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POSITIVE APPROACH TO BEHAVIOUR SUPPORTS POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy emphasises Woodbury (WAERL) and Woodbury Autism Education and Research (AERL) commitment and dedication to providing an abuse-free environment for autistic children. Despite potential behaviours of concern, they have equal rights in the community. Woodbury Autism Education and Research acknowledges behaviours of concern as a form of communication, emphasizing the difficulty faced by educators and support networks in responding effectively and ethically.

POSITIVE APPROACH TO BEHAVIOUR SUPPORTS

The positive approach to behaviour management is based on the premise that it is possible to reduce the likelihood of behaviours of concern when:

- A total approach to service provision reflects positive principles
- Services provide a range of options aimed at respecting the rights of autistic children
- Mechanisms exist to continually monitor and adjust these options according to the needs of the individual
- Respect is afforded equally to autistic children and those who work with them

Taking a positive approach to the management of behaviours of concern is one way of effectively understanding and minimising one of the major risks staff faces in their work environment.

WHEN TO USE

The policy provides a framework for management systems and monitoring authorisation processes to prevent abusive practices, and to support autistic children in a respectful and dignified manner during critical periods when the risk of behaviours of concern is greatest.

It is also recognised that situations occur where staff may be required to take active physical intervention, i.e. the use of Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCi) techniques, in order to protect the individual, students, staff, and others from harm. This policy provides strategies and guidelines for dealing with critical incidents which arise on occasions.



GUIDELINES

The positive approach has, as its main objective, the minimisation of behaviours of concern by addressing its function (the reason the student engages in it). It is an approach that considers the whole person, looks at the person's environment and lifestyle, and at what kinds of support the person needs to reach his or her potential and life goals.

Above all, the positive approach will reflect the person's individual needs and goals and allow for appropriate support and achievement of those goals.



PLANNING FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

The crucial strategy of the positive approach is the Individualised Educational Plan (IEP). This plan is designed in a collaborative way by staff, the person with a disability, their support networks, and advocates.

The IEP reviews the personal goals, needs, lifestyle, environment, and support issues for the child, and plans the short-term support and direction for that child. The plan will take into account the child's gender, cultural, linguistic, and religious background, such as an Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island, or non-English-speaking background.

IEPs are reviewed at the beginning of each semester per the Woodbury Autism Education and Research Individualised Education Plans and Parent Communication Policy.

IDENTIFYING THE FUNCTION OF THE BEHAVIOUR

One of the keys to preventing behaviours of concern is identifying the function of the behaviour and thus what the factors are that trigger the behaviour in the first place and reinforce and maintain its occurrence. It is the responsibility of Woodbury Autism Education and Research staff to identify the reason for the behaviour rather than merely react to it. In pinpointing the reason why, a child engages in behaviours of concern, every aspect of their skills, lifestyle, environment and cultural, linguistic and religious background, must be examined.

Once the function of the behaviour is identified, changes may be implemented to teach a new appropriate replacement behaviour, that will serve the same function while implementing targeted procedures to minimise the inappropriate behaviour.

Where possible behaviours of concern should be addressed in a proactive manner, identifying potential behaviour challenges and teaching appropriate replacement skills, before the behaviour reaches crisis point.



ASSESSMENT

Woodbury Autism Education and Research's positive approach to education ensures that all children are taught appropriate, adaptive skills to support their growth and development. Therefore, decreasing the potential for behavioural challenges later in life. As such, it can be said that all students who attend Woodbury Autism Education and Research have a behaviour support plan in place.

The development of behaviour support strategies includes comprehensive data collection through an assessment of:

- The child's lifestyle needs and goals
- The existing environment
- Environmental adjustments required to facilitate the child's integration (such as visual schedules, additional one-to-one support at times), possible communicative (or other) functions of the specific behaviour(s)
- Educational and learning needs
- Need for skill development
- Assessment of receptive and expressive communication skills
- Medical, neurological and/or psychiatric conditions
- The child's gender, religious, cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- Other possible factors which may arise in particular situations

INDIVIDUAL PLANNING SUPPORT

It is the clinical director's responsibility to ensure that:

- IEP meetings are conducted regularly, according to Woodbury Autism Education and Research's Individual Education Plans and Parent Communications Policy
- Crisis Intervention Plans are in place as required
- There are Behaviour Intervention Plans where required
- Appropriate consents are obtained
- Critical incidents are reported according to the policy
- Critical incidents are reviewed regularly in accordance with the Behaviour Support Plan
- Staff are suitably trained to work with our students for teaching new skills and handling behaviours of concern
- Staff are adequately supervised and supported
- Staff receive appropriate support including debriefing and counselling
- Individual cultural and language needs, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island are identified and met
- That abuse or allegations of abuse are dealt with according to the policy on Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation (e.g. child protection)
- All measures are taken to minimise the risk to other persons

LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT OF BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN



Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)

This plan is for behaviours requiring a low level of behavioural support and no reactive interventions. BSP outlines the proactive strategies to support and increase the occurrence of this appropriate behaviour and eliminate the contingencies supporting the behaviours of concern. This type of plan typically involves modifying already existing proactive supports within the environment.

Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP)

This plan will be created by the clinical team when a behaviour of concern arises that is either significant in its intensity, frequency, or duration. This will include the collection of data to determine the function of the behaviour, and the selection of appropriately individualised teaching strategies derived from relevant research-based literature. This plan will outline the teaching of appropriate alternative behaviours and procedures for dealing with the behaviour when it does occur.

The Behaviour Intervention Plan and Behaviour Support Plan considers:

- Detailed assessment of the reasons for a particular behaviour which is deemed concerning
- A review of the IEP together with examination of the child's total lifestyle and environment and potential for underlying medical factors that could be impacting student behaviour
- Planned strategies for changing the various conditions which might be maintaining the behaviour
- Consideration of possible rewarding and/or educational strategies which encourage more appropriate behaviours
- Incident Response Plan / Crisis Intervention Plan, if applicable

In turn, the Behaviour Intervention Support Plan must be incorporated into the IEP. All the strategies for intervention are implemented incidentally within the daily routines of the child. A meeting with the support networks and discussions regarding the data collected on the behaviour, occur when a BIP is developed. A signature of consent for implementation is required from the support networks before a BIP can be implemented.

CRISIS SITUATIONS

In the event where a behaviour change is sudden in onset and/or poses a significant threat to self or others, it is not always possible to implement a carefully considered plan. In these instances, a Crisis Intervention Plan referred to as an interim Behaviour Intervention Plan (iBIP) will be implemented to maintain safety and cohesion for a short period. While this crisis plan is in place, additional data and assessment will be completed to guide a more formal and individualised intervention for a comprehensive Behaviour Intervention Plan (cBIP). (Please also refer to the Discipline Policy). For crisis situations wherein the safety of the student, peers, and staff are at risk, a short-term strategy for managing the behaviour may be put in place to cope with and prevent the



escalation of behaviours of concern. Behavioural exit criteria will be developed and discussed with the support network to ensure safety of the student and staff.

CONSENT

When behaviour support practices are being considered, legally valid consent must be obtained before they are used. See *Reactive Procedure Levelling Policy* below for determination of which procedures require parental consent. Any procedure above and beyond that which are used routinely in a typical school setting require consent.

Consent of the parent/guardian of a child is mandatory before implementing Behaviour Intervention Plans and/or Crisis / Temporary Intervention Plans. Consent must be sought according to the strict guidelines set out in the Guardianship Act 1987 (NSW) and the Children (Care and Protection) Act 1987 (NSW). Behaviour Support Plans include only techniques which are routinely used in the school setting, and may not require support network consent, as determined by the *Reactive Procedure Levelling Policy*.

Documentation must show evidence of consent and outline how it was obtained.

REVIEW

All Behaviour Intervention Plans and Supports will be reviewed annually to ensure supports continue to meet the individual's needs, are appropriate and necessary. Progress toward behaviour-based goals will be reported to support networks at least once per term, outlining the student's current successes and reviewing minor amendments or changes to prescribed interventions.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Behaviours of Concern	Behaviours of Concern refers to situations arising in Woodbury Autism Education and Research's services, where the behaviour of an autistic child is of such intensity, frequency, or duration that the physical safety of the child or those nearby, is put at risk or the learning of other students is inhibited. The behaviour may also limit the child's ability to participate in daily life and enjoy wider experiences.
BIP	Behaviour Intervention Plan
BSP	Behaviour Support Plan
IEP	Independent Education Plan
NVCI	Non-Violent Crisis Intervention



LEVEL	DEFINITION
1	<p>These can be freely used throughout the day. No permission is required from the support network. No Behaviour Intervention Plan needed.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errorless learning and prompt fading • Model communication support • Honoring all forms of communication • Redirection • Self-Monitoring procedures • Positive reinforcement • Functional Communication Training • Enriching the environment • Modelling functional communicative responses • Positive pairing through play • Visual supports such as token economies, choice boards and written schedules • Shaping • Behavior chaining procedures • High-probability instructional sequence (High-P)
2	<p>Support network permission is required. An approved Behaviour Intervention Plan is necessary. The plan must describe all procedures in detail, and the plan must specify procedures for the systematic fading of Level 2 procedures to a less restrictive alternative (i.e., Level 1 procedures).</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental engineering • Differential Reinforcement Procedures (DRA, DRO, DRI) • Reinforcement of precursor behaviours for behaviours of concern whilst building skill capacity of socially significant and functionally equivalent replacement behaviours • Response blocking • Desensitization procedures for independent living skills and toleration skills • Toileting support procedures • Case conferences with all support network providers e.g. pediatricians, SLP, OT, BSP etc.
3	<p>Support network permission is required. An approved Behaviour Intervention Plan is necessary. The plan must describe all procedures in detail, and the plan must specify</p>



procedures for the systematic fading of Level 3 procedures to a less restrictive alternative. Level 3 plans are implemented if a student requires 1:1 support for 50% or more time at AERL. These increased supports are extended for ONE term (10 weeks). If additional supports are unable to be faded back to 1:2 supports during that time, recommendations may be made to transition on from AERL and on to other support providers for more intensive supports.

Examples:

- Emergency response plan and daily exit criteria is developed
- Reduced enrolment hours to support the safety of student and others due to high intensity behaviours of concern.
- Recommended engagement with a NDIS approved behaviour support practitioner (PBS) to provide in-home support to address the behaviour of concern.
- Recommendation to seek medical practitioner assessment to explore if underlying medical conditions are the cause of or contributing to behaviours of concern.
- Focus on HRE (Happy, Relaxed and Engaged) and FCT (functional communication training) as main goal for student whilst medical investigations are underway. All other IEP goals are on hold during this time.
- Weekly support network (immediate and external) check in meetings
- Transition and referral to other support service providers who may be better suited to provide reasonable and necessary supports if student's support needs are outside of the scope of competence or resources.

The following Level 4 practices are considered restrictive practices. These practices are not used at Woodbury Autism Education and Research or built into the Behaviour Intervention Plan. The immediate support network of the student would need to engage with a NDIS approved Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) specialist to provide in-home supports for the approval to use restrictive practices if deemed necessary.

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Examples:

- Restricted access
- Personal protective devices (e.g., helmets, arm guards, etc.)
- Manual restraints
- Mechanical restraints
- Fixed dose medications (GP Instructed)
- Overcorrection
- Response cost



5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seclusion (e.g. placing student in a separate room/area with doors/gates unlocked) <p>The following practices are considered the most restrictive. These practices are prohibited at Woodbury Autism Education and Research and may never be applied under any circumstance.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion (e.g. placing student in a separate room/area with doors/gates locked) • Electric Shock Therapy • Contingent Electric Stimulation • Deprivation • Physical restraints (i.e., belts, holding student down, holding body part in place, etc.) • Overcorrection (with the use of physical prompting/coercion) • Exposure to aversive stimuli (i.e., cold water) • Any practice which would not be acceptable for person of same age without a disability
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Please be aware that Level 2 and Level 3 procedures listed above cannot be applied, even on a trial basis, until support network consent has been received and an approved Behaviour Intervention Plan have been placed on file.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

This policy is to be used in conjunction with the following policies:

- WH&S Policy
- Risk Management
- Individualised Education Plans and Parent Communication Policy
- Discipline
- Child Protection Policy
- Critical Incidents
- Code of Conduct
- Grievance Procedures for Students of Woodbury Autism Education and Research
- Student Journey Map and adjacent Behaviour Intervention Plan flow chart for high intensity behaviours of concern (level 3 supports)

This approach is also a key workplace health and safety strategy, crucial for staff in understanding and minimizing risks (refer to the *Workplace Health and Safety Policy* and the *Risk Management Policy*).

