

Behaviour Principles Written Statement

Southgate School, along with its governing body, strongly believe in the Nurture approach. The six Nurture Principles are:

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom offers a safe-base
- Nurture is important for the development of self-esteem
- Language is understood as a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- Transitions are significant in the lives of children

Nurture is grounded in attachment theory, an area of psychology which explains the need for any person to be able to form secure and happy relationships with others. Research has shown that when nurture groups work well they make a considerable difference to the behaviour and the social skills of the pupils who attend them. Through intensive, well-structured teaching and support, pupils learn to manage their own behaviour, to build positive relationships with adults and with other pupils and to develop strategies to help them cope with their emotions (OFSTED, 2011).

We are committed to promoting safe practice within the context of respect and dignity; the core values that underpin all our work. Our aim is for all pupils to build secure and trusting relationships with staff and their peers. This will enable them to learn the skills they need to regulate their emotions as independently as possible. Our pupils will then be able to thrive and reach their potential across all developmental aspects.

All staff are responsible for helping pupils to regulate their emotions, anxiety and any resulting challenging behaviour. We will continually reflect, plan and take action to reduce pupils' anxieties. If pupils are in crisis or display challenging behaviours all staff will manage this calmly, effectively and keep everyone safe.

1. Aims of the Behaviour Policy

- To maintain a happy, respectful, caring and positive atmosphere within the school.
- To promote an environment where all pupils feel safe, secure, valued and respected.
- To ensure high expectations are positively maintained for all pupils.
- To develop pupils' strategies to cope with their emotions and regulate their behaviour.
- To enable pupils to build positive and secure relationships with staff and their peers.
- To inspire pupils to take pride in and responsibility for themselves, their learning, their actions and their environment.
- To support pupils to be as independent as possible.
- To support pupils' self-esteem, emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- To build positive partnerships between school and parents/carers.

2. High Expectations

In the context of positive relationships and a nurturing environment, the majority of children respond to clear boundaries and high expectations. The whole school community was involved in creating The Southgate Way, which outlines the high expectations we have of all our pupils throughout the school.

Positive behaviours are praised and rewarded to promote more positive behaviours. This is far more powerful than noticing and punishing negative behaviours.

- **Class Dojo**- This is used to reward pupils with Dojos throughout the day. All classes have a set of Dojos which are linked to The Southgate Way but additional, personalised Dojos may also be used. When pupils have collected 300 Dojos they can 'exchange' them for prizes or rewards.
- **Catch You Being Good** –The pupil is praised for a positive behaviour and this is then written on a postcard. The Catch You Being Good card is read out in our celebration assembly and put in a raffle box. At the end of each half term, a postcard is drawn from the raffle box and that pupil wins a raffle prize.
- **Certificates** - A theme for the week is shared in our Monday assembly as part of a coherent approach to the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of our pupils. This theme is further explored by class teachers in Reflection Time and through the wider curriculum. Staff will then put forward the names of pupils who have excelled in their response to these values. Certificates will be presented in the Celebration assembly.
- **Class of the Week Trophy** – A class is nominated for the Trophy each week to recognise their contribution to the theme for the week and for following the Southgate Way.



3. Developing Relationships, Environment and Skills

It is necessary for staff to put a great deal of thought and energy in to developing the relationships, environment and skills needed for pupils to positively and effectively manage their emotions, anxiety and challenging behaviour. All staff base their practice on the 6 Nurture Principles (detailed above). Support in relation to developing a nurturing ethos can be gained from nurture trained and experienced staff within the school.

Positive Nurturing Relationships

The primary focus is on building trusting and secure relationships with pupils. This provides the foundation for staff to be able to challenge pupils to extend their skills and knowledge in all aspects of the curriculum.

Classroom Environment

The environment needs to be carefully considered to ensure all pupils feel safe and secure in their classroom. This should include the sensory environment, structured routines and the communication environment.

Curriculum

All classes have structured sessions to develop communication and interaction skills, such as breakfast, structured break times and News Round. Each classroom will use and display the Zones of Regulation, to enable pupils to identify their emotions and strategies to manage them. All classes will also have daily Reflection Time to focus on the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural theme for the week, as well as weekly PSHE/SRE lessons. Boxall Profiles can also be used for individual pupils to assess and plan a personalised social and emotional program.

4. Understanding Anxiety, Crisis and Challenging Behaviour



At Southgate, we use the 'Six Stages of a Crisis Model' to understand the link between anxiety, crisis and challenging behaviour. Not all pupils in crisis will display challenging behaviour and some pupils may display challenging behaviour when not in crisis.

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation state that:

“Characteristically, challenging behaviour puts the safety of the person or others in some jeopardy or has a significant impact on the person’s or other people’s quality of life” (McGill, 2003).

Possible Causes of Challenging Behaviours

The reasons why people may have high anxiety or display challenging behaviour will vary from person to person. Here are some possible causes:

- An unmet basic need e.g. hunger, too hot, pain
- Over-stimulation or under-stimulation
- Too many inappropriate demands and requests
- Not enough structure or changes in routine
- Difficulty in understanding others or being understood themselves

- Difficulty navigating social situations or interactions with others
- Emotional Wellbeing or mental health issues
- Previous traumatic experience or attachment difficulties
- Medical needs e.g. pain, fatigue, ill health, changes to medication.
- Hormonal changes

Challenging behaviours are not generally 'curable' overnight. Meaningful and sustainable change can take some time and the focus should be on developing strategies for the pupil to understand and manage their emotions and anxieties. Our approach is personalised for all pupils. The aim is not to be consistent between pupils, but for all staff to be consistent in their approach to each individual.

5. Managing Anxiety, Crisis and Challenging Behaviour

All staff are responsible for helping pupils to regulate their emotions, anxiety and any resulting challenging behaviour. Southgate promotes a non-confrontational and low-arousal approach to managing challenging behaviour. It must be emphasised that using principles of non-confrontation is not about not doing anything or not intervening. It is about ensuring that interventions are effective and avoid needless conflict. Pupils benefit from clear and consistent personalised boundaries or 'non-negotiables' that are appropriate to meet their developmental, social and emotional needs.

Key Principles to Supporting Challenging Behaviour (adapted from Hewett, 2005)

- Early intervention is key to reducing anxiety and preventing a crisis or incident from occurring.
- Stay calm and show this with your body language, communication style, behaviour and facial expressions.
- Get your priorities right:
 - Manage the incident and ensure everyone is safe
 - Work for an effective outcome rather than a winner and a loser.
- Tune in and stay sensitive to the pupil's anxiety levels (see '6 Stages of a Crisis' model).
- See the situation from the pupil's point of view and validate their emotions.
- Continually assess the situation for risks, triggers and opportunities to de-escalate.
- Seek support from other colleagues if needed. Support can be sought from neighbouring classes or by using the school's alarm system which alerts staff who are on call.
- Don't expect to manage all incidents successfully; the key is to continually reflect and learn.

Physical Intervention

Southgate School provides regular Team Teach training for all staff working with pupils. The Team Teach approach focuses on de-escalating situations before physical intervention is necessary. Physical Intervention will only be used when other methods of de-escalation have been exhausted or where quick action is required (e.g. to prevent an assault).

Any Physical Intervention must be **reasonable, proportionate, necessary and in the pupil's best interest**. It will always be at the lowest possible level and for the shortest possible time. Physical Intervention will be considered to:

- Prevent Harm being caused to another pupil or adult
- Prevent the pupil from harming themselves

- Prevent damage being caused to property
- Prevent serious disruption

Parents and carers will always be informed when physical intervention has been necessary unless other agreements have been made which are recorded on the positive management plan and signed.

Unfortunately, on rare occasions, injuries may result from Physical Intervention (e.g. fingertip bruising). Staff at Southgate School will always be open and honest when reporting and recording.

Although we operate a 'hands-off' approach wherever possible, failure by staff to take reasonable, proportionate and necessary action could lead to them being held accountable.

6. Recovery, Depression and Restorative Practice

Pupils should be reassured and supported sensitively through the recovery and depression stages of a crisis. It is likely that if too many demands are placed upon the pupil at this time it will trigger another crisis incident.

Once they are calm (this may be within an hour or the next day) a restorative activity or discussion should be carried out with the pupil by a trusted and familiar member of staff. The aim of Restorative Practice is for pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning, strengthening and repairing relationships, being inquisitive about what needs to happen to move forward and avoiding attributing blame (Thorsborne & Blood, 2013).

A traditional restorative conversation should include the following questions:

- **What happened?** – Allow the person to tell the whole story from their point of view.
- **What did you think when...?** – Go back to different points of the story and ask what they were thinking
- **How were you feeling when...?** – Go back to different points of the story and ask what they were feeling.
- **Who has been affected? How?** – Encourage the person to think of the wider 'ripple effect'.
- **What do you need to move forward?** – Reflect on how the situation can be repaired and resolved to allow them to move on. What could happen differently in the future?

However, at Southgate School, this should be considered developmentally. This will be different for each pupil but could include the use of visual emotions cards, social stories, comic strip conversations, Zones of Regulation etc.

7. Recording Anxiety, Crisis and Challenging Behaviour

The class teacher is responsible for recording and reporting anxiety, crisis, challenging behaviour, physical intervention and any bullying or discriminatory behaviours.

At the end of each day, the class team will discuss each pupil's day and reflect on the levels of anxiety, what has been communicated through behaviour and how the pupil managed this. The focus is on identifying causes and triggers and never about blaming the child. This daily reflection is recorded on Integris through the 'Behaviour Quick Entry'. This records each pupil's anxiety as outstanding, good, stage 1 or stage 2.

All crisis incidents should be recorded in full as a 'Stage 3' incident on Integris. Any physical intervention should be recorded in full as a 'Stage 3- Physical Intervention' incident on Integris, with the UDI form completed in full.

- **Outstanding day (UPDATED TO REFLECT HIGHER EXPECTATIONS)**

The pupil has been highly engaged in their learning, has made outstanding progress and has consistently followed the Southgate Way throughout the day.

- **Good day (UPDATED TO REFLECT HIGHER EXPECTATIONS)**

The pupil has been engaged in their learning throughout the day, making good progress. They have followed the Southgate Way and navigated themselves through the day with success.

- **Stage 1**

The pupil has encountered some barriers which may have prevented engagement for all or part of the day. They may have fallen out with their peers, have appeared withdrawn, put their head on the desk, showed frustration etc.

- **Stage 2**

The pupil has struggled to engage in the day and has made little/ no progress. They may have run around, thrown things, caused damage, lashed out (not assaulted), shouted/ swore etc.

- **Stage 3**

These refer to crisis incidents and when the pupil has lost control (e.g. harming others/ self/ property).

Other documents that may need to be completed or updated include:

- Positive Management Plans or risk assessments may need to be written or updated.
- Accident Report if anyone has sustained an injury.
- If the incident involved any bullying, discriminatory behaviour (e.g. racism, sexism, homophobia etc) or safeguarding concerns then it should be recorded on CPOMS.
- Verbally inform the SLT on duty, the Head Teacher or DSL of serious concerns or incidents.

See the 'Recording Behaviour' document in the Staff Handbook for further guidance.

8. Communication

Good communication with parents and carers is essential. Parents and carers must be informed of any serious incidents and physical intervention, although individual arrangements and preferences can be agreed and recorded in Positive Management Plans.

It is likely that parents and carers will also be facing similar incidents. Good relationships and being honest and open with others involved will ultimately help to learn about behaviours and enable the development of constructive plans.

Other agencies may also be involved with the pupil (e.g. Educational Psychology or CAMHS) and open communication is to be encouraged throughout.

Any incidence of bullying or discriminatory behaviour (e.g. racism, homophobia, sexism) is regarded as very serious and will never be tolerated. The parents/ carers of pupils suffering any bullying or discriminatory abuse would be informed in person or by telephone in order that they can counsel and support their child.

Parents/ carers of pupils who display bullying or discriminatory behaviour will also be informed. Follow up and restorative work will always be carried out. (See Anti-Bullying Policy for further guidance.)

9. Positive Management Plans

Some pupils will need more personalised support to help them manage their anxiety and/or challenging behaviour. Because of the importance of secure relationships, this support is most likely to be successful when provided by familiar and trusted classroom staff.

Positive Management Plans will be completed for all pupils displaying high levels of anxiety, challenging behaviour or where physical intervention is required. Some pupils may have additional personal risk assessments. These documents will give clear guidance on approaches and strategies to support the pupil. It is the responsibility of each member of staff to read and implement the guidance.

Positive Management Plans should be written in collaboration with the pupil (wherever possible), parents/carers, staff from the school and any relevant external agencies involved with the pupil. This document will need reviewing regularly with the teaching team. If new behaviours are observed, behaviours change, or there is an episode of regular critical incidents an urgent review of the plan must be made.

10. Alternative and Personalised Timetables

It may be deemed to be necessary for reasons of safety to keep a pupil out of the classroom for a period of time following an incident. This should not be punitive but restorative and a return to class should be encouraged and carefully managed at the appropriate time.

Personalised or alternative timetables may be established to reduce anxiety levels (e.g. providing a lower stimulation environment for parts of the day) or provide a more personalised approach to learning (e.g. additional lessons on emotional regulation). These short term measures will be reviewed regularly.

11. Exclusion

Only the Head Teacher can make the decision to exclude a pupil. This will only be considered when it is deemed unsafe or disruptive for the pupil to be in school. Necessary adjustments must be made to make the environment safe for the pupil to return. A Restorative discussion should be carried out before the pupil returns to school. Arrangements should be made for education at home if the exclusion is prolonged.

12. Policies or guidance to provide further advice for specific situations

- Absconding Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Handling Challenging Behaviour flow chart in the staff handbook
- Recording Behaviour in the staff handbook

13. Conclusion

- The 6 Principles or Nurture and Attachment Theory underpin everything we do.
- We are committed to promoting safe practice within the context of respect and dignity.

- Our aim is for all pupils to build secure and trusting relationships with staff and their peers. This will enable them to learn the skills they need to regulate their emotions as independently as possible.
- All staff are responsible for helping pupils to regulate their emotions, anxiety and any resulting challenging behaviour.
- We will continually reflect, record, plan and take action to reduce pupils' anxieties.
- If pupils are in crisis or display challenging behaviours all staff will manage this calmly, effectively and keep everyone safe.
- A clear commitment is required by all staff to this behaviour policy in order for it to be effective.
- It is essential that over time this policy should be reviewed regularly in order to determine its effectiveness.