Positive Behaviour and Relational Practice Policy

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"I strongly believe that deep down in every child, however invisible, hostile or rejecting they may seem, is a deep longing to be seen, known and truly understood" (Louise Bomber 2007)

"You can be strict without being nasty, maintain boundaries without cruelty and correct children without aggression". (Paul Dix, Pivotal Education)

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

(Paul Dix, Pivotal Education)

Rationale

At Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust, we recognise that wellbeing and behaviour are inextricably linked. Research into child development, neuroscience and attachment theory all provide us with the understanding of the direct correlation between positive mental health and optimum educational outcomes. When children experience safety in their relationships, they can challenge themselves and are open to new learning. We know that a strong focus on child wellbeing increases the likelihood of children achieving their full potential, so it is vital that wellbeing is placed at the very heart of our trust and in all our schools.

We recognise the link between understanding the needs of our children and how this contributes to their ability to self-regulate. We use this knowledge to build resilience by managing all of our behaviour in a positive manner so we can be ready to engage with teaching and learning. It is imperative we understand how, as care givers, we can offer children the security and positive relationships needed to meet their individual wellbeing and mental health needs, guiding them along their journey in becoming independent and resilient, life-long learners.

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication, we therefore take responsibility for listening to the needs a child is expressing through their behaviour, whilst setting clear boundaries and expectations.

We aim to establish and maintain positive relationships with parents and carers which are key to recognising and understanding a child's ever changing emotional state. Regular conversations take place to ensure we understand the whole picture of a child's 'lived experience'; provision meets this need and effective adult relationships will support a child who may have experienced trauma.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- to create a culture of exceptionally positive behaviour: for learning, for community, for life;
- to ensure that all learners are treated fairly, shown respect and develop positive relationships;
- to celebrate positive behaviour.
- to help children to accept responsibility for their actions and to consider the impact of their behaviour on relationships with others using restorative approaches.
- to help children develop the ability to self-regulate, this may involve a period of co-regulation.
- to build a community which values kindness and celebrates our differences;
- to promote community cohesion through improved relationships;

- to ensure that excellent behaviour is a minimum expectation for all;
- to help children develop a sense of worth, identity and achievement.

Purpose of the policy:

To provide simple, practical procedures for staff and learners that:

- Recognise behavioural expectations;.
- Positively reinforces behavioural expectations;
- Promotes self-esteem and self-discipline;
- Explicitly teaches appropriate behaviour through positive interaction, PHSE curriculum and assemblies.

Consistent regulated adult responses	Supporting at the earliest opportunity	Relentless routines	Consistent and predictable language and phrases	Restorative follow up

RELATIONAL PRACTICE

At Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust, we expect to see from all of our staff, governors, trustees and visitors the following adult behaviours:

- calmness
- humour
- empathy
- consistency

- reflective practice
- catching students being positive
- recognising and praising positive behaviour with a smile
- de-escalation
- Warmth towards children and young people

Adult behaviours we don't expect to see are:

- aggression
- shouting
- negativity
- Adult dysregulation/'losing control'
- adults creating 'power struggles'
- humiliation/shame

Consistency in practice:

Consistency lies in the behaviour of adults and not simply in the application of procedure. A truly sustainable consistent approach does not come in a toolkit of strategies but in the whole school community having an agreed understanding of behaviour as unspoken communication. The key is that we will develop a consistency that ripples through every interaction. Where children feel heard and treated as valued individuals, everyone is respected and children accept the authority of adults to maintain safe environments.

"Quality relationships provide the necessary vehicles for adaption and recovery… every relationship has the power to confirm or challenge everything that has gone before".

Dan Hughes and Louise Bomber - Settling to Learn. (2013)

Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust is committed to creating an environment where exemplary behaviour is at the heart of productive learning. Everyone is expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same.

All adults will:

- **Meet and greet warmly** at the door, with a smile
- **Establish relentless routines** within the classroom setting
- **Model** positive behaviours and build relationships.
- **Adapt** planned lessons that engage, challenge and **meet the needs of all learners**.
- Use an approach that **recognises positive behaviour** throughout the day.
- Be **calm** and talk through the behaviours we would like to see and establish how we can achieve this.
- **Follow up** every time, keep ownership and **lead** reflective dialogue with learners.
- **Pause and be curious** about what the behaviour is trying to tell us and interpret what we see as a communication of feelings and needs, and then support the cause to bring about change.
- **Never ignore**, or walk past, behaviour that falls below the standard expected.
- Adults **deliberately noticing positive behaviour communication** 'choices' and offering the appropriate recognition to that student and also sharing with this with parents/carers the same day.

The management of behaviour (safeguarding) is **everyone's** responsibility. **All staff** will engage, use positive reinforcement and support where appropriate.

Senior Leaders:

Senior leaders will support colleagues so that they can facilitate supporting behavioural choices with the child in a positive manner; rather than managing the behaviour in isolation. They will ***stand alongside*** colleagues so that they can continue to build and grow the relationship, this may mean taking the class so that the key adult can guide, model and show a unified consistency to the learners or supporting a productive restorative discussion.

- Adults WILL NOT describe the child's behaviour to another adult in front of the student.
- Adults WILL USE positive and non-judgmental language.

Senior leaders will:

- Develop and insist on consistency in school that ripples through every interaction.
- Be a visible presence around the site and especially at transition times.
- Celebrate staff, leaders and learners whose effort goes above and beyond expectations.
- Use behaviour data to target and assess school-wide behaviour policy and practice.
- Consistently follow up any reported behaviour incidents on school MIS and monitor CPOMS.
- Ensure induction of new staff in this policy.

Rewards and Praise

- The emphasis of this policy is on **REWARD** and **PRAISE**, which should be given whenever possible for both learning outcomes and behaviour, appropriate to the child.
- Children must be aware of the rewards system that is in place and the procedures which are used to help children to think about their behaviour and to develop a positive attitude towards communicating their feelings and needs and learning in school.
- Reward and praise should be given proportionally to show progress achieved and not **based on compliance exclusively.**

Behaviour Expectations

• I treat others with respect and listen to their ideas. • I am polite and use manners to all. • I show care and offer help and support to others. • I use kind words and actions.	• I move around the school calmly and sensibly. • I look after my school and my belongings, and those of others. • I tidy up. • I line up sensibly and calmly around school.

• I greet others when I arrive and leave. • I respect people's differences. • I will not use hurtful words and phrases towards others.	• I make safe choices on the playground with people and equipment. • I will not physically hurt others.

Recognition and rewards for effort:

In Class Rewards:

Instant feedback can be received in a number of ways including…

- Class Dojo points.
- Stickers
- Verbal or written praise.

Every other week we host a celebration assembly where we have…

- Headteacher's awards for great learning.
- Spelling and Handwriting champions awarded for great progress.
- Ruby Hub Role models for those consistently setting high standards.
- Golden Table: For excellent table manners.
- Postcards sent home to praise one off pieces of learning or acts of kindness.

Boundaries

Children feel more secure when they know what is expected of them and what will happen if they make poor choices. It is crucial to model acceptable behaviour so children understand what is and what is not acceptable.

Children are appropriately held responsible for their poor choices. Every member of staff is responsible for supporting children with their behaviour. Staff will always do this **calmly and with care, reflecting and using the opportunity for learning.**

All staff should operate the stepped approach and allow time before moving on to the next step, which allows children to identify the next consequence and how they can turn it around. Children for whom this approach is not appropriate will have a relational plan developed (see appendix one).

Managing inappropriate ways of showing feelings and needs.

It is our fundamental belief that being 'fair' is not about everyone getting the same (equality), but about everyone getting what they need (equity) and that every behaviour a child demonstrates is a form of communication. Each child has individual and unique needs. However, some children require more support than others. Children and parents should learn to expect equitably applied steps for inappropriate behaviour with the understanding that our policy is adaptable to take account of individual needs of the children in our care.

Children will be consistently reminded of our expectations, and behaviour that falls outside of these expectations will be addressed.

De-escalation by adults avoids low-level behaviours escalating and becoming more serious. Adults will support the child to get back on track. **The expectations for managing low level behaviour are as follows;**

1. Remind

2. Warn (May be asked to move seats to give a chance to reset within class).

3. Thinking/Calm Time outside of the classroom environment.

4. Restorative Conversation

Consequences

Possible Consequences for persistent misbehaviour

1. **Loss of Social Time**
   - Reduction of break or lunchtime play for a short period.
   - Child may spend time reflecting with a trusted adult or completing a restorative task.
   - Alternative provision during social time (e.g., quiet space or structured play).
2. **Restorative Actions**
   - Encouraged to repair harm caused (e.g., writing an apology letter, tidying an area they disrupted).
   - 'Community service' within the school (e.g., helping tidy shared spaces, assisting staff).
3. **Supervised Reflection Time**
   - Time spent reflecting on behaviour with a teacher or senior leader.
   - Possible target-setting to improve choices.
4. **Parental Involvement**
   - Parents informed via phone call or meeting.
   - Home-school communication book for ongoing concerns.
5. **Temporary Class Relocation**
   - Child may work in a different classroom for a short period to regulate and reset.
   - Used to provide space for reflection while avoiding exclusion.
6. **In-School Exclusion**
   - Short-term removal from the classroom to work separately under supervision.
   - Opportunity for structured reflection before re-engagement.
7. **Support Plan**
   - Individual plan with specific goals and interventions to improve behaviour.
   - Regular check-ins with a mentor or senior staff member

Serious Misconduct

In the case of serious or persistent misconduct, such as the following;

- Involves actual or threatened violence against another child or member of staff.
- Puts themself, other children, members of staff or the wider community at risk of harm or injury.
- Bullying * (See below for definition)
- Derogatory behaviour such as racist, homophobic or non-inclusive language
- Swearing
- Defiance
- Damaging property
- Making poor behaviour choices with intent

The incident will immediately be reported to SLT and recorded/logged, an appropriate consequence/action taken in consultation with SLT will be decided. A phone call home by a member of SLT will automatically take place. Any such behaviours demonstrated may result in a suspension or exclusion.

**Bullying - There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is: repeated ,intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally, often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation*
It takes many forms and can include: physical assault, teasing, making threats, name calling, cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Recording Significant behaviour

Incidents will be recorded using the schools MIS system, these will be monitored by designated members of

the SLT team to observe any patterns.

Incidents of bullying, homophobia, racism or other prejudice will be reported to the local authority immediately, and to the Governing Body/Trustees termly.

Suspensions and permanent exclusions

A suspension may be issued as a consequence for a serious or persistent breach of behavioural expectations such as those outlined in the above 'Serious Misconduct'

Only the Head Teacher has the power to suspend or exclude a child from the school. The Head Teacher may suspend a child for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in any one academic year.

The Head Teacher may also exclude a child permanently.

'A permanent exclusion is when a child is no longer allowed to attend a school (unless the child is reinstated).
The decision to exclude a child permanently should only be taken:

- *in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and*
- *where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others such as staff or children in the school.'*

If the Head Teacher suspends or permanently excludes a child, he/she will inform the parents immediately, giving reasons for the suspension or permanent exclusion. If the Head Teacher has issued a suspension, the length of the suspension MUST be communicated to the parent upon notification of the suspension. At the same time, the school will inform the parents of all necessary information as laid out in the DfE Statutory Guidance. The school will inform the Local Authority (LA) and the Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust Leadership team about any suspensions of 5 or more days, and of any permanent exclusion. Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust adhere to the principal legislation guidance Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance 2024.

Confiscation

Any prohibited items found in a child's possession will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to child.

We will also confiscate any item which is harmful or detrimental to school discipline. These items will be returned to the parent after discussion with senior leaders, if appropriate.

Searching and screening children is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence

Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust will ensure that all incidents of sexual harassment and/or violence are met with a suitable response, and never ignored.

Children are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they feel it might be.

The school's response will be:

- Proportionate
- Considered
- Supportive
- Decided on a case-by-case basis

The school has procedures in place to respond to any allegations or concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing. These include clear processes for:

- Responding to a report
- Carrying out risk assessments, where appropriate, to help determine whether to:
  - Manage the incident internally

- Refer to early help
- Refer to children's social care
- Report to the police

Please refer to our child protection, safeguarding policy and child on child policy for more information

Malicious allegations

Where a child makes an allegation against a member of staff and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will follow this up in accordance with this policy.

Where a child makes an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment against another child and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will follow this up in accordance with this policy.

In all cases where an allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the school (in collaboration with the local authority designated officer, where relevant) will consider whether the child who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help. If so, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.

The school will also consider the pastoral needs of staff and children accused of misconduct.

Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information on responding to allegations of abuse against staff or other children.

Children's conduct outside the school gates: school powers:

The Law allows:
Schools have a statutory power to discipline children for misbehaving outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers a specific statutory power to regulate children's behaviour in these circumstances, to such as is reasonable'.

The school may discipline a child for any inappropriate behaviour when the child is:

- Taking part in any school-organised activity or school related activity or
- Travelling to or from school or
- Wearing the school uniform or
- In some other way identifiable as a child at the school

Or inappropriate behaviour at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, that:

- Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school or
- Poses a threat to another child or member of the public or
- Could adversely affect the reputation of the school depending on the incident

Transition

To ensure that we consistently strengthen and develop our teaching and modelling of appropriate behaviour, information related to the child's behaviour may be transferred to relevant staff at the start of the term or year.

Reasonable adjustments for SEND and trauma needs

Trust schools will also consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to the boundaries in response to any special educational /disability or trauma needs the child may have. Efforts will be made to seek to try and understand the underlying causes of behaviour and whether additional support is needed.

Schools recognise their legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent children with a protected characteristic from being disadvantaged. Consequently, our approach to unacceptable behaviour and those with hypo aroused behaviour may be differentiated to cater to the needs of the child.

The school's special educational needs co-ordinator may assess a child who exhibits unacceptable behaviour to determine whether they have any underlying needs that are not currently being met.

Where necessary, support and advice will also be sought from specialist teachers, an educational psychologist, medical practitioners and/or others, to identify or support specific needs. We aim to find the right support to help every child stay within their window of tolerance and be able to learn. This may mean working with practitioners outside of the school. The types of support on offer can be found by looking at the school's website and talking to the Head Teacher or SENDCo.

For some children we will put in relational plans and co-regulation plans to support their behaviour. Please see Appendix one for more information.

When acute needs are identified in a child, we will liaise with external agencies and plan support for that child. We will work with parents to create the plan and review it regularly.

Adjustments will be made by knowing the pupils well and understanding where their behaviours are coming from. They may include preventative strategies such as individual visual timetables, support at transitions, and sensory breaks. All children will receive a PACE approach during incidents. After incidents, children may explore their behaviours with tools such as social stories or comic strips. As always, parent engagement is crucial at these times to best support positive outcomes.

Parents/Carers Involvement

Parents/carers will be involved in helping to explore possible reasons for their child's behaviour and ways to work with the school in managing it. Children are more secure and confident when there is consistency between their education and home/care settings. Parents/carers will have opportunities to share and discuss behaviour strategies so that some consistency of approach can be discussed. Notes will be taken for future reference and added to the school MIS system. There will be a review of actions and a meeting to follow up in a mutually agreed-upon timeframe. Parents/carers who agree that additional support will be beneficial may also be offered advice on and signposted to outside services or early help.

Safeguarding

The school recognises that changes in behaviour may be an indicator that a child is in need of help or protection. We will consider whether a child's misbehaviour may be linked to the suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this may be the case, we will follow our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Appropriate physical contact

The use of appropriate physical contact is a normal part of human interaction. Appropriate physical contact may be used in a range of situations. This may include:

- giving guidance to children (such as how to hold a paintbrush or when climbing)
- providing emotional support (such as placing an arm around the back of a distressed child)
- physical care (such as providing first aid) Staff must remember that any form of appropriate physical contact should be in the child's best interests, reasonable and proportionate.
- On occasions when needed the adults may use passive intervention and prevention strategies (PIPs) to support the student. It is a way of supportively, calming and gently holding students until they are regulated enough to be safe to themselves and others.

All staff should understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the child, which lie beneath the behaviour, as well as the behaviour itself. The skills of guiding and appropriate physical contact are acts of care which combine with calming, diffusing and problem-solving.

Use of Reasonable Force:

In very rare occasions, it may be necessary to have physical contact with a child and use reasonable force. All our staff who have had Passive Intervention and Prevention Strategy (PIPS module 2) training have the authority to use reasonable force.

Such cases may be to prevent a child from injuring themselves or others or damaging property. Another circumstance when reasonable force may be used would be to intervene in fighting after a refusal to separate or where a child refuses to leave an area and are therefore required to be guided physically out of

an area. All staff will make reasonable adjustments when using reasonable force for children with special educational needs and disabilities. *In cases where a professional judgement is made that a child or adult is in immediate danger, an untrained member of staff may physically intervene to safeguard all concerned.*

Whenever reasonable force has been used, the incident **must be** recorded on a Positive Handling Record, as soon as possible and on the same day of the incident occurring and submitted to SLT and the SENCO and parents/carers of the child are debriefed.

Policy Circulation

11.1. This Policy will be published on the Trust's website and included in the Trust's Policy Monitoring Schedule.

11.2. This Policy will be circulated to every Member, Trustee/Director, Governor and Senior Employee by sending an email to the link on the Trust's website on an annual basis and when each new Member, Trustee/Director, Governor and Senior Employee joins the Trust.

11.3. The Trust Executive Team, is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of this Policy.

Related policies, guidance and further reading;

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- The staff Code of Conduct
- SEN Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy 6. Further Reading
- The Simple Guide to Child Trauma: What it is and how to help. Betsy de Thierry
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- The Children's Act 1989
- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/

Appendix One

Relational learning - Support for schools and settings