



Sticklepath Community Primary Academy



Relational (Behaviour) Policy Including Anti-Bullying Strategy 2023 – 2024



POLICY OBJECTIVES

- To provide guidance to Staff, Parents and Carers, School Community Representatives, and other stakeholders at Sticklepath Community Primary Academy on how to support our children to manage and regulate their feelings, communicate their words, and feel safe so they are ready to learn.
- To provide a holistic, whole-person, inclusive model for our understanding of behavioural needs.
- To underpin our beliefs with evidence-based practice and current research.

Background to rationale:

Staff at Sticklepath Academy have worked with Educational Psychologist and Social, Emotional and Mental Health advisory teachers, Catherine Dunnett and Matt Jones, and used evidence and guidance from the joint DCC and Babcock Developing Relational Practice and Policy 2020.

Why is this approach most suitable for our School Community?

'The Relational Approach is a universal approach to teaching and learning which influences whole school ethos, systems, and policy as well as everyday practice. It is also a targeted approach to support those children who are most in need.'

(Guidance For Developing Relational Practice and Policy. Babcock & Devon County Council)

The Relational Approach explicitly supports maintaining relationships in our community as well as nurturing children's social, emotional and mental health needs. At Sticklepath Academy, we have children who have experienced ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) and in some cases this has led to the child experiencing trauma and/or having a background of attachment needs. In line with research and studies, we use The Relational Approach to support the development of our school community. This document in turn has pulled key evidence from a number of other publications referenced in the booklet.



Our Relational Behaviour Support and Consequences are built around 3 clear stands:

- **To develop relationships** (safety, security and trust through a shared understanding of expectations)
- **To respond and calm** (to promote a supportive learning environment)
- **To repair and restore** (any harm done by damaging behaviour)

Quality First Teaching

Our core belief is that quality first teaching, with well-planned lessons, engaging content and accessible, yet challenging outcomes for all, is critical to establishing positive learning behaviours, which in turn creates lessons *'worth behaving for'*.

'The Business of the Day is Learning' is our mantra and minutes lost have to be made up because **'learning is that important'**. Learning new behaviours is a task, just like learning to read and write and children can learn to improve how they communicate their feelings and words.

Knowledge of the Child

Staff at Sticklepath take time to know all the children as people and gain a 'deep understanding' about their motivations. Opportunities are created throughout the academic year to share information to understand specific learning needs, learn from previous incidents and develop friendly, yet professional relationships between staff and students. Children need a personalised approach to support them to manage their feelings and communicate their words respectfully. The more challenging pupils' behaviour becomes, the more personalised an approach the pupil requires. Mistakes are part of the learning process and we recognise that all of our children are at different stages of the developmental process. We don't make a judgement about behaviour; instead we support and guide our children to get it right.

The Adult's Role

Relational behaviour strategies are not soft. They are built around high expectations from all the adults at Sticklepath Academy. However, setting expectations, pointing out shortcomings and reminders can be done in a positive way, with a firm but fair approach to all. Adults need to think about their tone and volume, constantly model politeness and respect and take control of situations with a focus on the behaviour not getting in the way of the learning. Consistency of approach is key and is established through scripts and individual plans.

We have high expectations for all children and staff. When we demonstrate our belief in our pupils, it supports them to succeed. We do this by committing to providing a calm and safe place for children to learn and model the routines in our own behaviour.

At Sticklepath our expectations for staff are:

- Staff are calm and considered - we communicate clearly and avoid shouting.
- Staff are kind and helpful - we find ways to show kindness to children and treat them with dignity and respect.
- Staff listen -we make time to listen to children and one another, and make a judgment about how/when to respond.
- Staff work hard - we are well-prepared, punctual and attentive and invest in relationships so we can have fun together.
- Staff look after property - we keep learning environments well organised.

Consistency and Routine

Our consistent whole school routines support our children to understand expectations, manage anxieties and mentally and physically prepare themselves for their day. This allows them to engage more fully with learning, manage their feelings and communicate in a positive manner. Behaviour for learning routines are explicitly taught – we do not assume our pupils know these. We teach routines for all activities. The more consistency there is over routines, the easier it is for our children. Routines support children with their emotional development and behaviour for learning as well as supporting children to manage cognitive load. We continuously reflect on how we support children to adapt to changes to routines and how we prepare them for changes, as this is an important life skill. Changes to routines are practiced to allow our children to learn that changes can be managed in a positive way.

Rewards and Sanctions

Sticklepath Academy does not believe that constant rewards and stickers are beneficial or realistic to life-long learning and can ultimately lead to inconsistency, reduced motivation and a lack of ownership and clarity. Instead, we seek to praise effort, risk taking and perseverance over outcomes and expected behaviour. This is underlined by our weekly Growth Mindset Assembly. In KS1 teachers nominate children in each class who have shown examples of effort, risk taking and perseverance in their learning. In KS2 this decision is made in consultation with the previous Growth Mindset awardee. These children meet the Executive co heads the following week for a drink and cake to discuss learning. The KS1 assembly is delivered by the Deputy Head and the KS2 by the Executive Co Head, both with a focus on learning about the brain and how we can train it to learn better and control our responses to the events that can trigger us to 'flip our lid'.

**On some occasions, pupils with SEN may need an individual reward system to encourage certain behaviours as part of an Individual Learning/Behaviour Plan*

Strategies for de-escalation at Sticklepath

'De-escalation is more often than not subtle and effective learner management. When staff deescalate well, it is almost like the learner doesn't realise it...' (Steve Brown, 2014)

Clear and consistent instructions are critical to our children. Gestures, facial expressions, movements, and tone of voice can be of benefit in de-escalation. The more a person feels loss of control, the less they hear other people's words. Children are then more likely to respond positively to non-threatening, non-aggressive non-verbal communications (NVCs).

Before speaking, attempt to refocus a learner with gentle reminders of the expectations - use simple encouraging gestures or signs to point them in the right direction before challenging them directly. Examples of 'drive bys' might be:-

- putting the necessary equipment on their desk
- a thumbs up
- pointing to the sign of the rule needed to succeed or asking if they are ok.

Avoid speech which could lead to shaming or humiliation of the child as we understand that such approaches are detrimental to the child's self-esteem and wellbeing and can escalate situations/incidents. Agree a script for landing a tough message softly. Explain to learners what you have noticed, remind of the rule or agreement and calmly state what needs to happen next or what their options are. Ensure you are assertive but not aggressive. Planning a script ensures you are focused and helps you to avoid verbosity.

When a child is beginning to dysregulate, staff will directly reference what they are seeing to 'flipping our lid' and prompt the child to identify who is controlling this behaviour and the strategies we have learned to gain control over how we respond to being challenged.

We recognise that a 'one size fits all' approach to natural consequences is not appropriate for our children. We consider developmental age and any additional or specific needs of the child when deciding appropriate natural consequences.

We use a plan, do and review approach to ensure children will not be given natural consequences that impede their future learning. This is closely monitored when we are discussing incidents with children which we deal with it in a non-judgemental way. For positive communication we use restorative questions.

When discussing behaviours/reactions, we make reference to the health and safety and the impact the situation may have had on all those involved and in the vicinity.

If a child's behaviour continues to be aggressive, defensive, hostile or disruptive, then further actions may be deemed necessary. In circumstances where a person acts in a belligerent way, we offer concise and respectful choices and consequences.

Unacceptable behaviour must, to some extent, be defined by individual teachers and teams of teachers in the light of the learning activity, the strength of their relationships with the pupils, the context in which the behaviour has taken place etc. Such behaviour as racism, repeated bad language, rudeness to staff, refusal to work acceptably, stealing, physical harm to others, damage to property, spitting, persistent patterns of behaviour, bullying including homophobic bullying and inappropriate sexual behaviour should be passed on to the Executive Co-Headteachers or Deputy Headteacher.

Passive Intervention and Prevention (PIPS)

As a school we acknowledge that at times we may need to de-escalate a situation where conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques have failed. As such staff may need to use restrictive physical intervention - Passive Intervention and Prevention (PIPS) - to appropriately manage a situation; this will only be used as a last resort. For example, with a child that is demonstrating dangerous levels of self-control; a high degree of personal stress; exhibiting challenging harmful behaviour that could put themselves and others in harm's way. Staff recognise that they can only use PIPS if they have completed an accredited PIPS training course.

Physical intervention can take many forms:

- physically interposing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path
- touching, holding, pushing, pulling or leading a pupil by the arm – in line with 'PIPs' training
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back.
- in extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds – as per 'PIPs' training (Identified in the child's behaviour care plan)

Any PIPS will be recorded using CPOMs and parents/carers will be informed. A debrief will also take place to ensure all parties involved are protected using a restorative approach – see appendix C

Safe Space

We recognise that some children (who are unable to regulate, despite strategies being used) may need to work in a safe space where they have privacy to complete tasks. A safe space is a low stimulation environment, away from other children, which is supervised. This will only be used as a last resort where other strategies

have not been successful. The aim is for the child to re-join class as quickly and successfully as possible. Staff will always be complete a CPOMs with a log of the incident.

Fixed Term Exclusion

There may be times when school excludes a child for a fixed period of time- Fixed Term Exclusion. This will only be used for a one-off serious incident or when there have been persistent breaches of the school's Relational Behaviour Policy. In this second instance, this should come as no surprise to parents/carers as they will have been fully informed of their child's difficulties in regulating and accessing learning. Where a fixed term exclusion is necessary, the executive co heads will:

- Confirm the length of the exclusion.
- The reason for the exclusion
- How to challenge the exclusion
- Ensure learning is provided for the child to complete.

in line with the Tarka Pupils Exclusion Policy. On return to school the child and parent/carers will meet with the executive co- headteacher to discuss collaboratively a way forward to successfully reintegrate the child, taking into consideration the protection of relationships with families, staff, and children.

Permanent Term Exclusion

As a school the executive co-headteachers may be forced to exclude permanently. This decision will only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's relationship policy
- where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the children or staff in the school
- in consultation with the TLP director of inclusion.

Where a child has an EHC plan, school will contact the local authority about any behavioural concerns at an early stage and consider requesting an early annual review prior to making the decision to suspend or permanently exclude. Where a child has a social worker, e.g., because they are the subject of a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan, and they are at risk of a permanent exclusion, school will inform their social worker, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the child's parents to involve them all as early as possible in relevant conversations.

Where a looked-after child (LAC) is likely to be subject to a permanent exclusion, the Designated Teacher (DT) will contact the local authority's Virtual School Head (VSH) as soon as possible. The VSH, working with the DT and others, will consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to help school address the factors affecting the child's behaviour and reduce the need for suspension or permanent exclusion. Where relevant, school will also engage with the child's social worker, foster carers, or children's home workers.

For any permanent exclusion, the school will take reasonable steps to ensure that work is set and marked for a child during the first five school days where the child will not be attending alternative provision. Any appropriate referrals to support services or notifying key workers (such as a child's social worker) will also be considered.

Appendix A – Sticklepath Anti Bullying Strategy

Introduction

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the School.

Sticklepath believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. All institutions, both large and small, contain some numbers of pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying.

Sticklepath also has a clear policy on the promotion of good citizenship, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is WRONG and will not be tolerated.

What is bullying?

Our definition of bullying: 'Bullying is intentional, persistent, or unprovoked acts of unkind, intimidating or threatening behaviour (physical or verbal) towards an individual or group of children'.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour.

It can be:-

- a). PHYSICAL. - A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.
- b). VERBAL. - Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc.
- c). EXCLUSION. - A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.
- d). DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT - Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hand over property to them.
- e) ON-LINE - Bullying can happen through emails, texts and on social networks. See the school's e-safety policy.

But we must remember that Bullying is one or more of the actions above that happens over a period of time to the same person or group. As a school we need to spend time explaining to parents and children what bullying is, as many use the term 'bullying' inappropriately.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!
- b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.

- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- f) Fighting back may make things worse. If you decide to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- g) Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

If you know someone is being bullied:-

- a) TAKE ACTION and be an 'UPSTANDER!' Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

As a parent:-

- a) Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- b) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- c) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- d) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- e) Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.

As a school:-

- a) Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times.
- b) Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. the PHSE programme.
- c) Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- d) Review the School Relational Behaviour Policy and its degree of success.
- e) The School Staff will continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure, ensuring that rules are few, simple and easy to understand.
- f) Not use teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- g) Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is.

h) Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.

i) We treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our School.

Action to be taken when bullying is suspected:-

If bullying is suspected we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:-

- A member of staff will listen separately to each person's version of the incident
- The member of staff will decide whether or not to implement the school's procedures for dealing with poor behaviour as outlined in the behaviour policy or to implement actions identified in this strategy.
- If a decision is made to implement the school's Anti Bullying Strategy, the following actions will take place:-
 - The Executive Co-Headteacher will be alerted and will co-ordinate the actions to be taken – if necessary a meeting will take place involving staff, parents, pupils, etc
 - The incident will be noted on CPOMs with actions to be taken noted; this will be shared with all parties.
 - Outcomes will be noted on CPOMs and shared with all parties
 - The victim will be offered an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher or another adult if they choose, and the victim's parents will be informed
 - The bully will be managed in line with the school's Relational Behaviour policy
 - Staff will discuss with the bully what has happened
 - Parents of children involved will be informed

Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies with on-going support offered to both parties. A restorative approach is used wherever possible.

Appendix B – Relational Behaviour Flow Chart

*Note not all 'relational strategies' are included in the flow chart – use full policy for wider range of support.

Individual	Whole class/group
<p>Give clear L.O's and concise instructions</p> <p>Non-Verbal Communications</p> <p>Build relationship</p> <p>Check in and connect regularly</p>	<p>Create class rules/agreements</p> <p>Plan seating plans and arrangements for groupings</p> <p>Give clear LO, guidance and instructions – T&L</p> <p>Model classroom behaviours expected</p>
<p>Single incidents of poor behaviour</p>	
<p>Use encouraging gestures and 'drive by's'.</p> <p>Consider adaptations to T&L – scaffold/challenge</p> <p>Adult (if available) to co-regulate and work alongside</p>	<p>Revisit class agreements</p> <p>Consider adaptations to T&L – scaffold/challenge</p> <p>Discuss the class with SLT to gain further advice/support</p>
<p>More serious, disruptive behaviour</p>	
<p>Send to either:</p> <p>a specific safe space 'time out' with suitable work to complete. Make sure child is clear on what is expected and how this will be achieved</p> <p>or</p> <p>to the team leader or relevant senior staff that warrants the behaviour shown.</p> <p>Record incident on CPOMS.</p> <p>Ask for SENCo support in looking at learning environment. Other interventions considered.</p> <p>Use of relational plan.</p> <p>Parental communication and possible meeting.</p> <p>Consider temp exclusion including reintegration meeting.</p>	<p>Re-establish class agreements – focus on trigger areas.</p> <p>Hold a class meeting to establish what is going well and what needs to change.</p> <p>Loss of break/lunchtimes to complete missed work.</p> <p>Report incident to SLT – agree way forward. Possible staff training identified – coaching and mentoring.</p> <p>Use of scripts.</p> <p>Parents informed – communication home.</p>
<p>Extreme and serious behaviour</p>	
<p>Use of external agencies to support (EH, Inclusion lead, Ed Psych etc) Consider alternative provision or part time timetable.</p> <p>Consider permanent exclusion</p>	<p>Relational support plan for class</p> <p>Plan coordinated action/support with SLT. Target specific and clear areas of focus.</p>

Appendix C – Restorative Approach

This conversation is an opportunity to enable the child to learn about themselves and others after an incident has occurred. It is helpful to communicate explicit safety cues and have the PLACE framework at the forefront of your mind at any stage of this process. The more the process feels like a collaborative conversation and curious exploration that the child is able to reflect and contribute to, the more they will be able to learn from the experience.

What happened?

Allow the child to tell their story, listening with genuine curiosity and without judgement by:

- Mirroring – facial expression, body language, tone of voice, attuning to mood.
- Accepting and validating the child’s experience and feelings.
- Reflecting back what you hear in manageable chunks and with a structure which aids understanding.
- Soothing. Using soothing (not cross) tones.

What were you thinking and how were you feeling?

Some children will find it hard to answer these questions and will need support to help them to integrate their feelings, emotions and thinking through:

- Listening and responding empathically, wondering aloud.
- Starting where the child is at developmentally. Explore physical sensations and name possible emotions.
- Letting the child know that you ‘get it’ (big behaviour usually means big feelings) by accepting their feelings and letting them know that they are valid.

Who else has been affected by this?

Explore what effect this might have had on other people. If appropriate use activities to help the child to see things from other people’s perspectives:

- Call upon your own experience or experiences you’ve heard about from others.
- Stories and role play can support empathy. Wonder aloud to aid understanding.
- Pictures and photographs, drawings and cartoons can help the child see other perspectives.

What do you need, and what needs to happen now so that the harm can be repaired?

To reinforce the collaborative nature of the process it can be helpful to ask: “how can we put right the harm caused?” or “what have we learnt from this experience?” This is about reparation in its widest sense. Apologies and restorative actions can be a part of this and can help children to move on, but they are not the goal and are not always appropriate at that time.

What does the child need in order to move forward?

- Short term intervention to help to keep them safe, particularly in managing specific situations / transitions that they may find tricky.

- Reassurance that school provides a structure in which they can feel safe, and that everyone is working to try to ensure that the same thing won't happen again.