaviour will never be reinforced (i.e. given attention).
- Not effective for intrinsically reinforcing behaviour such as self stimulatory behaviour.
- Where possible, a reinforcement element will be included for replacement behaviours (see above)

Procedures without Reinforcement (involving sanctions)

Although the following procedures are used commonly in mainstream schooling (e.g. losing stars from star-charts, being kept in at break, being asked to write out incorrect spellings 3 times) they are technically punishment based.

BACB Ethical Guidelines 4.02 state **'**The behaviour analyst recommends reinforcement rather than punishment whenever possible. If punishment procedures are necessary, the behaviour analyst always includes reinforcement procedures for alternative behaviour in the program.

Cornerstone Learning will always start with proactive and positive reinforcement-based interventions. If all options have been attempted thoroughly and they are not effective sanction-based interventions may be considered.

Behaviour reduction strategies involving reinforcement are nearly always used first. However in specific or emergency situations (such as head-banging/severe aggression) strategies involving sanctions may be considered in discussion with parents.

Sanctions involve the presentation of an unpleasant stimulus (positive) or removal of a pleasant stimulus (negative) immediately following a specific behaviour **that causes a reduction in that behaviour**.

Positive Punishment is never used as most behaviour management methods would rely on the removal of a positive stimulus rather than the application of a negative one.

Although reinforcement-based reduction procedures are typically more effective long term, and have less risk of side effects, punishment procedures can result in a quick reduction. Therefore they are sometimes considered when dealing with dangerous behaviours (e.g. eating glass). Less intrusive procedures would then be added once the behaviour has been reduced to a safe level.

The term 'punishment' is a technical term within ABA and does not relate to the term as used in layman language. The aim is not to make the child feel bad, but to add a consequence that results in a reduction in future occurrences of the target behaviour. If it doesn't, it isn't punishment! So for one child music may be a reinforcer and for another with sound sensitivity, it would be a sanction. It is vital to be clear.

Over-Correction
The child is given a consequence related to the effects of the inappropriate behaviour.
Restitutional Over-correction: the child corrects the environmental effects of the inappropriate behaviour.
- *Example:* A child purposely pours juice on to the table and so is required to clean up the juice before moving on to their choice of activity
Guidelines
- Should pertain to a problem behaviour
- Should teach an appropriate/functional behaviour
- Should be immediate
- Should restore the environment to its original state
- Will not work if the child finds it reinforcing

Time Out
This is the removal of *all* reinforcing stimuli. Note that this differs from extinction in that during extinction, only reinforcement for the target behaviour is withheld.
- Often used by parents of typically developing children, e.g. Sitting in a corner, being sent to their room
- May be used in school setting where extinction is not appropriate
- If child is placed in time out for tantrumming and crying, he can leave after a specified period (e.g. 3 minutes) of non-crying (appropriate behaviour).
Guidelines
- Do not reward the child when he leaves the time-out situation.
- As a general rule, 1 minute per year of the child's age.
- All time-outs should be conducted in a well-lit, open and supervised area.
Limitations
- Not effective if child wants to escape from present situation
- Not effective if child can engage in self stimulatory behaviour while in time out
- Not effective unless child has a good repertoire of alternative behaviours for which he will miss out on reinforcement.

Response cost

- Response cost is the loss of an amount of reinforcement as a consequence of exhibiting inappropriate behaviour. Response cost could be the removal of a star on a star-chart, loss of pocket money etc.

Guidelines
- If the behaviour does not decrease then response cost has not occurred and the value of the reinforcement needs to be evaluated.
- Should be based around a reinforcer we were giving the child, and not be based around child's own things.
- Should never relate to break times, food, drink, or other basic rights

How can we ensure Interventions are Proving Effective?

Data would continue to be taken to ensure the behaviour is reducing as a result of the intervention. If the behaviour increases or stays the same by the follow-up workshop, immediate changes to the behaviour Plan should be made.
For harmful behaviours (e.g. eye gouging), review behaviour data daily to ensure intervention has not caused any increase.
It can help to visually analyse progress through graphing data.

How do we know when a behaviour has been effectively reduced?

A behaviour has been effectively reduced when it is within the range of the child's peers and/or is no longer diminishing the child's quality of life or that of their family, or significantly impacting their ability to learn.

Positive Handling Policy

This policy sets out the framework for the use of positive handling. This is set within the organisation's overall behaviour management framework and the UKSBA and BACB's ethical guidelines.

Definitions
- Within this document "positive handling" includes physical interventions ranging from physical touch used in reinforcement and physical prompting to restraint.
- "Restraint" is considered to be any action that is used against resistance from the child.

The Legal Framework
The use of physical intervention in relation to children is a difficult legal area. Adults have a duty to safeguard the health, welfare and safety of children and young people in their care and others. The law recognises circumstances when the use of

reasonable physical intervention will not amount to an offence. Examples would include the use of reasonable physical intervention to prevent physical injury to a child or others.

Physical contact or physical interventions can amount to the criminal offences of assault and false imprisonment. Corporal punishment is prohibited in schools, children's homes and foster placements.

It should be emphasised that whether an act of physical intervention falls within the law

will depend very much on the circumstances of the particular case. NB Reasonable here takes into account whether any intervention was necessary and proportionate.

Section 1: Physical Contact

Working principles regarding physical contact
● Any form of physical contact should be a conscious, self aware, necessary, proportionate ie reasonable and justifiable act.
● Within a therapeutic setting touch may be needed for educational reasons (i.e. where language is too complex for the child to follow and they need to be shown physically).
● Touch will also often be required as a social reinforcer e.g. a pat on the back, high five, playing games such as 'row the boat'.
● Touch is part of normal human life and some children will need gentle and systematic desensitisation to help them tolerate contact such as shaking hands.
● It is appropriate for staff to use touch with young people in their care in a positive and professional manner.
● Particularly with younger children, touching is inevitable and often can give welcome reassurance to the child. However, staff must keep in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued and must therefore conduct themselves accordingly.

The difference between physical guidance and restraint
A child with special educational needs may frequently need to be physically guided for a number of reasons. There may be occasions when a child's behaviour will need to be maintained by physical guidance in a manner which does not carry the force of restraint. For example, if a child is pinching and not responding to verbal direction, the adult may take the child's hand and lead them to the alternate activity. The main factors separating this from restraint are the degree of force applied, the intention of the action and how the action is perceived by the young person.

The DfES guideline "Use of reasonable force: Other physical contact with pupils" updated on the 26/4/12 stresses that schools should *not* have a no contact policy and gives examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:
● holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school
● when comforting a distressed pupil
● when a pupil is being congratulated or praised
● to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument

- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching
- to give first aid.

Protecting Staff

Staff should respond to young people in a way that gives an appropriate level of care. However, it is recognised that staff need to protect themselves against physical contact being misinterpreted. The following guidelines will help to protect staff against false accusations:

- Consideration needs to be given to the meaning of touch– affection or physical
  intervention within different cultural norms
- Staff should be aware of those young people who seek physical contact in inappropriate circumstances and raise the issue with their line manager
- The level and type of physical contact should reflect the social, emotional, physical and educational needs of the child.
- Staff may find themselves alone with children and some physical intervention may be appropriate at such times. Consideration should be given to issues such as leaving doors open where possible, use of CCTV, awareness of body language, personal and professional boundaries, etc.
- Young children and young people with disabilities may need assistance in private, with personal care tasks such as toileting and bathing; in most cases the parents will be responsible. Otherwise appropriate physical intervention from staff is otherwise written into the workshop notes in a way which reflects good teaching practice. Staff would never be involved in self care and alone unless in an emergency situation.

Section 2: Restraint

Working principles regarding restraint

Cornerstone Learning does not advocate the use of physical restraint. Only where exceptional circumstances occur, would physical intervention be used and where possible all other reasonable strategies are impracticable or have proved ineffective. Restraint would be used:

- With the minimum force necessary and such that the degree and duration of force is proportional to the circumstance
- As an act of care not punishment
- Where the behaviour concerned involved personal injury or risk of personal injury to the child or others
- Where there is serious damage to property (including the child's own property)
- When strenuous attempts to de-escalate the situation prior to the use of physical intervention were made.
- Where possible, in the event of restraint becoming necessary, before touching the child, the member of staff should advise the child calmly and repeatedly about what they are going to do and why, and how the child might change his/her

behaviour, in order that the restraint would become unnecessary. Where possible this would be tailored to the child's communication method (e.g. sign) and level.
● As a temporary measure, and should be continually being assessed in order to reduce or remove the intervention as quickly as possible

Section 3: Guidelines for Good Practice in Behaviour Management

Behaviour Management Framework
All staff are trained to predominantly use positive proactive strategies to prevent behaviours of concern escalating or use positive reinforcement–based reactive interventions that do not require handling. However, staff may think there is a possibility that a child may need to be restrained if:

a) the child's behaviour is likely to cause harm to themselves or others, or significant harm to property (see Appendix A), and a functional assessment has been carried out to find out the reason (function) for the behaviour and identify the antecedents
b) all appropriate proactive and positive reactive strategies have been effectively introduced and the data shows they have been ineffective

OR

c) the child' behaviour is so harmful to themselves or others (e.g. eye-gouging, severe head-banging, aggression with implements) that emergency restraint is necessary

In these instances the staff will:

1) Complete an independent risk assessment
2) continue to take ABC and other appropriate measures
3) continue to teach alternative behaviours in order to ensure that early and preventative intervention is the norm.

These actions will reduce the incidence of extreme behaviours and make sure that the use of physical restraint is rare.

Working with other organisations
Behaviour plans will be compatible with the policies in place at the child's educational placement.

Restraint Training
Where possible, restraint should only be used by staff trained in positive handling. Where restraint has been highlighted as a high risk, those involved with the child will be required to be trained in appropriate techniques. However, the guidelines also apply to staff in emergency situations where the behaviour was not foreseeable.

Lone working
Cornerstone Learning staff should not work alone, but if circumstances have created such a situation (e.g. the child has run out of the house) a second adult should be called to reduce the risk of the member of staff or child suffering bodily harm, and to act as a witness.

After the incident:
● A full incident report will be completed by all concerned as soon as possible.
● If the child does not already have one, it will be necessary to compile an individual risk assessment.

This policy has been written with reference to the educational legislation that came into force on 1.9.98 (Section 550 of the Education Act 1996) together with DfES national guidance (DfES Circular 04/12). This establishes the power of teachers and other staff to use reasonable force if required.

Quality Assurance

Cornerstone Learning will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures. The directors will ensure action is taken to swiftly remedy any identified weaknesses within its procedures.

Policy Dates

This policy was written and takes effect February 2024

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