



## The Ranch Xtreme Alternative Education Provision

# Therapeutic Behaviour Policy

<p><b>Reviewed by The Directors</b></p>	<p><b>Summer 2024</b></p>	<p>This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the Directors board. Our Directors will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.</p> <p><b>Staff Roles Named in this Policy:</b>  <b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b> <a href="#">Iain Woodbridge</a>  <b>Inclusion and Faciliator Lead</b> <a href="#">Toni Matthews</a>  <b>Elsa and Nurture</b> <a href="#">Elle Laird</a>  <b>Team Teach Trained Staff:</b>  <a href="#">Iain Woodbridge</a>, <a href="#">James Matthews-Woodbridge</a>,  <a href="#">Tom Gilford</a></p>
<p><b>Adopted by The Ranch Xtreme</b></p>	<p><b>Summer 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Review cycle:</b>  <b>At least annually or sooner with updates</b></p>
<p><b>Date for next review</b></p>	<p><b>Summer 2025</b></p>	<p><b>Signed by Directors:</b> <i>Toni Matthews</i>  <i>Iain Woodbridge, James Matthews Woodbridge, DIANA</i>  <i>GLENCROSS.</i></p>

# Therapeutic Behaviour Policy

## 1. Rationale:

Maintaining a calm and inclusive learning environment in which all pupils and adults can be safe, happy and productive is of paramount importance to everyone at The Ranch Xtreme.

As an Inclusive Alternative Education Provision we work hard to ensure that all members of The Ranch Xtreme community are treated with respect and understanding. All adults subscribe to the notion that 'behaviour is the child's loudest voice' and that building relationships with our pupils is the best way of understanding this voice. We all recognise the strong link between behaviour, feelings and experiences and use this knowledge in all elements of alternative provision.

Our goal is to provide successful outcomes with the aim to transition our pupils into mainstream education or empower them to their next education stage. As pupils make their way through their placement at The Ranch Xtreme they are supported to understand what this means in practice and to recognise that how they conduct themselves has a significant impact on those around them. This is done through positive behaviour support strategies that seek to balance the desire for high expectations and clear boundaries with the need to tailor strategies to the individual and complex needs of young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. A high priority is given to working alongside parents and carers as partners in this work.

The Ranch Xtreme is committed to The Thrive Approach; this is the over-arching therapeutic approach to behaviour support that has been embedded in all of the support that we provide.

Thrive is now used in over 2800 schools nationwide.

## 2. Encouraging Prosocial Behaviour:

The emphasis throughout the setting is on supporting pupils with resilience and to behave in a prosocial way, to encourage pupils to develop internal controls rather than punishing them for getting

this wrong.

At The Ranch Xtreme, the definition of behaving in a prosocial way is behaviour that is positive, helpful, and intended to promote social acceptance. It can be characterised by a concern for the rights, feelings and welfare of other people, and behaviour that benefits other people or society.

Staff empathy and understanding of each pupil's perspective and experience of the world is seen as central when considering how best to support and encourage appropriate behaviours.

The most commonly used form of encouragement to promote prosocial feelings and behaviour is the way we build relationships through our interactions.

THRIVE supports children with their emotional health, well being and social skills, all of which are needed to enable learning to take place. Children cannot always put their needs into words, but the way children behave can tell us a lot about how they are feeling.

### **Staff should follow The Thrive Approach:**

**Connection:** Staff will stay open and socially engaged rather than defensive, and so promote this in the pupils. It provides opportunities to experience that s/he is valued and worthwhile and to practice experiencing joy and happiness (including the practice of regulating positive emotions). Staff should engage in light, hopeful, open and spontaneous interactions. Nonverbal elements of communication especially the tone of voice, body language and facial expressions are an essential part of conveying safety, interest, warmth and welcome. Staff should always endeavour to make themselves approachable to the pupils they are with.

**Validation and Active Listening** creates a feeling of psychological safety and belonging. Staff will promote feelings of trust and that they understand the thoughts, feelings and wishes of the pupil. Pupils learn to feel safe with people and therefore staff should show that they value the pupil. The focus is on the acceptance of the pupil's internal experiences – the thoughts, feelings, wishes, beliefs, desires and hopes that people carry inside themselves.

There are obviously times when it is not appropriate for a member of staff to agree fully with something a pupil says. At these times, it is helpful to acknowledge the pupil's perspective and to actively listen and reflect on what they are sharing. Correction is carried out whilst maintaining connection (the relationship is stronger than the incident). Through interactions, staff should show that they have kept the pupil in mind (e.g. "I thought of you when... because it reminded me of the time when..." or "How are you getting on with..."). These interactions should provide acceptance not rejection.

**Co Regulation and Reflection** promotes wondering without shame. Staff should engage in interactions to get to know more about the pupil and show an active interest in their experiences. When we direct non-judgemental curiosity towards a child or young person, then s/he is more likely to be receptive to understanding this experience and it is likely that it will be less overwhelming. Staff will take an interest in the pupils experiences (e.g. "What's that about?", "Well let's figure it out together?") and should show that they want to resolve and understand any problem together. Staff will engage in finding out; What s/he likes and does not like? What's important in his/her life? What helps him/her and what doesn't? In addition, it is beneficial to promote being curious about things that are not problematic in the pupil's life and his/her successes. Staff will show being curious on behalf of him/her, gently wondering aloud ("I'm guessing that maybe..."), exploring together and/or inviting them to talk (depending developmental stage of the pupil).

**Empathy** communicates understanding and helps the pupils to be safe enough to feel vulnerable. Empathy provides experience of comfort. To learn to empathise with others the pupil will first have to experience empathy from others. Staff should show they are able to see things from the pupil's point of view and communicate that. Staff will promote a pupils need to feel safe enough to be sad and, therefore, to be open to comfort. Staff will stay with empathy rather than moving on to reassurance or to problem solving too quickly (e.g. "Thank you so much for telling me." "That sounds really hard?" "How are you coping?" or "Is there anything that helps?"). Staff will show 'Empathy' for positive emotions too (i.e. matched affect and shared delight in positive experience).

- All staff consistently model positive behaviour and language, including body language.
  - Social stories and visual pathways are used to explain and help pupils to understand the expectations of social situations and therefore support them to make prosocial choices.
  - Staff use positive and differential reinforcement as celebration of prosocial behaviours ('catch them getting it right').
  - Staff use special interests and motivating activities to make tasks intrinsically motivating rather than 'dangling carrots' for pupils to work towards.
  - Staff do not use sweets or any food as motivators for prosocial behaviour. •
- At times pupils need space, time and areas that support their sensory needs.

These places include:

**EquiScholars stable/paddock**

**The hill**

**The Den**

**Individualised agreed safe spaces**

**Green Gym or other outdoor spaces**

- Pupils using any of the above safe spaces will be monitored by their named Youth Support Worker. Where this is not possible alternative supervision can be sought via a member of Early Intervention Team, Youth Support Team Leader, on site Director. Staff with the most competent understanding of the individual's needs will decide what is the best approach to supervision, based on their knowledge of the function of the behaviour. Positive phrasing and limited choice can be used to support and direct pupils to make positive choices. If the function of behaviour is attention, staff can disempower the behaviour by giving very little attention to my antisocial behaviour and giving their full attention to prosocial behaviours when they are chosen.

### **3. Responses to and reduction of anti-social Behaviour:**

- We do not talk at The Ranch Xtreme in terms of punishments for behaviour, but we do recognise that children and young people need boundaries and to understand that there are consequences for anti-social behaviour.
- In order to be successful we have to tailor our strategies, including those for behaviour, to the individual needs of each pupil. Individual risk management plans, Exit plans, Behavioural triggers observations, are written for those pupils who require a specific response that might be different to the majority. The Ranch Xtreme see each child as an individual.
- Individual approaches to support prosocial behaviour are as many and varied as the pupils themselves, but can include the following:
  - The use of an area or areas of the setting that are identified for a pupil to go.
  - The use of sensory breaks throughout the day.
  - Timetabled therapy sessions e.g. ELSA and Nurture interventions, or through the mental health practitioner Rebecca Lynock.

- Antisocial, difficult behaviour such as swearing, derogatory language and threatening behaviour is addressed by staff on the scene with verbal reminders (or visual) stating what behaviours are acceptable. This should be done through the use of positive phrasing, limited choice, disempowering language and de-escalation scripts. Examples of these below. Staff verbally & visually direct others away from the scene using positive phrasing, body language and de-escalation scripts. This is then reported to the named keyworker and the Lead Facilitator/Inclusion Lead.
- **Positive phrases** are clear, uncomplicated, unambiguous instructions delivered with clarity. It is often beneficial to support a positive phrase with a 'please' or 'thank you'. Using 'please' will suggest an element of choice so should be reserved for low-level behaviours. Using 'thank you' suggests you expect the student to comply.

Neither please nor thank you would be used in a high level, dangerous situations. The positive phrase would be delivered assertively but without aggression. An example would be 'put the knife down on the table'. Repetition is really important because of processing. Staff who are inexperienced may interpret lack of response with not understanding so they change the instruction, leading to more confusion and anxiety. Repetition gives the child more opportunity for the child to process the instruction. Also need to allow for take-up time. All children need time to process. Children in a heightened state of anxiety or in crisis need even more time than they usually do.

Examples:

**Stand next to me**

**Put the pen on the table**

**Walk up the hill**

**Switch the tablet off**

**Walk with me to the chickens**

**Stay by the Nook**

- **Limited choices** often follow directly from positive phrases 'Jay we are going to The Den, do you want to walk on your own or with me, on your own or with me, Jay?'

Positive phrases and limited choices should be punctuated with take up time (an opportunity for the child to think, process and consider.) Examples:

**Where shall we talk, here or by the goats?**

**Put the pen on the table or in the box**

**I am making a drink, orange or lemon?**

**Are you going to sit on your own or with the group?**

**Are you starting your work with the words or a picture?**

- **Disempowering language.** Anti social empowered behaviour needs to receive as little interaction as possible while waiting to empower (interact positively) with any pro social behaviour as soon as it is evident. The message is anti social behaviour is pointless, pro social behaviour is powerful. Disempowering relies on managing the audience including the adults. Necessary observation for safety reasons should be from a distance with no unnecessary verbal communication. It is an effective strategy to empower other prosocial behaviours in the dynamic while dis empowering anti social behaviours in any individual.

Examples:

**You can listen from there**

**Come and find me when you come back**

**Come back into the Den when you are ready.**

**We will carry on when you are ready**

- **De-escalation script** is designed to remove heat from a situation and create space and time. Any element can be chosen as an appropriate response to the aggression or challenge presented by the student. Example:

**Child's name**

**I can see something has happened**

**I am here to help**

**Talk and I will listen**

**Come with me and.....**

- Reflection is carried out at an appropriate level for each pupil. Reflection is used to explain the protective consequence (if it is necessary to remove a freedom to protect from harm) and to support understanding and future learning - educational consequence.
- Reflection sessions will follow positive listening principles:
  - **Take time to listen.**

- Listen to the pupil's perspective first - connect, validate.
  - Try to understand how all those involved felt and why they did what they did.
  - Explain why staff took the actions that they took.
  - Try to connect feelings with behaviours. Body sensations.
  - Talk about future strategies, using visual prompts as appropriate, that the pupil can use when they are feeling anxious, angry or upset.
  - Talk about how staff will help the pupil to respond with more prosocial behaviour in the future.
- Some pupils may not have the expressive or receptive skills to fully engage in a reflection session. Where this is the case staff will explore alternative strategies such as social stories in order to explain why certain actions are taken and teach prosocial skills for the future.
  - Any incidents of bullying are taken seriously and staff will:
    - Listen
    - Investigate (gather information from all parties and any witnesses)
    - Record (incident forms) and share with Toni Matthews Lead Facilitator and Iain Woodbridge DSL
    - Set up opportunities for restoration, reflection and follow-up work with individuals and groups
  - Parents and carers are informed the same day of all serious incidents and are kept informed of low level disruption or cause for concern at regular intervals (by Designated Safeguarding Lead)

#### **4. Recording, Analysis and Monitoring of Behaviour:**

- Significant behaviour incidents are recorded on the Incident Report Form and logged on the Safeguarding hub on SharePoint365. Forms are electronic and instantly accessible to complete. Once completed they are kept on the system and an individual incident folder is created for the child on the Safeguarding hub on SharePoint365 and forwarded to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to be investigated as soon as is practically possible.
- A significant behaviour incident is one which has:
  - resulted in physical harm to anyone involved or in significant damage to property or buildings been of significant duration or included behaviour that is out of the



## **ordinary for that pupil**

- **a pupil leaves the site without permission**

1. • In the event of an accident or injury to a pupil or adult an Accident/Incident Form is completed, normally in addition to a Serious Incident Form. In the same way.
2. • Incidents that have required restrictive physical intervention are logged. Named staff have Team Teach training.
3. • All forms are completed fully using precise, factual and non-judgemental language and include precise timings and duration of an incident. Full names of staff and pupils involved must be recorded on all documentation.
4. • Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform parents of incidents through phone calls or emails when the facts have been established. The use of concise and non-judgemental language should be used, as well as discussing the protective and educational consequences that will follow.
5. • Analysis of behaviour is central to a positive therapeutic behaviour policy.
6. Staff review behaviour and complete observations and session notes daily and pupils are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their actions.
7. • Regular solution-focussed meetings are built in to the full staff meeting calendar. This offers opportunities for the wider staff group who work with any one pupil to discuss how best to support a pupil by looking at the pattern of behaviours and focusing on strategies to encourage prosocial behaviour and communication.
8. • Senior leaders collate and analyse termly behaviour outcomes for the following and adjust provision and approaches accordingly

### **5. Physical Intervention:**

- At The Ranch Xtreme we promote appropriate touch as part of a therapeutic approach. There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with individuals for a variety of reasons, for example:
  - **To comfort or reward a student**
  - **To direct or steer a student (supporting, guiding, escorting)**
  - **To protect individuals from harm**
  - **For activity reasons (for example in physical games)**

- Staff focus on the use of proactive strategies such as planning, structure and de-escalation skills in order to address behaviour concerns.
- Three staff are trained in Team Teach which includes physical intervention techniques which are non restrictive. These techniques range from offering an arm to an open mitten escort (paired) and can be used by trained staff to support guide and escort pupils.
- Where there has been an assessed need through an audit of need and risk assessment documents where physical intervention techniques will not suffice, named staff (**Iain Woodbridge, James Matthews-Woodbridge and Tom Gilford**) are trained in the use of minimal restrictive physical interventions tailored to meet the presenting needs. It is understood that these are reactive strategies that are only to be used as a last resort.
- Where a pupil is restrained we are committed to analysing the crisis in order to learn from the experience and to develop skills and strategies that allow us to resolve issues before arriving at crisis point in the future.
- We use The Thrive Approach to behaviour. All staff receive initial training and regular refreshers in positive behaviour support strategies. If behaviours are identified as dangerous relevant staff will be trained in Team Teach. This includes restrictive physical intervention and personal safety responses.
- Where there is a need for physical intervention or restraint , the Team Teach trained staff follow guidelines. Other than emergency situations restrictive physical intervention is only used following an audit of need and an individual risk management plan is then put in to place. Restrictive physical intervention is only used to respond to dangerous (rather than difficult) behaviours.
- In an emergency staff may need to physically intervene with the pupil in order to manage the crisis and make the situation safe. There are a number of factors that need to be considered when doing this.
  - a. Any restrictive physical intervention should be a last resort. Staff should be very clear that they do not have an alternative approach available to manage the situation.
  - b. Any intervention needs to be reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary.
  - c. Any staff member physically intervening needs to be confident that they have the physical and emotional capacity to perform the technique i.e. undertake a personal risk assessment.
  - d. Staff physically intervening need to ensure that they are approaching the situation

objectively.

e. Every intervention needs to be in the best interests of the pupil.

• In the event that staff do physically intervene their intention should always be to reduce the risks associated with the behaviour for all concerned.

- This may involve maintaining the pupil where they are and removing the rest of the class. If a pupil is being restrained staff and pupil should wherever possible remain standing and keep moving.
- This may involve staff directing the pupil (using agreed Team Teach techniques e.g. elbow tuck or figure of 4) to a safe place. Once there, staff either remain in a physical restraint or disengage and give the pupil space according to the risk management plan. This decision is informed by the following factors.

- **Where they disengage it should be either because they feel that the pupil is calm enough to manage themselves without being an ongoing danger or because they feel that remaining in a restraint is over arousing or not safe.**

- **Where they choose to remain in a restraint it should only be because they believe that their restraint is safe and that the pupil is likely to calm in this position.**

• When staff disengage from the pupil it is always the intention that they, or someone else, remains with the pupil.

Staff remain in the room/area unless the risk management plan indicates otherwise.

Staff follow the individual risk management plan for a pupil, in the event that there is no plan in place staff will remain in the room/area unless this is clearly making the situation unsafe.

In this incident the member of staff will call for assistance via radio or whistle and request a change of face. Following the first incident a risk management plan will be set up.

At all times a member of staff will monitor the pupil

- Staff may also be trained in personal safety responses as part of the Team Teach intervention. These are classed as Restrictive Physical Interventions and are to address specific dangerous behaviours displayed by individuals. These include responses to neck grabs, responses to hair pulls and responses to bites. Staff will be trained in these responses if it is deemed essential.
- Any incident of restrictive physical intervention is recorded both on a serious incident form and in the safeguarding investigation log. Staff will inform the DSL as soon as possible (preferably the same day).

- Procedures are in place for supporting and restoring the student after every incident of restrictive physical intervention, as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times. A restoration for the other students involved, or who witnessed the incident, should also be considered at an appropriate level.
- Risk Assessment: Pupils who are known to present with dangerous behaviour will have a therapeutic risk management plan drawn up and this has a focus on risk assessment.

## **6. Exclusion:**

### **Fixed Term/Temporary Exclusion**

- The Ranch Xtreme at a last resort makes occasional use of short, fixed term external exclusions in response to serious incidents of difficult and or dangerous behavior.
- An exclusion of this nature gives the pupil a short period of time to reflect upon the incident and to consider how to avoid such behaviors in the future. It also gives The Ranch Xtreme staff time to consider the consequences of the incident and how best to support the pupil on their return (change of environment, update therapeutic risk management plans, differentiation etc.)
- Fixed term exclusions are often supported by advice from external professionals such as the Chesil SEND Team, named educational psychologist and the local authority. Every reasonable attempt will be made to involve parents and carers in discussion prior to the exclusion.
- A return to setting meeting with the DSL and Lead Facilitator provides an opportunity for all to reflect on the seriousness of the incident, to discuss how to prevent a recurrence in the future and to promote prosocial behaviors.

### **c. Permanent Exclusion**

The Ranch Xtreme aims not to permanently exclude or rescind placement to its pupils. On rare occasions, where the needs of a pupil have been found to exceed the provision available, a managed move to another school or setting is negotiated with the local authority and parents.

- Managed moves are only contemplated when everything that can conceivably be done to provide adequately for the pupil and to moderate his/her anti-social behavior has been tried and that a significant period of time has elapsed in which there has been no evidence to suggest that the situation can be made manageable.

## **7. Policy Development and Staff Training:**

- New staff are made aware of this Behaviour Policy as part of The Ranch Xtreme's comprehensive Induction Programme.
- All staff receive initial and ongoing training in The Thrive Approach of de-escalation and intervention strategies and approaches.
- Where a risk has been assessed and there is a potential need that a pupil will require restrictive physical intervention the key working support staff working with that pupil will be those trained in Team Teach.
- Regular updates to policy and practice are shared with staff through staff meetings detailed on the termly Staff Meetings and Training Calendar. Topics include all matters relating to therapeutic behaviour support, including the functional analysis of behaviour.

## **Other Policies and Documentation:**

Anti-bullying Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Code of Conduct

Code of Staff Behaviour