

# Ravensfield Primary School



## Behaviour Policy 2022 - Relationships and attachments matter

### **Rationale**

We are a Thrive Approach school. For us this means that we will have the Thrive Approach embedded within our ethos and Thrive approaches across our whole setting. We aim to continually deepen our understanding of how social and emotional learning develops and can be supported and how this underpins our capacity and availability for wider academic learning.

One of the core principles is that the adult–child relationship is vital when developing the child/young person’s social and emotional skills essential for life and learning. Humans are a social species and babies first learn about themselves through the eyes of their caregivers, in other words, the experience reflected back from the caregiver to the child initiates the child’s experience of who they are. Children are naturally meaning-making beings; they make sense of the world through their experiences.

When children experience safety in their relationships they open up to new learning; when they experience a threat to their safety they mobilise themselves for responding to danger and/or prepare to shut down if the conditions are overwhelming and they lack the resources to respond. All children need to have the experience of an adult providing them with a secure base and calming them when

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they are physiologically dysregulated. We describe this as meeting **Being** needs by being a co-regulator.

We also teach that all children need to have experienced having older wiser others (secure bases) to depart from to explore the world, while knowing they can retreat to this secure base in order to refuel, share experience and regulate in the face of danger or threat. We describe this as meeting **Doing** needs by being a co-adventurer.

Finally, we emphasise that all children need adults who 'lend their brains' to children to help them make sense of the complex and often incoherent information all around them. Adults help to organise children's experiences, develop their capacity to reflect and support them to make mental representations of themselves in relationship with others and the world by holding the child's mind in their mind and reflecting this back to the child. We describe this as meeting **Thinking** needs by being the co-creator of meaning.

As Ravensfield we strive to demonstrate a relational approach to supporting social and emotional development and behaviour based on the following six principles:

1. We understand behaviour communicates unmet needs and can separate the child/young person from their behaviour.
2. We understand that each developmental stage has a range of typical behaviours which provide opportunities for adults to role-model and explicitly teach appropriate behaviours.
3. We provide containment, predictability and routine to build a sense of safety in the emotional and physical environment.
4. We encourage children/young people at our setting to become accountable for their actions and the impact they may have on themselves and others, promoting a solution-focused approach to changing future behaviours.
5. We keep in mind that we are the adults and the children/young people are still growing, learning and developing.
6. We seek to restore relationships and change behaviours rather than punish the actions a child may have taken. Although this does not exclude the use of sanctions, we seek the most appropriate way of supporting children/young people to develop robust stress-regulation systems and therefore the skills of self-control, empathy and emotional management.

We recognise that behaviours can be learned and within our cognitive awareness, but also that they can be unconscious, patterned, non-problem solving defence or discharge responses and might feel overwhelming. Attentive, observant adults working in relationship with children are required in order to recognise behaviours, identify the underlying needs and respond in appropriate ways. No significant positive learning can occur without a significant, positive relationship.

We are very clear that everyone has the right to feel safe, feel special and to have their needs met. Therefore, our Behaviour Policy reflects the deeper, important social and emotional learning that each child needs to develop, both personally and within our community, where consistent containment aims to ensure that one individual's need and learning does not adversely impact on another's. We are a community with a commitment to inclusion and so expect parents/carers of children at our school to be fully supportive of our approach to ensuring all children feel safe, special and have their needs met.

The development of positive social, emotional and learning behaviours is at the heart of our Behaviour Policy. At the centre of our school is an awareness of the emotional climate which ensures

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that all children feel valued, calm, cared for and part of an interdependent community.

*Social and emotional competencies have been found to be a more significant determinant of academic achievement than IQ* Duckworth and Seligman 2005

*School-based programmes of social and emotional learning therefore have the potential to help young people acquire the skills they need to make good academic progress.* British Educational Research Journal 2013

## **Team Teach**

Please see our policy on Positive Handling.

## **Aims**

We want to ensure that our pupils are able to:

- Build effective restorative conversations between adults and children and children and children
- understand, regulate and manage emotions
- apply thinking between feeling (sensation and emotion) and action
- increasingly show empathy and understanding to others-this is core to our learning.
- experience challenges, succeed in their learning and have a sense that learning can be fun and relevant to their lives; to become independent, self-aware, resilient learners – socially, emotionally and academically, to be enthusiastic and foster a willingness to take risks.
- From the earliest opportunity pupils will be encouraged to build tolerance, make good choices and take responsibility, in readiness for them taking their place in society.
- Gaining a sense of pride and building self-awareness through planned and incidental social and emotional learning and positive experiences is part of the ethos of our school.
- De-escalate dysregulations

## **Approaches to developing positive behaviours** (in conjunction with our Teaching and Learning Policy)

- High quality education which involves pupils, builds on success, ensures progression and reasoning, as well as involving and informing parents
- Relationships which promote empathy and attachment
- For social, emotional and academic learning to be recognised, planned for and with explicit descriptive feedback across the day
- For whole class Thrive screenings and online tools to enable a strategic response to individual, group and cohort development, and therefore plan next steps
- Programmes of Citizenship, SRE (Sex and Relationships Education) and PSHCE, (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education) used as rich opportunities which are part of all areas of school life and learning
- To encourage children to recognise sensations and therefore emotions, to manage their feelings by separating feelings and actions and allowing opportunities for thinking to take place between the two
- For children to become increasingly self-aware, taking responsibility for themselves and their actions in age-appropriate ways
- Where need is identified, for structured, tailored, group and individual programmes, creative activities and outdoor learning to be incorporated into action plans

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- For individuals with Special Needs (SEND) to be recognised within our behaviour systems with appropriate scaffolded support to ensure they can manage within boundaries that are recognised as fair and consistent for all
- Adults to be observant, open and inclusive, acting as role models, particularly in how respect is shown, and being co-regulators as needed
- We reward positive behaviour, challenge inappropriate behaviour and set achievable targets for development

### **Behaviour Support**

The development of positive social, emotional and learning behaviours is at the heart of our behaviour procedures and approaches. As a Thrive school we use our understanding of social and emotional development and learning as part of our approaches to all learning and in our responses to behaviour.

Our expectations, the rules that underpin them, rewards and sanctions around behaviour are revisited, reviewed at regular intervals and agreed by all. This offers containment and safety.

Our whole school rules are:

- Do be kind and helpful
- Do be gentle
- Do listen
- Do work hard
- Do be honest
- Do look after property

Our expectations are expressed positively. This underlines our understanding that children learn best within positive, trusting relationships and relate to our school values: Love, Honesty, Forgiveness, Respect and Hope.

The revisiting of our expectations regularly is vital in order that they remain fresh, relevant, maintained and explicit and are owed by all stakeholders.

Values boards are used to recognize, acknowledge and promote effective learning behaviours related to the school values.

All adults work in partnership to model, reinforce and support our expectations. Our relationships with each other model our expectations across our community. We invite parents and carers to be part of this through our open and respectful partnerships.

We also recognise the vital role that play and creativity hold in linking experience to understanding and this is used within a planned approach across the school.

SEMH interventions, including Thrive, are an important part of our school provision with the following aims:

- To develop age appropriate social skills
- To have the opportunity to interact, build understanding, empathy, respect and inclusion

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- For the importance of positive play and being creative
- To be physically and mentally healthy – to have fresh air, exercise and the opportunity to relax, reflect and develop emotional literacy
- For the opportunity to explore and interact positively with adults and peers in a less structured, nurturing environment applying choice and preferences

Our positive approaches to behaviour involve us ‘noticing’ good choices, being explicit in descriptive feedback and praise, providing reward as reinforcement. This includes:

- Positive framing
- Being clear and explicit about expectations
- Restorative conversations
- 30 second scripts

All adults will use PLACE in order to build relationships and ‘be in relationship’ with pupils.

P-playful-we show pupils we are willing to have fun and make learning fun

L-loving-we show our pupils we care

A-accepting-we are non-judgmental

C-curious-we are interested in our pupils

E-empathic-we understand and see things from their point of view

All staff will:

- take time to recognise and record positive behaviours and attitudes and reward success
- try to catch children and young people doing the right thing and enhance this
- engage in establishing the non-negotiable and negotiable rules at the start of the academic year and re-visit these regularly and at least half-termly
- focus on the values, rights and responsibilities of the school when establishing these boundaries in conversation with children and young people
- remind children and young people that their actions impact on others and that they have a responsibility to safeguard others’ rights
- seek both resolution and learning when dealing with incidents
- consider how our actions and words help and give children and young people time and space to resolve the situation
- keep in mind that children and young people benefit from a clear structure (containment) within which to learn
- use sanctions only as a form of appropriate, proportionate and positive intervention
- keep in mind that any sanction used is to resolve rather than escalate a situation whilst preserving the dignity of all involved.
- keep in mind that sanctions must be applied compassionately and in a fair and consistent way

In supporting children who need help managing their behaviours the school takes the following actions to be reasonable, proportionate, necessary:

- Communicate with parents
- Positive framing
- Consistent use of language in reframing and re-directing heavier
- Take up time
- Calming spaces

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- Additional agencies and resources
- 1:1 and small group interventions
- Restorative conversations
- Logical consequences which range from time to reflect to exclusions
- Building positive relationships with pupils and parents

Inappropriate sanctions are ridicule, sarcasm or remarks likely to undermine a child's self-confidence, public or private humiliation, applying sanctions to whole groups or classes in cases of individual or small-group wrongdoing, leaving a child in an unsupervised situation, sanctions that are used in a discriminatory way, consistently denying a child access to a particular part of the curriculum (including Thrive sessions) and so on.

When an incident occurs, we understand that this will cause a rupture in relationships and we seek to repair this rupture. We describe this as 'distressed behaviour' rather than 'challenging behaviour' because we understand that the behaviour is communicating a level of need within the child/young person.

### **Recognition**

For children who go "above and beyond" a note will be sent home as well as a Dojo message. These will relate to the school values: Love, Honesty, Forgiveness, Respect and Hope. The aim is to promote intrinsic motivation, rewards will also be given for the process of learning (behaviours for learning) rather than the output of an activity (which may promote extrinsic motivation).

### **Whole-school recognition**

Assemblies provide high quality opportunities for praise linked to deeper learning.

Whole school recognition assemblies involve an element of positive praise and celebration, with each teacher giving explicit praise as to how a child has gone 'above and beyond.' Pupils names and achievements are displayed in the bespoke animated PowerPoints which are shared in Friday assemblies.

Recognising the importance of positive comments, respectful interactions and our role as models to the children, the school expects all adults - staff, parents and governors - to employ this in our relationships with each other, as well as with our pupils.

Our positive approaches are based on our understanding the pupils are learning how to manage themselves with the added complexity that they are doing so within a community of other learners who might not yet be skilled. This clearly suggests that triggers and challenge will arise which will need to be managed. Children will be supported in self-regulation and this represents that good learning has taken place.

A behaviour policy review will take place regularly to scrutinise the effectiveness of the school's approaches.

### **Partnership with parents/carers**

In line with our inclusion approach, wherever possible, all children and parents are welcome at our school. We work as a team to support the children/young people in our setting as they grow and develop socially and emotionally. We actively promote a partnership with parents/carers and other agencies, where appropriate.

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**Supporting staff**

Dealing with a child demonstrating distressed behaviour can be upsetting. It is okay to feel upset and to feel hurt. If you feel that you are getting angry when dealing with an incident, withdraw, give yourself space and time, and seek support during and afterwards. Managing distressed behaviour when you feel angry can escalate the situation. Avoid arguments and negotiations once a sanction is imposed but continue to give clear choices about further conduct.

Other linked policies, procedures, protocols include:

- Blue Room protocol
- Teaching and learning policy
- Positive handling policy
- SEND policy
- Mental Health Policy

## **Appendix 1**

### **The relate–rupture–repair cycle**

Inevitably there will be times when there is a break in the nurturing connection between the adult and child. For example, if the adult is tired, busy dealing with something else or is emotionally unavailable due to a major life event, and so on. While we might do our best to minimise these breaks in connection, when they do happen, they can be repaired, and learning can come from this experience.

Research scientist Suzanne Zeedyk shares with us that “making up is more important than messing up.” Dr Zeedyk refers to the everyday scenarios where relationships between two people go through a rhythm of relating (in relationship), a rupture happening in the relationship and then making a necessary repair to the rupture in order to return to relationship. The repair not only rewires patterns of behaviour; it also establishes trust. This is known as the relate–rupture–repair cycle.

When we look at each element of relate, rupture and repair, we examine the specific skills we, as adults, can use to help support these interactions with the children we work with.

### **Relate**

The ‘relate’ phase refers to the times in a relationship when we feel connected and attuned with one another, things are going well, and we are making efforts to maintain this positive and mutually beneficial relationship. In this phase, we are effectively building a bridge of connection between ourselves and the other person. Caregivers and their infants start building this bridge from before the baby is born and continue to build it after birth and throughout the child's life.

In the relate phase of the cycle, the adult can monitor their own emotional state and can regulate themselves physiologically, relationally and cognitively to be optimally present and accessible for the child. The adult can connect with the child and focus on their needs being met. The adult is present and can contain the child's emotional experience for them. The connection between the two is reciprocal.

### **Rupture**

The ‘rupture’ phase refers to those times in a relationship where there is a misunderstanding or misattunement, in other words, when we don't get it right for the other person and we feel like the relationship experiences a setback. At this point the bridge of connection might feel weakened or more vulnerable. Although we might think of ruptures as being problematic and therefore to be avoided where possible, in fact, they are an inevitable part of any relationship. They become a crucial component in the relationship when the rupture is subsequently repaired because this helps to develop the child's resilience.

Ongoing attunement between the emotionally available adult and the child will inevitably move through different phases, being at times fully synchronised and all-encompassing and at other times disconnected and misattuned.

When a rupture happens, it is likely that we will see the child's behaviour change. The child no longer feels the presence of the adult as supportive or alongside them, and their nervous system quickly reacts to the withdrawal of these cues of safety with survival responses of fight, flight or freeze. These are associated with distressed behaviours we describe in Thrive as passive or non-problem-solving behaviours.

If an adult is able to stay regulated themselves, they will be able to notice subtle changes

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communicated by the child, stay attuned to the child and repair the rupture effectively with compassion. Conversely if they are triggered and become dysregulated, they won't be able to attune to the child and this could also trigger them into further dysregulation. It is therefore important for adults to be aware of their triggers and possible reactions and have access to ways they can stay regulated in challenging circumstances. It is important that ruptures in the relationship are noticed so they can be repaired. If the adult is unable to or does not notice the rupture then it can't be repaired. This is a lost opportunity to build the child's capacity for relationship and regulation.

### **Repair**

The 'repair' phase of the cycle involves correcting the misunderstanding or misattunement of the rupture by trying to share understanding of intentions, feelings, thoughts and actions in order to come back into relationship. The repair part of the cycle is an essential component of healthy growth, boosting our resilience and helping us to cope with challenges by giving us greater trust that difficulties can be resolved.

The emotionally available adult becomes aware that there is a misattunement between him/herself and the child. The adult is able to deal appropriately with their own reaction, in that moment, to stay regulated and is then able to reach out to the child and repair the rupture in their relationship. The adult may do this by apologising and reaffirming the attuning and validating stance, and by demonstrating acceptance, curiosity and empathy to the child.

In this situation the adult has the capacity to stay steady and regulated in the presence of the dysregulated child. By repairing the relationship, the child's arousal state can settle and the relationship can continue in an attuned way. The adult must always repair the relationship, not the child.

### **Vital Relational Functions**

To support the rhythm of this cycle we use the communication skills of the Vital Relational Functions (VRFs). The VRFs represent the key techniques that we consciously apply in relationship.

- Attunement: matching the energy of the child with non-verbal, prosodic, energetic and behavioural communication
- Validation: acknowledging the validity of the feelings the child is experiencing
- Containment: predictability, routine and experiencing safety and security both relationally and environmentally
- Regulation: transforms what was too much to bear alone into an experience that can be tolerated together

## **Appendix 2**

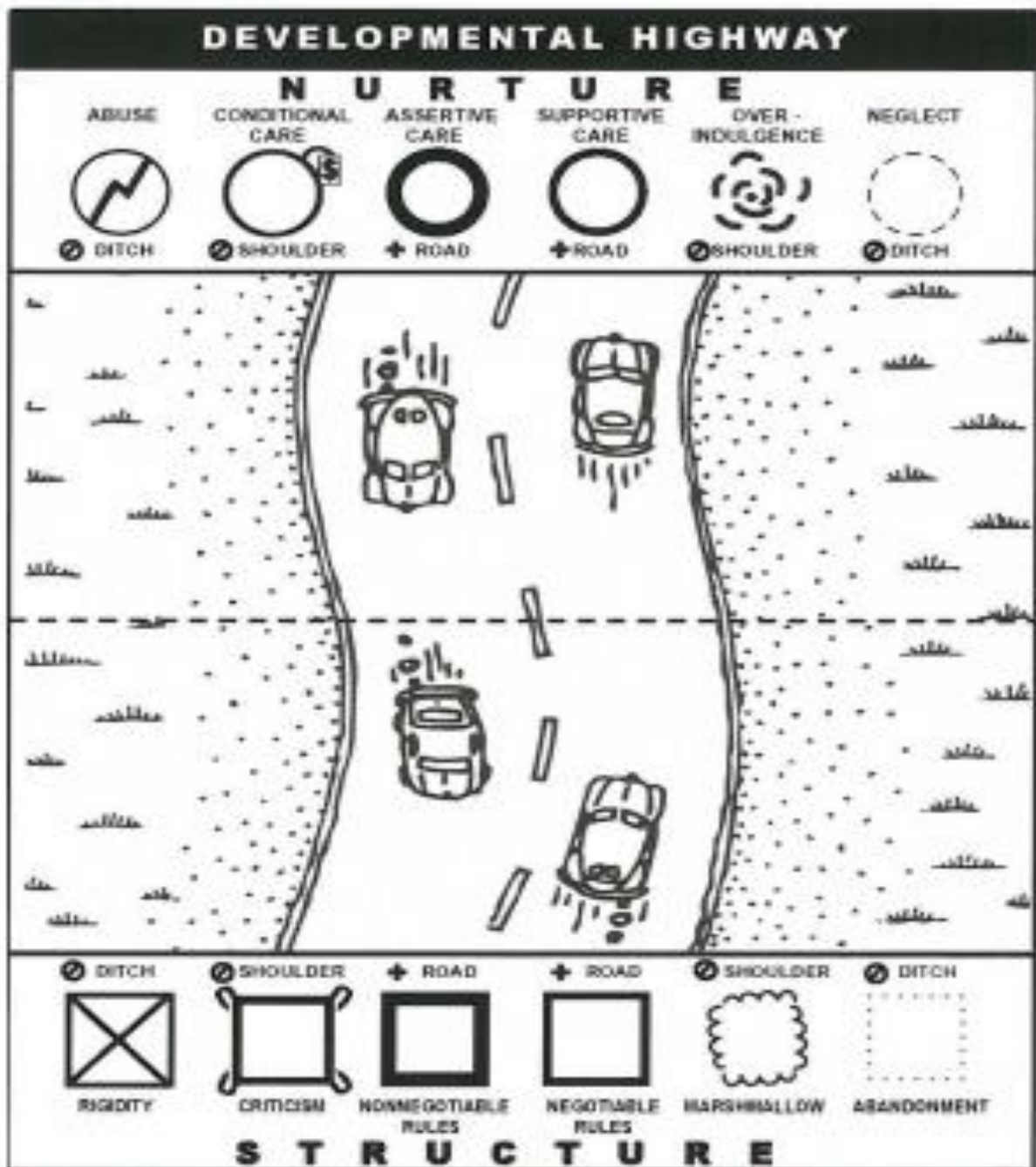
### **The Nurture–Structure Highway**

Both nurture and control (structure) are crucial to the healthy development of the child, supporting the child to be themselves while being able to adapt sufficiently to fit in socially with others. However, where nurture and control are taken to the extremes, they can have a negative effect.

Parent educators Jean Illsley Clarke and Connie Dawson (Illsley Clarke and Dawson 1998) created the model of the Nurture–Structure Highway to help adults maintain an appropriate balance. In this model both nurture and structure are continuous (the road). It is important to stay on the road of reasonable levels and not swerve off into the ditches or hard shoulder of extremes.

This Nurture–Structure Highway model provides a way of helping adults consider the best possible support for the child (staying on the road) and how to avoid veering off into the extremes. It is helpful in making the distinction between negotiable and non-negotiable rules and is particularly useful when discussing boundaries and rules. Coming to an agreement about non-negotiable rules can contribute positively to children’s safety and will support consistency for all staff at the setting

# The Nurture-Structure Highway



Reproduced with kind permission of Isley Clarke J and Dawson C (1998). *Growing Up Again: Parenting Ourselves, Parenting Our Children*. Minnesota: Hazelden.

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## Nurture



**Abuse:** Cruelty



**Conditional care:** "If you..., then I..."; "Only if..."



**Assertive care:** "I care; I'll provide what you need."



**Supportive care:** "I care. I'll help you if you wish."



**Overindulgence:** Always OK, spoiling, giving in.



**Neglect:** Don't care or can't care.

## Structure



**Rigidity:** Always my way; strict.



**Criticism:** Always your fault.



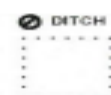
**Non-negotiable rules:** No choice. "Because I care, these are the rules."



**Negotiable rules:** Some choice, compromise.



**Marshmallow:** Soft and gooey; making excuses.



**Abandonment:** No structure or protection.