

Wilton and Primary School



De-escalation Policy

At Wilton and Barford Primary School we actively work towards creating a safe and caring, positive environment where pupils, parents and staff are valued and respected.

This policy acknowledges the differences that are typical of people with autistic spectrum conditions, and the effects that these may have on behaviour and self-management of behaviour. Considerable sensory issues, difficulties with communication, social interaction and social imagination, and differences in perception and thought processes mean that it is difficult for some pupils to make decisions, plan, predict, reflect, or evaluate. These difficulties can sometimes give rise to anxiety, frustration, confusion and distress. This in turn can give rise to some 'inappropriate' and/or 'challenging behaviour'. We are aware that in these incidences pupils may not have the necessary self-control to maintain a safe and positive environment and as adults we need to be prepared to positively intervene.

A structured environment where consistency is deemed to be of paramount importance enables us to promote positive self-management skills. A wide range of pupil-specific, pro-active methods are in place that acknowledge and respect individual abilities; difficulties and differences. Together these help to lessen the incidences of 'challenging' behaviour. However these incidences do and will still occur and consistent, systematic responses to the behaviours presented by individual pupils are planned and implemented to manage the immediate situation before and while pro-active strategies take effect.

Many pupils with an autism spectrum condition (ASC) also display some behaviour that staff may not understand. Behaviour is often a means of communication. Staff must endeavour to understand the function / meaning behind the behaviour. Specific strategies are used to reduce anxiety and promote feelings of well-being and to modify unwanted behaviours and promote more appropriate behaviours. Pupils have individual behaviour plans that are regularly reviewed and updated with parents, healthcare, education professionals and form part of the documentation for Annual Review.

Children with an ASC will have access to the following resources to support their behavioural needs:

- An individual timetable
- Individual work stations.
- Transition support
- Social stories and comic strip stories to support their understanding.
- Access to specialist approaches, by trained members of staff (such as TEACCH; Boardmaker, etc.)
- Daily exercise.
- Home School Link Book
- Specific plans to support emotional and behaviour needs.
- Appropriate levels of staff support.
- Safe / calming spaces, both internal and external

We believe that appropriate relationships between staff members and pupils are a major contribution towards behaviour management in the school. However, as in many establishments, staff members are at times unavoidably absent from school. In order for the consistency of management to continue we endeavour to use either a small group of supply staff who are familiar with our pupils or place the child in the class of a familiar teacher.

We strive to draw upon good practice from a range of approaches for working with people with autism spectrum conditions, and design programmes around pupil's needs and differences. In this way we feel that we recognise, and work with, each child's strengths and difficulties in a caring and supportive manner, thus reducing anxiety, frustration, confusion or distress.

Pupils who display challenging behaviours have an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) and Risk Assessment (RA). This is written in collaboration with the child, parents, teachers, TAs and the SENCo. It details the behaviours exhibited, trigger behaviours and de-escalation strategies used by or with the individual pupil. If some of the challenging behaviours are happening frequently they are recorded on a Behaviour Monitoring Form so that staff can monitor and analyse behaviour patterns, function of behaviour and the effectiveness of strategies put in place. The IBPs are reviewed at least each term and updated if needed. They are also updated if a pupil regularly displays a new behaviour.

We recognise the critical role played, and exclusive knowledge and experiences that parent/carers have of their children, especially if their child has an ASC. We aim to work in partnership with parent/carers to gain mutual support, exchange information and share consistent approaches to children in our joint care. This is achieved through the home-school link books, telephone calls and scheduled meetings that occur once per term, unless important issues arise in the meantime. Parents are reminded through the home-school agreement that they should let the school know of any concerns or problems that may affect their child's behaviour. Daily informal parental contact is recommended for all children with autism. It is important that we feedback positive messages and share children's successes with their parents.

The school's De-escalating Challenging Behaviours procedure should be followed by all staff and will form part of staff induction training. The procedures must be on display in all classrooms and in each teacher's Supply Teacher Information file along with behaviour Risk Assessment and Individual behaviour Plans. The IBPS must clearly identify triggers and warning signs of pupil anxiety plus successful de-escalation strategies for named children.

CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENT

At Wilton and Barford Primary School, we believe that every child has the right to be safe and therefore to be cared for in a way that ensures her/his safety and meets her/his individual needs. We recognise that all children need protection at all times from anything or anyone that may cause them harm and we work together following the Child Protection Policy to ensure this. We respect all members of the school's community and treat information with confidentiality.

Date: May 2013

Review Date: May 2015

Signed CoG:

Signed (HT):

De-escalating Challenging Behaviours Procedure

S.C.A.R.E.D. Calming Technique

Safe:

Provide an environment that is safe with little sensory stimulus and social pressure.

Calm:

Remain calm and use concrete literal language. Talk in a strong but calm voice.

Affirmation:

Provide validation of affect and acknowledgement that the child is doing their best to resolve the situation.

Routine:

Establish clear routines that can be used in times of anxiety. Acknowledge child's coping strategies e.g. flapping as a sign that the child is trying to manage their anxieties.

Empathy:

Acknowledge the anxiety being felt by the child. See the situation from their point of view. Understand that the behaviour has a function and acknowledge this calmly.

Develop a plan:

Know what key triggers can be and plan in advance. Know what action to take if a crisis is reached. Review and amend the plan after any incident.