

Positive Handling Policy	
Person Responsible:	Ruth Price
Date of Policy:	February 2024
Next review date:	February 2027
Rationale	
<p>Distressed behaviour may be defined as any behaviour, which is verbally or physically aggressive, disruptive, destructive or self-injurious. It includes any behaviour which interferes with learning and may result in an inability to make and/or sustain positive relationships. Staff have a duty of care to follow intervention procedures to prevent a student from causing harm to a member of staff or another student or to protect a student at risk of harming themselves.</p>	
Aims	
<p>At Great Oaks College, we aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist staff in developing skills to support with students who are displaying distressed behaviour • To understand what function the behaviour serves in order to implement supportive strategies, including supporting students in learning to communicate their needs, using Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) where appropriate • To monitor behaviours which occur frequently in order to establish patterns and identify possible triggers • To maintain commitment to staff support and communication • To ensure that all students are treated in a dignified manner, enabling them to make choices and to have control over their own behaviour wherever possible • Outline steps to be taken when a student is presenting with an increasing level of distressed behaviour, or when the behaviour displayed puts students/staff/college property/the education of others at significant or sustained risk. • To work in line with Team Teach, a de-escalation and crisis intervention training which is recognised by the Institute of Conflict Management. 	
Objectives	
<p>Change in terminology Effective from February 2024, the college has adopted the terminology 'distressed behaviour' in replacement of 'distressed behaviour', in line with Team Teach. This term acknowledges that, in most cases, behaviours displayed serve the function of communicating that there is something the young adult is finding problematic, therefore distressed behaviour is often the result of a breakdown in communication.</p> <p>Context There are many factors which may impact the behaviour of students at Great Oaks College, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical needs (such as hunger, thirst) • Lack of motivation (intrinsic/extrinsic) 	

- Communication difficulties
- The developmental level of the student
- Environmental changes (such as staffing, activity, weather)
- Changes in the domestic situation (such as birth, death, divorce, moving house, a family member being away)
- Illness, pain (long/short term)
- Sensory processing difficulties
- Changes in medication
- Onset of puberty
- Ineffective classroom management
- Mental Health and associated conditions
- A combination of any of the above

College-wide strategies around positive handling

- All staff trained in Team Teach at Level 2
- A consistent, non-confrontational approach by staff
- An emphasis on communication
- An emphasis on choice
- Use of appropriate strategies according to individual need
- Working on strengths
- Building relationships
- Use of compassionate language around distressed behaviour
- Unconditional positive regard for students who have become distressed
- Working with parents
- Liaison with multidisciplinary team
- Giving feedback on behaviour
- Setting appropriate targets
- Modelling of appropriate behaviour by staff
- Positive reinforcement
- Restorative approaches to understand behaviour
- Physical intervention, in line with Team Teach, will only be used as a final resort, where all other strategies from the individual Positive Handling Plan have been exhausted, and where failure to support could result in injury to the student, other students, staff, or significant damage to property.
- Physical intervention is only ever used in the best interests of the student, using the minimum force for the shortest time (reasonable, proportionate and necessary)

Positive Handling plans (PHPs)

A positive handling plan will be put into place for any student who requires individualised strategies to be in place around behaviour. Individual behaviour strategies will be discussed in class teams in the first instance, with input from Heads of Pathway and Senior Leaders as appropriate. Parents/carers will also be consulted, final decisions will be recorded, and a copy placed in the student's folder on the college network. PHPs are reviewed annually in the Autumn term and updated as needed. Updates to PHPs may be shared in Pathway meetings or with all staff working with the student via email, as appropriate.

Risk assessment

When a student's behaviour presents a risk to their own safety, to their peers or to staff working with them, it will be necessary to complete a student risk assessment, with reference to the Health and Safety Matrix is kept in the Risk Assessment folder on staff shared server. Student risk assessments are stored in the student's folder on the college network; they are reviewed annually and updated as needed. Updates to Risk Assessments may be shared in Pathway meetings or with staff working with the student via email, as appropriate.

Collaboration with external professionals

Some students at Great Oaks College will have input from external professionals around positive handling, such as psychiatrists, psychologists and PBS. Where this is the case, Great Oaks College will engage with external professionals in order to support a consistent approach between college, home and other provisions, such as respite.

Where college requires further support in putting strategies, SLT may make a referral to external professionals such as the Educational Psychologist. Where there are concerns around behaviours displayed in the home, or where there is a concern around a possible underlying medical need, the college may advise parents to request GP referrals to community services such as Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) or the Learning Disabilities Health Team.

Team Teach

Team Teach training aims to provide a toolkit of holistic strategies on de-escalation and crisis intervention, both verbal and non-verbal for supporting and reducing instances of disruptive and distressed behaviours, with the aim of keeping those who have become distressed safe, as well as those around them.

All staff new to Great Oaks College will receive Team Teach training within their first term of employment. All staff will receive yearly Team Teach refreshers.

There are currently five Team Teach instructions at Great Oaks College:

- Magdalena Winiarczyk
- Hannah Saunders
- Richard Murr
- Gemma Manville
- Piotr Mozolewski

Deprivation of Liberty

Supervision of students who are all vulnerable young adults is necessary and failure to do so would be in breach of our staff 'duty of care'. It therefore follows that deprivation of liberty must be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary in order to safeguard these young people.

Safeguarding our vulnerable young adults is paramount and at Great Oaks College we have electronic doors which open using an electronic swipe fob. Different areas within the building are accessible only by using the fob system. Both the front doors and the gates to the car park also are protected in this way.

To ensure that liberty is safeguarded Great Oaks College will plan ahead whenever there are arrangements in place which might foreseeably result in a deprivation of liberty *such as restricting access to certain areas when student behaviour is causing immediate risk*. Those

arrangements will be set out in detail in student PHPs and risk assessments and reviewed annually. Some students are given access to some fobbed doors. This is based on individual need and suitability.

Dynamic Risk Assessment

In unforeseen circumstances where young people become distressed or pose a risk to themselves or others, staff will make a dynamic risk assessment to identify hazards, assess risk and take appropriate action immediately. This action will always be in the best interests of the student, in good faith and in line with the training they have received. After an event where staff have made such a dynamic risk assessment, this will then be incorporated into students PHP's and Risk assessments for the management of these incidents in the future.

Reporting the use of Physical Intervention

All incidents of significant distressing behaviour will be reported on MyConcern. This will be done as soon as possible on the day the incident has occurred.

If a physical intervention has been used, this will be detailed on MyConcern. Staff will also complete the record book which is kept in the Deputy Principals' office.

If physical intervention has been used, the parent must be informed of the type of intervention, why it was used and how long it was used for. Staff will make every attempt to contact parents to report the use of physical intervention on the day on which it occurred.

Exclusion

As detailed in this policy, we will always try a range of strategies to manage behaviour and to identify the causes and triggers where students display distressed behaviour.

Only the Principal (Nickyie Thomas) can exclude a student.

If a student behaves in a way that compromises student or staff safety to a level which the college considers to be a dangerous, the student will be excluded from college.

Students can be excluded from Great Oaks College in two ways:

1: Suspension or fixed term exclusion

Suspension or fixed term exclusion is not usually intended to correct student behaviour. This process will only be used when Health and Safety is compromised and where a student's presence is believed to be a risk to themselves or others. The purpose of the fixed term exclusion is to allow an investigation to take place following a serious incident, so that risk assessment and behaviour support strategies can be reviewed and any changes required in order for the young person to return to site can be implemented.

2: Termination of placement

Termination of placement will only be considered if:


The attendance of the student has become incompatible with the provision of efficient education for others.

A student's behaviour poses too great a risk to the other vulnerable students on site.

Please refer to Exclusion and Place Termination policy for more information.

College admissions

As outlined in the Admissions policy, the college is unable to offer a place to a student who requires access to a Safe Space tent, their own space or 2:1 staffing as part of their positive handling plan. In order to assist us in working effectively, it is essential that parents/carers, local authorities and previous placement disclose the behaviour support needs of the young person during the application process.

Approved by Board of Trustees	
Print Name	Killian O'Sullivan
Sign	
Date Agreed	15/3/2024