



Horndon-on-the-Hill Church of England Primary School

Behaviour and Positive Relationships Policy

September 2023

We are all part of God's family. Through trying our best in all we do, we find a sense of belonging.

1 Corinthians 12:27 - All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

Respect, Honesty, Thoughtfulness, Courage, Responsibility

Signed-----

Chair of Governors

Date approved-----

Date to be reviewed-----

Equality, Equity, Democracy, Self-help, Self-Responsibility, Solidarity

Introduction – Aims and objectives

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all.

Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community – Anthony J. D’Angelo

Our vision statement, our core values and the values of the Osborne Trust are embedded across the school in order to promote good relationships, so that all stakeholders can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to learn.

Our Behaviour and Positive Relationships policy embodies our culture and ethos developed through a Trauma Informed approach where relationship is at the heart of every interaction and supports the whole school community to include our staff, our pupils, parent(s)/carers and all other agencies working with Horndon on the Hill Church of England Primary School.

We are committed to ensuring that our school develops a Trauma and Mental Health Informed Approach to ensure that all our pupils develop positive mental health and resilience, enabling them to fully engage in life and learning. There is a growing body of research and understanding of the impact of Childhood Adversity Experiences (ACE) on long term mental and physical health and the protective factors that mitigate the potential impact. It is our aim to maximise the protective factors of school by creating an environment of safety that has strong, positive and supportive relationships at its heart.

If we are truly to protect our pupils and each other, our school approach needs to reflect a differentiated and developmentally appropriate response to behaviour by recognising that behaviour represents an unmet need, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and/or neurocognitive or neurochemical profile.

Whole School Approach

As a school we have embraced a wider definition of trauma to encompass any event that is experienced as frightening, painful or out of control, characterised by there being no one available to support or mitigate the impact of traumatic toxic stress. As such, even the day-to-day exposure to events such as divorce, loss of a loved one, illness within the family, moving house can be experienced as traumatic. Children and adults can be affected by toxic stress. Providing an environment that has safety, connection and compassion at its heart ensures that our school environments never unwittingly re-traumatise any of our school members and act to maximise protective factors through the conscious use of our relationships.

All adults in our school are aware of how to create an ethos and environment of both physical and psychological safety and have the skills to respond to those who have been impacted by traumatic stress. We fully understand and support the impact that connection with a trusted, emotionally available adult has on a child and seek to maximise this for those who are identified as requiring additional support.

Our positive behaviour management and relationship policies reflect a trauma informed approach, and our behaviour strategies are both developmentally and trauma- informed. We do not operate a ‘zero

tolerance' or 'one size fits all' approach to distressed behaviour, however, we have high expectations of behaviour for all, and support is offered to those having difficulty meeting those expectations.

Relationships

Our school is invested in supporting the very best relational health between:

- Parent(s)/carer and child
- Pupil and pupil
- Pupil and school staff
- Parent/carers and school staff
- School staff
- School staff and senior leaders
- Pupils, parent(s)/carer and other agencies
- School staff and external agencies

All staff understand:

- Basic physiological and emotional needs must be met before a student feels safe enough to relax and learn.
- All staff need to consistently demonstrate that they care and can be trusted.
- All staff need to be well regulated as raised voices, angry faces and body language create fear and stress.
- Strategies and skills to manage behaviour take time and effort to learn – small successes need to be celebrated.
- Building a threat-free, safe environment where adults are in charge and take full responsibility

means that students are free from the burden of having to keep themselves physically and emotionally safe.

All staff are responsible for adhering to positive practise that promotes a pupil's ability to engage in, and access their learning. This is based on the understanding that pupil's best achieve, develop and reach their true potential when staff are; fair, flexible, trustworthy, respectful, and model positive relationships. It is the expectation at Horndon on the Hill that all staff, regardless of role, act in this way.

We believe that our parents know their children best and we are committed to working in partnership to identify the best ways of providing support for everyone within school. We aim to develop positive, non-judgmental working alliances with all our parents.

Clear and concise expectations of behaviour will be described, modelled and encouraged through class assemblies and in class time to ensure that all children understand what is appropriate.

Motivators

Rewarding positive behaviour is effective only when students understand when and why they are being given it and that all staff apply this consistently. Motivators should be relational in nature and three-dimensional if possible.

Examples of motivators:

- Relational activities
- Verbal acknowledgement of good behaviour
- Special mention in school
- Positive messages communicated to parents e.g. phone call, verbal message or email
- Individual reinforcement such as a visit to another member of staff to celebrate
- Verbal and written praise from the class teacher or other adult in school for good learning, effort or behaviour. Specific links can be made in line with the school and Trust values.
- More subtle forms of praise for students who find overt praise difficult to accept
- Recognising and celebrating achievements more formally in parent/carer meetings or celebration events
- Every Friday a celebration assembly will be held in school.
- Each class teacher will nominate a child who has worked above expectations throughout the week to be “Star of the Week”. These children will be recognised during an Achievement assembly.
- House tokens can be given for excellent behaviour, quality of work and displaying the Christian vision and our core values. These can be given by all members of the teaching and support staff. House tokens are placed in the collection tubes located in the hall and totals are shared with the children during an achievement assembly. At the end of each term, the house with the highest number of points, will receive the house cup.
- Special events will be arranged during the year such as Sports day for example, to enable the teams to win additional points for their house.
- House Captains will be pupils from year 6 elected by the school community (staff and pupils). The elections will be set up to reflect the election process, with children being nominated by their peers, election speeches to the other classes, and secret votes. The person with the most votes will be elected House Captain and the person with the second highest number of votes will be Vice Captain for each house.

Responses and Natural Outcomes

- Although actions do have consequences, students are not always acting out of choice, they are sometimes engaging in survival behaviours that are mediated by unconscious processes. Therefore, caution should be used with the word ‘choice’.
- A ‘Connection before Correction’ approach is used, so the priority is always on repairing the relationship and establishing emotional safety. Using any sanction is effective only if students are clear about why it has been given and that it is given after they have a chance to reflect on their behaviour when they are in a calm state.
- Outcomes should only be applied when the student is regulated and able to reflect upon their behaviour.
- Staff avoid any actions which lead to shaming or humiliation of a student.

- Only the adult who is involved in the event should comment.
- The developmental age and specific needs of the student will be considered when deciding appropriate outcomes, as will the student’s physical and emotional state at the time. A ‘one size fits all’ approach is not appropriate, and this should be kept in mind when deciding upon an appropriate natural outcome, as outlined below.
- A restorative conversation takes place as soon as possible, focusing first on the student’s own feelings (physical and emotional) and how the other student/person may have felt.
- Outcomes of behaviour are responsive to the needs of the student rather than punishing or isolating.
- Natural outcomes include *making up time for lost learning* and *reflection time*, where the lens is upon the student’s own bodily and emotional state and *reparation time*, where the person that has been affected by the student’s action is the focus, and actions are taken to repair the relationship.
- If the context is repeatedly problematic, e.g. assembly, student works with adult to ensure subsequent participation can be successful, e.g. having reduced time / supervision / or not taking part in the activity. As above, the student is given alternative activity, supported by adult. This is a protective strategy rather than a punitive one, and this should be clearly communicated to the student.
- The class teacher discusses the School’s vision statement along with the core values of the school and of the Trust with their class regularly (at least once every term). In addition to this, each class also has its own classroom code, which is agreed by the children and displayed on the wall of the classroom. In this way, every child in the school knows the standard of behaviour that we expect in our school. If there are incidents of anti-social behaviour, the class teacher discusses these with the whole class during ‘circle time’.

Restorative Approach

This school uses restorative approaches to encourage everyone to take responsibility for their behaviours. All staff have been trained in restorative approaches and will apply them to resolving situations in the school. This approach starts with a restorative enquiry, if conflict arises over low-level issues i.e., friendship breakups, disputes over games, running in the corridor and not responding to reasonable adult requests.

Traditional		Restorative
What’s happened, who is to blame?	<i>becomes</i>	What’s happened, who has been harmed and in what way?
How should we punish them?	<i>becomes</i>	What needs to happen to put things right and ensure that this never happens again?

What we see and say	What is really going on
Unacceptable behaviour/a naughty child	Understandable behaviour
Avoidant	In 'flight' survival mode
Defiant	In 'fight' survival mode, coping with threat
Aggressive	Frightened
Attention seeking	Connection needed
Withdrawn	Cautious
Rude	Self-protective
Not engaging	Does not feel safe yet

Protect

- Our school aims to increase 'safety cues' in all aspects of the school day for our pupils and each other, for example designed and timetabled interventions that create opportunities for the emotionally available adults to be alongside our pupils across the school day.
- Open door/Earliest Opportunity policy for informal discussions with parents/ carers.
- We aim to increase our staffs' understanding in nurturing attachments and the PACE approach (Hughes, 2015). This means that our pupils are met with a warm emphatic, playful and curious staff team that will enable them to move out of flight/fight or freeze and into relationship and trust.
- As a school we ensure that interactions with pupils, their families/carers, other agencies and each other are socially engaging not socially defensive.
- All members of our school aim to interactively reflect and repair occasions when they themselves move into defensiveness.
- Our school staff adopt ways of developing relationships and understanding of our pupils, their families/carers and each other. Holding at the heart of our approach relationship as the key to personal, social and emotional development, (as well as academic achievement for our pupils).
- Our school staff adjust their expectations for our pupils, their families and carers in accordance with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress. This sometimes involves removing vulnerable and traumatised pupils in a kind and non-judgemental way from situations they are not managing well. As a staffing team we are also able to do this for each other.
- The use of a robust debrief system. De-briefing opportunities are available in several ways for staff and pupils to assist them in managing situations that have caused or may cause distress. An

incident debriefing meeting assists people, particularly staff and pupils, to overcome the effects of an incident by:

- Talking about what happened
- Expressing how they feel because of the incident
- Identifying any individual stress reactions (i.e. physical, emotional, thinking, behavioural)
- Identifying some ways of dealing with stress reactions
- If appropriate, independent referrals can then be made to outside agencies and professionals such as Education Support Partnership, which offers individual support, information and counselling to our staff 7 days a week/ 24 hours a day.

Relate

- A whole school approach and commitment to enable our pupils, families/carers and staff to see themselves, their relationships and the world positively, rather than through the lens of threat, danger or self-blame.
- Our school provides everyone with repeated relational experiences (alongside emotionally available adults) to support everyone to move from 'blocked trust' (not feeling psychologically safe with anyone) to trust, and from self-help to 'help-seeking'.

Regulate

- As a school we use evidence-based interventions that aim to repair psychological damage and brain damage caused by traumatic experiences, through emotionally regulating, playful and enriched interactions.
- In our school the emotional well-being of and emotional regulation of staff is treated as highly important to prevent burn-out, stress –related absence, or leaving the profession through stress-related illness, secondary trauma and/or feeling blamed or under-valued.
- Our school provides staff with support and strategies which are there to enable staff to take the space they need to reflect and rejuvenate.
- Relational interventions specifically designed to bring down stress hormone levels (e.g. from toxic to tolerable) in vulnerable children, enabling them to feel calm, soothed and safe.

Reflect

- The adults in our school feel confident to develop relationships with pupils, their families and each other.
- Our school promotes the exploration of conversations with our pupils that helps to make sense of their life, to develop a language for their emotions and a narrative that makes sense of their experiences and how they feel. Supporting our pupils to understand their thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and reactions and in doing so enables them to identify and explore new options and strategies for ways forward with their challenges.
- Staff development and training to help children move from 'behaving' their trauma/painful life experiences, to reflecting on those experiences.

- A positive behaviour and relationships policy is based not on punishment and sanctions, but on resolution and interactive repair (e.g., restorative conversations).
- Within the context of an established and trusted relationship with a member of staff pupils are given the means and opportunity to symbolise painful life experiences through images as well as words, as a key part of 'working through' these experiences. Means include the provision of different modes of expression, e.g., art/play/ music/sand/emotion worksheets/emotion cards.
- Staff training and development in the art of good listening, dialogue, empathy and understanding (instead of asking a series of questions/ giving lectures).

Monitoring

The Headteacher monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. She/he also reports to the governing body on the effectiveness of the policy and, if necessary, makes recommendations for further improvements.

The Headteacher keeps a record of any pupil who is suspended for a fixed-term, or who is permanently suspended. It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor the rate of suspensions and to ensure that the school policy is administered fairly and consistently.

The Role of the Governors:

- The Local Governing Body has the responsibility for the monitoring of this Behaviour and Positive Relationships Policy's effectiveness and holding the Head of School to account for its implementation.
- The Local Governing Body reserve the right to extend this policy beyond the school gates in accordance with the DfE statutory regulations.

Review of policy

The local governing body (LGB) reviews this policy on a regular basis. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the LGB receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

The policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

[Behaviour and Discipline in Schools](#)

[The Equality Act 2010](#)

[Supporting pupils with medical conditions in school](#)

[Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#)

In addition, the policy is based on:

Schedule 1 of the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#):

paragraph 7: outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children,

paragraph 9: requires the school to have a written Behaviour Policy, DfE guidance explaining that academies should publish their Behaviour Policy online.

Addendum 1

Suspensions

Fixed term and Permanent Suspension

- Only the Headteacher (or the acting Headteacher) has the power to suspend a pupil from school. The Headteacher may suspend a pupil for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in any one school year. The Headteacher may also suspend a pupil permanently. It is also possible for the Headteacher to convert fixed-term suspension into a permanent suspension, if the circumstances warrant this.
- If the Headteacher suspends a pupil, he/she informs the parents immediately, giving reasons for the suspension. At the same time, the Headteacher makes it clear to the parents that they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision to the governing body. The school informs the parents how to make any such appeal.

The Headteacher informs the LA and the governing body about any permanent suspension, and about any fixed-term suspensions beyond five days in any one term. The governing body itself cannot either suspend a pupil or extend the suspension period made by the Headteacher. The governing body has a discipline committee which is made up of between three and five members. This committee considers any suspension appeals on behalf of the governors.

When an appeals panel meets to consider the suspension of any pupil, they consider the circumstances in which the pupil was suspended, consider any representation by parents and the LA, and consider whether the pupil should be reinstated. If the governors' appeals panel decides that a pupil should be reinstated, the Headteacher must comply with this ruling.