



## Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust- behaviour and relational practice -PRIMARY SCHOOLS


### South Tawton Primary School


At Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust we create a climate underpinned by The Trust values of solidarity, equality, equity, democracy, self-help and self-responsibility.


Positive attitudes and relationships allow and encourage practices which guarantee the success of inclusion. Attitudes govern all day-to-day practices of classrooms and schools. An inclusive school prioritises relational practice and removes barriers to learning and participation. We manage and support behaviour using relational and restorative practice and principles. These principles are underpinned by our Trust Inclusion Pledge and the recommendations of the EEF's 2019 report:

**IMPROVING BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS** 

 **Classroom-level** strategies have a big **impact** on pupil behaviour, but **consistency** and **coherence** at a **whole-school** level are paramount

Every pupil having a **good relationship** with **one adult** in the school is likely to lead to **better behaviour** outcomes 

 A positive **classroom environment** is significantly more likely among teachers with **5+ years experience**  
Source: TALIS database

**Simple strategies**—such as positively greeting students at the door—are not only **low cost**, but also **highly effective** in improving **classroom behaviour**. 

Our Trust is invested in supporting the very best possible relational health between;

- Parent and child/young person
- Child/young person and child/young person
- Child/young person and school staff
- Parent and school staff
- School staff
- School staff and senior/Trust leaders
- School staff and external agencies.

To this end our Trust is committed to educational practices which **Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect;**

**In all our Primary Schools and nursery provision we aim:**

- To maintain a caring, orderly community in which effective learning can take place and where there is mutual respect between all stakeholders.
- To help children develop a sense of worth, identity and achievement
- To help children to form positive internal working models of self, others and the world
- To help all children to accept responsibility for their own actions and to consider the impact of their behaviour upon relationships through the use of restorative approaches
- To develop in all children the ability to listen to others; cooperate and to appreciate other ways of thinking and behaving

**Our aims, we believe, are achieved when:**

- We create a positive school culture and climate which is consistently safe and caring that fosters connection, inclusion, respect and value for all members of the school community, promoting strong relationships between staff, pupils and their parents/carers
- We recognise that being 'fair' is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity) through appropriate support.
- Staff understand that behaviour is a form of communication of an emotional need (whether conscious or unconscious). With support with unconditional positive regard, pupils can be helped to behave in more socially acceptable/appropriate ways. That relationships are key and that there is "connection before correction"
- Pupils are provided with excellent role models
- Not all behaviours are a matter of 'choice' and not all factors linked to the behaviour of children and young people are within their control.
- Staff have high expectations and maintain boundaries at all times to ensure pupil needs for consistency, predictability and security are met. There will be times when we need to be flexible around boundaries depending on pupil needs. We always make reasonable adjustments.

**Communication – Appropriate language**

**Restorative Approach**

Restorative approaches also known as restorative practice create a harmonious learning environment where pupils are able to self-regulate their own behaviour and learning. Restorative approaches have been found to be very effective in improving behaviour and attitude as it promotes telling the truth, taking responsibility, acknowledging harm as appropriate response to conflict and in doing so creates accountability.

Restorative approaches are not intended to replace the use of consequences but support the decision-making process and bring about understanding of the need to restore the relationship that has been damaged by the behaviour.

**Restorative approaches are based on four key features:**

RESPECT: for everyone by listening to other opinions and learning to value them

RESPONSIBILITY: taking responsibility for your own actions

REPAIR: developing the skills within our school community so that its individual members have the necessary skills to identify solutions that repair harm and ensure behaviours are not repeated

RE-INTEGRATION: working through a structured, supportive process that aims to solve the problem and allows young people to remain in education.

**Good routines rooted in a low arousal approach MUST be in place for:**

- Start and end of day
- Transition times
- Lining up including assemblies
- Getting changed for PE
- Moving around the school
- Break and Lunchtimes
- Taxi/Bus/Transport time
- Start and finish of the day

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. We must be consistent in our application of the rules, codes of conduct, rewards and consequences in order to promote a predictable and therefore safe environment. Inconsistency is confusing to pupils and undermines the work of other staff and pupils' confidence in our systems. We always make reasonable adjustments.

- Contact may be made with parents / carers to identify any possible causes of difficulties, for example a change in circumstances at home.
- Limit setting and problem solving can follow sometime after an event, when the pupil is regulated and able to reflect upon their behaviour. In such circumstances, staff should inform the pupil that their behaviour is inappropriate and that it will be spoken about later using restorative approach to support them to consider alternative approaches.

**All staff will do the following to support the relational based behaviour principles: Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect;**

**Protect**

- Empathise
- Use an attachment / trauma informed approach to understand behaviours
- Will remain curious and demonstrate the desire to understand a behaviour and what it communicates.
- Demonstrate unconditional positive regard
- Ensure 'safety cues' in all aspects of the school day; 'meet and greet' at the classroom door and an open-door policy for informal discussions with parents/ carers.
- Will provide routine in every lesson, in every classroom so pupils know what happens next
- Will provide activities at breaktime to help manage social time.
- Staff trained in 'PACE' modes of interaction (Hughes 2015); being warm emphatic, playful and curious (proven to shift children out of flight/fright/freeze positions).
- Staff ensure that interactions with children are socially engaging and not socially defensive, to decrease likelihood of children relating defensively (flight/fright/freeze).
- A whole school commitment to ensure no use of harsh voices, shouting, put downs, criticism and shaming (proven to be damaging psychologically and neurologically).
- Staff 'interactively repair' occasions when they themselves move into defensiveness.
- Pedagogic interventions that help staff to get to know children better on an individual basis e.g. 'I wish my teacher knew'. (What matters to them, who matters to them, their dreams, hopes). This is key to enabling children to feel safe enough to talk, if they wish, about painful life experiences, which are interfering with their ability to learn and their quality of life.
- Vulnerable children have easy and daily access to at least one named, emotionally available adult, and know when and where to find that adult. If the child does not wish to connect with the allocated adult, an alternative adult is found.
- School staff adjust expectations around vulnerable children to engender equity and correspond with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress. This includes removing vulnerable and traumatised children in a kind and non-judgmental way from situations they are not managing well (e.g. children who are continually triggered into alarm states in the main playground/social spaces can access a calmer, smaller areas with emotionally regulating adults).
- Provision of a clear, confidential and non-shaming system of self-referral for children's help/talk time.
- The nurturing of staff in such a way that they feel truly valued and emotionally-regulated and in so doing to support them to interact throughout the school day with positive social engagement rather than defensiveness.

### **Relate**

- A whole-school commitment to enabling children to see themselves, their relationships and the world positively, rather than through a lens of threat, danger or self-blame.
- Vulnerable children provided with repeated relational opportunities (with emotionally available adults) to make the shift from 'blocked trust' (not feeling psychologically safe with anyone) to trust, and from self-help to 'help seeking'.

### **Regulate**

- Help pupils to find ways to recognise and manage emotions in an appropriate way supported by adult emotional co-regulation.

- Use calm, well-regulated tone and respectful language appropriate to the needs of that child
- Will respond calmly to help pupils become calm
- 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. This is to support learning, quality of life and protect against stress-induced physical and mental illness, now and in later life.
- Evidence-based interventions that aim to repair psychological damage and brain damage caused by traumatic life experiences, through emotionally regulating, playful, enriched adult-child interactions.
- The emotional well-being and regulating of staff is treated as a priority to prevent burnt out, stress related absence, or leaving the profession through stress-related illness, secondary trauma and/or feeling undervalued, blamed or shamed.

### **Reflect**

- Staff training and development and training in the art of good listening, dialogue, empathy and understanding (instead of asking a series of questions/ giving lectures).
- Provision of skills and resources to support parents and staff in meaning empathetic conversations with vulnerable children who want to talk about their lives. This is to empower children to better manage their home situations and life in general.
- Within the context of an established and trusted relationship with a member of staff (working cooperative alliance), children are given the means and opportunity to symbolise painful life experiences through images/play and artistic expression as well as words, as a key part of 'working through' these experiences and memory re-consolidation.
- Means include the provision of different modes of expression, e.g. art/play/drama/ music/sand/emotion worksheets/emotion cards.
- PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and psycho education as preventative input, informed by current research psychological and neuroscience) on mental health, mental ill-health (full range of specific conditions), relationships (including parenting) emotions, social media and tools for how to 'do life well'.
- Curricular content enables children to make informed choices about how they relate to others, how they live their lives, and how they treat their brains, bodies and minds.
- Staff development and training to help children move from 'behaving' their trauma/painful life experiences, to reflecting on those experiences, to reflecting on those experiences and developing resilience.
- Staff referencing and helping them develop positive, coherent narratives about their lives.
- A behaviour policy based not on punishment, sanctions, resolution and interactive repair (e.g. restorative conversations).

### **Pupils who experience anxiety:**

Due to the differing needs pupils sometimes are in a state of high anxiety. We offer pupils different calming strategies and areas around the school for them to regain composure and be supported through co-regulation strategies. To help lessen anxiety and help pupils to self-regulate they also have access to

- Safe spaces in classrooms
- Outside space to physically cool down
- Quiet area in office foyer
- Interventions specific to their needs
- One-page pupil profiles
- Calmer classrooms
- Relational support plans
- Identified key adults
- ELSA trained staff
- CBT trained staff
- Pastoral support sessions

### **Supporting Appropriate Behaviour:**

#### **Modelling**

One way that pupils learn about both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour is by observing others. Pupils model their own behaviour on other people's responses therefore it is important that they are given the opportunity to observe positive role models.

"Emotionally mature adults are flexible enough to change, to be present in the toughest moments and to judge slowly. They are patient, encouraging and kind. Through the fog of anger they keep everyone safe. In the calm light of day they build rapport and emotional currency (Paul Dix, 2017)

The school is committed to providing positive role models for our pupils:

- Staff model appropriate, positive behaviour at all times
- Staff highlight pupils' appropriate behaviour to their peers
- Staff acknowledge and reward pupils' appropriate behaviour
- Older pupils are given opportunities to act as positive role models to younger pupils (e.g. having a position or responsibility or mentoring role). Pupils are given first-hand experience of a wide range of aspirational role models from outside of the school

#### **Praise and positive reinforcement and reward**

As a school we recognise that encouragement, praise and positive reinforcement teaches pupils that appropriate behaviour choices have good consequences. This can be used to recognise and reinforce appropriate behaviour. Positive reinforcement may take the form of different approaches across each Key Stage:

- Acknowledgement of good behaviour
- Team points, class marbles, certificates, SCARF certificates
- Positive messages communicated to parents / carers through emails or telephone calls home
- Individual reinforcement such as sticker charts
- Responsibilities around the school
- Reward days or golden time
- More subtle forms of praise for pupils who find overt praise difficult to accept
- Recognising and celebrating achievements whilst in and out of school.

Consistent use of modelling, encouragement, praise and positive reinforcement is used to:

- Create a positive, respectful school environment.
- Increase pupils' self-esteem and self-efficacy
- Reduce pupils need for extrinsic motivation and increase intrinsic motivation which will help pupils develop skills in self-regulation of their behaviours as they move from primary to secondary.
- Promote a model for appropriate behaviour and positive relationships

Consistency of approach and the use of a common language to reflect this is essential. The use of the pronoun 'we' in terms of relationships within school is a significant ingredient in securing commitment to the school ethos.

### **The Key Concepts of Relational Practice (taken from the Pivotal Schools approach):**

1. Consistent, calm adult behaviour.
2. First attention to best conduct.
3. Relentless routines.
4. Scripted interventions.
5. Restorative follow up.

The approach celebrates "pride before prizes".

### **Examples of RELATIONAL approaches used with pupils:**

School Situation: Pupil in heightened state of anxiety, attempting to climb over the fence and not following instructions to come down.

Playfulness – Use playful language to de-escalate the situation. "Goodness me I really would rather you came down. Problem is that if you fall I will have to fill out a lot of forms and I'm a bit like you - I don't really like writing."

Acceptance - the pupil is experiencing extreme anxiety as a result of a fall out with a friend and that this is a real experience. Communicate that you accept how they feel (e.g. "I can see that this has made you feel really upset"). Avoiding saying things like, "Oh it doesn't matter, don't be upset about a silly fall out."

Curiosity- Enquire and check what the young person's emotional experience is. "I wonder if you're feeling angry because of what X just said?"

Empathy - Show that you understand that how difficult they are finding things. "I understand that this must be really difficult for you. I know that when I am feeling upset I just want to run away from everything."

Using a calm approach, the pupil's anxiety decreased and they came down off the fence. . Instead of imposing consequences, once the pupil was calm, a discussion was had about the dangers of climbing the fence. The pupil was able to reflect on their behaviour and think of alternative things they could do next time

### **Questions to support restorative conversations.**

**Can you tell me;**

1. What happened?

2. What were you thinking/feeling at the time?
3. Who has been affected by this?
4. In which way?
5. What can be done make things right?

Limit setting and problem solving can follow sometime after an event, when the pupil is regulated and able to reflect upon their behaviour. In such circumstances, staff should inform the pupil that their behaviour is inappropriate and that it will be spoken about later using restorative approach to support them to consider alternative approaches.

Dartmoor Mult Academy Trust hold a strong ethos of non-exclusion/suspension where possible. However, exclusion/suspension may be used on the grounds of health and safety if the behaviour is or is potentially harmful to themselves or others (e.g., absconding, assault, bullying including cyberbullying, damage to property, repeated racism or homophobia) Exclusion will only be undertaken with a view to the safeguarding arrangements in place in each individual case. Only the Principal may exclude a pupil. See guidance

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/641418/20170831\\_Exclusion\\_Stat\\_guidance\\_Web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641418/20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf)

### **Expectations on School Visits and Out of School Activities**

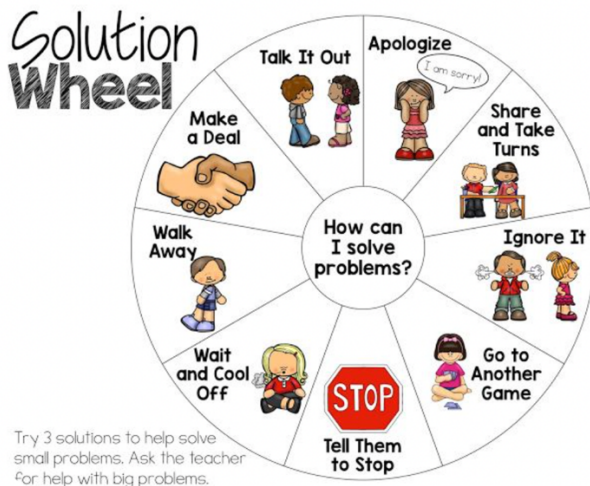
Expectations for behaviour on school visits and out of school activities remain as those for school. At all stages of planning and preparation for an off-site visit, a risk assessment will be carried out. Where challenging behaviour is due to a special educational need, appropriate support will be put in place.

### **Limit-setting approaches:**

Normal classroom management strategies should be in place to support positive behaviour. The Praise to criticism ratio should be 5-1 and this enables staff to highlight expected behaviour, build self-esteem and foster positive relationships.

Limit setting and problem solving can follow sometime after an event, when the pupil is regulated and able to reflect upon their behaviour. In such circumstances, staff should inform the pupil that their behaviour is inappropriate and that it will be spoken about later using restorative approach to support them to consider alternative approaches.





## Recording behaviour

Incidents of deregulated behaviour are recorded on CPOMS and restorative actions recorded.

## Physical Intervention

Although every opportunity will be taken to diffuse a situation and support pupils to regulate there will be occasions when physical intervention may be necessary to keep pupils and others safe. Designated staff attend training in PIPS for Positive Handling. Parents will be informed if their child is involved in a significant incident.

Please refer to the DFE document “Reducing the need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention in School” (June 2019) Physical intervention must be recorded with the Principal and also on the online safeguarding system. A meeting will be held with a member of SLT to discuss the intervention and debrief. It is important that, at an appropriate point, the member of staff initiating the intervention meets with the young person to debrief, discuss the need for the intervention and, most importantly, restore the relationship.

Please see guidance and policy:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/812435/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812435/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention.pdf)

Use of reasonable force policy [Trust \(dartmoormat.org.uk\)](http://Trust(dartmoormat.org.uk))

## Safeguarding Duties

All behaviour is a form of communication. All staff are responsible for considering whether any misbehaviour gives cause to suspect whether a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. If such suspicions exist, staff must follow the Trust and locally determined Safeguarding procedures. The school will also consider whether continuing issues around behaviour might be the result of unmet educational or other needs. At this point, the school will consider whether support systems such as the Graduated Response and/or Early Help should be put in place and whether liaising with external agencies is necessary or appropriate.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

[Keeping children safe in education 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812435/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2021.pdf)

## **The Role of Parents / Carers**

Parents / carers have a vital role to play in their pupils' education. It is very important that parents / carers support their pupil's learning and co-operate with the school to promote positive outcomes.

The school is very conscious of the importance of having strong links with parents and good communication between home and school therefore the school works collaboratively with parents.

The school will ensure that parents are kept informed as to their pupil's behaviour at school, so that pupils receive consistent messages about how to behave at home and at school. The School's Behaviour Policy is accessible to all parents/carers via the school website.

If the school has to implement consequences for pupil behaviour, parents should support the actions of the school. If parents have any concern about the way their pupil has been treated, they should initially contact the class teacher.

The school expects all members of the community to adhere to the principles and therefore to behave in an appropriate manner within school. Incidents of verbal or physical aggression to staff by parents/carers/extended family of pupils in the school will be reported immediately to the Principal who will take appropriate action.

## **Staff wellbeing and supervision**

Staff well being is paramount. It is essential that all adults are able to recognise and respond to their own feelings and emotions. Staff should ensure that they access Occupational Health, their own GP or other appropriate support services if they feel low or vulnerable. (TalkWorks <https://www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk/> ). All these services are confidential. If staff feel comfortable speaking to colleagues they should be aware that, in the first instance, informal supervision should be available from the school's Senior Mental Health Lead and/or an Adult Mental Health First Aider.