

Castlehill Primary School and ELR



**Developing resilient learners by
supporting positive behaviour**

Responding appropriately to behaviour which may disrupt learning and, on occasion threaten the safety of children and staff is both complex and demanding. Each child is unique and a range of factors contribute to behaviour at any particular time and circumstance including; self regulation difficulties, cognitive impairment, trauma and attachment issues, acute or chronic family dysfunction, learned behaviour, sensory needs, bullying or relational difficulties, mental health issues as well as the dynamics of specific situations/interactions.

All children need adults who care about them and provide consistent approaches which promote and reinforce appropriate behaviour in the context of a positive environment. In Castlehill we use tools such as Wellbeing Assessments, My World Triangle, Sensory profiling, Talking Mats, Emotion Works, Emotion Coaching etc to inform our work with children, identifying the appropriate and proportionate level of support to meet their learning needs. In the ELR there is a strong focus on understanding our children's needs and supporting them to develop their emotional understanding and self-regulation capabilities through a menu of strategies that best meet our children's needs.

Information gathered from these assessments is used to develop a support plan for a child. For some children a focussed behaviour support plan is required. This enable us to consider the specific needs of an individual child in various circumstances and devise a plan to support that individual in a consistent, safe and positive manner by identifying and eliminating specific triggers and having a plan to support the child in difficult/unpredictable circumstances. These behaviour plans are developed by class teachers and SMT with input from other agencies, if appropriate.

The development of the consistent use of Emotion Coaching will allow us to support children really well. The steps which must be used by all staff are:

- Be aware of your child's emotion by scanning.
- Recognise your child's expression of emotion as a perfect moment for connection and teaching. If you recognise that a child may be in a state of high arousal, alert other adults in the room using non verbal cues.
- Listen with empathy and validate your child's feelings
- Help your child learn to label their emotions with words
- Set limits when you are helping your child to solve problems or deal with upsetting situations appropriately

Using our positive behaviour support approach is fundamental to our way of operating in Castlehill ELR, acknowledging that all behaviour- no matter how bizarre or self defeating it may appear- is always functional. Some possible functions are: sensory, escape/avoidance, tangible, attention needing. This plan should include:

1. Environmental Intervention eg identifying potential trigger and restructuring the child's experience to eliminate/reduce them. Teaching and reinforcing the use of alternative behaviour by the child.
2. Positive Intervention - ensuring children have a wide range of new and wide learning experiences. These experiences include: 1:1 teaching in a low arousal environment either in class or another quiet space; alternative seating arrangement eg polomo chair, therapy balls, lying on floor, work stations, group tables, outside spaces etc.
3. Focussed interventions - teaching and reinforcing specific desired behaviours. Planned ignoring may be used to reduce reinforcement of negative behaviours. One strategy which may be used as part of this involves temporarily removing a child from his/her class, this may take place within the class or in another space eg the SNUG, Open area, Chill Zone or other quiet area but always with adult support. Evidence shows that such 'time out' of 1-2 minutes, is sometimes effective. Its effectiveness does not increase with duration after 15 minutes. The use of class Quiet/ Thinking Spaces may be effective. These should be designed with at risk children in mind so that they are supported to use this space for positive experiences eg a child may like to play with puppets/read books/play with lego should have access to this and be encouraged to experience calm in the space. Adults can then encourage its use when low level anxiety is observed - and higher level anxious behaviour is predicted/observed. Adult modelling positive language is essential. The class SNUGs are the most appropriate area for children in crisis as this will be a space previously used and will be seen as a safe, calm space. When staff see a child reaching potential crisis all objects that can be harmful eg electrical equipment, furniture etc will be removed from SNUG and soft materials, cushions, blankets etc to remain.
4. Reactive intervention - In dangerous situations staff should use the strategies learned as part of MAPA training eg Interruptive strategies, proximity control, instructional control, facilitated relaxation, physical holding or moving as a last resort for the safety of the child or other children in the vicinity. Walkie Talkies are to be kept charged in class and replaced after each use. **Please see appendix 1 for emergency call protocol.**

UNCRC Article 19 : Everyone should take all legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation while in their care.

Gottman, John, and Joan DeClaire. *Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child*. (1998)

Scottish Government: Developing a positive whole-school ethos and culture - Relationships, Learning & Behaviour. (June 2018)

Paterson B, Martin A & Nisbett I. (2011) The use of time out and seclusion in Scottish Schools: A matter for concern? Workshop report.

DRAFT

Appendix 1

Supported Call System

Staff who are 1-1 supporting children who are identified as being a potential risk (in the short or long term) should carry a walkie talkie with them.

Walkie talkies should be set to channel 6 and stored in the classroom for easiest access.

Staff using the walkie talkie to call for assistance are linking with the office staff. They should state where they are and simply ask for assistance to be provided.

No details of the child or the situation should be given, at this time.

Office staff will identify a member of the SMT to support.

Reminders:

It is beneficial to tune into signs of anxiety/stress/anger before they reach 'crisis ' level. During this phase the child may be able to move to a safe space with a little support.

Children in 'crisis' should NOT be 'moved' unless in the most extreme of circumstances. This presents too high a risk to the child and staff, especially where stairs are involved.

Holding children **MUST** be as a final resort and only used in extreme circumstances when the child is at risk.

Staff should ensure they keep themselves and others safe. This will usually mean distancing themselves or withdrawing. This is a stage where staff will typically have support.

Adult Response in each

