

EAGLE'S NEST
awakening potential, inspiring dreams

Behaviour Policy

Approved on: 1st September 2021

To be reviewed by: September 2024

Signed: Duncan Layzell

Position: Trustee

Signed: Phil Pusey

Position: Trustee

(Agreed electronically as per our constitution. Emails held on file)

Introduction

As an alternative provision working with students who are struggling to effectively manage their behaviour in school, we recognise that a huge part of the work we do is in the area of helping these young people to manage their social and emotional responses in a more appropriate way, indeed this is an important part of the teaching they will experience through their time spent at Eagle's Nest. This teaching will range from explicit 'anger management' or 'managing emotions' sessions, to 'on project training' which seeks to model, challenge and develop responses through interactions with others when studying a different explicit qualification, for example cooking, animal care or horticulture.

Our organisational values set the tone for our behaviour management approach:

- **Accept:** We believe in accepting every young person as they are, no matter what their history, no-one gets turned away.
- **Belief:** We believe that every young person is uniquely valuable and has something positive to offer.
- **Relate:** We believe that modelling positive behaviour is the best way for students to learn what they have not seen/experienced (or grasped) before.

We seek to do this through our organisation's core approaches to:

- A. Educate: leading to increased positive experiences of education
- B. Empower: leading to the ability to make positive life choices
- C. Relate: leading to improved levels of trust within relationships

Rationale

The young people with whom we work, for a wide range of reasons, have not managed themselves well within the mainstream setting. It follows, therefore, that the approaches we use should be different in order to work with this specific and minority cohort. We use trauma informed approaches to recognise the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on the development of the brain, and seek to work with the young person and others to repair developmental brain damage that inhibits their ability to manage their emotions and behaviours.

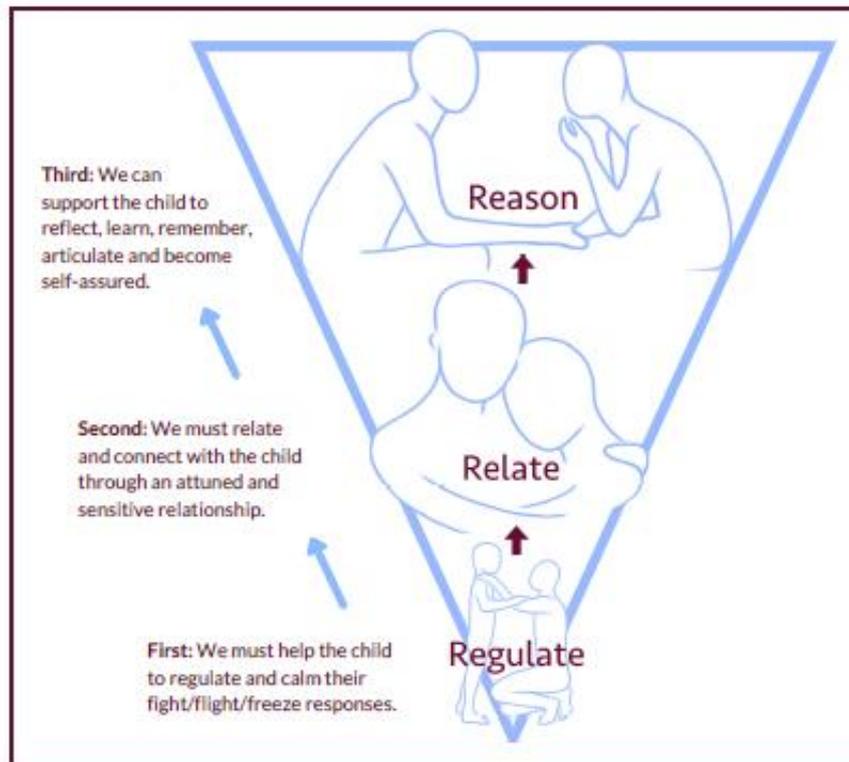
We follow the strategy of neuroscientist Dr Bruce Perry in the way we relate to young people, recognising that we will not be able to access the reasoning part of their brain unless we have first helped them to regulate their fight/flight/freeze response. We need to become trusted adults in their life to do this, (see diagram "The Three R's: Reaching the Learning Brain" on the next page, provided by www.beaconhouse.org.uk).

We are clear that routine and consistency are the best environments for young people recovering from trauma, and each day is set up with this in mind. We always seek to prepare students if there is a change coming, be that alterations to staffing due to illness/holiday, or an alteration to the programme.

Our 'start of day' routines are an essential part of this. The target setting and social skills games over 'tea and toast' are used to assess the emotional state of the young people on arrival and to try to settle as a 'family unit' for the day. All the students we work with are struggling to express their emotions appropriately at times, so this first half hour is vitally important and allows us to make necessary adjustments to support and staffing for the day based on how students present.

The Three R's: Reaching The Learning Brain

Dr Bruce Perry, a pioneering neuroscientist in the field of trauma, has shown us that to help a vulnerable child to learn, think and reflect, we need to intervene in a simple sequence.



Heading straight for the 'reasoning' part of the brain with an expectation of learning, will not work so well if the child is dysregulated and disconnected from others.

In order to achieve this, staff should:

Be Clear What They Would Like to See

- Set clear expectations (recognising some students will fail to meet these on occasion, but not lowering the overall expectation as a result)
- Try to warn clearly what the consequence will be ahead of time so the student is clear. "If you choose not to hand the phone in this week, I will have to speak to home and arrange that it is left there next week"
- Ensure the situation is unpicked after an incident, be that on the day or in a follow up visit or session. Reset the expectations.

Build Trust with the Young Person (by following through)

- Always carry out what has been said, be that positive or negative consequence, even if you regret saying it afterwards (it is more important that they learn to trust you at your word).
- Take care not to voice a consequence that is not possible to enforce. E.g. "You will get in the car or your parents will be coming to collect you right now." (We don't know if they are available, and many live a long way away.) This kind of comment empowers them to take up the challenge rather than encouraging them to conform to the set boundary.
- Say sorry to them if you make a mistake!

Always use the Language of Choice

- Remind a student they are in control of the choice they will make, not you. Empower them to make the right choice by reminding them what you would like to see.
- Negotiate with a student who is in a state of non-compliance in order to get a solution that shows they have given a little, even if they do not manage the whole expectation. Be clear what the whole expectation is, but negotiate something in between to move things forward. Remind them they have a choice to do the right thing.
- Give them space to back down without losing face. If they are refusing to hand something over, tell them you want it in the next five minutes and then leave them. If possible, create a way for them to do this away from others.

Support Each Other

- Be relational, with some assertiveness if needed, but do not raise your voice, and, if you feel you are getting frustrated, ask another team member to take over (you have not lost, we are a team).
- Work together as a staff team. It is sometimes best to walk away and leave another staff member to take a different approach for the same end goal.

Eagle's Nest recognise that these approaches take practice to become second nature. They require a high level of patience and good emotional awareness of self when dealing with such a situation over a long period. Indeed, no matter how much experience one may have, on a day when we are emotionally drained or tired for personal reasons, it is more challenging to respond appropriately. Incidents of conflict can be very draining and we seek to support staff through training and supervision to develop their capacity in this area.

Our Expectations for Students

1. Phone box – Hand in your phone to the 'phone exchange' box on arrival. When phones are placed in the box, you have the option to take a sweet or chocolate from the box as a reward for handing it in.
2. Take part in the planned activities for the day –you are expected to have a go at everything, including worksheets. We will support you and understand it is sometimes difficult, but you are expected to try your best.
3. Respect others' views and opinions – Don't laugh or mock others because of what they have said. Whilst some opinions are not helpful to share, and we must be willing to learn that, it is not ok to laugh at others just because they think differently.
4. Do not be offensive to staff or students – it's never ok to use swear words or nasty comments to or about someone else, no matter how difficult they are to get along with.
5. Be willing to try to put things right – saying sorry is difficult, admitting we have said something we shouldn't have is tough, but we need to allow others to help us put things right.
6. Work on being able to talk about what is bothering you – developing the skills to talk about how you feel is really important to your future mental health and well-being. It's really important to your future.

Consequences

Whether positive or negative, these should be related to the incident in a way that makes sense. At a time of conflict, it may not be possible to think through the best consequence if it has not already been agreed, so it is better to simply say, "If you choose not to do this, there will be a consequence." This gives time to consider an appropriate consequence out of the heat of the situation.

Possible **positive consequences** could be:

- Ongoing praise for positive choices, including work being praised by other staff and students.
- Praise for putting things right after a bad behavioural choice
- Letting a student know you are proud of them and being explicit about why
- Allowing a reward activity after work is completed (pool or other game of choice)
- Having their phone back after work is completed
- Receiving a small sweet treat for handing their phone in
- Ice cream or similar treat if behaving on an offsite activity, or at the end of half term of good behaviour
- Outing related to area of work at end of positive half term
- Emails/texts/phone calls home and/or to school with praise
- Certificates
- Recognition at Awards Evening
- Other appropriately identified reward
- Card posted home to congratulate on behaviour

Possible **negative consequences** could be:

- Removed from group to complete session 1:1 (for session)
- Parent/ Carer does not leave until phone handed in at start of session
- Phone to remain at home for future sessions
- Cigarettes to be left at home
- Home visit to discuss and agree expectations moving forward
- Home visit to catch up on work missed/ not completed
- Work at home session, (either staffed by EN, or work provided following home visit after incident)
- Move from one project to another part way through term to facilitate fresh start/ different group dynamics
- Move to 1:1 if accessing group work not achievable for young person at the present time
- Positive behaviour agreement drawn up and signed by student and staff
- pause and restart project with a different group in next half term
- Emails/texts/phone calls home and/or to school with concern
- Other appropriately identified sanction
- Card posted home to remind them of the positive things about them amidst difficult times (reminding them they are special and liked despite their behaviour is both true and a very powerful tool to help them change)

The aim of this strategy is to encourage students to make positive choices about the way they participate both in activities and with each other, bearing in mind that we are always moving students towards being able to effectively manage their behaviour in a larger and less intensively managed setting as they move back to mainstream school, college or the work environment.

We use the language of choice regularly, making it clear what the right choice would be and leaving space for them to make it. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own conduct and to develop self-discipline. They are responsible for the choices they make and the consequences, good or bad, that follow.

Use of Force

We do not practise physical intervention, other than in circumstances where not to do so could lead to harm to self, others or property. Possible examples of this would be to separate two students who were fighting, or to stand in front of a doorway if to do so would prevent a student or staff member being hurt. If intervention is used, it is always with the least force and for the least amount of time possible. In such circumstances, incident forms are always completed, and home and schools informed of the incident.