The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Prevention, Support and De-escalation in School Hubs

Introduction

Effective professional development in managing behaviour is best understood within a framework comprising structures, procedures and strategies aimed at supporting children and managing behaviour in a planned and systematic way.

In keeping with the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child, the De- Escalation guidelines explicitly recognises established practices and procedures which enable adults to make provision for managing behaviour effectively. The most effective methods are preventive and proactive and employ whole school strategies and approaches. These include: nurturing approaches, developing positive relationships, self-regulation techniques, restorative approaches and many other generic strategies which minimise conflict and support calm, high quality environments.

It is essential that managers of any provision ensure that all procedures and initiatives are in place so that the provision functions to manage behaviour effectively and positively - these are the foundations of appropriate staff support. If procedures and systems are functioning well, there is high quality care and learning and communications and organisational planning are effective, it is much more likely that staff and children will experience a positive ethos. A positive culture will in turn, facilitate positive staff relationships with children and nurturing approaches towards them.

Rationale

The support provided for children and young people in school hubs during this period created by the COVID-19 crisis must be consistent with the agreed support strategies and interventions that would normally be used and accepted practice within Highland Council.

This Guidance is part of a suite of support documents and training modules aimed at providing a summary of information and links to additional supports on key aspects of practice, supporting staff who may have less knowledge of working within this policy framework in schools. More detail and guidance can be accessed within the policies and guidance documents on the Highland Council Website
https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/1/support_for_learners
or by contacting bernadette.cairns@highland.gov.uk

1.0 Preventive Approaches and Strategies for Staff

It is recognised that children's needs must be understood by all staff, alongside awareness of competing family pressures such as interactive media, shifts in social attitudes, poverty and adversity issues. Positive behaviour can be promoted and encouraged by staff through the development of positive relationships and resilience building. A balance between effective support and good order helps to create a positive ethos. Barriers can be addressed though adapting the environment in response identified need. ABLe provides a framework for supporting this. http://www.ableschools.org.uk

1.1 Nurturing approaches:

Staff who understand that attachment issues are key to why children behave in certain ways are better equipped to create positive solutions and nurturing environments so that children are emotionally ready to engage. Staff who are able to provide children with a consistent and reliable response to their needs will help them to develop and maintain trusting relationships. In turn, the child is more likely to develop confidence and a sense of security and independence. 'Nurture' should be supported throughout the provision as a whole, with all children having frequent opportunities to observe and learn from nurturing adult role models via everyday interactions, communication and relationships.

1.2 Self-Regulation:

A way of working with children which gives them a framework to help them to manage their own responses, behaviours and impulses, by supporting them to develop, over time, new ways of thinking and managing their behaviour. It enables the individuals to make goals/targets and think through the actions required to achieve those goals (Goal, Plan Predict, Do, Review). Routine repetition of agreed scripts is a significant part of the self-regulation development. Use of tools e.g. 5 point scales https://www.5pointscale.com/ and calm down sequences

1.3 Restorative Approaches:

These approaches aim to improve behaviour and relationships in schools by moving away from a blame and retribution model of dealing with unacceptable behaviour towards one, which is based on social responsibility and self-awareness. Based on a non-judgemental approach, key questions are asked to engage the individual who has been involved in an incident in taking responsibility for their actions and repairing the relationship with those who have been affected.
https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/restorativeapproaches/RA-in-the-UK.pdf

1.4 Time out approaches:

Time Out can be a useful strategy to allow young people to have some time and space to calm and self-reflect. Staff should consider strategies which empower children to make the right choices and where children can be enabled to choose time out as a safe option. The aim of this approach should be to de-escalate a situation or to support a young person to become calmer when feeling overly agitated. Consideration should be given to how the young person might perceive it, so they don't feel excluded or rejected.

No young person should have Time Out enforced and Seclusion or other restrictive interventions should not be used, unless there is an immediate health and safety concern. A risk assessment should then be created to reduce the risk of a further recurrence.

1.5 Staff response styles

Staff attitudes and skills and the nature of the interactions they have with children are essential elements of behaviour management.

A positive, confident response style strikes the correct balance to ensure that the wellbeing of both parties is preserved. This is an interactive style in which the staff member is appropriately directive without being inappropriately demanding. Rules and acceptable boundaries are fair and set in advance, without being overbearing or didactic.

1.6 Model the behaviour you want to see:
- Behave as you wish the children to behave
- Make sure you start activity sessions on time
- Avoid meeting anger and agitation with anger and agitation
- Avoid taking things personally
- Acknowledge – don't react.

1.7 Refocusing
- Bring children back on task by asking questions, quiet praise or privately repeated instructions; e.g. "Are you finding this bit tricky?"
- Give children thinking time and time to respond;
- Walk away, give the child time to get started without feeling under pressure
- Be confident and assume compliance, smile, say 'thank you', and 'please'.

1.8 Avoiding confrontational practices

It may be possible to ignore confrontational posturing and tones of voice that children may use. It is important to stay focussed on the issue which is of concern. If the situation is becoming difficult, try to take time-out from the situation for the sake of both yourself and the child. Time to review and reflect is crucial.

Avoid what, how, why questions as these are likely to cause the student to respond defensively, especially if he/she perceives that blame is being directed towards him/her. Use solution focused conversations which involve the pupils in order to reach a mutually agreed solution and plan for the future.

Time Out/Time In approaches when correctly used, can be a beneficial de-escalation tool. They can provide the child with an appropriate means of reducing anxiety and frustration, resulting in feeling calmer.

1.9 Other Practical Strategies –
ABLe http://www.ableschools.org.uk/ should be used in the first instance to investigate strategies to help support the young person, there are a wealth of strategies and information on the website including behaviour management and self-regulation. Some examples include:
- **Calm Down Sequence**
- **5 Point Scale**
- **Calm Box**
- **Sensory Equipment** – to help children who require sensory input to help them deescalate
- **Quiet spaces** – areas around school/nursery/class
- **Workstation**- to help with low arousal environment.
- **Use of scripts**- to help with consistency of approach.

- **Social Stories**- to help with social situations
- **Happy Book**- this would be used in time out to help the student focus on positive images to help the child calm
- **Reward System**
- **Blether Board**- use to find out more about the situation

1.10 Exit strategies
It is important that all members of staff are fully aware of procedures for dealing with potentially violent and dangerous incidents. This is particularly important if a child threatens to leave or actually leaves the building without permission. It is also important to know the procedure for getting assistance when an adult believes that it is no longer safe or appropriate for a child to remain with the group.

Staff should not try to physically block the exit route of an angry or highly agitated child. As soon as the child leaves the room, agreed procedures should be put into action.

2.0 Staff responses
Individual staff should be aware of their own emotional state and what can upset them. Everyone gets emotional at times. Being aware about what may trigger an emotional response is vital for all professionals who work with a range of children. Awareness of potential triggers means staff are more likely to manage themselves calmly and takes steps to maintain a sense of calmness even when being challenged significantly by a student.

2.1 Direct towards successful outcomes
The literature on behaviour management identifies a range of useful skills and tactics employed by effective adults in managing low tariff disruptive and off-task behaviour. Being a good role model, using early intervention, consistently demonstrating respect, having high expectations and making appropriate use of praise all help to minimise the likelihood of unwanted behaviour spreading and escalating.

It's important to communicate what we want the children to do instead of what they should not do. Avoid using the words 'Do Not' and couch our language in more positive terms. Tactical ignoring can be useful; sometimes our attention can reinforce or encourage certain types of unwanted behaviour.

2.2 Catch them being good
The vast majority of children enjoy receiving, and respond appropriately to, genuine praise and recognition of their efforts and endeavour. Make good use of role models. Try to share responsibilities in class. Giving praise to children on task, frequently helps to bring others who were off-task back on board. Whenever possible, it is beneficial to give specific praise to the child who returns to task.
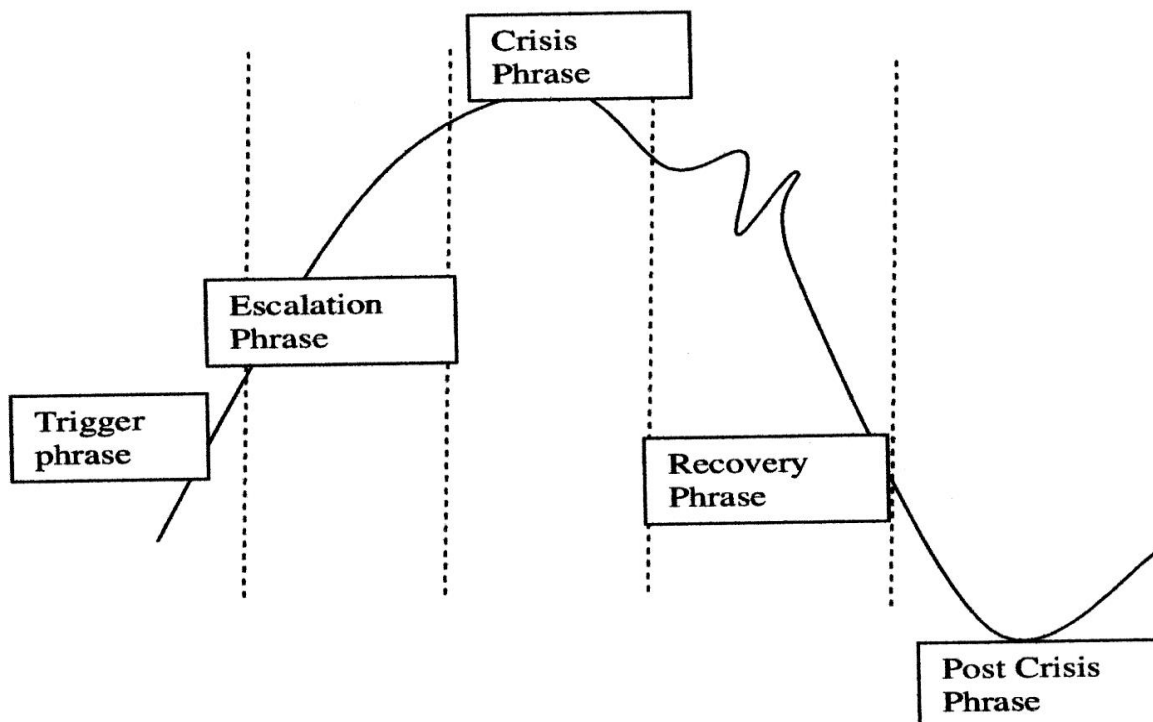
2.3 Non-verbal communication
Individuals will pick up on non-verbal cues. Emphasise the importance of congruence between the words and non-verbal communication e.g. "Nice to see you back" will only convey the right message if accompanied by welcoming body language.

2.4 Body language
The effect our body language has on others has a huge impact, always try to be aware of what message your body language is conveying. e.g. eye contact, smiling, nodding, thumbs up, relaxed but confident stance – shoulders down, arms relaxed

3.0   The Cycle of an Incident

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                            ┌──────────┐
                            │ Crisis   │
                            │ Phrase   │
                            └──────────┘

              ┌─────────────┐
              │ Escalation  │
              │ Phrase      │
              └─────────────┘
                                        ┌──────────┐
   ┌──────────┐                         │ Recovery │
   │ Trigger  │                         │ Phrase   │
   │ phrase   │                         └──────────┘
   └──────────┘
                                              ┌──────────────┐
                                              │ Post Crisis  │
                                              │ Phrase       │
                                              └──────────────┘
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Preventative approaches done well will prevent many incident escalating. However, from time to time an incident between children or between a child and an adult will escalate to a point where verbal or physical aggression may be observed.

The process we go through when a situation is escalating will require different interventions. There is always a trigger to any incident, but this can be something observable and able to be seen by others, or may be a perception, a thought or a feeling within us. In relation to incidents involving children and young people, it is therefore important for a debrief situation afterwards, so that the adult can reflect on the part they played in the incident (as their behaviour may have added to or been the trigger to the subsequent incident. Engaging with the child and discussing what the trigger was, once the incident is over and they have calmed down (maybe the next day), will give a better indication as to the trigger – which can perhaps be avoided in the future.

During the Escalation phase, preventative approaches may still be able to be used effectively, but the section below on Staff Responses will be most important.

In the crisis stage, it is important to be aware that the child will be unable to access rational or logical thought and will not process language and instruction as they may otherwise do. Keeping language to a minimum and removing any other children or objects that could be harmful to the child or others, will be important. During this phase, reassure the child that you are there for them and observe from a safe distance, but do not encroach on their personal space as this may further inflame the situation.

The recovery phase may take up to an hour or more, depending on the level of distress or type of situation. During this phase, the child may cry and need reassured and comforted. They may respond to being offered a drink, something to eat and the

opportunity to snuggle up on a bean bag, with a blanket (or similar). Do not debrief or try to engage in discussion about the incident until well after the event. During the recovery period the chances of a further emotional hijack are extremely high.

The post-crisis phase is when the debrief can take place with the child, the adult and with others, who can be involved in creating a plan or creating a risk assessment to support the child in the future.

4.0   Wellbeing Support Plans and Risk Assessment

This would be only introduced if there is a foreseeable risk and used as staged intervention alongside the Child's Plan. The Highland Council Risk Assessment format should be used.

4.1   Risk Assessments and Individual Plans

- aid anticipation and identification of likely causes of problematic incidents
- prevent or minimise the recurrence of problematic incidents
- identify positive solutions whilst promoting positive outcomes for children
- plan and intervene in the best interests of children and staff
- use record keeping systems to inform the risk assessment and management process ,
- ensure the involvement and participation of parents, children and relevant professionals for the best interests of individuals concerned
- should include debriefing which will allow for reflection and forward planning

4.2   Responsive Wellbeing Planning

Responsive wellbeing planning should be preventative and solution focused and refers to the interventions and controls put in place following identification of risks. If there is a foreseeable risk in relation to a young person then the planning process should begin. This would be in the form of a Wellbeing Support Plan (appendix 1) and/or Risk Assessment (appendix 2).

This should be carried out:
- to minimise future risks to pupils and staff
- to identify a plan of appropriate support for the child
- to provide a plan of appropriate support for staff
- to use the framework of GIRFEC and child wellbeing
- to provide a coordinated multi-agency response to the needs and risks identified by the plan.
- to ensure the involvement and participation of parents, pupils and relevant professionals to ensure the best interests of individuals concerned
- to set a date for review within an appropriate timescale (level of risk dependent)

This should be carried out when there is evidence of one or more of the following:
- it is likely that a child's future behaviour may endanger his/her or other's safety
- there is a pattern of behaviour which has caused concern over an extended period
- there is a single, exceptional incident which may be repeated in the future
- a child cannot access a specific aspect of their learning as a result of risk-taking behaviour or Additional Support Need, e.g. in practical lessons.

A Positive Relationship Plan should be a working document, initially it would be written by the team around the child. It provides staff with a simple tool to analyse behaviour and

to support the child. When used appropriately it supports a proactive, collaborative, solution-focused approach which provides a structure to open up a dialogue about a difficult situation. It also provides a formal means of planning & recording interventions which can facilitate reviews and be used to inform formal record keeping e.g. Child's Plan.

After each incident there should be a debriefing meeting, this will allow for reflection and support for the staff member and the young person.

Where appropriate an 'Violent Incident Form (Schools)' should be completed in accordance with existing procedures
https://www.highland.gov.uk/staffsite/downloads/file/36/violence_and_aggression_form_schools

The head of establishment should carefully monitor these forms to ascertain if any patterns are developing or if further action has to be taken, and by whom.

If the incident of violence and aggression has involved a physical intervention there is the facility to record this on the form.

5.0 Physical Intervention

CALM (Crisis, Aggression, Limitation & Management), is the chosen strategy of Highland Council for Physical Intervention techniques. Only those who hold a current accredited training qualification in CALM may carry out these techniques and must do so within the parameters of the Physical Intervention Policy https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/12443/the_use_of_physical_intervention_in_educational_establishments_policy This requires a minimum of two trained staff to be available at any time and to record all uses of CALM holds.

Staff trained in the use of recommended techniques must maintain their skills and have time protected to allow them to undertake the appropriate level of practice and re-verification. Both individual members of staff and The Highland Council is vulnerable to legal action if staff use the CALM methodology without valid and up-to-date re-verification.

On the rare occasions where a physical intervention has taken place, but it was not preceded by an incident of violence and aggression. Please complete a Violence and Aggression Form (Schools) report but indicate clearly on the submitting email that *"this incident is a record on a physical intervention only".*

Records of incidents should be retained in case of inquiry or complaint and shared with the Area Manager as appropriate.

References:

British Institute of Learning Difficulties (2014), BILD Code of Practice for minimising the use of restrictive physical interventions. Fourth Edition www.bild.org.uk

Equality Act (2010) UK Government
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) (2020)
https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/

Scottish Government (2014) Children and Young People (Scotland) Act
www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/pdfs/asp_20140008

Scottish Government (2004a & 2009) Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act Edinburgh
www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/welfare/ASL

Scottish Government (2007 c) UN Convention on The Rights of the Child
www.gov.scot/resource/doc/217822/0058326

My Wellbeing Support Plan: Rationale and Guidance

Positive Relationships Support Plan REVIEW.pdf

GIRFEC is underpinned by the UNCRC and these Rights should form a key part of a child's support and development plan and this approach should be promoted by all staff.

> Fundamentally, the approach promotes practitioners:
>
> - to consider each child as an individual with their own needs, risks and rights
> - to engage and involve the child as far as practical in discussions and decisions which affect his or her future
> - to seek out and consider the voice of the child
> - to plan and review activity to improve outcomes, based on well-being.
>   https://www.cypcs.org.uk/rights/uncrcarticles
>
> <div align="right">https://www.gov.scot/publications/uncrc-the-foundation-of-getting-it-right-for-every-child/</div>

By ensuring UNCRC this will promote a child' wellbeing, respect their views and ensure a holistic approach is taken that will build on strengths and promote resilience. Article 3 ensures adults put the child at the centre in their decision making. This safeguards Article 12 which ensures that children are respected and have the right to express their views on things that can affect them. Article 4 states that as practitioners we have a responsibility to ensure a child's rights are actively promoted and understood by children and the adults who support them and that these realised in practice.

> Article 3 (UNCRC) says that adults should think about the best interest of children and young people when making choices that affect them.
>
> Article 12 (UNCRC) says that when adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account.
>
> Article 4 (UNCRC) says that the Scottish and UK governments should both work to make sure the convention on children's rights is known about and upheld.
>
> <div align="right">https://www.cypcs.org.uk/rights/uncrcarticles</div>

Wellbeing is supported by the SHANARRI framework and promotes a common language for both practitioner and child. Assessing the needs of a child using this framework identifies what may need to change and how best to support a child at the same time as respecting the child's rights.

The Wellbeing Support Plan supports and engages with GIRFEC and ensures the UNCRC are upheld.

This Rationale is supported by a fuller reference that can be found at
https://www.gov.scot/publications/uncrc-the-foundation-of-getting-it-right-for-every-child/

GUIDANCE

The Wellbeing Support Plan is based on a positive partnership between the child, supporting adults and parents/carers. It promotes an understanding of identified needs, focuses on strengths and building resilience taking into consideration the views of the child.

The plan is intended to be solution focused, reflective and restorative, promoting positive relationships through working in partnership. We know that by listening, understanding, respecting and acting on a child's views that this will increase their sense of belonging and self-worth leading to increased wellbeing and a reduction in barriers to learning.

The Appendices below are referenced in the plan and support GIRFEC and UNCRC. They should be made reference to and support the child's understanding when completing the plan.

1. <u>Rationale and Guidance</u>:

2. <u>SHANARRI Tool</u>: This tool can be used to understand what a child's actions are communicating, the function behind the action and what need they are trying to get met. The tool can be used directly with the child or form part of a team meeting. SHANARRI Tool.pdf.
The GIRFEC Wellbeing Wheel consists of 8 key indicators. Further information can be accessed at https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/wellbeing-indicators-shanarri/

   The indicators are informed by research and are consistent with dimensions of development found in the ecological approach to children's development. They are interconnected and will overlap, rarely sitting in isolation. (see Aldgate *et al. The Developing World of the Child,* Jessica Kingsley, 2006)
https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/wellbeing-indicators-shanarri/

3. <u>My World Triangle – to be and do my very best</u>**:** This tool can be used with the child to develop an understanding of what could make a difference and who could help towards being and doing their very best. My World Triangle - To be and do my very best.pdf
The My World Triangle tool helps identify strengths and pressures in all aspects of a child's life. My World Triangle.pdf

4. <u>UNCRC Articles and GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators</u>: Wellbeing indicators align with UNCRC and support holistic growth and development to reach a child's full potential. UNCRC Articles girfec wheel.pdf
The UNCRC Childs Language Poster supports understanding uncrcchilldfriendlylanguage.pdf

Further Resources:

- UNCRC Signs Poster: This resource provides accessible understanding of a child's Rights through symbols. https://www.cypcs.org.uk/ufiles/Symbols-Poster.pdf

- UNCRC Book for children: This resource promotes a child's ownership of their Rights and provides an easy reference that can be both used and shared at school and home. https://www.cypcs.org.uk/rights/young-peoples-resources/uncrc-booklet

Hard copies of both these resources can be obtained free by contacting Children's and Young Peoples Commissioner Scotland or through www.cypcs.org.uk.

- Getting the Views of Children and Young People: This guide was produced by Allied Health Professionals (NHS Highland and The Highland Council). It provides a guide of some of the methods for supporting CYP in sharing their views and can across a range of ages and abilities.https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19720/getting_the_views_of_children_and_young_people

My Wellbeing Support Plan

Name: Date:

I am good at and interested in;	I get to do these things in;
I can sometimes find it difficult when:	**This is how I might react:**

I need support to feel/be: (use the SHANARRI indicators)

This is what could help me: (Use My World Triangle) From myself: From Adults: From my environment:

My target we are going to work on is:

My first goal will be to:

Adults will support me to do this by:	This will help me by meeting my needs:

We will know I am making progress when:	My views of this plan are:

Dates and information that has been shared with my parents/carers about how things are going in My Wellbeing Support Plan ;

Date:	Information:	Shared by:

Support Plan

This is how adults will respond to support me when I am finding things difficult:

	When I	Adults will	This will respect my Rights UNCRC: specify Article
When I first find it difficult			
When I need more help			
When I am not coping			

My Wellbeing Support Plan will be reviewed with me on: _____

The following people all agree and will support me with My Wellbeing Support Plan:

Pupil …………………………………………………………….. Date ……..........

Parent/Carer……………………………………………..……… Date ……………

Class Teacher …………………………………………………... Date ….…………

ASN Teacher …………………………………………………... Date ……………

School Management …………………………………..……… Date …………….

Other Adults ……………………………………………………… Date …………...

When things have not gone to plan:

Date:

How we will work together to restore relationships:
How we will work with others who have been affected by what happened:
The changes we need to make to My Wellbeing Support Plan to support me more:

Service:	DESCRIPTION OF WORK ACTIVITY OR AREA OF THE WORKPLACE ASSESSED:	Name of Assessor:

RISK ASSESSMENT

Service:	**DESCRIPTION OF WORK ACTIVITY OR AREA OF THE WORKPLACE ASSESSED:**	Name of Assessor:
Area:		**Date completed:**
Location:	**Click here for Highland Council's guidance notes re risk assessments.**	**Date of Review:**

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4			STEP 5
List potential Hazards here:	List groups of people at risk from hazards. Including those most vulnerable:	List existing control measures or note where information may be found:	Calculate the residual risk taking the presence and effectiveness of existing measures into account: **Severity x Likelihood = Risk Rating** (1 TO 3) (1 TO 3)			List further control measures necessary to reduce risk to an acceptable level **and** date of their proposed introduction:
						If you want more rows click in this box and press the tab key