



Kisimul School

Operational and Education Policy and Procedure

Behaviour Modification

Policy

Children placed at Kisimul have severe and complex learning difficulties, compounded by challenging behaviour. It is essential for these children to have a caring, consistent and supportive environment if they are to cope with or overcome their individual difficulties.

Each child should be treated as an individual and allowed his/her own space as appropriate. Through staff support and guidance the children are enabled to own development activities and experiences. The physical environment should be tailored to the child's needs and be appropriate to the age and ability of the child. The buildings should be well maintained and decorated to a high standard.

It is essential to minimize frustration by using language / communication systems that are appropriate to each child's level of understanding and by aiming tasks and activities at levels suitable for an individual's age and ability. The school provides predictable patterns of life and consistent boundaries. Drug therapy is not generally used as a method of controlling behaviour.

Kisimul School operates a 'no blame' culture; we create learning opportunities. A positive approach is enhanced by emphasising positive behaviour and ignoring negative behaviour as much as possible and where appropriate. Our philosophy is encapsulated by: 'Giving the young people a chance. And when they mess it up.... with dignity give them another'. (Williams 2003).

Procedure

- Staff members are expected to act at all times in the best interest of the child, rather than their own or the team's.
- Work ethics dictate that at all times staff should act in a 'Professional' manner, 'Respect' the pupils and allow them, and indeed encourage them, to 'Own' their experiences, life and environment. (PRO)
- At Kisimul school individual behaviour programmes are employed, where appropriate, to reduce or eliminate specific challenging

behaviours. Each child has an IPCP or placement plan after a six months assessment period. This is a 'live' document that gets updated on a regular basis and discussed at each social services review. (see IPCP procedure)

- It is evident that from time to time some of the pupils at Kisimul School require physical reassurance and guidance from staff members, which constitutes good caring skills. This is on occasions when they may have minor incidents of self injurious behaviour, be frustrated, be anxious, etc. Ultimately it happens as a form of redirection and guidance to a more positive and potentially more socially acceptable type of behaviour. This may occur while out on the minibus, in the classroom, at the dining table or indeed at any given time. In this instance staff members may hold the pupils' hands until they have calmed down. When staff display 'good caring skills', it should be recorded in the handing over files.
- If any child is upset or angry they must be given the opportunity to move from the group / situation and be given time on their own. The senior member of staff must ensure that a staff member is assigned to the child. If this individual attention in itself does not calm the child, the assigned member of staff must ask the child (using an appropriate method of communication) if they would like time on their own. If the child declines this offer they should be warned that unless they calm down they will be taken out of the situation and given time out whether or not they consent. The senior member of staff with the child must decide when it appears likely that he / she requires time on his / her own. When this occurs the child should be accompanied by two members of staff to soft play, the garden, or the playground. The child should then be allowed a certain amount of freedom e.g. the staff can stand on the other side of the gate. Nevertheless, it is not appropriate or safe for a child to have time on their own without a member of staff supervising. It is the responsibility of the senior member of staff who initiated the procedure to monitor the situation. He or she must be prepared to deploy back-up members of staff should the situation become dangerous.
- Situations which are known to trigger challenging behaviour in individual children must be avoided (unless this is counter-productive to their development.) Sanctions may only be used when previously documented as permissible and agreed with parents and placing authorities, and then only as part of an authorised individual behaviour modification programme. Sanctions must be in the interest of the child while maintaining their dignity, i.e. not for the gratification of an angry member of staff, not for revenge and not to 'win'. Sanctions must not be oppressive, humiliate the child or lead to a sense of rejection.

- Any sanction should be written up in the Sanctions book to facilitate inter-team communication and comply with the National Minimum Standards (Care Standards Act 2000).