Rotherham Opportunities College

Student Behaviour and Support Policy

Document Control

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4			
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1. Introduction and Purpose

Rotherham Opportunities College (ROC) is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment in which every student can participate, develop and succeed.

ROC recognises that behaviour can be a form of communication and may indicate a need, feeling, difficulty or level of dysregulation. Students may communicate and regulate in different ways and therefore require individualised approaches to support.

Our approach is based on recognising what may be happening for a student, providing support at the earliest opportunity, maintaining the safety and wellbeing of everyone, restoring relationships where difficulties have occurred and supporting students to return positively to learning.

Recognise • Support • Keep Safe • Restore • Return

Support First • Safety Always • Success Together

This policy should be applied in a way that maintains the student's dignity, recognises their individual needs and promotes their voice and participation.

2. Our Approach and Principles

Positive behaviour support at ROC begins with understanding the individual student rather than simply responding to an incident.

Staff should recognise that changes in behaviour may communicate that a student is experiencing difficulty, discomfort, anxiety, frustration, dysregulation or another unmet need.

- recognise changes in behaviour, communication and regulation;
- understand what a student may be communicating;
- provide appropriate support as early as possible;
- use individualised communication and regulation strategies;
- adapt activities or environments where appropriate;
- promote positive relationships between students and staff;
- protect the safety, emotional wellbeing and learning of all students;
- involve students in decisions about their support wherever possible;
- work constructively with parents, carers and the wider team;
- restore relationships following difficulties; and
- support students to return successfully to learning.

Responses should be proportionate to the individual circumstances and the level of risk presented.

3. Recognising When a Student Needs Support

Staff should be alert to changes in a student's behaviour, communication, engagement or regulation.

- withdrawal;
- increased movement or pacing;
- changes in communication;
- repetitive behaviour;
- refusal;
- distress or agitation;
- leaving an activity or session; or
- difficulty engaging.

These signs do not automatically mean that a student has behaved inappropriately. They may indicate that the student requires additional support.

Staff should use their knowledge of the student, their preferred communication methods and any agreed individual strategies to consider what the student may be communicating.

Where appropriate, information contained within individual plans and risk assessments should inform the support provided.

4. Support and Early Intervention

Where possible, staff should respond to changes early so that difficulties do not escalate unnecessarily.

- regulation or de-escalation strategies;
- providing appropriate choices;
- allowing additional processing or regulation time;
- adapting the activity or task;
- adapting the environment;
- using the student's preferred communication;
- offering appropriate space; and
- involving a trusted member of staff.

The support provided should reflect the needs of the individual student rather than relying on a single response for all students.

Where difficulties continue, staff may use personalised support strategies and seek additional assistance from the Learning Coach, Pastoral Team or College Management.

Relevant concerns may also be discussed through the Student Progress Meeting so that the student's support can be considered and reviewed.

5. If a Student Leaves a Session

Leaving a classroom, activity or session is not an expected stage of the behaviour pathway and, in practice, should occur only in very rare instances.

ROC's approach is based on recognising changes in a student's regulation and providing appropriate support and early intervention wherever possible. The expectation is that staff will use agreed strategies, adaptations, communication approaches and regulation support to help the student remain safely engaged within their learning environment.

However, in very rare instances, a student who is significantly dysregulated may leave a classroom, activity or session unexpectedly. This should not be viewed as an expected behaviour, a planned regulation strategy or a routine way for a student to access space.

If this does occur, staff will make a dynamic safety judgement based upon the individual student, the circumstances and any relevant risk assessment.

Students are not permitted to leave the college site and should remain safe within the college environment.

In most circumstances, staff will provide appropriate space and monitor the student rather than immediately following them, as following a dysregulated student may, in some circumstances, increase their level of distress or dysregulation.

- there is an immediate safety concern; or
- the student's individual risk assessment indicates that this is necessary.

Once the student is regulated and it is appropriate to do so, staff will support them to return positively to their session and learning.

Where a student leaving a session becomes repeated or begins to form a pattern, this should not be accepted as an expected part of their college day. The student's support, possible triggers, communication needs, reasonable adjustments and risk assessment should be reviewed to identify what additional support may help them remain safely engaged in learning.

6. Behaviour Response and Safety Threshold

ROC's emphasis is on positive support, early intervention, reasonable adjustments and de-escalation. In the vast majority of situations, students can be supported successfully through these approaches without the need for a formal Behaviour Response.

It is very rare for a student's behaviour to become so extreme or present such a significant level of risk that the Behaviour Response threshold is reached. A Behaviour Response is therefore not an expected or routine part of supporting behaviour at ROC and is reserved for exceptional and serious situations.

- causes injury;
- creates a significant risk of injury;
- causes significant property damage;
- creates a significant risk of property damage;

- creates a serious safeguarding concern;
- includes threatening behaviour; or
- significantly affects the emotional or mental health of other students.

The purpose of this threshold is to protect the safety, wellbeing and learning of the student concerned and other students.

A Behaviour Response should not be used simply because a student is dysregulated, refuses an activity, leaves a session, communicates distress or displays behaviour that can be safely supported through the usual strategies available to them.

Decisions will be based upon the individual circumstances, the seriousness of the incident and the level of risk presented.

7. Actions Following a Behaviour Response

In the rare circumstances where a student's behaviour reaches the Behaviour Response threshold, College Management will be informed.

The parent/carer will be contacted as required and arrangements will be made for the student to go home safely.

The incident will be recorded clearly and factually on CPOMS and required college procedures and paperwork will be completed.

Following such a serious incident, the student will have a reflection day at home on the next working day. As Behaviour Responses are reserved for exceptional circumstances, a reflection day should similarly be a rare occurrence and is not intended to form part of the student's usual behaviour support.

The purpose of the reflection day is to provide time for the incident to be considered carefully and, importantly, for the college to consider what may have contributed to the situation and what additional support, strategies or reasonable adjustments may be required to enable the student to return successfully.

The emphasis remains on understanding, support and a positive return to learning rather than punishment. The reflection day forms part of the wider process of reflection, restorative practice, support planning and successful reintegration.

8. Restorative and Reintegration Meetings

Before returning to college following a Behaviour Response, a meeting will take place.

For students under the age of 18, a parent/carer is expected to attend a face-to-face meeting with their child, a member of College Management and any other relevant staff.

For students aged 18 and over, the meeting will take place with the student, a member of College Management and any other relevant staff. With the student's permission, their parent/carer will also be invited.

The meeting should be constructive and supportive. Its purpose is to:

- review what happened;

- consider what may have contributed to the situation;
- listen to the student's views wherever possible;
- agree appropriate next steps;
- identify additional support;
- consider reasonable adjustments;
- restore relationships where required; and
- plan for a successful return to learning.

A written Positive Behaviour Support Plan will be agreed and recorded on CPOMS.

9. Positive Behaviour Support Plans

A Positive Behaviour Support Plan is intended to identify what will help the individual student to succeed.

Wherever possible, the plan should be developed with the student, rather than simply being written about them.

- the student's strengths;
- the student's views;
- early signs that the student may require support;
- known triggers or difficulties;
- preferred methods of communication;
- regulation strategies;
- strategies that staff should use;
- approaches that staff should avoid;
- individual arrangements if the student leaves a session;
- agreed reasonable adjustments;
- positive goals and targets;
- how progress will be monitored;
- who will provide support; and
- an agreed review date.

The student and relevant people will have the opportunity to contribute to and sign the plan.

The plan should remain a positive working document and should be reviewed according to the agreed timescale or sooner where the student's circumstances or needs change.

10. Returning Positively to Learning

Following an incident, the emphasis should be on enabling the student to move forward successfully.

Once agreed support is in place, staff will support the student's positive return to learning.

Staff will monitor the Positive Behaviour Support Plan over the agreed period and recognise and celebrate progress.

The aim is not simply to prevent a recurrence of an incident but to help the student develop the communication, regulation, independence and support strategies that enable them to participate successfully in college life.

Where strategies are not effective, or where circumstances or needs change, the plan may be reviewed before the agreed review date.

11. Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

ROC recognises the important contribution that parents and carers can make to understanding and supporting a young person.

- communication;
- regulation;
- changes in circumstances;
- known difficulties or triggers; and
- strategies that have previously been helpful.

ROC asks families to work openly and constructively with the college so that, wherever possible, approaches between home and college are consistent.

Parents and carers can expect concerns to be taken seriously, relevant incidents to be communicated appropriately, decisions to be explained clearly, opportunities to contribute to support planning where appropriate, and the student's individual needs, dignity and voice to remain central to planning.

For students aged 18 and over, the student's wishes and permission will be taken into account when involving parents and carers.

12. Monitoring and Review

Positive behaviour support should be monitored as part of the college's ongoing support for individual students.

- incidents recorded on CPOMS;
- patterns or changes in behaviour;
- Positive Behaviour Support Plans;
- agreed strategies and reasonable adjustments;
- student progress;
- student voice;
- information from parents and carers; and
- information from relevant members of the wider college team.

Where patterns or concerns emerge, these may be considered through appropriate college processes, including Student Progress Meetings.

Positive Behaviour Support Plans should include an agreed review date and may be reviewed earlier where the student's needs or circumstances change.

This policy will be reviewed by ROC in accordance with the review date recorded within the Document Control section and sooner where significant changes to college procedures make this necessary.

Our Shared Aim

At ROC, our shared aim is to help every student: be safe • feel safe • re-engage with learning • move forward successfully with the right support.

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