

Quinton Primary School



Behaviour Management Policy (Trauma Informed)

Reviewed - Feb 2024

Context

We strive to be an emotionally literate school with our everyday practice informed by an applied knowledge of the neuroscience of emotional and social development and attachment research. Through this, we aim to ensure resilience, good mental health and a readiness to learn.

'Emotionally literate teachers, who interact with children in ways that soothe, calm, contain, stimulate and accompany them as they learn, support their students to become emotionally literate too. In so doing, they provide the positive interactions that contribute to the development of effective stress management systems in their learners' brains. At best, such teachers/adults contribute to the establishment of 'good-enough' regulating, focussing, meaning making and memory circuitry in the brain.'

'Feel The Difference: Learning in an Emotionally Literate School' Lynne Gerlach /Julia Bird (2006)

Policy Aims

At Quinton Primary School, our behaviour management policy reflects a trauma informed approach and our rewards and sanctions are both developmentally and trauma informed. We do not operate a 'zero tolerance' or 'one size fits all' approach to distressed behaviour. We have high expectations of behaviour for all, however rigorous support is offered to those having difficulty meeting those expectations.

There is a growing body of research on the impact childhood adversity has on long-term mental and physical health. To ensure every child develops positive mental health and attunement, our policy aims to ensure that four key relational needs in every child are met. These needs are:

Affect Attunement

This is the ability of the adult to hear, see, sense, interpret and respond to the child both verbally and non-verbally. It means that the adult communicates that they see, hear and have an understanding of the child's experiences.

Empathy

This involves the adult validating how the child is experiencing a particular event, even when it is very different to how they are experiencing it. It helps the child to make sense of their feelings and of the event.

Containment

This means ensuring consistency, so that children are clear of the boundaries, which are applied in a supportive, matter of fact and non-punitive way. This may mean physical containment, if the child is out of control or placing themselves or others in danger (see Safe Touch Policy).

Soothing (emotional regulation)

This involves an adult helping to bring down toxic stress to tolerable, through empathy, soothing presence and prosody of the voice. This may involve physical containment (see Safe Touch Policy) and movement such as rocking, walking, running or bouncing.

We are committed to educational practices which protect, relate, regulate and reflect (see Relationship Policy). Our school Relationship Policy ensures that staff relate to children in socially engaged and not socially defensive ways. Language is used in a positive way, with gentle tone of voice.

Staff Aims

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Emphasise the importance of being valued as an individual within a group.
- Promote, through example, honesty, courtesy and respect.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect, and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- Create an environment which recognises and celebrates difference.

"When little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it is our job to share our calm, not join their chaos."

L.R. Knost

We recognise that clear structure of predictable outcomes have the best impact on behaviour. Our principle sets out the rules, relentless routines and visible consistencies that all children and staff follow. It is based on the work of Paul Dix and his book 'When the adults change, everything changes'. Good behaviour is recognised sincerely rather than just rewarded. Children are praised publicly and reprimanded in private. It is everyone's responsibility.

"When people talk about behaviour, they obsessively search for the instant solution. Some peddle magic dust or 'behaviour systems' that glisten yet quickly fade. Others relentlessly scream for a bigger stick to beat children down with. Both extremes harbour an irresistible idea that there is a short cut to changing behaviour. They sell the lie that you can provoke sustained behavioural change in others without doing much hard work yourself. The truth is that there is no alternative to the hard work: building relationships with those who would rather not, resetting expectations with those who trample them, being relentlessly positive and sustaining a poker face when confronted with challenging behaviour."

Paul Dix, Pivotal Education

Rules

At Quinton Primary School, we follow three simple, clear and coherent rules, to ensure tight consistency. These rules are relentlessly reinforced, pursued positively by all adults, referred to in every conversation about behaviour and emphasised in every part of school life. They are:

Be ready

Be respectful

Be safe

At Quinton Primary School, we have the following approach to poor behaviour.

Gentle approach, use child's name, child level, eye contact, deliver message
<p>1. REMINDER A reminder of the three simple rules (be ready, be respectful, be safe) delivered privately. <i>I notice you chose to This is a reminder that we need to (be ready/ be respectful/ be safe). You now have the chance to make a better choice.</i></p>
<p>2. CAUTION A clear verbal caution delivered privately, making the student aware of their behaviour and clearly outlining the consequences if they continue. Remind the child of previous examples of good behaviour. <i>I notice you chose to This is the second time I have spoken to you. If you choose to break the rules again, you leave me no choice but to ask you to go to the calm area/ catch up your work at playtime. Remember yesterday when you..... That is what I need to see now. Think carefully about your next step.</i></p>
<p>3. CALM TIME Calm time is a short time in a different area of the room, or possibly outside the room if another adult is available. It is a few minutes for the child to calm down, breathe, look at the situation from a different perspective and compose themselves. I notice you chose to You need to go to the calm corner. I will come and speak to you..... Give the child time to respond, but if the child refuses to do what has been asked repeat the script.</p>
<p>4. FOLLOW UP, REPAIR AND RESTORE This is a meeting at break time or lunch time. It should not run over to the next day. Emotion coaching is used during these conversations, to help children make sense of events (see appendix A). 1. What happened? (neutral, dispassionate language) 2. What were you thinking at the time? 3. What have you thought since? 4. How did this make people feel? 5. Who has been affected? 6. How have they been affected? 7. What should we do to put things right? 8. How can we do things differently in the future?</p>
<p>It's not the severity of the sanction, it's the certainty that this follow up will take place and its immediacy that is important. If stage 3 is reached, stage 4 must be carried out.</p>

There may be occasions where a child is asked to stay inside at break or lunch time, in order to ensure the safety of themselves and of others. This will be at staff discretion.

Where similar negative behaviours occur regularly in a year group, social stories will be used to help children to understand appropriate behaviour, and to therefore change their behaviour in the future.

Visible Consistencies

In addition to following the stepped boundaries above, we also have the following visible consistencies throughout our school:

Clear routines including:

✓ Meeting and greeting

At the start of the day, senior leaders are strategically placed around the school, welcoming children and demonstrating visible enthusiasm. Teachers or teaching assistants are placed on classroom doors, doing the same.

✓ Fantastic walking

Children walk around school with their hands behind their back, walking tall and proud, and walking quietly. This ensures safe and non-disruptive transitions around school.

✓ Positive reflections

Every lesson is ended with positive reflections, using the kindness and gratitude jars.

✓ Over and above

Children are recognised for going over and above expectations.

✓ This is how we do it here

All children are aware of the expectations within the classroom and within the school.

Rewards

Our emphasis is on rewards to reinforce positive behaviour. We believe that rewards have a motivational role, helping children to see that positive behaviour is valued. The most common reward is praise, informal and formal, public and private, to individuals and groups. Rates of praise for behaviour are as high as for work. In addition to praise, we use the following systems to reinforce positive behaviour:

- Recognition boards

Each week, the recognition board in each class has a behaviour focus such as 'being kind'. When a child demonstrates that behaviour, their name or photo is put on the recognition board. Names cannot be taken off the board. It is a collaborative strategy: we are one team, focused on one learning behaviour, and moving in one direction. At the end of the day, the aim is for everyone to have their name/ photo on the board. Even pupils who have received private sanctions can be caught demonstrating positive behaviours.

- Positive notes home

Positive notes home are given out throughout the day, for children who are going over and above.

- Head teacher's awards

"Thinking of a child as behaving badly disposes you to think of punishment. Thinking of a child as struggling to handle something difficult encourages you to help them through their distress."

The Gottman Institute

Appendix

A- Emotion Coaching

Labelling- 'name to tame'

- I wonder whether you are feeling... right now.
- I wonder what was going on there for you... I think you were feeling...
- If I were to make a best guess, I would say that you were feeling...
- I wonder if you were feeling really anxious about... so you...
- It sounds as though you were feeling really angry with...

Empathising and validating- 'fuel connection'

- I'm sorry that happened to you, you must feel very...
- I would feel... too if that happened to me
- That would make me feel...
- It is normal to feel... about that
- It is ok to feel...
- I might feel... too if I felt I had been treated unfairly

Limit setting and problem solving- 'find solutions'

- Separate the feeling from the behaviour: It is not ok to behave like that because... and these are the rules we have to follow to keep safe
- Next time you are feeling like this, what could you do?
- Let's think of what you could have done instead
- I can help you to think of different ways to cope
- Have you thought about doing... instead?
- Let's decide what you can do next time you feel like this

Glossary

Emotionally literate- The ability to read or recognise your own emotions and the emotions of others

Neuroscience- Science which deals with the structure or function of the nervous system and brain

Attachment- A deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space

Trauma- Trauma is a response to any event/s encountered as an out of control, frightening experience that disconnects us from all sense of resourcefulness, safety, coping and/ or love (Tara Brach, 2011)

Childhood adversity- A broad term that refers to a wide range of circumstances or events that pose a serious threat to a child's physical or psychological well-being

Toxic stress- Occurs when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/ or prolonged adversity

Prosody of the voice- The rhythm, stress and intonation of speech, which provides important information beyond a sentence's literal word meaning