



The Rainbows - Mill Lodge ARC

Understanding and Supporting Behaviours

Mill Lodge Primary School ARC

Our Background and Understanding of Behaviour Principles

- Mill Lodge ARC caters for pupils with a primary diagnosis of autism with additional levels of need, specifically with their communication and cognition.
- Our fundamental aim is to support our pupils to develop functional life skills including the ability to regulate their emotions and ensure that our pupils leave ready to transition to the next stage in their lives.
- We believe that all children want to learn and engage. If they are behaving in a way that impacts their ability to do this, then there is an unmet need.
- Our pupils are more likely to experience Social Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (SEMH) because of their specific learning needs.
- We understand that behaviours which challenge happen for a reason and are frequently the only way pupils can communicate their needs or wants at that time. In this moment our children are not giving us a hard time – they are having a hard time.
- We endeavour to work in partnership with families (families is taken to mean anyone with parental responsibility) to support pupils both inside and outside of school.
- We recognise that above all the ARC is a learning environment and we continually support all pupils so that learning can take place for everyone.
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.
- The policy takes cognisance of relevant legislation, regulations and guidance including the most recent examples from the Department for Education, Department of Health and the Health and Safety Executive.
- This policy includes lessons we have learnt via outside training and support from organisations such as Dynamis, Educational Psychology, Solihull Specialist Inclusion Support Teams, Autism Education Trust resources and training.
- This Policy should be read in conjunction with our 'Safe Touch and Positive Handling Policy.'

The purpose of this policy is to give good staff the strategies and support they require to continue to remain diligent, responsive, emphatic and problem solve as a team.

Our Commitment and Our Responsibilities to, and as a Staff Team

- As a team we will strive to create a nurturing environment which has an attachment aware approach.
- As individual staff members you recognise that people's behaviour is shaped by their attitudes, experiences and their specific educational needs.
- We understand that to support behaviour we must first understand the root cause of the behaviour.
- We also appreciate that due to some pupils' complex and varied learning needs and life experiences that some pupils may always display behaviour that is challenging.
- We recognise, share and celebrate pupils' hard work and efforts.
- We understand that the expectations and stresses of school life and home life can cause anxiety for our pupils which results in displays of challenging behaviour.
- We work closely with families to provide holistic support and show respect in our interactions with them.
- We will support our pupils to make appropriate choices and engage effectively in their learning. If pupils display challenging behaviour, we take action to ensure that all people are emotionally and physically safe and follow the guidelines in our 'Safe Touch and Positive Handling Policy.'
- You will receive regular training which keeps you informed about positive, restorative practice built around de-escalation. You will know how to engage ethically, legally and always within the best interest of the pupil.
- We use restorative and reflective practice to help pupils reflect as much as they are able after incidents. We do not insist on the use of sorry.
- We do not use punishments. We provide motivating activities that encourage pupils to engage. We respect if a pupil communicates that they do not wish to engage or continue. We will not create situations which escalate or lead to inappropriate behaviour because of this.
- Any responses we give to an incident will always be appropriate to a pupil's cognitive ability and their understanding of the situation.
- You will be offered opportunities to spend time away from a situation after a difficult scenario has happened should you require this.

- You will be actively encouraged to contribute to individual planning which leads to better understanding of our pupils needs such as Sensory Ladders, Pupil Profiles or Risk Reduction Plans.
- Your opinion will be valued, respected and heard within problem solving scenarios such as team meetings as you will also value, respect and hear the opinions of others.

Our Commitment and Our Responsibilities to Our Pupils

- You will receive an education where we place your individual needs at the centre.
- You will be cared for and kept safe.
- Your hard work and efforts will be recognised, shared and celebrated.
- You will always be treated fairly but this does not mean we will treat you all in the same way. Being fair means that we will do our best to give everyone what they need to be successful.
- We recognise that you are all individuals, and we make sure that we offer you an education and environment that is right for you.
- We understand that your behaviour is often how you communicate with us and that communication can be very complex for you.
- We will always try to understand what you are telling us.
- We will use praise and recognition of efforts in the moment and make sure you know why you have done well.
- We will help you learn to self-regulate and support you with co-regulation.
- We will use restorative and reflective practice to support you to develop your ability to manage your behaviour, emotions and relationships.
- We will try to adapt our practice based on our knowledge of you, what you are currently experiencing and what sort of day you are having.
- We will make sure that we try our very best to understand your motivations and non-negotiables. We will have these available whenever possible to help you to access your day.
- We will use our knowledge and observations of you to try to always offer you pre-emptive strategies that help you to de-escalate and manage your behaviour as effectively as you are able to.



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The ARC Rules and Values

ARC Values and Approach:

The ARC's approach is underpinned by the belief that: 95% of behaviour support should focus on proactive behavioural support and only the remaining 5% is diversion and de-escalation, of which only 1% would be management of crisis situations.

How the ARC manages and records the 1% that are crisis situations is covered in the 'Safe Touch and Positive Handling' Policy. The information within this policy will initially focus on the 95% proactive behavioural support and then the other 4 % diversion strategies we employ.

Developing Our Pupils Emotional Literacy and Understanding:

We believe enabling practice should focus around planning to give our pupils the skills they need to live fulfilling and independent lives. If all of our strategies relate to how we manage a situation we miss opportunities in shaping our pupils' ability to develop supportive, meaningful relationships and self-regulation skills.

Therefore, this section of the policy focuses on some of the ways we develop these skills.

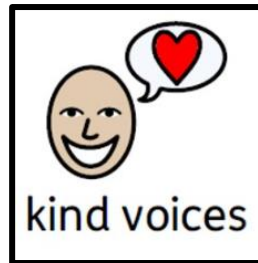
ARC Rules:

We have 3 main rules within the ARC:

We always have:

We always use:

We always:



These are prominently displayed on posters, used on lanyards and reinforced through the specific use of social stories. We will remind pupils if we feel they are not displaying these positive outcomes. We also use these to reflect after situations have happened.

We work with the pupils to develop their own understanding of what each image means. We positively praise using specific language when the pupils independently show us these positive actions e.g. sharing a resource, tidying away or having positive physical interactions.

Developing our pupils understanding of emotions and how these can be experienced

The ARC has introduced 'The Transporters' to help with their children's understanding of emotions. This video resource was designed by the Autism Centre of Excellence and is evidence-based practice. It has been clinically proven to help autistic children to recognise the causes of emotion and the facial expressions that go with them.

The development and evaluation of The Transporters was funded by the UK Government Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and was developed in collaboration with Professor Jon Drori.

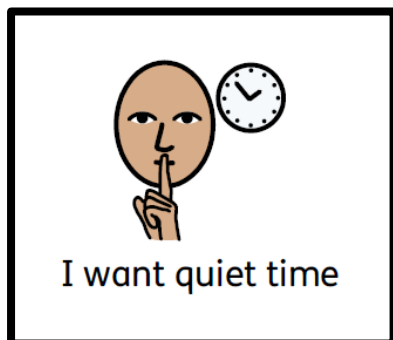
[The Transporters \(UK\) | Teaching autistic children about emotions | Au](#)



Visual Resources:

We use visual supports such as emotion fans or social stories to help. We incorporate We may introduce prompt or request cards that we use with our pupils until they can make the request independently. We may have objects or photos that pupils can use to request a change of place or

quiet time. We incorporate the word 'help' into tasks and map it onto actions when pupils require it e.g. 'You want **help**.' We encourage the use of sabotage within tasks to increase pupils opportunities to ask adults for help when they are calm and motivated in order for them to generalise this skill and use it when they require help in different scenarios.



Learning When and How to Regulate

We know that if our pupils are not feeling regulated they will find it hard to access their learning experiences and will be more likely to employ negative behaviour in order to cope.

All our pupils need support to regulate their emotions and arousal levels and recognise when they are feeling stressed. Staff understand what heightening and heightened arousal looks like for each pupil and work with pupils to regulate their emotions and arousal levels. Some pupils will always need an adult to help them regulate and staff offer opportunities to co-regulate – this could be through calm talking, play, intensive interaction, mirroring or simply being present.

Sensory Ladders:

The 'sensory ladder' tool* was designed by OT Kath Smith. It is used to help young people who have sensory processing difficulties which affect their energy levels and self-regulation. It is useful for children whose energy levels are very high, too low or who seem to switch from one extreme to the other.

The sensory ladder will help staff and children to begin to recognise how their body might look and feel when they have too much energy, too little energy or feel just right.

Each of our pupils has a Sensory Ladder which is completed co-operatively by staff. The ladders work on the principle of numbers 1 – 5 (3 being 'just right') 5 is highly dysregulated and 1 is zoned out. The ladders work on supporting children to get back to 3 by using agreed strategies. It also includes

descriptions of the behaviour we would see at each stage and ‘non-negotiables.’ These are items or adjustments (e.g. stim toys) which staff agree are meaningful for each pupil and need to always be in place.

[Sensory Ladders – for self regulation | free for anyone | anywhere | anytime](#)



Daily Regulation Activities:

We understand our pupils need for a soft start to their school day. We always spend the first 15 minutes of the day in our outside space where pupils can access the trim trail, swings, trampoline, slides or sand pit. Both of our class spaces lead directly out onto this area and it is available when pupils need it.

OPAL Play:

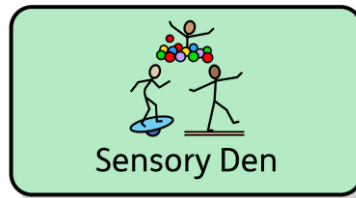
We are fortunate enough to be able to access the primary school’s impressive outside space. This has been designed to significantly improve children’s outdoor play experiences. It also has a large trim trail and climbing area which our pupils access with weighted back packs as advised by Occupational Therapists.



Sensory Den and Sensory Circuits:

Our Sensory Den is designed to offer a space to complete sensory circuits or work on a 1:1 in a calm space.

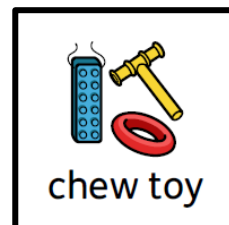
Sensory Circuits use sensory-based movement activities that help children achieve the ‘just right’ level of alertness they need to engage in their learning. The circuits are based on the theory and principles of Sensory Integration.



Seating, Stim Toys and Chew Toys:

We have a range of seating available which offers different types of feedback such as Zuma chairs, wobble stools, peanut balls, yoga ball seats, beanbag chairs. It can help to aide any sensory troubles that pupils may have when sitting on certain types of seats. This may also help to reduce the fidgeting and uncomfortableness while also promoting their attention and behaviour.

There are always sensory chew toys available and we identify what toys our pupils find as comforts or to use as stims. Pupils are able to access these throughout their day.



Knowing and Understanding our Individual Pupils

Understanding of Pupil Stage of Development:

All our pupils are developmentally different from their neurotypical peers. When viewing behaviours and considering how to manage behaviour effectively it is important to consider the likely developmental age of the pupil – this could be markedly different from their chronological age. We aim to support behaviour by having a detailed understanding of each pupil's stage of development and understanding in order to pitch appropriate learning activities.

This understanding also supports expectations around socialisation. For example, pupils that are only operating at the parallel level of play will not be expected to take turns items; they will be encouraged to participate in shared play first.

Individual Pupil Profiles:

Every child has an Individual Pupil Profile which offers ideas and strategies for these headings:

I communicate using the following methods:

My special interests and important routines are:

I learn best when supported by:

My strengths are:

Help me to regulate and manage my emotions by:

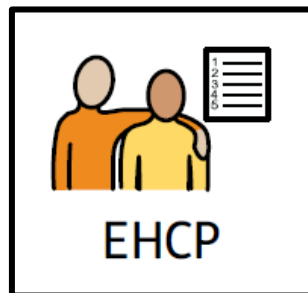
Important things to know about me:

Help me to engage and interact by:

These are jointly completed by the whole staff team and reviewed throughout the year.

Education Plans:

All pupils have an Education and Health Care Plan which has long term outcomes in the 4 Key Areas of Learning. These are broken down into achievable steps onto their Individual Learning Plans. These will also use advice from outside agencies about sensory dysregulation or difficulties with communication which may lead to frustration. Some pupils also have an individual Risk Reduction Plan.



Diversion, Distraction and Re-Directing

As previously outlined the ARC's approach is underpinned by the Team Teach belief that: 95% of behaviour support should focus on proactive behavioural support and only the remaining 5% is diversion and de-escalation, of which only 1% would be management of crisis situations (please see 'Safe Touch and Positive Handling' Policy for details).

The strategies we use to for diversion and de-escalation are outlined below:

- At all times staff should use their professional judgement and assess how best to reduce the risk of restraint. De-escalation will always be the desired response.
- When considering responses for behaviours the best interest of the pupil concerned will be of paramount importance.
- Responses will be only used that are likely to modify or support behaviour and never as a punitive method.

- As all pupils are different and have different needs different strategies might be used to address the same challenging behaviour.
- The following table gives examples of some possible responses – it is not an exhaustive list and staff are expected to make an ‘on the spot’ risk assessment on how best to support the pupil.

Element	Staff Responses
Prompt	Choices, visual support, verbal prompts using clear, reduced language, reminders of expectations/rules, reminders of task, simple reassurance.
Change	Reduce direct gaze, reduce volume levels, use no big movements, instead offer calm body language, get down to the child’s level. Change the task, activity, environment, peer, position or staff member.
Time	Step away and give pupil time to become compliant, allow significant processing time before repeating request etc. Use a visual timer.

Different pupils require different responses and responses with the same pupil may be different depending on staff member and context. The consistent approach comes from staff calmly and fairly responding to pupil behaviour.

Restoring, Reflecting and Rebuilding

The most important aspect of the post incident stage is to understand the reason for the behaviour and support with more socially acceptable ways of communicating this.

E.g. a pupil may have tipped paint on the floor because they did not want to paint.



We would support the pupil to indicate finish using a communication aid, gesture or sign.



Or they may have tipped the paint as they are experimenting with emptying/filling schema.



We would supply the pupil with messy play activities that are more suitable.

Consequences will only be used when the pupil has the cognitive understanding necessary to engage with this approach and the consequences have a positive impact on behaviour (instead of escalating it).

It is therefore not possible to apply the same consequence to the same behaviour due to the level of understanding.

There will always be a staff response to an incident – but there may not be a pupil consequence.

Restorative Justice Approach:

Where appropriate we operate a restorative justice approach which allows everyone to contribute to a solution and helps our pupils with their problem solving.

This will be implemented in a very simplistic way. We may use social stories; circle time; our ARC rules to support pupils to reflect and identify strategies for coping in the future.

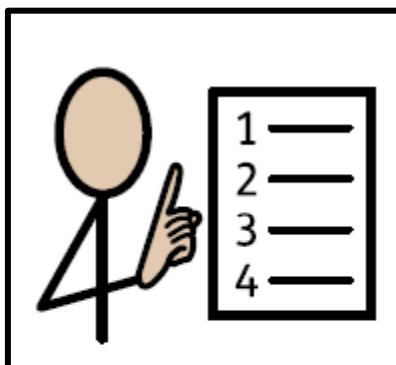
Where pupils are not able to engage in a restorative approach, we will support the pupil to restore and rebuild relationships in a way that is appropriate. This might be intensive interaction, play or shared experiences – or whatever is an appropriate activity. It is important staff members able engage in positive interactions with pupils to build their confidence back in the relationship.

Additional Information

In addition to this policy we also follow Mill Lodge Primary School's and Government Guidance on:

- The Equality Act 2010
- [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)
- Use of Reasonable Force in Schools
- [Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK](#)
- School Exclusion
- [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK](#)

This Policy should be read in conjunction with our 'Safe Touch and Positive Handling' Policy.



Policy Owner	
Role:	
Date Issued:	
Chair of Governors Signature:	

Next Review Date:	Reviewed by:	Changes Made:	Chair of Governors Signature: