



South East Network - Youth+ Positive Behaviour Management Policy

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Drafted by	Network Principal	Approved by	NP/CP/HoC
Responsible person	Network Principal	Scheduled review date	December 2018

Introduction

The South East Network of Youth+ recognises the individual dignity and worth of every young person. Young people who attend a Flexible Learning Centre (FLC) have typically disengaged from mainstream education settings, and may have lived experiences of trauma, mental illness, disability, substance addiction, homelessness or family breakdown. These experiences can have ongoing legacies in the lives of young people, which affect the way that they form relationships and participate in the learning environment. Young people who attend a FLC regularly demonstrate behaviours that are complex and at times confronting, conflictual or dangerous.

FLC’s operate from a philosophy of Common Ground, where staff members walk alongside young people on their individual learning journey, as part of a democratic school community. This philosophy is expressed through the four Principles of Operation that all young people and staff members work within; Respect, Honesty, Participation and being Safe & Legal.

Purpose

The intention of this policy and associated procedures is to enable all young people enrolled in the South East Network of Flexible Learning Centres to get the help they need to learn and participate fully in the learning community. This policy therefore outlines how the South East Network and its schools will support young people to operate by principles and make choices that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers and the learning community. This policy is informed by the *National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF)* and the Edmund Rice Education Australia *Code of Conduct*, and aligns with the South East Network, Youth+ Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct.

Policy

The South East Network and its schools engage with young people in ways that:

- Respect their rights;
- Support their learning goals and best interests;
- Celebrate their achievements; and
- Are both age and developmentally appropriate

The Network and its schools work in both systemic and highly individualised ways to ensure that young people are supported to make good choices and demonstrate prosocial behaviours at school. The Network’s practices with young people are underpinned by Edmund Rice’s charisma of compassion and inclusion, and are informed by contemporary evidence relating to trauma, attachment and educational engagement.

Where young people demonstrate behaviours that are not consistent with the four Principles of Operation, they are provided with a range of supportive interventions in order to restore relationships and the safety of the school community.

Youth+ does not permit the use of corporal punishment under any circumstances.

AUTHORISATION

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December 2017

Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the **Network Principal** (or a delegated authority) to implement this policy and to monitor its performance.

It is the responsibility of the **Head of Campus/ Head of School** to ensure that:

- They are familiar with positive behaviour management policy and procedures, and that they follow them accordingly.

It is the responsibility of **all South East Network and Flexible Learning Centre staff members** to ensure that:

- They are familiar with positive behaviour management policy and procedures, and that they follow them accordingly.

It is the responsibility of the **Network Principal** to ensure that:

- All **Head of Campus/ Head of School's** are aware of their responsibilities in regard to positive behaviour management; and
- **Head of Campus/ Head of School's** are given continuous support and guidance to implement uphold the positive behaviour management policy.

Positive Behaviour Support procedures

Definitions

Corporal Punishment involves the application of physical force to punish or correct a Student. The South East Network of Youth+ does not permit corporal punishment under any circumstances.

The following list provides employees with a guide to behaviours that are unacceptable as they are contrary to good professional practice and Edmund Rice Education Australia values. Such behaviours include but are not limited to:

- Using an object, such as a ruler, book or whiteboard marker to gain a Student's attention in a hostile or inappropriate physical manner;
- Restraining/holding a Student for any purpose other than when a Student's actions cause or threaten to cause imminent harm to himself/herself or others;
- Hitting or kicking a Student;
- Pushing, pulling, shoving, grabbing, pinching or poking a Student, including by their clothing;
- Shaking or forcibly handling a Student;
- Intimidating a Student;
- Swearing at a Student;
- Using sarcasm to humiliate;
- Using names or nicknames to undermine the self-confidence of a Student;
- Locking a Student in a confined space;
- Refusing biological needs as a means of punishment;
- Criticising a Student rather than the Student's actions;
- Practices which instill fear or using fear as a means of controlling a Student; and
- Practices which cause a Student to feel alienated.

Positive Behaviour Management is an umbrella term that describes a range of approaches to behaviour management that are based more on prevention and support, than on punishment.

Guidelines

Strategies to promote a safe and supportive school community.

Schools within the South East Network will:

- Provide a safe learning environment;
- Implement a Youth+ Model of Wellbeing that articulates the Network's approach to supporting staff and student wellbeing;
- Provide staff with induction and ongoing training in relation to the charism of Edmund Rice, trauma informed positive education, inclusive education, adjustment and differentiation, professional and nurturing relationships with young people and operation by principles;
- Reduce barriers to young people's educational engagement through the provision of practical support such as transport, transport allowances or training, food throughout the school day, and clothing and toiletries as required;
- Maintain regular contact with parents and guardians through a variety of channels, such as phone calls, text messages, face-to-face meetings and school newsletters;
- Provide flexible classroom spaces that allow young people to work in ways that suit them and that minimize distractions to their learning;
- Provide a comprehensive social & emotional learning program that addresses core curriculum frameworks and is responsive to community needs;
- Employ multidisciplinary staff;
- Involve young people in decisions that affect them and frequently negotiate behavioural expectations in line with the principles (ie: create a working agreement);
- Hold a range of multi-faith celebrations and opportunities to explore spirituality;
- Thoroughly supervise young people during the school day and school activities,
- Provide staff members with ongoing supervision and debriefing opportunities, as well as other initiatives to maximize staff wellbeing, recognising that when staff are well supported young people benefit too.

Individual support at enrolment

School staff will provide young people and their guardians with a comprehensive enrolment process that includes:

- A site tour and enrolment meeting that includes a brief psychosocial assessment to determine any necessary educational support strategies;
- Support to complete enrolment forms and other requirements, as needed;
- With consent, liaison with other professionals and previous schools in order to coordinate support for the young person and gain an understanding of their educational; and
- An induction program.

Ongoing supports throughout enrolment at the Flexible Learning Centre

School staff will provide the following supports in order to maximize each young person's safe and respectful participation in the learning community:

- Identification of a key teacher and wellbeing worker for each young person;
- Consistent, predictable and warm professional interactions with young people;
- Regular monitoring of the young person's strengths and circumstances across several social and emotional domains, and targeted interventions to strengthen these;
- Developing, monitoring and regularly updating an individual learning plan for each young person;
- Thoroughly documenting information relating to the young person's attendance and engagement at school, as well as contact with caregivers;
- In line with privacy obligations, sharing important information related to young people with internal and external colleagues, so as to coordinate care for the young person;
- Participating in care team meetings and facilitating student support group meetings for young people

who reside in out of home care, have a disability, or who are particularly vulnerable;

- Supported referral to external services, as required;
- Praise young people for their achievements and positively acknowledge when young people are operating by principles; and
- Development of an Engagement Plan or Safety & Support Plan, as required.

Responding to challenges that arise

Staff members will use the following strategies to respond to young people who are operating outside of the principles:

- Address emergency situations in line with the FLC's Emergency Management Plan;
- Use de-escalation strategies such as empathic statements and rhythmic, somatosensory activities to help young people to regulate when they are heightened;
- Enact, or prompt a young person to enact, their Safety & Support Plan;
- Explain to a young person how their behaviour seems to fall outside of the principles and prompt them to consider an alternative behaviour;
- Facilitate collaborative problem solving or restorative conversations with young people, and / or their guardians, and/or anyone else involved in an incident;
- Renegotiate Engagement Plans, Safety & Support Plans or professional Risk Management Plans;
- Implement natural consequences that are sensitive to the context in which the incident occurred and the individual circumstances of the young people involved; and
- Seek advice from a Police Youth Liaison Officer and other specialists as required.

Supporting students with disabilities or who are particularly vulnerable

Where a young person has been identified as being particularly vulnerable, extra measures will be taken as required in order to support their positive engagement in the school community. The following factors may signal that the young person is in need of additional support:

- The young person has been diagnosed with a disability, or the young person's presentation and engagement in the learning environment leads staff members to believe they may have an undiagnosed or undisclosed disability or significant health concern;
- The young person has recently experienced family breakdown, or changes in their housing and care arrangements;
- The young person is known to have mental health concerns or to regularly use illicit substances; and
- The young person has demonstrated in other ways that they may have difficulty comprehending or enacting directions from staff members, or acting in ways that maintain their safety and the safety of others.

The need for additional and highly individualized supports will be determined through:

- A narrative psychosocial assessment undertaken at the point of enrolment and regularly thereafter (see Youth+ South East Network Wellbeing Rubric);
- Other conversations held between staff members, the young person and their carers;
- Consultation with former schools and other professionals who work with the young person (as long as the young person's guardians have provided informed consent for this to occur); and
- Observation in the learning environment.

Additional supports may include, but are not limited to:

- Increased supervision, including line of sight arrangements as necessary;
- The development of a Safety & Support Plan;
- An individualized timetable (See South East Network Youth+ Engagement Plan);
- Individualised or 1-1 social skills development sessions;
- Working with parents, guardians and other medical specialists to determine a diagnosis and seek specialist supports and additional funding, as required;
- Purchasing sensory aids or regular sessions with specialist practitioners such as an art therapist;
- Making space available for the young person to meet with specialist practitioners (such as a counsellor)

onsite and during the school day, as appropriate;

- Facilitated care team meetings or Student Support Group meetings with the young person and all relevant professionals to develop and review supports in place for the young person.

Staff members will ensure procedural fairness in their responses to young people by:

- Recognising that young people behave in ways that meet a particular need for them at a particular point in time, and considering any response in light of best addressing the individual needs of the young person;
- Always responding to behaviours of concern in a way that is consistent with the principles, appropriate to the situation and the age / developmental stage of the young person;
- Participating in induction and ongoing whole staff professional development sessions to ensure consistency of practice;
- Working closely with the young person's other key worker(s), participating in collaborative debriefing and regular supervision sessions in order to reflect upon practice and determine best responses;
- Documenting any significant behavioural concerns and follow up on the Lotus Notes database, and bringing these to the attention of staff in positions of leadership where further support and direction are required.

Related documents

- *Edmund Rice Education Australia Code of Conduct*
- *South East Network, Youth+ Pastoral Care (Staff & Student Wellbeing) Policy*
- *South East Network, Youth+ Duty of Care Policy*
- *South East Network, Youth+, Anti-Bullying Policy*
- *South East Network, Youth+ Safety & Support Plan*
- *South East Network, Youth+ Engagement Plan*
- *South East Network, Youth + Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct*

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