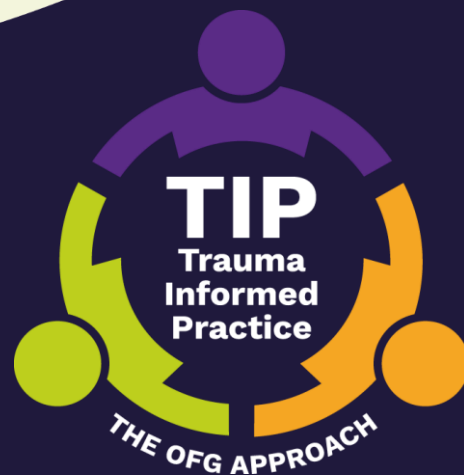


Trauma Informed Practice


Person-Centred Behaviour Policy Best Practice Guidance

September 2024



Restraint
Reduction
Network





“When we understand that behaviour is telling us something about a child’s inner experience, we can approach them with empathy and support rather than sanctions-based punishment. This helps children feel safe, understood, and valued, ultimately supporting their learning and building crucial skills for a safer and more successful future.”

**Dr. Leanne Johnson, Head of Trauma Informed Practice
& Dr. Freya Spicer-White, Chief Clinical Officer**

Most importantly, remember...

“You can’t teach children to behave better by making them feel worse. When children feel better, they behave better.”

Pam Leo



Top Tips & Reminders

A non-sanctions-based approach does not mean lack of boundaries. Boundaries are crucial!

Behaviour is the tip of the iceberg and communicates an unmet need – go beyond the tip to find and meet that need.

Relationship based restorative approaches offer an evidence-based alternative to zero tolerance behaviour management systems – systems which only increase shame & make children feel worse.



Ensure that school values are co-produced with young people, and make sure that any rewards are linked to school values.

Instead of sanctions or punitive approaches - use natural and logical consequences that are linked to what happened to support learning.

Access to positive activities (e.g. golden time) should not be contingent on behaviour. Instead have enrichment time which is accessible for all which builds self-esteem and relationships (safety allowing – if the risk is too high, children will need an alternative choice)

Ask the children to operationalise the school values. E.g. 'What does being kind look like?' Gaining their ideas encourages what you would all like to see!

Ensure there is no carry over to home or to the next school day – instead utilise co-reflection at the end of the day. A new day is a new day – let's start as we mean to go on!

Utilise the children's behaviour policy to support children's understanding and help bring parents/carers on board with the accompanying letter to them.

Be patient and understanding of young people's needs – things may take time.

Use regular co-reflection as a team and ask the young people to think how to improve things together.

Use of Rewards

Best Practice

Targets and rewards to be individualised to each young person – children are capable of different things.

Reinforce personal growth, values and effort – not just achievement.

Make praise specific and individualised. Ask children how they would like to receive it.

If children require extrinsic rewards, vouchers are a way to make them relationship focussed, spending them together.

Make use of unexpected rewards- ‘catch children being good’ - this helps to build intrinsic motivation.

Things to Avoid

Having a whole-school/class approach – children have different abilities.

Enforcing rules/code of conduct without consulting with young people.

Punitive approaches or consequences that are not linked to what happened – they don't support learning.

Removing already earned rewards.

Taking away break and/or lunchtimes – these help children regulate.

Using exclusively extrinsic motivational rewards (i.e. monetary rewards).

Having reward systems on show to all which is shaming.

Remember

Rewarding attendance without understanding the underlying struggles only deepens the divide between students who can and cannot control their circumstances. True support lies in addressing the root causes rather than masking these complex issues with superficial incentives.

To foster genuine growth and equity, we must prioritise empathy over rewards.