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Purpose

RBAir operates a blended provision in which the majority of education is delivered through online learning, but often social communication or lifeskills-focused sessions occur in a centre or in the community. Regardless of the type of session or medium through which it takes place, RBAir intends to enable students to manage their own behaviour by making informed choices, as opposed to staff managing students' behaviour. We believe that the manner in which staff relate to students and the way that they construct an appropriate learning environment are the key factors that will lead to student behaviour that supports the learning of all members of the community.

Scope

The use of corporal punishment or any 'tool for managing behaviour' that in any way demeans, damages, threatens or humiliates a young person will never be tolerated or considered within RBAir. Our whole purpose is to enable students to develop a positive self-identity.

The headteacher is responsible for the 'management of student behaviour' within RBAir; all staff, however, must play an active role and students are encouraged to ensure that their behaviour supports their own development and contributes to a community that is supportive of all its members.

Policy statement, provision, and safeguards

Red Balloon staff always seek to:

- acknowledge 'good' behaviour;
- celebrate any success (academic or personal);
- enable students to display learning proudly (e.g. through sharing with peers);
- provide situations within which students can succeed and acknowledge that success;
- expect all members of the RBAir community to contribute positively to it;
- make RBAir a place where students feel safe, enjoy learning, and wish to be.

Red Balloon seeks to support students to become:

- determined (displaying resilience, tenacity, self-control, curiosity),
- optimistic (displaying enthusiasm, confidence, ambition),
- emotionally intelligent (displaying humility, respect, sensitivity, tolerance).

and to lead students to be:

- | | | |
|-------------|-----|----------|
| ● kind | not | callous |
| ● generous | not | greedy |
| ● forgiving | not | vengeful |
| ● tolerant | not | bigoted |

- trustworthy not deceitful

The core principles that underpin the above are:

- unconditional positive regard;
- understanding of individual rights and responsibilities;
- placing student voice at the heart of curriculum building ('Negotiating the Curriculum');
- restorative justice.

It is the quality of the relationships that are built across RBAir, both online and in person, that is the greatest factor in enabling students to develop prosocial behaviours.

The headteacher will ensure that all staff are appropriately trained and engage in ongoing discussion regarding good practice.

Unconditional positive regard (UPR)

Students hold an absolute right to be treated with respect and care. That right is not contingent upon their behaviour or the quality of their academic performance. Key features of providing UPR are:

- a friendly welcome each day, whether in person or online;
- time taken to get to know each individual student;
- time taken to discuss those subjects that interest the individual – staff should always strive to enter a student's 'quality world', no matter how different that is from their own;
- acceptance of each student's right to a viewpoint and to be 'listened to' (with the given that these rights are contingent upon understanding individual responsibility to maintain the rights of others);
- recognition of the contribution(s) each student makes to the community;
- acceptance of the individual;
- valuing of 'difference';
- encouragement of self-worth as a person as 'me', rather than as a 'success' in particular areas;
- declared confidence in a student's ability to contribute positively to the community, to behave appropriately according to the environment they are in and to change their behaviour if they wish to, given appropriate support (unconditional positive regard and a growth mindset).

Rights and responsibilities

UPR cannot operate successfully unless students understand that each member of the community has the same rights: an individual who chooses to ignore the rights of others does not lose their absolute right to UPR, but any such behaviour will always be 'picked up' – definitely by staff, and, it is to be hoped, by other students too. 'Picking up' may mean anything from a quiet word to an insistence upon a restorative justice meeting.

Each member of the RBAir community has the right to:

- be treated with respect;

- feel safe physically and emotionally;
- learn.

All rules will be framed to ensure that individual rights are upheld. Different physical spaces, including online and face-to-face sessions, will require different 'ground rules' to ensure that all students are physically safe; the principles remain constant. Wherever possible, conversations with students about behaviour should refer to these principles.

Student voice

In order to enable students to engage effectively with learning, RBAir staff aim to generate learning experiences that interest students, 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 students in individualising that curriculum – how does each student learn most effectively; how can they show that they have mastered new learning?

Equally, students are central to reviews of progress and identification of their next learning targets.

Students are involved in the development of rule and routine systems within each centre, though no rule or routine that would impact negatively upon the non-negotiable core rights will be considered.

Responding to misbehaviour

When a student'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 student and any others with them.

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

In instances of challenging behaviour, de-escalation techniques can be used online and in person to help prevent further issues. Teachers or other staff may offer time out, temporarily removing the young person from the online or in-person session to create a 1-1 discussion space, or to allow time for overwhelm to subside. Staff may, in some instances, choose to end an online session for a student (e.g. when there is acute or complex emotional dysregulation), informing the parent immediately if this has occurred.

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

Restorative justice

Red Balloon Centres and RBAir do not apply sanctions or give concrete rewards (though staff always seek to provide positive feedback where possible). Our intention is to build students'

intrinsic motivation to learn and to contribute positively to the community. Staff will always let students know when they have behaved in a manner that ignores the rights of another student or a member of staff. Wherever possible inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour will be responded to in a low-level fashion, usually with a calm explanation of why the behaviour is unacceptable (how it fails to acknowledge the rights of others) and a clear statement of what behaviour is required. If such low-level response fails to bring about the required outcome, it may be necessary to convene a more formal meeting between the pertinent parties and to address the issue in accordance with restorative justice principles.

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 (behaviour may be criticised, the person may not be). Through such structured conversation resolution is usually reached.

Further key practices

Involvement of parents / carers – staff will share information with parents / carers and ensure that students know that the centre and parents / carers work together for the good of the student.

Involvement of other key professionals – staff will always involve professionals in reviews of progress. In any case where they have significant concern that a student's behaviour may not be in accordance with RB principles, they will alert and seek the involvement of the commissioning agent or other involved professionals.

Serious contravention (in terms of severity or duration) of the rights of a member / members of the RBAir community – the aim of RBAir is to enable students who have had damaging or traumatic experience of mainstream schooling to re-engage with education, and staff, therefore, cannot allow any student to behave in a manner that jeopardises the positive development of other students. We will ensure that this is made absolutely clear to all involved at the point of referral, and that no student is admitted who does not feel able to give a commitment to the maintenance of the rights of others (see Admissions Policy). If, despite this initial understanding, after intervention and support, it is not possible to enable a student to behave in a manner that upholds the rights of others, we will either seek to educate that young person 'away from other students' for a period of time. We will consider if it is possible to support their return to groups online or face-to-face, or whether it is more appropriate to negotiate with the commissioning agent regarding an alternative placement.

Red Balloon 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 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 that is also available.

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

Working with SEND students:

In accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) RBAir will seek to ensure that no student suffers discrimination of any sort.

When a centre receives a referral for a student with SEND, the Admissions Team, including the SENDCo, will check during the provision meeting that the centre is able to meet all identified needs.

Red Balloon behaviour practice enables staff to treat each student as an individual, hence to meet their specific needs. Where necessary, staff will include plans for improving learning behaviour within an individual learning plan and work with the student to monitor progress against that plan.

Legislation / guidance that informs this policy

- Education and Inspection Act (2006)

Section 89 of the above Act requires that the headteacher of a relevant school must determine measures to be taken with a view to:

- “promoting among pupils self-discipline and proper regard for authority,
- encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among pupils,
- ensuring that the standard of behaviour of pupils is acceptable,
- ensuring that pupils complete any tasks reasonably assigned to them in connection with their education, and
- otherwise regulating the conduct of pupils”.
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations (2015)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Gov.UK Sept 2023)

Other Red Balloon policies to be read in conjunction with this one

- Anti-Bullying
- Student Wellbeing
- Safeguarding
- Exclusions
- Use of Reasonable Force
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff
- E-safety
- Diversity, Equality and Inclusion
- Admissions

Both the prevention of bullying and the management of any bullying behaviour that does occur (implied within the behaviour framework described below) are discussed in more detail in the anti-bullying policy.