

Newington Primary School

Positive Relationships Policy



Review - March 2025

February 2024

Rationale

At Newington Primary School, we are on a journey towards excellent teaching and learning. As part of this journey, we promote positive relationships between all members of the school community based upon the 6 principles of nurture (see appendix 1). It is crucial that everyone understands the role that they play in this process and feels supported to carry out their role effectively. We value the importance of explicitly teaching and modelling excellent behaviour. This is done through: Setting high expectations, having clear rules and routines and consequences while promoting praise and rewards, and all of this is done through building positive relationships.

Purpose of Policy

- To ensure a systematic and structured approach to behaviour which is understood and followed by all members of the school community
- To ensure that all pupils' rights are respected.
- To promote positive relationships between all members of the school community
- To encourage a culture of collegiality, where all staff feel supported to carry out the role expected of them

Our Vision

At Newington Primary School, we believe everyone has the right to achieve, be respected and valued in a nurturing, fun and inclusive environment where expectations are high and success is celebrated.

Our Values



Our Shared Aims:

For Pupils:

- Pupils have the right to learn in a classroom which is orderly and free from distractions (Article 28 –Right to Education)
- Pupils should be encouraged to respect everyone's human rights (Article 29 – Goals of Education)

For Parents:

- Parents/carers will engage with school staff to promote and maintain positive relationships and behaviour within school.
- Parents/carers will work with school staff to build positive partnerships which will allow everyone to work together to provide support for their child(ren).
- Parents/carers should report incidences which they feel staff should be aware of as soon as possible to ensure it is dealt with efficiently and appropriately.
- Celebrate your child's efforts, achievements and successes. Talk to them about their school day and what they have achieved and encourage them to bring in or talk about wider achievements.

For Staff:

- Staff have the right to teach/support in a positive and peaceful environment. (Article 28)
- Staff should always act in the best interests of all pupils. (Article 3 – Best Interests of the Child)
- Staff should build trusting positive relationships with all pupils. (Article 12 – Respect for Views of the Child)
- Staff should provide clear expectations for behaviour in the classroom/playground and should reinforce these with praise or sanctions.
- Positive reinforcement and praise are crucial to creating positive relationships. (Article 12 - Respect for Views of the Child)
- In the classroom, teachers should establish and reinforce routines for all classroom activities.
- Staff should foster the children's self-esteem and confidence through encouragement and positive feedback, to enable them to become increasingly independent as learners and to focus on values that will enable them to become fully rounded individuals. This is celebrated through praise and certificates.
- In the classroom, teachers should take a proactive approach to managing behaviour and should have a plan for behaviour in the class which has been shared with pupils and reinforced regularly. This is known as the Class Charter and is based on principles agreed across the school.

For SLT:

- Staff have the right to expect support from SLT in maintaining a positive and peaceful classroom environment.
- For pupils who do not respond to the Class Charter or the school rules, a risk assessment needs to be made, agreed by all and followed by everybody working with that child.

Appendix 1 the 6 Principles of Nurture

As a nurturing school, we are also guided by, and place a large value and emphasis on the six Principles of Nurture to meet the needs of each child. These principles are:-

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base for all children
3. Nurture is important for the development for well-being
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives

Procedures for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Behaviour is a response of an individual or group to an action, environment, person or stimulus. At Newington Primary School, we recognise that the Curriculum for Excellence cannot be delivered without good relationships and positive behaviour.

“The starting point for learning is a positive ethos and climate of mutual respect and trust based upon shared values across whole school communities where everyone can learn and work in a safe and peaceful environment.”

Building the Curriculum for Excellence through positive relationships and behaviour, 2009.

“Discipline in school should respect children's human dignity.”

Article 28 - UNCRC

Despite the best efforts of all, incidents of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour may still occur. These behaviours may vary from consistent low-level disruption to actions which may merit exclusion from school. In exceptional circumstances, the school (Headteacher) would follow exclusion procedures from Dumfries and Galloway Council Policy.

In a situation where an individual's or group of individual's behaviour and actions fall below the high standards we expect, a range of strategies will be used to support a return to positive behaviour.

Staff are expected to use the behavior flow chart (See Appendix 2)

Where staff feel that behavior needs specialist support, a referral will be made to other agencies in agreement with the parents/carers. There also may be a need to create a Risk Assessment and/or a Child's Plan to move forward positively.

Bullying

“Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place

in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online.”

(Respect for All, Scottish Government, 2017)

Bullying is a complex behaviour which leaves people feeling helpless, frightened, anxious, depressed or humiliated. It should be defined by the impact it is having on the person or people affected. It is therefore, not always easy to narrow down behaviours into a definitive statement that will cover all actions and situations. However, it is important to recognise and acknowledge bullying behaviours in order to identify them when they are happening.

Bullying can be verbal, physical, and/or emotional or involve online conduct which is unwanted and uninvited. The behaviour may be intentional or unintentional, can cause physical or emotional harm, may be repeated over time or be a one-off incident. Bullying is a combination of behaviours and the impact they have.

It can be a range of behaviours including:

Physical: this may include hitting, kicking, pushing, or taking or damaging someone else’s property.

Verbal: this may include spreading rumours, name calling, teasing or talking about people.

Emotional: this may include excluding someone from the group, embarrassing someone or making them feel bad for being different.

Online: online bullying does not take place face to face but occurs when technology is used to send messages, texts or images which hurt, humiliate, intimidate or embarrass others. Online bullying often involves the same type of behaviour as other bullying, for example, name calling, spreading rumours or leaving people out, but it takes place online on social networking sites, in chatrooms, during gaming or instant messaging platforms. The impact of online bullying is as hurtful and damaging as other forms of bullying behaviour. Some online behaviour is illegal. If an individual sends, posts or forwards indecent, racist, sectarian, threatening or inflammatory comments or photographs, they may be committing an offence and may be subject to prosecution. Online bullying will be treated as seriously as any other form of bullying.

Unlawful Prejudice-based bullying towards those with protected characteristics: Unlawful Prejudice towards those with “protected characteristics” such as: disability, sex (gender), gender reassignment (transgender), pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation

Other Prejudice-based bullying: socio-economic, body image, care experienced children and young carers.

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on local authorities to promote equality, foster good relations and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened
- Doesn't want to go on the school
- Asks to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is nervous and jumpy when an online-message is received These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

Any of these feelings may have other causes – so quiet, calm discussion and good listening is vital for understanding what is really happening.

Responding to Bullying

Unintentional Bullying

In some cases, children or young people may not be aware that their behaviour is bullying. They are perhaps modelling behaviours of other adults or children and young people, not understanding that their behaviour is wrong because they have never been taught otherwise. In these circumstances, the **intent** to bully may not be present, but the impact and effect on the person being bullied will be no less severe because of this. It must be explained to the person bullying that their behaviour is unacceptable and why. Bullying

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takes place in the context of relationships and can happen anywhere. In this situation, if it is a one off with no intent, a member of the SLT would record on a pastoral note and a phone call home if necessary.

Schools may investigate any incidents of bullying that occur away from school premises or out of hours that have an effect upon the health and wellbeing and learning of children and young people. Staff members investigating the incident must ensure that appropriate support is provided within school to the child or young person(s) involved.

Children with additional support needs may experience bullying differently and may be targeted because of their additional support need. In addition, social, emotional or behavioural needs which can arise from bullying, may be considered an additional support need if the bullying is having an impact on the child or young person's learning.

How and when schools involve parents and carers in relation to bullying, will be handled carefully and sensitively whilst considering the opinion of a child or young person in line with Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is important to ensure the child or young person's privacy is respected unless they disclose potential harm to themselves or someone else.

Children and young people should normally be informed of any intention to share information, and the reasons why this is felt necessary. An exception to this, would be where you believe informing the child would place the child at significant risk of harm.

If a bullying incident has occurred in school, it is important to talk to the children or young people involved before talking to parents/carers. If they do not wish the nature of the bullying incident disclosed, every effort should be made for it not to be. Teachers should ensure that they are fully aware of children and young people's right to privacy in the context of disclosures, and the limits of that right in terms of child protection guidance. The right to privacy is not an absolute right, and where there is a child protection concern, local child protection procedures must be followed.

Prevention Strategies

By raising awareness and promoting positive behaviour within our school, all staff, parents and stakeholders should establish open, positive and supportive relationships where children and young people feel safe, secure, listened to, and secure in their ability to discuss sensitive issues.

It is essential that adults model behaviour which promotes positive relationships and positive behaviours.

Strategies that we use within our school to promote positive relationships and prevent bullying are:

- Education and awareness of rights e.g. UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools
- Development of an inclusive and positive ethos and climate of respect, responsibility and positive relationships; and a culture where bullying and discrimination is unacceptable
- Education exploring prejudice which clearly identifies prejudice based bullying behaviours
- Pupil involvement and engagement through class discussion and pupil council

Children will tease, fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and have disagreements. This is a normal part of growing up and should be distinguished from bullying. However, in an environment where this behaviour is left unchecked, it can lead to bullying, making those being bullied feel afraid, uncomfortable and unsafe in their environment.

Physical Restraint or Physical Intervention

Although the vast majority of young people in our school will never require any form of physical restraint or physical intervention, many staff work with young people who exhibit challenging behaviour.

This part of our policy will help to clarify both when staff may or may not be required to intervene physically and the circumstances where it is acceptable or unacceptable to physically restrain a pupil.

Dumfries and Galloway Council accepts that in certain circumstances physical intervention or physical restraint may be necessary.

It is important that we as a school make it clear to staff, parents and pupils what is and what is not acceptable in relation to physical intervention or physical restraint and describe the skills staff require in order to manage the range of behaviour they are likely to encounter. Any use of physical intervention or physical restraint must always be set within the guidance of an overall behaviour management framework/developing positive relationships and underpinned by sound risk assessment.

Protocols, Plans and Programmes

Staff must do all they reasonably can to prevent confrontation or difficult situations developing in order to maintain good working arrangements for all pupils and staff. In most situations a pupil's behaviour can be predicted. Staff generally know their pupils well and will be able to foresee the type of situation which may cause that pupil severe stress or frustration and which may result in an outburst of unacceptable behaviour.

All relevant staff, including supply staff, should be aware of pupils whose behaviour is volatile and also those with additional support needs whose behaviour is difficult to manage.

Terminology

Physical intervention refers to any action by which one or more people restrict the actions of another, eg blocking the path of a child or guiding him or her away from a harmful

situation. It includes physical restraint. Physical restraint is the positive application of force with the intent of overpowering the pupil to prevent harm. Both are acts of care and control aimed at ensuring the safety of the pupil and of others. The proper use of physical control requires judgement skills and knowledge of non-harmful methods of control. Physical restraint is therefore qualitatively different from other forms of physical contact, such as manual prompting, physical guidance or other contact which might have an appropriate place within the context of particular teaching approaches, for example where staff are working with pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties or in the pre-school sector.

Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000

The Standard in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 (Section 16) states that action taken to avert an immediate danger of personal injury to, or an immediate danger to the property of, any person (including the pupil concerned) shall not be viewed as corporal punishment. Physical intervention or physical restraint can only be justified if all other intervention strategies and non-physical methods have proved ineffective and / or there is an immediate danger of physical harm to individuals or the risk of significant damage to property. No member of staff is obliged to undertake physical intervention where doing so would place that member of staff in immediate danger of physical harm. In no other circumstances can physical intervention or restraint against a pupil be justified.

It should be remembered that all staff have a duty of care and will need to use their professional judgement as to whether or not to use reasonable force to avoid a situation escalating to crisis point. Members of staff may, if acting in accordance with this policy, intervene to avert such immediate dangers.

PRINCIPLES RELATING TO RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

It is essential that every member of staff is aware of these principles and applies them to their practice:

- Physical intervention, up to and including physical restraint, should be used only as a last resort when all other strategies have been exhausted.
- Such physical intervention should serve to de-escalate or prevent a violent or potentially violent situation. c) Physical intervention must not be used as a method of enforcing discipline or compliance when there is no serious risk to individuals or significant risk to property.
- If all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent a pupil exhibiting violent behaviour and the situation continues then the pupil must be warned, if practicable, that if they do not desist, physical restraint may be used.
- When it is apparent that a pupil is not responding to the behaviour management strategies being used by an individual member of staff and a violent incident seems imminent, then wherever possible another member of staff must be summoned. This should not be seen as failure as the presence of a second adult

could prove helpful in ensuring safety, objectivity and calm control, as well as providing a witness to what takes place.

- When it becomes necessary to physically intervene with a pupil, staff should strive to maintain a calm and reassuring manner.
- Restraint must at all times be “reasonable” and judgement of what constitutes “reasonable” rests with the member of staff at that point in time. “Reasonable” is the minimum intervention a responsible adult would exercise to prevent physical injury or damage, always bearing in mind danger to those concerned.
- Care must be taken to avoid pain or injury to the pupil. Physical Intervention must never interfere with breathing, blood supply or genital areas or involve holding the throat, wrists, joints or fingers.
- Restraint should be relaxed and released as soon as possible to allow the pupil to regain composure. The pupil should be told what will happen next to avoid unnecessary anxiety. If the member of staff intends to gradually release the grip and stay quietly with the pupil, this should be explained.
- Restraint should always be an act of care, never of punishment.
- A pupil must never be asked to restrain another pupil.
- If a young person exhibits persistent or serious violence, a Headteacher should give consideration to requesting a risk assessment to look at best practice in both planning and working with the young person.

PROCEDURAL POINTS FOLLOWING PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Any incident where physical intervention has been used must be recorded and reported to the SLT immediately or as soon as is feasible and the circumstances and justification recorded within 24 hours and emailed to TeamTeach within Supporting Learners.

Parents/carers should be contacted by a member of the SLT without delay and on the same day in all cases.

Both the pupil and the parents must be made aware of the reasons why restraint was necessary. The views of the pupil and parents should be recorded at the time of discussion. It is important that the young person involved is restoratively debriefed on any incident involving physical intervention (this does not always need to be verbal – use of body language, scaling, communication cards sign along etc is acceptable if young person would not understand spoken explanation).

A member of the SLT should discuss the incident and reasons with the member of staff involved (debrief). Support should be provided as appropriate after the incident. Time must be taken to ensure that the member of staff involved has the opportunity to discuss the incident and their feelings around it. After a serious incident it is sometimes helpful for staff to have an opportunity to speak to someone (possibly a colleague, one of the Team-Teach tutors, or trade union representative) who is external to the establishment and/or not in a line management relationship to them.

Reconsider the strategies in place and to re-assess risks in the light of what has happened. This should take place as soon as possible after the incident and a date must be set on day

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of incident.

The incident forms are collated by Team-Teach Co-ordinator and statistics forwarded to the Head of Education on an annual basis, where they are analysed and considered to inform future practice.