



Relational Policy

(previously Behaviour Policy)

To be adopted alongside;

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

Morpeth First School is committed to creating an environment where exemplary behaviour is at the heart of productive learning. Everyone is expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour, and encourage others to do the same. Our relational policy guides staff to teach self-discipline and self-respect, and develop in children the ability to make positive choices.

Our relational policy, like all aspects of our school life, is underpinned by our school character values, with a strong emphasis on respectful behaviour, and these values are used to frame all of our discussions around behaviour.

Our relational policy is hinged on the importance we place on the relationships we build. We are here to teach children academic subject matter, but also to teach them how to develop as responsible and flourishing members of society. Just as we would teach them how to read or count when they first come to us - by letting them practise and get it wrong, by encouraging and praising them, by guiding and coaching them - so too do we see it as our role to support them in these very same ways to develop their positive behaviour.

We support and guide and coach and praise.

When the children make mistakes, we concentrate on the relationships affected and support the child to repair them. We focus on what the child can learn from it and about how to behave more appropriately. We talk about the consequences and place emphasis on each person's own responsibility for their choices and actions.

This is our relational, restorative approach which builds self-esteem in each child and an understanding that they are responsible for their behaviour and in doing so, builds a school community with respect and empathy at its heart.

Aims

It is a primary aim of Morpeth First School that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and consistently. This policy is designed to promote and encourage positive attitudes towards good behaviour, and to develop the school as a caring and co-operative community by:

- creating a culture of exceptionally good behaviour: for learning, for community and for life
- promoting good relationships and ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly and shown respect
- valuing children's achievements and promoting their self-esteem
- helping pupils take control of their own behaviour, and be responsible for the consequences of it
- building a community which values kindness, care, good humour, good temper and empathy for others
- promoting community cohesion through improved relationships
- ensuring that excellent behaviour is a minimum expectation for all, and by fostering a positive climate of high expectations for work and behaviour
- by taking a consistent approach to behaviour

Expectations of Staff

The following staff expectations have been developed and agreed by staff in school. This applies to all staff: teachers, support staff, wraparound, admin and lunchtime staff, and also volunteers.

- To be an exemplary role model for children and colleagues and consistently model the school character values
- To respect all children and treat them fairly through the implementation of consistent expectations, rules and responses to transgressions
- To consistently support children to take responsibility for their own behaviour and the choices they make, using the values as a guide
- To raise children's self-esteem and develop their full potential
- To provide an inspiring and inclusive curriculum
- To create a safe and stimulating environment that supports children's learning, both academically and behaviourally

Expectations of Pupils

The following pupil expectations have been developed and agreed by children in the school.

- To follow the school rules (see below)
- To conduct themselves in accordance with our school character values (see below)
- To make positive choices
- To remind each other of the school rules and the character values and support each other to make positive choices

Expectations of Parents / Carers

Parents are expected to support the school's relational policy by:

- Making children aware of appropriate behaviour in all situations and being aware of the school rules and expectations
- Encouraging independence and self-discipline, showing an interest in all that their child does in school and by being a role model
- Fostering good relationships with the school and supporting the school in the implementation of this policy.

School Rules

The school rules are intentionally few in number and written concisely to ensure children can remember and understand them. The rules are permanently displayed around the school in each classroom and they are consistently referred to by all staff. Children know the rules and we have actions to go with them to help them to remember.

- Move calmly and safely
- Respect everyone and everything
- Come ready to learn and try your best

School Values

There are 11 values, each of which has a monthly focus across the school year. Discussions around behaviour are consistently framed using the values, by supporting children to reflect on whether they have conducted themselves in accordance with the values and which choices they could make moving forward.

The values underpin and drive all aspects of school life, including behaviour. They are developed in the children through:

- Assemblies, focusing on the value of the month
- Displays in the Character corridor and in classrooms, showing the value of the month with a definition & relevant quotes
- Examples of children added to the recognition board and the character working wall in their classroom when they have shown the value of the month to provide pupils with an example of what the value looks like in action
- Cumulative displays around school of all values as they are covered across the year
- Staff using the vocabulary relating to values consistently and regularly, recognising in children when they have shown a particular value and explicitly explaining what they have done to show that value
- Adults modelling the values.

In addition, the values are taught through the curriculum by:

- planning into each half term the values which underpin the topic as well as the outcomes through the curriculum for each value
- explicitly explaining to the children which value they are working on and planning in ways to help them develop that particular value.

September - Kindness

October - Courage and Confidence

November – Respect and Tolerance

December – Self Regulation

January – Optimism and Gratitude

February – Ambition and Self-motivation

March - Honesty

April – Integrity and Sense of justice

May – Curiosity and Critical thinking

June – Resilience and Determination

July – Collaboration and communication with society

Motivating Positive Behaviour (preventative measures)

We aim to motivate children to make positive choices in their behaviour through the following measures:

- Raising pupils' self-esteem through positive communication and 'sticky praise'
- Ensuring successful experiences
- Emphasising children's own responsibility through providing choices
- Explicitly and consistently developing children's understanding of the character values and how they influence behaviour
- Ensuring each day brings a new start
- Providing children with a forum to have their voice heard - through class work and school council
- Ensuring the environment is attractive, well organised and cared for
- Varying groups in class according to friendship and abilities
- Displaying and celebrating children's outcomes (finished work and photos of positive actions)

Engendering Positive Behaviour through the Curriculum

- Provide quality teaching which encourages engagement and exploration

- Ensure engaging and impactful activities matched to pupil abilities
- Vary lesson pace
- Plan for and support pupils with SEND
- Effectively deploy other adults in the classroom
- Set challenging but achievable goals
- Explain tasks well
- Provide a comprehensive programme of PSHE and be prepared to provide responsive lessons to unforeseen events in school, the wider community, nationally and internationally

Engendering Positive Behaviour through Classroom Management

- Ensure efficient use of time
- Establish clear routines (end of lessons/day and activities)
- Share explicit expectations for behaviour and routinely reinforce these
- Allow time for clearing up, questions, and children to finish work
- Allow children to organise their own time and tasks where possible and appropriate
- Plan for quality activities for those who finish quickly
- Develop a culture of pupils evaluating their own completed work; Have they worked hard enough? Is it their best? Could they present it better?
- Have clear movement routes around the classroom
- Ensure resources are easily available and kept tidy
- Discourage wastefulness

Engendering Positive Behaviour through a Climate for Learning

- Create a climate where children have equal status
- Cultivate a working environment which is comfortable, attractive, interesting and safe
- Establish a climate where there are clear expectations about behaviour and work habits
- Be clear about the relevance of classroom activities
- Work towards an ethos where children can have an increasing role in shaping classroom activity
- Be explicit in expectations of what constitutes achievement and encourage children to work towards relevant standards
- Support children to try new things and learn from mistakes

Engendering Positive Behaviour through Personal Growth

We aim to develop pupils' personal growth through a climate where the following are cultivated:

- An ability to recognise their own feelings and understand they have a choice in how to act on them
- Respect for self and others
- Acceptance so people can be themselves and express beliefs
- Trust in themselves and others
- Self-discovery – find out about themselves and meet own needs
- Non-threatening climate to challenge others
- Openness to the ideas of others and tolerance for differences
- Right to make mistakes
- Active people (staff and pupils) learning with others
- Respect and admiration for differences in learning style and interest
- Co-operative evaluation and self-evaluation (with help)

Addressing misbehaviour

Staff will always respond to poor behaviour calmly and in private. These such incidents are viewed as an opportunity to help a child reflect on their choices and identify how they can learn from the situation.

Staff intervene very briefly when a child is misbehaving with a planned and predictable script, such as;

- This is how we do it here
- I've noticed... (for positive noticing and correction)
- I need you to...
- I understand and yet...
- Remember our rule about...

Strategies to Support Behaviour

The approach and language used to communicate with children always needs to be carefully considered, especially when redirecting or challenging inappropriate behaviour. The following are examples of strategies staff may use when supporting behaviour:

- When giving instructions, staff are calm, clear, and specific about what they are asking and what the success criteria for the task is. This gives a clear start and end point and communicates that the outcome is non-negotiable
- Staff offer directed choices (no more than two choices) which encourages children to make positive choices
- Staff reduce language used to ensure expectations are clear and simple
- Use limit setting scripts such as “when/then” and “if/then” to help teach boundaries in moments of dysregulation
- Staff replace “please” (which is a request that can be denied), with “thank you” (which is a nonaggressive command)

- Use of open questioning - Staff avoid asking “Why” relating to behaviour – “Why did you do that?” This can be a difficult phrasing to respond to and will often escalate a situation as children feel they have to verbally defend their actions. More open questioning or “wondering” can be received as more collaborative and less of a challenge.
- Staff may use sensory tools to support co-regulation
- Change of face/place approach – in times of dysregulation, a different member of staff may be used to support and/or the child removed from the environment to access a calm space
- When redirecting or challenging aspects of behaviour, staff make clear the distinction that they are addressing the action - specifying the problem is the behaviour, not the person, and that the relationship remains secure.

Staff remain positive about future choices, using positive praise to reflect back on these.

Restorative Conversations

Where a child has behaved in a way which is counter to the school rules and values, a restorative conversation may be held between the member of staff dealing with the incident and the pupil. It is important to note that not all incidents need to be resolved in this way.

The atmosphere in a restorative conversation is supportive and reflective rather than a judgmental attack on a child’s behaviour. Restorative conversations follow a consistent Key Stage script (which can be worded differently to meet different children’s understanding but always ensuring the crux remains the same). The scripts are based on a selection of the following questions (not all questions would be asked):

- What has happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought since?
- How did this make you/ people feel?
- Who has been affected?
- How were they affected?
- What should we do to put things right?
- How can we do things differently in the future?

Depending on the child’s responses, there may be further supplementary questions. As part of the restorative conversation, the child is given the opportunity, and supported, to reflect on the impact of their behaviour and how they can make things right.

Members of staff will use their own judgement about whether it is appropriate to hold the conversation immediately or if it is better to delay it. For example, the child and/or adult may require a short period of ‘cooling down’ time to ensure that the restorative conversation is held when all parties are best placed to benefit from it.

Equally, it may not be possible to hold the conversation immediately if this will impact on lessons and learning opportunities.

In some cases, and for a variety of reasons, the member of staff who has discovered the incident may feel it is more appropriate to refer the child to a colleague, such as the teaching assistant supporting that pupil, the SENDCo, the key stage leader, the deputy head or the head teacher. In this

case, the restorative conversation, following the same consistent script, would be held by the person to whom the incident was referred.

Restorative Conversations where there has been a conflict

Where there is conflict between two or more pupils:

- this is investigated fully by a member of staff
- children involved are given the opportunity to share their concerns and views about the conflict (including using the script above)
- the member of staff acts as a facilitator to help resolve the conflict and supports and encourages all parties involved to seek a resolution.

Physical Strategies to Support Self-Regulation

We deploy physical strategies as self-regulation tools. These include:

- Sensory tools suited to the different sensory needs of the children
- Use of breakout space/sensory area/Nurture Nook/ HUB
- Movement breaks
- Visual cues to help identified children make the correct choices (now and next boards, visual timetables etc)

Frame of Language for Pupils

Through coaching and role play, we explicitly teach children how to handle conflict. We provide children with a frame of language, which is appropriate to their age and misbehaviour, to support this. For example:

"When you were running away from Alice, how do you think Alice felt? Do you think Alice understood why you were running away?"

"Maybe instead of running away next time you could say something like 'I know you're just trying to help me Alice but I need some time by myself. Please can I come and find you later when I have cooled off?'"

Or

"What happened after you pushed Adam? Do you think it solved the problem?"

"Maybe next time instead of pushing, you could take two steps back and say to Adam 'I didn't like it when you did/said XYZ, please don't say that to me again' in a firm voice".

Emotional Literacy

There is an expectation that teachers help all children become more aware of how behaviour can be a result of a challenge that a child is experiencing and that at different times, children may need different techniques or strategies to help them, and that this is relevant for some children more than others. Children are taught self-regulation techniques through our character education lessons.

This helps children to better understand why their peer may need, for example, a fidget tool or ear defenders as a strategy, because they listen better when moving or they concentrate better when other noise is removed for instance.

These kinds of strategies are offered as a general way of coping for whoever will benefit from them and this helps to ensure that neurodivergent children don't feel embarrassed to use them, especially as they grow older.

Taking Responsibility for Choices - natural consequences

Following a discussion with the child, staff may feel, in some instances, it is necessary and appropriate for there to be a consequence for the child's behaviour. Consequences should always be related (and never arbitrary) to the misbehaviour so the child can learn from it. However, it is not expected that there will always be a consequence; an alternative such as focusing on solutions, creating routines, offering limited choices or dealing with the belief behind the behaviour may be more appropriate.

Informing Parents

It may be necessary to inform parents of the misbehaviour if it is serious or if it is part of a pattern of behaviour.

This will usually be done by either the class teacher or a member of SLT. Parents may be invited into school for a meeting in some cases.

Persistent Misbehaviour

We are aware that there are experiences in school that can trigger patterns of behaviour in pupils. These triggers may relate to learning, peers, adults/authority, or other factors in a child's life. Where a child repeatedly misbehaves, we keep a log of the child's behaviours and the situation surrounding them. In doing this, we can:

- increase our awareness
- recognise potentially disruptive situations and attempt to minimise them
- implement strategies to manage behaviour within the school e.g. some pupils may be unable to co-operate in a group situation for very long and they would require closer observation/greater input.

If a child regularly displays poor behaviour and a pattern is detected, this should be reported to our Key Stage leaders who will work alongside the class teacher to identify appropriate and personalised support for the child, in the form of an individual behaviour plan. The parents should also be informed of this information.

Serious Incidents

We have the right to take measures to keep pupils and staff safe. These measures include:

- The legal right to confiscate inappropriate items from pupils, such as mobile phones, medication or sharp objects
- A legal duty on schools to make provision to tackle all forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, prejudice based bullying, discriminatory bullying

- Searching bags if there has been an incident of theft.

There will be zero tolerance of any form of deliberate serious assault on pupils or staff.

Positive Handling (using physical restraint)

A number of key staff members have been trained in the use of physical restraint (Safety Intervention Training). Positive handling will only ever be used as a last resort when all other de-escalation strategies have been exhausted, or where there is an immediate risk of harm if physical restraint is not employed. Physical force will never be used as a form of punishment.

Incidents that require the use of positive handling /restraint can be very upsetting to all involved and may result in injuries to pupils or staff. Until an incident has subsided, it is essential to reduce risk of re-escalation and to ensure the situation remains calm. Staff should avoid saying or doing anything that might inflame the situation during the recovery phase.

Pupils should be given time and space to calm down after an incident and when ready, be reintegrated back into their classroom as soon as possible. Staff should also be offered a short break out of the classroom where possible after an incident. It is important to ensure that staff and pupils are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require more than basic first aid.

All injuries should be reported and recorded on an accident form in the accident log book.

Whenever positive handling /restraint is used, the incident must be recorded on CPOMS and a 'Positive Handling' form will need to be completed by the member of staff involved and any witnesses within 24 hours of the incident.

Exclusion

At Morpeth First School, we view exclusion as the very last resort and aim to work with parents and external agencies to avoid this option as far as possible, whilst at the same time considering and ensuring the safety and well-being of the rest of the school community.

Only the Head Teacher can exclude a child. In their absence, this can be delegated to the Deputy Head teacher or other member of the Senior Leadership team.

The reason(s) for exclusion has to be so serious that this merits the child being off-site for either a fixed term exclusion or in very serious circumstances, permanent exclusion. Permanent exclusion is a very last resort.

The reasons for a suspension may include, but is dependent upon the circumstances of:

- Serious physical harm to another child or member of staff
- Persistent racist behaviour
- Serious, deliberate damage to school property
- Behaviour which may put the pupil themselves at risk of serious harm
- Carrying or bringing into school what constitutes a dangerous or offensive weapon (e.g. screwdrivers, knives/penknives, nails, baseball bats etc.)

The exclusion procedure is laid down by specific guidelines and includes informing the child's parents, Chair of Governors and Northumberland LA.

Northumberland County Council agreed Exclusion Policy will be followed.

A permanent exclusion may result from, but is dependent on the circumstances of:

- Serious physical harm caused to another child or member of staff
- Persistent abusive, threatening or violent behaviour towards another pupil or a member of staff
- Continuous disruption to the learning of classmates, which seriously impinges upon the learning of peers
- Uncontrollable violent behaviour which could, potentially, put the pupil themselves or others in danger.

There may be other instances in which this sanction becomes necessary but the school would undertake to have a dialogue with the Local Authority before taking any such action relating to permanent exclusion.

Depending on the type of exclusion, in most cases, parents have the right to make representations to the Governing Board. In all cases of permanent exclusion, parents have the additional right to appeal to an independent appeal panel.

For permanent exclusions, the local authority must arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil to begin no later than the sixth school day of the exclusion. This will be the pupil's 'home authority' in cases where the school is maintained by (or located within) a different local authority.

Where it is not possible, or not appropriate, to arrange alternative provision during the first five school days of an exclusion, the school should take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the pupil. Work that is provided should be accessible and achievable by the pupil outside school. In the case of a looked after child, the school and the local authority should work together to arrange alternative provision from the first day following the exclusion.

References; Paul Dix 'When the adults change, everything changes.'

Policy created Autumn 2024 - Written by Nadine Fielding (Head teacher)