

St Albans Mencap

Charity number: 210073

stalbansmencap.org.uk

Behaviour Policy:

Therapeutic Thinking Approach

St Albans Mencap Charity promotes a therapeutic approach to behaviour management that values respect, clear communication, and positive relationships among staff and beneficiaries. The policy emphasizes preparation, consistency, and confidentiality to foster a supportive environment.

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Behaviour Policy – Therapeutic Thinking Approach (HCC preferred approach)

All members of St. Albans Mencap Charity are valued as individuals and are expected to show respect for one another. Promoting positive behaviour requires a whole-charity approach. The maintenance of good conduct in all charity schemes and projects is essential to the well-being of all children, young people and adults. For this reason, guidelines are in place for both staff and beneficiaries accessing the charity projects.

Guidelines for all staff to encourage appropriate behaviour

- In line with training, follow the principles of Hertfordshire Therapeutic Thinking.
- Be a good role model and set clear guidelines of expected behaviour
- Develop good listening skills and respond appropriately to children and young people
- Give children, young people and vulnerable adults time to communicate and express themselves
- Allow everyone to have choice and responsibility
- Establish positive relationships with each other
- Keep volume and tone of voice controlled and calm
- Be prepared before children, young people and vulnerable adults arrive to access the project
- Treat beneficiaries and information about them with confidentiality, respect and sensitivity
- Use clear, positive, respectful language

Guidelines for staff to encourage positive behaviour

Whilst accessing the project, the manager and/or assistant manager is responsible for children's behaviour management and should direct and manage support staff. All charity staff should set high expectations and give clear instruction to children. In addition, support staff should develop a behaviour curriculum by modelling accepted behaviours.

These include:

- Plan and deliver appropriate sessions that include activities and work requirements suitable for each child, young people or vulnerable adult accessing the scheme/project
- Relate activities to earlier experiences and discussion to enhance their social learning
- Prepare for activity delivery before beneficiaries arrive.
- Activities should start and end on time
- Ensure that equipment and materials are available before the activities and that they are in working order
- Establish routines for frequent activities, e.g.: the collection and return of materials
- Plan individual, purposeful and positive engagement opportunities

Rewards and sanctions/consequences

Good behaviour should be acknowledged through a variety of approaches:

- Praise and approval from adults
- Peer-group acknowledgement
- Celebrating achievements
- Reporting to parents
- Extra responsibilities

Unacceptable behaviour leads to consequences. On such occasions it is essential that the child understands why their behaviour has been unacceptable, according to their age and maturity, and that the sanction/consequence issued is reasonable. Any consequence will be appropriate to the behaviour. It is important that children are involved in this process through discussion i.e. roots and fruits.

Examples of (supportive, protective) consequences which may be used:

- Differentiated activity space
- Completing activity and repairing minor damage to property
- Discussion/meeting with senior staff

Staff in the scheme should liaise regarding children's achievements and misbehaviour. Both achievements and difficult behaviour should be dealt with, as and when they arise.

If a child is displaying difficult behaviour, staff may de-escalate the situation by:

- Following the principles of Hertfordshire Therapeutic Thinking, e.g.: positive phrasing, limited choice, disempowering the behaviour
- Staff may use daily physical intervention in line with Hertfordshire Therapeutic Thinking training: Offering an arm, Supportive arm, Open mitten guide, Open mitten escort, Supportive hug, Open mitten escort – paired

Recording and reporting incidents of difficult behaviour

A child may amend and modify their behaviour in response to adult intervention, in which case it is not necessary to complete an incident/accident record. Difficult behaviour must be recorded when any of the following behaviours are evident:

- Verbal abuse of others (e.g.: children, young people and vulnerable adults, staff, visitors)
- Physical injury to self/others or damage to property
- Bullying/e-bullying and/or racist incidents or where physical intervention is used in response to a behaviour incident.

All staff have a responsibility to record incidents of difficult behaviour. If another child or member of staff has been injured during an incident, this must be recorded.

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Should Restrictive Physical Intervention be used this should be recorded in the bound and numbered book. Reports will be collated by the Manager who will then analyse the data and provide monitoring and evaluation to the Board of Trustees. It is important to -

- Monitor and keep a record of all documented incidents
- Liaise with and support colleagues regarding Risk Reduction Programmes

The Trustees have delegated authority to use Restrictive Physical Intervention according to Hertfordshire's Framework to the Manager and Assistant Manager taking a leading the projects and schemes for children and vulnerable adults. All staff have been trained by a certified Therapeutic Thinking (Hertfordshire STEPS) Trainer and their training is current.

At times, it may be necessary to implement particular strategies for individual children and vulnerable adults. The relevant information will be recorded on the individual's documentation and/or the individual's Risk Reduction Plan'. Difficult behaviour occurs for several reasons. There are always reasons why children display such behaviour and it is important that we recognise the influence of our own response and how we behave towards one another. It is also important to separate the 'behaviour' from the child.

Appendix 1

