A POLICY TO PROMOTE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Heroes Berkshire’s most important function is to provide effective learning for all students in a caring friendly and well-ordered environment.

The aim of this policy is to support a positive ethos at the farm so that effective learning can take place and that each person is valued, respected and treated well.

We are a caring community whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all.

We all have a responsibility to manage behaviour and relationships in a positive way.

At Heroes Berkshire we believe that students generally want to behave well and that Behaviour is a means of communication.

Our Behaviour Policy is designed to enable all members of the Heroes community to work together in a supportive way. It aims to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure.

At Heroes Berkshire, we aim to:

• Promote and support children to demonstrate a high standard of behaviour

• Promote self-awareness, self-control, respect for authority and acceptance of responsibility for their own actions.

• Create and maintain a positive and safe environment where effective learning can take place and all students can grow socially, emotionally, with mutual respect

• Provide a nurturing environment

Heroes Berkshire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

It is our job to ensure all students are supported to communicate their needs safely and appropriately. With the right support and intervention students can learn to improve their ability to self-regulate.

All our students are at different stages of the developmental process, some of our pupils have social difficulties and/or learning difficulties which impact on how they behave and respond.

Heroes staff use a variety of strategies to support students to improve their behaviour. All staff have a clear understanding of the needs of all the students in our care. They encourage good behaviour and develop high quality relationships with the pupils.

Heroes Berkshire invests time to allow students the opportunity to reflect on and learn from their mistakes. Mistakes are all part of learning, we always exercising professional judgement, common sense, and flexibility to deliver the right outcomes in difficult situations.

Heroes works in close partnership with parents and carers and makes sure that they communicate on a regular basis with the school/carer or the parent.

Students who attend Heroes Berkshire are expected to uphold the values of the Farm:

 **Respect, Caring, Kindness, Fairness and Honestly**.

Students are expected to follow the dress code at all times which is enclosed shoes/boots, long trousers/long shorts, water-proofs in case of rain.

To ensure that all students can continue to enjoy a high-quality learning experience with the animals we ask that the students arrive on time and be ready to engage with our sessions, be positive and have a ‘can do’ approach to the learning sessions and activities.

 We ask students not to use their mobile phones whilst they are on site unless they are taking photos of the animals or looking up information on the animals or information needed for whatever subject they might be engaged in.

We ask that they are respectful towards others, are respectful of the farm, the animals and the buildings, furniture and resources.

**Initial Strategies for addressing poor behaviour**

All staff have a responsibility to be proactive in planning for behaviour to select the most appropriate strategy to address poor behaviour.

In the majority of cases, the students Mentor/Tutor would intervene and will address the behaviour in a positive and constructive manner. Students will be made aware of the impact of their behaviour on the animals and the other students around them.

When addressing poor behaviour, consideration should be given to:

1. Clear and realistic expectations
2. Recognising effort
3. Specific student information
4. Timing of any intervention to minimise impact to ‘pace and flow’ of the session
5. Use of voice and language
6. Location for discussion with pupil
7. Desired outcome of intervention (a fair, considered and proportionate response to allow for escalation to Principal if necessary)

**Responses and Consequences may include:**

* De-escalation
* non-verbal/verbal cues delivered without interruption to the session if in a group
* a quiet word
* using a calm tone of voice and clear, direct language
* choosing to address the issue after a cooling off period
* Parental Contact or school contact to discuss the situation

It is critical that Mentors/Tutors work to resolve difficulties in the first instance and a referral to the Principal should only be made in situations of persistent indiscipline or serious incidents.

 The Principal will maintain an overview of pupil progress – positive and negative aspects.

Discussion with Colleagues, and Mentor Staff are invaluable when attempting to address concerns about Low Level Indiscipline. Other planned opportunities to address Low Level discipline will include Meetings, Peer Observations, Monitoring and through weekly House Team Meetings.

As the first point of contact for the pupils at the start of the day, the Mentor/Tutor has a responsibility to establish a positive atmosphere that will continue throughout the session.

**Physical Intervention**

Staff are advised against physically intervening except where a pupil is placing her/himself or others at major risk of harm and instead use de-escalation techniques. (see separate policy)

Physical restraint of a pupil may be necessary in order to:

* + maintain the safety of pupils and staff.
	+ prevent serious damage to vehicles and property.
	+ Prevent harm to animals

**Minimising the need to use force**

The use of physical restraint is not part of Heroes Berkshire disciplinary process – it is an emergency response, to an exceptional situation.

 An assessment of the risk to the pupil, to other pupils, to the responsible adult, animals or to property/vehicles, must be made in such circumstances.

**Deciding whether to use force**

• Staff should have grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary in self-defence, because there is imminent risk of injury, a developing risk of injury, risk of injury to the animals or damage to property or vehicles. The risk of injury may be to the pupil, to other pupils, or to a member of staff/the public. The law recognises that a reasonable use of physical force in self-defence to prevent injury is appropriate.

• It is recognised that staff will have to decide whether attempting physically to restrain a student will improve or exacerbate the situation. A difficult situation may be worsened by attempts at physical restraint when dealing, for example, with some pupils with particular special educational needs.

• Physical restraint should only be used as an exceptional measure when a pupil is placing her/himself or others at serious risk of harm. It should only be used when verbal comments do not control the unacceptable behaviour.

• Clearly it is not always possible to secure the presence of other staff before applying restraint but every possible effort should be made to do this. It is preferable that a member of the Leadership group should be the person who restrains the pupil.

• Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or to remove the risk of harm should be applied and if used, should be accompanied by calmly letting the pupil know what s/he needs to do to remove the need for restraint. Consideration needs to be given to the age, sex and understanding of the pupil in question.

• As soon as it is safe to do so, restraint should be gradually relaxed to allow the pupil to gain self-control.

• Any use of physical restraint must be recorded and the parent/carer/school must be informed by the Principle

**Recording incidents**

Clear, careful recording is very important. It is also important that any staff who assisted with the restraint, or who witnessed it, should also provide a report. All reports must be given to the Principal it may also be appropriate to report the incident to external agencies involved with the student and their family

**Post-incident support**

Staff who have been involved in physical restraint may feel distressed or upset, and should be given time to regain their composure before resuming duties and an opportunity to reflect and discuss the incident with colleagues and managers as soon as is appropriate. Staff may also require access to further counselling and support.

Pupils involved in the incident, possibly as witnesses, may also need appropriate support.

Their parents/carers/school will need to be contacted. Advice may need to be given with respect to rebuilding relationships.

**Minimising the need to use force**

The use of physical restraint is not part of the disciplinary process – it is an emergency response, to an exceptional situation.

**Staff should consider the following when planning to work with a student**

• Create a calm, orderly and supportive session that minimises the risk of threat of violence of any kind.

• Develop effective relationships between pupils and themselves that are central to good order.

**Role of the Mentors/Tutors**

Mentors/Tutors are responsible for all aspects of the session providing direction, leadership, motivation for all students who attend. They are responsible for leading by example and providing direction, leadership and motivation for all pupils.

In many cases the Principal will be called upon to deal with challenging behaviours which remain unresolved by the Mentor/Tutor. Great care should be taken to de-escalate the situation and ensure that relationships, while perhaps strained, remain in a position to be repaired.

Consideration should be given to:

 Nature of difficulty and the strategies which have been employed by the Mentor/Tutor

 The readiness of the student to engage in discussion about the behaviour

 The timing of incident

 Desired outcome for resolution

**Responses and Consequences available would include**:

* Discussion with the Mentor/Tutor about the strategies used and possible alternative strategies
* Discussion with the student about the consequences of continued behaviour
* Discussion with Mentor/Tutor around next steps
* Monitoring of a students behaviour through the use of a targeted timetable
* Consideration of contact with Parents/ School/Agency to request support
* Consider, with the Mentor/Tutor, the appropriateness of the sessions/activities
* Exclusion – At Heroes Berkshire exclusion is used at a very last resort and in consultation with Parents/Carers (and Social Workers) however if we feel the student is not benefiting from our programme, we may ask that another programme is put in place for the student. This will be done after meeting with the student, parent/carer/social worker.

**Modelling**

One way that students learn about both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour is by observing others therefore it is very important that they are given the to observe positive role models.

Heroes Berkshire is committed to providing positive models for our pupils:

• Staff model appropriate, positive behaviour always

• Older pupils are given opportunities to act as positive role models to younger children

(e.g. having a position of responsibility or buddy role)

Heroes recognise that encouragement, praise, and positive reinforcement teaches the students that appropriate behaviour has positive consequences. This can be used to recognise and reinforce appropriate behaviour and help and encourage pupils who are having difficulty to change what they are doing.

**Malicious allegations against staff and students**

The Principal will decide whether to take disciplinary action in accordance with this policy where a pupil is found to have made false and malicious allegations against a member of staff or student.

**The Role of Parents**

Parents have a vital role to play in their children’s education. It is very important that parents support their child’s learning and co-operate with Heroes Berkshire to promote good behaviour.

Heroes Berkshire is very conscious of the importance of having strong links with parents and good communication between home and the school who refer them.

Heroes will ensure that parents/schools/carers are kept informed of the students behaviour at the farm, so that students receive consistent messages about how to behave at home/school and the farm.

Heroes Behaviour Policy is accessible to all parents/carers via the Heroes Berkshire website.

Parents and Students are also asked to sign an agreement when enrolling with us.

Heroes Berkshire expects all members of the community to adhere to the principles as set out in the Behaviour Policy and therefore to behave in an appropriate manner within the farm.

Incidents of verbal or physical aggression to staff by parents/guardians/carers of children at the farm will be reported immediately to the Principal who will take appropriate action.

**Monitoring and review of the policy**

This policy should be reviewed on an annual basis. It should be reviewed in the light of incidents that may have occurred during the previous twelve months and any training needs that arise should be actioned.

**Dated July 2023**