



Merrylands Primary School and Nursery

Behaviour Policy Amendment in response to Covid-19

Merrylands Primary School has reviewed Annex A (Behaviour Principles) of the Planning Guidance for Primary Schools issued by the Department of Education.

Context

We want our school communities to feel safe, calm and re-assured, and to know that it will be okay to come back to school. We are already working on creating an environment that is and feels physically and emotionally safe for all of us.

When the children return, we want them to feel excited and happy coming into school and we want them to know that we are genuinely delighted to have them back and to be able to see them again. We will provide an inclusive environment in which the children feel surrounded by support, and know that they can rely on all the adults around them to be positively reinforcing the same messages to create these warm, welcoming feelings of care and nurture when we cannot touch and need to keep a safe distance.

We will focus primarily on meeting the social and emotional needs of our pupils and on their readiness to learn skills.

This amendment is to be read in conjunction with our own published Behaviour Policy. We continue to follow our behaviour policies in terms of promoting and rewarding positive behaviour.

All children and staff have experienced trauma and loss since the beginning of this current pandemic (COVID -19). There has been significant loss of routines, structure, opportunities and freedom. Relationships, friendships and social interaction have been significantly affected. For some children and staff, this could trigger a trauma response.

The return to school for some of our children could also induce feelings of stress, due to the new routines and changed environment. Many may experience separation anxiety, due to the prolonged period at home with their parents.

All staff in schools need to be aware of this and adapt our responses accordingly. We will need to constantly model and coach around these new expectations, behaviours and routines, and always reassure and reframe any negative perceptions.

Where possible and within the limitation of the COVID-19 secure school environment, staff will continue to use the Essex Steps Therapeutic approach implemented February 2019.

We know that all behaviour is communication and when we are seeing behaviours indicative of a stress/trauma response (such as increased irritability, activity, withdrawal, non-compliance, all attention needing behaviours), we should always be using the **Steps** approach to label, acknowledge and validate the feelings and behaviours we are seeing and the possible reasons for those.

We ask all staff to then seek to reframe and reinforce the positive behaviours we wish to see, leading by example at all times.



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Complex and unsafe behaviours

Challenging, complex and unsafe behaviours (“behaviours of concern”) are an indicator that children need support to be included in our schools.

Complex and unsafe behaviours involve a very small proportion of children.

As some of the strategies we use for de-escalation and to support positive behaviour cannot be used in the current circumstances (COVID -19), an individual risk assessment will be made for a child where the risk of complex unsafe behaviour is likely.

Such unsafe behaviours include:

- Spitting, licking and biting
- Physical aggression involving skin to skin contact
- Absconding
- Serious emotional distress caused by the need to maintain social distancing

This may include pupils:

- who have an individual behaviour or communication plan
- where the school deems it to be necessary due to behaviour of the pupil before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The risk assessment will be discussed and agreed with parents prior to returning to school. Where it is deemed that a child is too high a risk to come into school and keep themselves and others safe, the school will work with the parents and child to support a gradual transition into school at an appropriate time when routines have been established at school.

It is important to note that children’s engagement in behaviours of concern can change over time.

Principles underpinning our approach

Strategies and interventions to support children’s positive behaviour development reflect Berlesduna Trust’s abiding principle that states:

“Good behaviour is of paramount importance and all adults working in our schools share the responsibility for maintaining good behaviour. We recognise that positive attitudes and positive behaviour can be fostered through pupils experiencing success and by celebrating their achievements. We, therefore, aim to reward children for their efforts with the approval of their friends, teachers and parents. We aim to celebrate publicly and therefore encourage children’s efforts not only in academic work, but also in social behaviour and general achievement.”

Reasonable Adjustments

Please be aware that the following reasonable adjustments have been made in addition to our Behaviour Policy and will take effect from June 1st, 2020 until the end of this academic year.

All staff are expected to teach and model the new behaviour expectations using the Steps approach and to support positive behaviour in line with our stated principles.

If pupils display any of the following behaviours, Parents / Carers will be contacted, and the provision and approach discussed. Where we are unable to reduce the impact and risk of the



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behaviour the indicated sanction will be used.

Behaviour	Action	Sanction
Not following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising	<p>Adults to model and more closely supervise.</p> <p>Parents informed and provision and approach discussed.</p>	Should this become persistent, the pupil will be sent home for the rest of the day and a warning letter issued. A behaviour risk assessment will be undertaken which may indicate that it would not be safe for the child to be in school.
Running away from adults to access out of bounds areas, including those areas of school that will be temporarily prohibited in light of the current circumstances.	<p>Adults to explain the reasoning and de-escalate using appropriate strategies.</p> <p>Parents informed and provision and approach discussed.</p>	Should this become persistent, the pupil will be sent home for the rest of the day and a warning letter issued. A behaviour risk assessment will be undertaken which may indicate that it would not be safe for the child to be in school.
Not following designated routes around school.	<p>Adults model correct movement around the school.</p> <p>Parents informed and provision and approach discussed</p>	Should this become persistent, the pupil will be sent home for the rest of the day and a warning letter issued. A behaviour risk assessment will be undertaken which may indicate that it would not be safe for the child to be in school.
<p>Spitting, licking and/or biting others.</p> <p>Physical aggression involving skin to skin contact.</p>	<p>Remove other children and adults to a safe distance.</p> <p>Parents informed and provision and approach discussed.</p> <p>Contact the parents of the child and the child who has been spat at.</p>	The pupil will be sent home for a fixed term exclusion of at least 2 days. A behaviour risk assessment will be undertaken which may indicate that it would not be safe for the child to be in school.
Deliberately coughing in the direction of other pupils and/or adults.	<p>Remove other children and adults to a safe distance.</p> <p>Parents informed and provision and approach discussed</p> <p>Contact the parents of the child and the child who has been coughed at.</p>	The pupil will be sent home for a fixed term exclusion of at least 2 days. A behaviour risk assessment will be undertaken which may indicate that it would not be safe for the child to be in school.



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Deliberately making any inappropriate and insensitive comments or displaying insensitive behaviours linked to the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, a pupil saying, "Your mum has coronavirus."	Explain to the child why what they have done is inappropriate. Parents informed and provision and approach discussed. Speak to the child who has been affected. Contact their parents.	Should this become persistent the pupil will be sent home for rest of day and a warning letter issued.
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Parent/Carer agreement

In returning your child to school Parents/Carers are confirming that:

- they have read the school's Behaviour policy and this amendment which comes into effect from the 1st June 2020
- they understand that if their child displays the behaviours detailed in the amendment that they will be contacted and that where the school is unable to reduce the impact and risk of the behaviour the indicated sanction will be used
- they will be fully supportive of these reasonable adjustments which have been made to protect the pupils and staff at the school.



Annex A: Behaviour principles

In light of the need for children to behave differently when they return to school, and any new systems you have put in place to support that, you'll need to make changes to your behaviour policy. Behaviour policy changes will also need to be communicated to pupils, parents and staff.

Areas schools may wish to add to their behaviour policy are:

- following any altered routines for arrival or departure
- following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising
- following instructions on who pupils can socialise with at school
- moving around the school as per specific instructions (for example, one-way systems, out of bounds areas, queuing)
- expectations about sneezing, coughing, tissues and disposal ('catch it, bin it, kill it') and avoiding touching your mouth, nose and eyes with hands
- tell an adult if you are experiencing symptoms of coronavirus
- rules about sharing any equipment or other items including drinking bottles
- amended expectations about breaks or play times, including where children may or may not play
- use of toilets
- clear rules about coughing or spitting at or towards any other person
- clear rules for pupils at home about conduct in relation to remote education
- rewards and sanction system where appropriate
- identify any reasonable adjustments that need to be made for students with more challenging behaviour.



Appendix B: Berlesduna Trust Behaviour Risk Assessment

Reason for completing this risk assessment			
Schools are asked to complete this risk assessment if they have concerns regarding behaviour or safeguarding risks posed to other pupils and adults.			
Pupil Details			
Name of pupil:		DOB:	School:
Does the pupil or student have an EHC plan? <Yes/no>		Does the pupil or student have a social worker? <Yes/no>	
	Aggressive or non-aggressive behaviour that causes increased risk to pupil and others	COVID 19 risk to pupil and others	Control Measures
Behaviour which impacts risk	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Urinating, defecating outside of toilet</i> • <i>Playing with bodily fluids or spiting at others</i> • <i>Mouthing equipment</i> • <i>Licking</i> • <i>Close proximity to others faces</i> • <i>Scratching</i> • <i>Biting</i> 		
Conclusion of behaviour risk assessment: <The pupil is safe at school>/ <The pupil poses a significant risk to others and is required to stay at home>			
Brief rationale:			
Monitoring and Liaison Arrangements while the child is at home			
Risk Assessment Review statement (This may be a suitable date of review, coupled with a commitment to review in light of new information):			
Monitoring arrangements while child is at home: <daily>/<weekly>/<fortnightly>/<monthly>/other (specify)>			



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Liaison plan while child is at home: *Please give details of the safeguarding arrangements while the child is at home.*

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Risk assessment completed by (signature)	Name	Job title	Date
Risk assessment quality assured by (Headteacher signature)	Name	Job Title	Date
		Headteacher	