



BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Reviewed by Jamie McManus

Date of Last Review 25/10/24

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Introduction

As an alternative provision working with students who are struggling to effectively manage their behaviour and/or emotions in school, here at UniqMinds we recognise that a huge part of the work we do is in the area of helping these young people to manage their social and emotional responses in a more appropriate way. This is an important part of the teaching that all of our students will experience through their time spent at UniqMinds.

The young people with whom we work, for a wide range of reasons, have not managed themselves well within a mainstream setting. It follows, therefore, that the approaches we use should be different in order to work with this specific group.

Here at UniqMinds, we believe we have a unique life changing way of delivering this through martial arts, that all our students will participate in for part of the day. Our martial arts sessions will help our students at UniqMinds develop self-discipline, self-control, anger management, focus and concentration, that will allow them to develop not only in a learning/education environment, but also in the outside world.

At UniqMinds we understand that routine, consistency and a sense of belonging are the best environments for young people recovering from trauma, and each day is set up with this in mind. We always seek to prepare students if there is a change coming, this could be alterations to staffing due to illness/holiday, or an alteration to the programme or a change to the routine for the day/week.

We will start our days at UniqMinds with what we consider to be an essential part of the day. We will set our daily targets and allow a small time for our students to settle into the environment. As staff, we will use this time to assess the emotional state of the young people on arrival and to try to settle as a team for the day. All the students we work with are struggling to express their emotions appropriately at times, so this first half hour is vitally important and allows us to make necessary adjustments to support and staffing for the day based on how students present.

Aims for all our students:

The aims for our students at UniqMinds will focus on the word PRAISE:

- Perseverance – keep on going when the going gets tough
- Respect one another, your surroundings and your own education
- Attention – manage your distractions, keep focussed
- Initiative – use your initiative and be motivated to make a difference
- Self-motivated – work hard, have the self-discipline to not waste your opportunities
- Explain your learning and show your progress.

Definitions of Behaviour

Misbehaviour is defined as:

- Refusing to hand in phones / vapes at the beginning of the day
- Disruption in lessons, in social areas between lessons, and at break and lunchtimes
- Refusing to engage in any of the sessions
- Non-completion of work
- Poor attitude

Serious misbehaviour is defined as:

- Repeated breaches of UniqMinds rules and policies
- Any form of bullying
- Sexual assault, which is any unwanted sexual behaviour that causes humiliation, pain, fear or intimidation
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Aggressive / violent behaviour towards staff or students (both within the provision or off site)
- Truancy/Absconding from UniqMinds
- Smoking /vaping
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory behaviour
- Possession of any prohibited items. These are:
 - Knives or weapons
 - Alcohol
 - Illegal drug
 - Stolen items
 - Tobacco and cigarette papers
 - E-cigarettes, vapes, vape pens and vaporizers
 - Fireworks
 - Pornographic images
 - Any article a staff member reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student)

Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Please see the UniqMinds Anti-Bullying Policy for more in-depth information on Bullying.

Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the behaviour policy consistently
- Modelling positive behaviour
- Providing a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of each student
- Be Clear What They Would Like to See:
 - Set clear expectations (recognising some students will fail to meet these on occasion, but not lowering the overall expectation as a result)
 - Try to warn clearly what the consequence will be ahead of time, so the student is clear e.g. “If you choose to continue to disrupt everyone, I will have to speak to home”
 - Ensure the situation is unpicked after an incident, be that on the day or in a follow up visit or session.
 - Reset the expectations.
- Build Trust with the Young Person (by following through):
 - Always carry out what has been said, be that positive or negative consequence, even if you regret saying it afterwards (it is more important that they learn to trust you at your word).
 - Take care not to voice a consequence that is not possible to enforce. E.g. “You will get in the car or your parents will be coming to collect you right now.” (We don’t know if they are available and may not be able to happen.) This kind of comment empowers them to take up the challenge rather than encouraging them to conform to the set boundary.
 - Say sorry to them if you make a mistake
 - Always use the Language of Choice
- Remind a student they are in control of the choice they will make, not you. Empower them to make the right choice by reminding them what you would like to see.
- Negotiate with a student who is in a state of non-compliance in order to get a solution that shows they have given a little, even if they do not manage the whole expectation.
- Tune in to the student’s behaviour and focus on drawing their attention to something that will engage them when they are in a state of non-compliance. This might be taking the student to the breakout area to play a game of table tennis, or into the break out room to take time to decompress. Staff members will take a student to an area where they have the opportunity to talk and express their feelings in a safe space.
- Be clear what the whole expectation is but negotiate something in between to move things forward. Remind them they have a choice to do the right thing.
- Give them space to back down without losing face. If they are refusing to hand something over, tell them you want it in the next five minutes and then leave them. If possible, create a way for them to do this away from others.
- Support Each Other
- Be relational, with some assertiveness if needed, but do not raise your voice, and, if you feel you are getting frustrated, ask another team member to take over (you have not lost, we are a team).
- Work together as a staff team. It is sometimes best to walk away and leave another staff member to take a different approach for the same end goal.

Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Support their child in adhering to the student code of conduct
- Inform the school / provision of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with a member of staff promptly.

Student Code of Conduct

- Take part in the planned activities for the day –you are expected to have a go at everything. We will support you here at UniqMinds and understand it is sometimes difficult, but you are expected to try your best. **YOU CAN DO IT**
- Show respect for others, individual and group differences. Respect others' views and opinions – Don't laugh or mock others because of what they have said. We must be willing to learn that it is not ok to laugh at others just because they think differently.
- Do not be offensive to staff or students – it's never ok to use swear words or nasty comments to or about someone else, no matter how difficult they are to get along with
- Be willing to try to put things right – saying sorry is difficult, admitting we have said something we shouldn't have is tough, but we need to allow others to help us put things right.
- Work on being able to talk about what is bothering you – developing the skills to talk about how you feel is important to your future mental health and well-being. It's really important
- to your future.

All students will be required to attend a taster day at UniqMinds, so they can spend time in the provision, meeting with our coaches and other students, get a feel for our ethos and an introduction to the policies and procedures. Once a student placement begins, this will be subjected to a two-week probation period.

Rewards and sanctions

UniqMinds recognises that rewards and sanctions are an important part in shaping behaviour, we also acknowledge that students have different interests and different motivators. Therefore, the rewards or consequences will be determined on an individual level to best suit the student's development.

Possible positive rewards & praise could be:

- Ongoing praise for positive choices, including work being praised by other staff and students.
- Praise for putting things right after a bad behavioural choice
- Letting a student know you are proud of them and being explicit about why
- Allowing a reward activity after work is completed (extra recreation time or reward of choice)
- Outing related to area of work at end of positive half term
- Emails/texts/phone calls home and/or with the school with praise

- Certificates
- Reward Card posted home to congratulate on behaviour

Possible negative consequences could be:

- A verbal reprimand
- Expecting work to be completed at home, or at break or lunchtime
- Removed from group to complete session
- Meeting with parent/guardian to discuss and agree expectations moving forward
- Meeting with parent/guardian to catch up on work missed/ not completed
- Positive behaviour agreement drawn up and signed by student and staff
- Pause and restart project in the next half term
- Emails/texts/phone calls home and/or to school with concern

Off-site behaviour

Sanctions may be applied where a pupil has misbehaved off-site when representing UniqMinds, such as on a school trip or in the taxi on the way to or from the provision.

If UniqMinds hears of bullying behaviour, intimidation or violence to others by UniqMinds members outside of the provision, we will liaise with their parents to discover if any sanction has already been given at home. UniqMinds will then decide if a sanction / additional sanction to the home one, needs to be given to reinforce that such behaviour is not acceptable.

Malicious allegations

Where a student makes an accusation against a member of staff and that accusation is shown to have been malicious, we will discuss the issues with the student and may decide to call a multi-agency meeting. Please refer to our safeguarding policy for more information on responding to allegations of abuse. UniqMinds will also consider the pastoral needs of staff accused of misconduct.

Use of Force

Physical restraint

In some circumstances, staff may use reasonable force to restrain a pupil to prevent them:

- Causing disorder
- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property

Incidents of physical restraint must:

- ***Always be used as a last resort***
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned

- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded and reported to parents
- Be recorded and reported to the referring school.

Confiscation

Any prohibited items (listed previously in this policy) found in a student's possession will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to students. We will also confiscate any item which is harmful or detrimental to the running of UniqMinds sessions. These items will be returned to students after discussion staff members and parents.

Suspension of Students

This section provides an overview of the suspension process. UniqMinds will adhere to current legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. The provision is obliged to have regard to the DfE guidance on exclusions. We ensure that our policies and practices do not discriminate against pupils by **unfairly increasing their risk of exclusion**. Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages, needs, or low participation affecting one group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

The Directors of UniqMinds and the Advisory Board will comply with statutory duties in relation to SEN when administering the exclusion process. This includes having regard to the SEND Code of Practice when making a decision.

The suspension policy relates to behaviour not only in provision but also to behaviour out of provision: e.g. travelling to and from UniqMinds; on trips; work experience placement etc.

UniqMinds believes that suspension is recognised as an appropriate sanction, however staff will ensure that a range of other strategies have been tried and exhausted before stating the suspension process. A suspension will likely arise as a result of persistent breaches of the provision's policies and procedures.

Prior to suspending a student, the Directors of UniqMinds will:

- ensure a thorough and detailed investigation has been conducted
- ensure all evidence has been considered
- ensure the student has had the opportunity to be heard
- consulted with any relevant individuals

Suspensions should only ever be issued by a Director of UniqMinds and will be done in full consultation with the referring School.

Directors, Advisory Board members, independent review panel members and clerks, and SEN experts must by law have regard to this guidance when deciding:

- whether to suspend a student.
- whether to uphold a suspension.
- whether to direct reinstatement.

- whether to recommend or direct that the advisory board considers the suspension again.

UniqMinds has a range of policies, procedures and staff training in place that will promote good behaviour. This behaviour policy is widely publicised so that students, parents and all provision staff are aware of the standards of behaviour expected and the range of sanctions.

Daily Suspension

A daily suspension will be issued for any of the following:

- Continual, inexcusable lateness.
- Disrespect to staff, other students, rules and UniqMinds values
- Refusing to take part in any of the sessions
- Disruption to lesson or training session
- Refusing to tidy up their mess

UniqMinds will suspend the student for the remainder of the day and the following steps will be taken:

- UniqMinds will call the school to arrange for the safe transportation of the student back to school or home.
- UniqMinds will provide a full written report as to why the daily suspension has taken place which will be emailed to the school
- The student is welcome back to UniqMinds on their next scheduled day.

Automatic Suspension

An automatic suspension will be issued for any of the following:

- Verbal/ physical abuse towards other students or staff
- Damaging fixtures, fittings or equipment
- Absconding
- Theft.
- Refusal to hand over phone or vape.
- Bullying.
- Possession of illegal substances/ weapons (school and police informed – depending on severity).
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- If a student has received 3 daily suspensions, on the 3rd incident the student will receive an automatic suspension, and the below procedure followed.

UniqMinds will suspend the student with immediate effect and the following steps will be taken:

- UniqMinds will call the parent to arrange for the safe transportation of the student back to school or home. If UniqMinds are unsuccessful in contacting the parents, we will ask the referring School to make arrangement for the collection of the student.
- UniqMinds will inform both the school and the parent / guardians on the day of a decision to suspend a student by telephone, followed with an email to the school. The details leading to the suspension, as well as the number of days the suspension will last will be detailed in the letter.

- A reintegration meeting will be required with the student, parent / guardian, a school representative and a UniqMinds Director before a student can attend any further sessions. The meeting will be an opportunity for the student to reflect on the reasons for the suspension and identify ways to ensure it doesn't happen again. UniqMinds staff members will discuss with the student and parent / guardian strategies that can be put in place to support the student in making more positive decisions in the future.
- Following the suspension and subject to the re-integration meeting outcome, there will be a two-week probation period when the student is welcomed back into the provision.
- If another suspension, either daily or automatic, is issued within the two weeks, this will result in an instant termination of the placement.
- If the students settle back into the provision, they will remain on a 3-month probation period from the day they start back. If the student engages well during the probation period and the positive behaviour strategies implemented, at the end of the 3-month period, all suspension rules are reset.

During a suspension, parents / guardians are responsible for ensuring the student is not found in a public place during education hours.

We want students to thrive at UniqMinds, and to really benefit from the sessions on offer at the provision. If at any point a UniqMinds staff member has concerns about a student's commitment to their placement (i.e. the student expresses they don't want to be here; they don't like it; they are not interested in the training or coaching) UniqMinds reserve the right to call a review meeting. The meeting will be with the student, parent / guardian and a school representative, and will review whether UniqMinds is the right provision for the student. Following the meeting, the student may be placed on a probation period to see if their engagement increases. If not, UniqMinds may terminate the placement.