

Behaviour for Learning Policy

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Related documents:	Children Act 1989 & 2004 Education Act 2002 (Section 175) Equality Act 2010 SEND Code of Practice 2015 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) – Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, September 2025

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The context for policies at Red Balloon of the Air (RBAir)

Description of learners

Learners who come to RBAir experience, or have experienced, significant difficulties in managing their mental health. This commonly results from diagnosed conditions such as Autism, ADHD, and other associated emotional and clinical issues. Access to education has generally been affected by a reduced capacity to self-regulate acute anxiety, manage environmental and social demands, and cope effectively with mainstream learning environments. Impact on academic progress and attendance has been considerable, and, in some cases, learners have not been in an education provision for up to two years.

At RBAir, we recognise that many Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) conditions and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are linked to experiences of trauma. Our approach is therefore underpinned by trauma-informed practice, ensuring our environment is safe, nurturing, and supports recovery and learning.

The delivery of education at RBAir

In order to meet the full range of needs of our learners, RBAir adopts a multi-modal delivery method, combining both online and in-person approaches. This supports the process of re-engagement with learning and enables the young person to work at their own pace to access the most appropriate pathway to recovery.

RBAir aims to provide the following:

- **A safe and predictable environment**
Whether online or in person, we establish routines and clear boundaries, reducing uncertainty and supporting learners to feel secure.
- **A 'relationships first' approach**
All staff prioritise building strong, trusting relationships, recognising that positive connections are key to healing from trauma and developing confidence in learning.
- **A trauma-informed approach**
All staff are trained to recognise that behaviour often communicates underlying emotional needs or trauma and therefore respond with empathy and curiosity, rather than with any punitive intent. De-escalation and restorative practice form the approaches to resolving any issues relating to behaviour, both online and in person.
- **Trained staff**

Our team receives ongoing professional development for SEND, trauma-informed practice and equality and diversity objectives.

- **Personalised support**

We develop individual support plans, which may include mentoring, counselling, and regular wellbeing check-ins, all tailored to each learner's needs.

- **Whole-provision culture**

Trauma-informed values underpin our policies and daily practice, ensuring all learners feel valued, understood and safe.

- **An engaging and enriched curriculum**

Whether online or in person, the learning experience for young people is designed to be responsive, flexible and engaging, enabling learners to begin to appreciate the benefits of re-engaging with education.

- **Family and multi-agency involvement**

We work closely with families and external professionals to ensure holistic, joined-up support for every learner.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all learners and staff at RBAir by setting out clear procedures and expectations for effective safeguarding and productive learning and personal development. This policy aims to create a secure environment where all members of the school community feel protected, respected and able to thrive.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, learners, volunteers and visitors. It covers all activities that take place on RBAir premises, as well as off-site events and trips organised by the provision. Using the principles **Self-Determination Theory**, this policy aims to develop and encourage:

- Autonomy
- Competence
- Relatedness

3. Principles of behaviour for learning at RBAir

At RBAir, it is a core belief that behaviour in learners reflects their past experiences and how they have previously negotiated challenges in educational provisions. This can be demonstrated by disengagement with learning, high anxiety and significant and entrenched

demand avoidance. Often learners lack the capacity to self-regulate and look to the external environment and people around them to support them into more predictable regulated states. At RBAir, we look to develop behaviour from three perspectives to improve the attributes necessary for effective learning:

Emotional growth

- Being able to name and express a range of emotions in a reflective way
- Managing impulses and set patterns of behaviour in relation to learning
- Developing resilience – this might be related to participation and/or endurance for a challenging activity.

Social and relational resilience

- Being attentive to and being able to accept direction, guidance, support and feedback from trusted adults and peers
- Being able to focus on the session and begin to function in relation to others to improve own learning
- Being able to accept incremental challenge
- Showing empathy and appreciate diversity.

Cognitive development

- Being able to organise time and space for own learning
- To be able to set goals and monitor own progress
- To be able to understand how they think and reflect on the impact on learning
- To talk purposefully with staff and peers and value the opinions of others.

Learner voice

In order to enable learners to engage effectively with learning, RBAir staff aim to generate learning experiences that interest learners, are pertinent to them, within which they can achieve success, and which are accessible yet challenging. RBAir provides access to a core and an extended curriculum. Staff strive to engage learners in individualising that curriculum and encourage them to invest in their own development. Learners are central to reviews of their progress and identification of their next learning targets.

Working with SEND learners

In accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010), RBAir will seek to ensure that no learner suffers discrimination of any sort. When RBAir receives a referral for a learner with SEND, the Admissions Team, including the SENDCo, will check during the provision meeting that RBAir is able to meet all identified needs. RBAir behaviour practice enables

staff to treat each learner as an individual; therefore, meeting their specific needs. Where necessary, staff will include plans for improving learning behaviour within an Individual Provision Plan (IPP) and work with the learner to monitor progress against that plan.

4. Managing behaviour for learning

Across the provision, **staff** promote RBAir principles by:

- setting clear boundaries and the reasons for them, e.g. making sure all participants points of view are respected;
- giving options regarding how to approach work / an activity / social situation;
- providing the best conditions for a learner to be successful while maintaining appropriate degrees of challenge to move learners forward;
- the provision of sessions/work matched appropriately to the individual profile of the learner, taking into account learning needs;
- modelling effective self-regulation, using language to show how this might be achieved;
- providing space to reflect on feelings and thoughts within the context of a learning experience;
- providing purposeful feedback regarding progress.

At admission, learners and families sign a Community Agreement that sets out the guidelines for behaviour at RBAir.

Learners are expected to:

- do their best to attend each session on the timetable;
- work towards making social and academic progress;
- treat the other learners and staff with kindness and respect, regardless of similarities or differences.

Strategies for managing behaviour

RBAir understands that behaviour is a form of communication and will work sensitively with each learner to ensure underlying needs are understood and met, and a suitable learning environment is sustained.

Staff are careful to separate the behaviour from the learner themselves so that each session may present a positive start and a fresh opportunity to re-engage with learning and others.

When a learner's behaviour falls below that reasonably expected of them, staff will respond quickly in order to restore a calm and safe learning environment for that learner and any others with them.

Wellbeing calls

Given the online nature of much RBAir provision, learners may withdraw from a session rather than present as openly combative or disruptive; in such cases, as with any learner who stops responding online, a **wellbeing call home** is the first response. This may be followed up by an email or conversation with a parent/carers and/or the learner to define the issue and find ways to move forward positively.

De-escalation

In instances of challenging behaviour, **de-escalation techniques** can be used online and in person to help prevent further issues. This may involve the use of containing language, the presentation of options to the learner and/or offering **time out**. This might be temporarily removing the learner from the online or in-person session to create a 1:1 discussion space or allowing time for overwhelm to subside. Staff may, in some instances, choose to end an online session for a learner (e.g. when there is acute or complex emotional dysregulation), informing the parent/carers immediately if this has occurred.

RBAir does not apply sanctions or give concrete rewards (though staff always seek to provide positive feedback where possible). The intention is to build learners' intrinsic motivation to learn and to contribute positively to the community. Staff will always let learners know when they have behaved in a manner that ignores the rights of another learner or a member of staff. If low-level responses fail to bring about the required outcome, it may be necessary to convene a more formal meeting between the pertinent parties.

In such a meeting (led by a member of staff), both the member of the community who has concerns about the behaviour of another and the person about whom the concerns are being expressed have the opportunity to describe their respective points of view calmly. A mediated approach often leads to a resolution.

In the event of a **serious breach of the behaviour policy** or if behaviour constitutes a criminal act there would follow the process as follows:

- Prompt suspension from the provision for a period while an investigation takes place, this will be determined by the Head of Centre.

- Following an investigation by the Head of Centre, the provision may be withdrawn or re-instated depending on risks to other learners, staff or the public.

Serious breaches may include:

- verbal assault to any RBAir community member;
- physical assault to any RBAir community member;
- any abuse related to protected characteristics;
- hate speech;
- false or fabricated allegations;
- bringing knives or weapons into the environment, this extends to trips and visits;
- bringing drugs in or using drugs on the premises, this includes trips and visits.

The use of reasonable force

RBAir believes that the supportive and nurturing aspect of its provision, allied to an effective admissions policy, makes it extremely unlikely that any form of physical intervention or ‘positive handling’ will ever be required from a member of staff. However, we acknowledge the importance of ensuring that:

- all in-centre staff are aware of current guidance in this area;
- staff feel confident as to the course of action they will take should a situation arise in which they decide that physical intervention is the best course of action to take.

A policy summarising the most recent DfE guidance regarding ‘use of reasonable force’, together with the RBAir interpretation of it, is also available.

In any case wherein a learner is deemed to have made a malicious or false allegation against a member of staff, consideration will be given as to whether that learner can remain within the RBAir community (see Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff Policy).

5. Risk management

All learners in their first half term will have a Risk Management Plan (RMP) created (this can be co-created with the learner if they feel able to contribute) that will encompass their presenting issues and mitigations in relation to their needs. These will be bespoke to the individual and will focus on ensuring that the young person receives the best conditions across the provision to engage effectively with their learning.

6. Further key practices and government policies

As an independent provider, RBAir has a bespoke approach to the administration of wider government policy in relation to the maintenance of a safe learning environment. Statutory compliance in relation to safeguarding is strictly adhered to. Staff are trained in, and aware of, responsibilities in relation to child protection, RBET's Staff Code of Conduct Policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, and the role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Staff are aware of the searching and screening policy and will follow the guidance as shown should there be a serious concern and the safety of other learners or staff is at risk :

- [Searching, screening and confiscation in schools - GOV.UK](#)

Use of mobile phones

While RBAir understands the national drive to remove mobile phones from the classroom, it is not a workable approach for the provision as a whole. Due to a significant proportion of the learning programme being carried out online in the home environment, policing the use of additional technologies is problematic. To mitigate this, all new learners are asked to sign an ICT Acceptable Use Agreement:

- [ICT Acceptable Use Agreement](#)

When in Centre, learners may use their mobile phones for information retrieval during sessions, and for leisure outside session times. Guidance is given for their use, and learners are encouraged to put them 'away' when not required. This might be into a pocket or a bag or away from the learner in a practical session.