Behaviour Policy

All credit to Spectrum Gaming for Format/Ideas

Young people (in fact all people) are innately driven to meet their 3 basic needs...

- Autonomy: Having choice and control over their actions
- Relatedness: Feeling connected with and accepted by the people around you
- Competence: Feeling that you are learning and developing skills

This means that young people strive to grow, develop and have positive connections.

Young people do well IF they can.

But there are some things that can get in the way...

Stressors:	Unmet needs:	Skill gaps:
What if the space is too loud, too bright, too busy? What if the people around a young person do not understand them? Stress caused by the physical and social environment can get in the way.	Did they have enough sleep? Are they dysregulated? It is hard for a young person to do well if their physical, emotional, social and sensory needs aren't met. But it is wider than these short-term needs. What if they have a lot of trauma, or feel ashamed of being autistic? Longer	Everyone on the planet has different strengths and needs. This means they may thrive in some areas, but find some things that most people find easy, very difficult. If someone has a skill gap, unless the skill is developed, or unless support is put in place to stop it being a barrier, it is hard to do well.

	term thoughts, feelings and experiences can make it harder to do well.	

> People typically use rewards and punishments when these things are in the way, but we know that rewards and punishments don't fix things...

Why rewards and punishments don't work.

1. **Internalising Needs** - They make people internalise their needs: You may see a change in behaviour in the short term, but this is because young people try to internalise their needs. Short term change leads to long term dysfunction as it creates masking, trauma, hypervigilance and burnout.

2. **Feelings Matter** - They are designed for when your feelings don't matter: But when it comes to supporting young people, thoughts and feelings DO matter. If a young person is punished for their behaviour, they may change their behaviour, but their underlying stress, unmet need or skill gap will still exist. This often leaves people feeling worse, not better.

3. **Decreasing Motivation** - They are proven to DECREASE motivation: There is a lot of evidence that shows that rewarding people for their behaviour decreases their internal drive. People start doing things to comply, rather than because it feels good. Over time, people can become dependent on rewards, and lose their sense of self.

4. **Unconditional Support** - Young people need UNCONDITIONAL support, love and encouragement: Young people are usually trying their very

best. Rather than rewards being conditional on "good behaviour" - shouldn't trying their best be enough?

Instead of rewards and punishments, there are some key values we think are essential…

Our Key Values

Unconditional Positive Regard: We hold unconditional positive regard for young people, valuing them as unique individuals deserving of respect and acceptance. Regardless of challenges or differences, we maintain a positive and non-judgmental attitude. All individuals possess the innate capability to succeed when provided with the right support, understanding, and opportunities.

The importance of positive relationships: Positive relationships play a pivotal role in establishing trust. We prioritise the development of strong, supportive, and respectful relationships. These relationships are built on open communication, empathy, and active listening. We recognise that it is our responsibility to develop trusting positive relationships, not the responsibility of young people.

Creating a nurturing environment: We are committed to creating a nurturing environment where trust and positive relationships can flourish. We aim to model trustworthiness, respect, and empathy, setting the tone for interactions

among all young people. We believe that when trust and positive relationships are present, challenges can be effectively addressed with compassion and understanding.

Embracing neurodiversity: We wholeheartedly embrace the concept of the neurodiversity paradigm, recognising that neurological differences, including autism, are natural variations in the human experience. We aim to adapt our practices and approaches to accommodate the unique needs and preferences of all autistic young people. We have a commitment to neurodiversity affirming practice.

Being Trauma Informed: We adopt a Trauma Informed approach, recognising that past experiences may influence behaviour.

Trauma Informed Practice

Trauma can have a profound and lasting impact on individuals' emotional and psychological well-being. By understanding and addressing the potential impact of trauma, we aim to create a safe and predictable environment where young people are supported with the healing process. We aim to create a safe and predictable environment where autistic young people can feel secure and supported, following the 6 key principles of trauma-informed practice. *(Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, 2022)*:

1. Safety: Prioritising the physical, psychological and emotional safety of young people.

2. Trustworthiness: Explaining what we do and why, doing what we say we will do, expectations being clear and not overpromising.

3. Choice: Young people are supported to be shared decision makers and we actively listen to the needs and wishes of young people.

4. Collaboration: The value of young people's experience is recognised through actively working alongside them and actively involving young people in the delivery of services.

5. Empowerment: We share power as much as we can, to give young people the strongest possible voice.

6. Cultural Consideration: We actively aim to move past cultural stereotypes and biases based on, for example, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, geography, race or ethnicity.

Dated: 01/02/24	Review Date: 01/02/2025	Signed: Caitlin Howells	Caitlin Howells