



## Bellsquarry Primary School Relationship Policy

### Policy Statement

At Bellsquarry Primary, we work to create a climate of mutual respect and openness. We want everyone to work together, to ensure our learners, staff and parents benefit from a culture which promotes self-esteem, trust, compassion, mutual respect, and which recognises rights and responsibilities of our learners, based upon trust. We ensure that excellent behaviour is a minimum expectation for all. This policy underpins our values of Friendship, Kindness, Commitment, Achievement, Respect, Equity and Support.

### Pivotal Practice

Every member of staff should have a copy of the book, 'Where the Adult Changes, Everything Changes' by Paul Dix.

This practice underpins our approach to positive and inclusive behaviour, promoting an ethos of kindness and visible consistency in adult behaviour across the school. We aim to build relationships with pupils, showing an interest in their life and showing daily acts of care.

Broad principles: **Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe**

Five Pillars of Pivotal Practice:

1. Calm, kind, consistent adult behaviour
2. First attention to those doing the right thing – praise behaviour over and above the norm
3. Relentless routines
4. Scripting difficult conversations
5. Restorative follow up

Consistency in Practice

- **Consistent language; consistent response:** Referring to the agreement made between staff and learners, simple and clear expectations reflected in all conversations about behaviour.
- **Consistent follow up:** Ensuring 'certainty' at the classroom and senior leadership level. Never passing problems up the line, teachers/PSWs taking responsibility for behaviour interventions, seeking support but never delegating. A Bellsquarry Team approach.
- **Consistent positive reinforcement:** Routine procedures for reinforcing, encouraging and celebrating appropriate behaviour.
- **Consistent, consequences:** Defined, agreed and applied at the classroom level as well as established structures for more serious behaviours.
- **Consistent, simple rules/agreements/expectations:** Referencing appropriate behaviour, icons, symbols and visual cues, interesting and creative signage.
- **Consistent respect from the adults:** Even in the face of disrespectful learners! You model the expected behaviour.
- **Consistent models of emotional control:** Emotional restraint that is modelled and not just taught, teachers as role models for learning, teachers learning alongside learners.
- **Consistently reinforced rituals and routines for behaviour:** In classrooms, around the school, at reception, in the dining hall etc.

- **Consistent environment:** calm and inclusive classroom approaches with everyone's opinions valued and respected. Physical environment calm, clutter free, accessible with identified nurture nooks where required.

#### **All staff**

- Meet and greet at the door
- Refer to 'Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe'
- Model positive behaviours and build relationships.
- Plan lessons that engage, challenge and meet the needs of all learners.
- Use a visible recognition mechanism throughout every lesson.
- Be calm and give 'take up time' when going through the steps. Prevention before sanctions.
- Follow up every time, retain ownership and engage in reflective dialogue with learners.
- Never ignore or walk past learners who are not meeting expectations of behaviour.

#### **Senior leaders will:**

- Meet and greet learners at the beginning of the day
- Refer to 'Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe'
- Be a visible presence around the school
- Never ignore or walk past learners who are not meeting expectations of behaviour.
- Celebrate staff, leaders and learners whose effort goes above and beyond expectations
- Regularly share good practice
- Engage with staff to support learners with more complex needs.

#### Recognition and rewards for effort:

We recognise and reward learners who go 'over and above'. Although there are tiered rewards, our staff understand that a quiet word of personal praise can be as effective as a larger, more public, rewards. The use of praise in developing a positive atmosphere in the classroom cannot be underestimated. It is the key to developing positive relationships, including with those learners who are hardest to reach. (See the Positive behaviour toolkit for more information)

#### Classroom/teaching space

Engagement with learning is always the primary aim. For the vast majority of learners a gentle reminder or nudge in the right direction is all that is needed. Although there are occasions when it is necessary, every minute a learner is out of your lesson is one where they are not learning. Steps should always be gone through with care and consideration, taking individual needs into account where necessary. Focus on and praise the behaviours you want and expect to see. Address negative behaviours non verbally and follow up later using 'Ready, Respectful. Safe' as a basis for discussion. Sometimes a simple reiteration of expectations without discussion is all that is required. All learners must be given 'take up time' in between steps. It is not possible to leap or accelerate steps for repeated low-level disruption. See the Positive Behaviour toolkit.

### Practical steps in managing and modifying poor behaviour:

Learners are held responsible for their behaviour. Staff will deal with behaviour without delegating. Staff will use the steps in behaviour flowchart for dealing with poor conduct.

**The flyby:** A quick and quiet reminder of the instruction and the expected behaviour you are looking for.

**The reminder:** A reminder of the expectations for learners; **Ready, Respectful, Safe** delivered directly to the learner. The teacher makes them aware of their behaviour. The learner has a choice to do the right thing.

**The warning:** A clear verbal warning delivered privately to the learner making them aware of their behaviour and clearly outlining the consequences if they continue. The learner has a choice to do the right thing. Learners will be reminded of their good previous good conduct to prove that they can make good choices. Scripted approaches at this stage are encouraged:

#### 30 second intervention

- a. Gentle approach, personal, non-threatening, side on, eye level or lower.
- b. State the behaviour that was observed and which rule/expectation/routine it contravenes.
- c. Tell the learner what the consequence of their action is e.g. who it is affecting and how. Refer to previous good behaviour/learning as a model for the desired behaviour.
- d. Walk away from the learner; allow him/her time to decide what to do next. If there are comments, as you walk away – do not react or respond. Write them down and follow up later.

We resist endless discussions around behaviour and spend our energy returning learners to their learning.

**The time-out:** The learner is asked to speak to the teacher away from others; Boundaries are reset; Learner is asked to reflect on their next step. Again they are reminded of their previous conduct/attitude/learning. The learner is given a final opportunity to re-engage with the learning/follow instructions.

Learners should only stand outside classrooms if they need to cool down and/or to defuse a situation. In general, three minutes should be enough.

If the step above is unsuccessful or if a learner refuses to go take a time out then the learner will be asked to leave the room. If appropriate, a member of 'on call' staff will escort the learner to a workspace outside the teaching room.

**The Restore:** Once the learner has had time to reflect, a 2 minute restorative conversation will be held with the learner. This may be at the beginning of break/lunch time when the other children are

not present to discuss how they are going to restore the relationship or resolve the disruption to their learning. (see possible consequences the teacher may choose to put in place with the child)

*See the Positive Behaviour Toolkit for more information on the positive behaviour strategies used as well as the recognition approaches we use to celebrate and praise the children who go above and beyond.*

Staff will carry out positive behaviour approaches calmly and with care. It is in nobody's interest to confront poor behaviour with anger.

We do this in a number of ways:

- Staff know children well, as individuals, and provide support where it is needed, both in the classroom and in the playground.
- We maintain high expectations of behaviour and our Bellsquarry Boundaries ensure that children know what is expected of them and what will happen if they do not use the strategies and supports available to help them follow the school rules.
- Staff are very aware of the need for strong relationships and trust, and know that they have a significant part to play in helping children repair any rupture in a relationship.
- By using restorative approaches, children are now speaking about their actions with honesty, and are reflecting on the impact their actions have on themselves and others. Children and adults are aware of the importance of repairing and sustaining strong relationships.
- We understand the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences.
- We have high expectations of our children, and staff model positive attitudes towards children and their families, treating everyone with respect and compassion.
- Class charters outline individuals 'rights and agreed responsibilities'.
- Pivotal practice is used which promotes effective approaches to behaviour, including bullying, resilience. one trusted adult, attachment theory.
- We actively encourage parents to share in their child's learning through open events, class assemblies to share learning, personal learning logs and meetings with their child's class teacher.
- We have a high level of support from parents and carers.
- We built a sense of pride in the school, amongst our children. This is promoted through assemblies as well as class work, where children's work, behaviour and achievements out of school are publicly celebrated.
- We use 'Restorative Approaches' when children find themselves in conflict with other children/are struggling with relationships. This enables children to reflect on their behaviour, and its impact on other people, and to make sincere amends. We promote a 'no blame' approach, to allow children to change their behaviour without creating opportunities for resentment, or by using punitive responses which can damage relationships.
- If a conflict has occurred, we act in a way which helps everyone involved repair and rebuild relationships, restore trust and agree a way forward.
- We are actively seeking parent helpers, and we have a strong Parent Teacher Action Group (PTAG), whose members work to represent the wider parent forum. The head teacher attends PTAG meetings, and plans with the committee on a termly basis.
- If parents have any concerns, we take these seriously, and follow them up.
- We actively seek parents' views, and survey all our parents on a biannual basis, as well as encouraging parents to respond to West Lothian Council's surveys.
- All children are given planned opportunities to respond to West Lothian's surveys, and the head teacher regularly meets with classes/groups of pupils to seek feedback on the work of the school

- Class teachers promote self-esteem through positive feedback. Children who model our school values well are 'called out' for their positive actions/attitude. Children are also encouraged to 'call out' each other, and to discuss this as a class.
- Children who are successful in their application to act as House Captains are required to model good behaviour and attitudes at all times, and are encouraged to play a role in creating an ethos of mutual respect.
- We inform parents early if we are worried about their child, or have concerns about their child's behaviour. Meetings around this are positive and focused on support.
- Our weekly assemblies focus on aspects of citizenship, wellbeing indicators, friendship, children's rights and community, as well as key events in the year's calendar.
- Some of our older children are trained as Buddies for our early years learners, to encourage them to play well together at breaks and lunchtimes.
- We have also improved our playground facilities and introduced games and activities to make break times and lunchtimes more enjoyable for our children, and to reduce the likelihood of any disputes or 'falling out'.
- We seek advice and support from expert services, e.g. Educational Psychology, Health colleagues and Pupil Support Services, to support children who may struggle, at times, with relationships in school.
- We share information with each other, as a staff, in a professional manner, to support children who have additional needs, or those who need a bit of extra attention.

We are proud of the attitudes and behaviour of the children in our school, and visitors to our school frequently remark upon this. Likewise, if our children are on a visit/school excursion, the good behaviour of our pupils is often commented on by adults.

"Pupils at Bellsquarry Primary School act as positive representatives for the school at all times, whether in the school or the local community" (P7 pupil).

"Pupils will celebrate the success of others and encourage each other to achieve high standards of education and behaviour" (P7 pupil).

However, conflict and inappropriate behaviour does occur from time to time, causing relationships to suffer, and this is treated seriously. Reported incidents of bullying are treated very seriously.

The staff throughout the school use restorative approaches to help children deal with conflict and disagreements and follow procedures to inform parents early to deal with most incidents. However, repeated incidents or incidents of a more serious nature are handled by our Senior Management Team.

Our response to bullying has, at its core, the value of restoring and repairing relationships. It emphasises tolerance, care and respect for other people.

The whole school community has the responsibility to help create a secure and safe learning environment, where children, staff and parents can be confident they will be treated with respect and compassion.

### **Anti-bullying statement:**

This school believes in the Rights of the Child. In the United Nations Convention, it states that "All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child" (Article 3). It also states that "Children have the right to protection from all kinds of violence, both physical and

mental. They must be kept safe from harm and must be given proper care by those who look after them” (Article 19).

We wish to create a climate at Bellsquarry where everybody encourages respect, values opinions, celebrates differences and promotes strong relationships. This will make it all the more difficult for bullying behaviour to flourish or be tolerated. Bullying is unacceptable, and all adults and children should be aware of the role they play in addressing bullying behaviours.

What is bullying behaviour?

- Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or psychological.
- It can be rooted in ignorance or disrespect.
- It can make people feel frightened, distressed, fearful, anxious, depressed or demeaned.
- It can be something which is intentional or unintentional.
- It can be something which happens once or on a number of occasions.
- It represents a relationship which is not functioning well.

What should be done?

By pupils:

If a pupil feels they are being bullied they should

- Try not to respond physically or deal with the problem alone.
- Talk to a parent, teacher, friend or trusted adult in the school as soon as possible.
- If a child sees someone being bullied they should not confront the bully. They should encourage the person being bullied to report it immediately and offer support. Tell an adult what you have seen or heard.

By staff:

Staff should

- Give support to the victim
- Treat all reported incidents seriously and investigate them
- Gather evidence from other people if possible
- Consider sensitively what action should be taken
- Report any concern/allegation of bullying to the HT/PT
- Try to use curricular opportunities to raise awareness of bullying and what action to take
- Give support to the alleged bully, who may be unaware of how his/her actions are affecting others
- Adopt a restorative approach
- Notify parents if patterns of bullying behaviour persist
- Use the behaviour monitoring log to record incidents, so that patterns or repeated behaviours are picked up quickly

By parents:

If parents/carers have any suspicion that their child is being bullied, or is bullying others, they should

- Tell us immediately if they notice any changes in their child’s behaviour.
- If parents suspect bullying, we ask that they contact the HT/PT immediately.
- Discuss any worries with their child, and let us know about these.
- Try to avoid advising their child to ‘hit back’. This can often make a situation worse.

- Try to be patient while we work together to resolve the problem. This sometimes takes a long time, to ensure that relationships and trust have been restored and that incidences will not recur.
- Try to work closely with the school in responding to the problem.
- Work with us to encourage children to rebuild damaged relationships.

In order to adopt a proactive strategy to raise awareness of what bullying is, preventing bullying, and what to do if it does happen, our curriculum offers opportunities for young people to play an active role in good behaviour and reducing incidents of bullying. Curricular opportunities include citizenship, communication skills, rights and responsibilities, conflict resolution and taking responsibility for health.

### **Anti-racism statement:**

We work to ensure that Bellsquarry Primary School is an inclusive school community, where all children are respected and that any incident of a racist nature is taken very seriously.

Bellsquarry follows council procedures in this area. We ensure that the victim(s) are supported, and work with the victim and the perpetrator to resolve conflict.

Unfortunately, some children call others names of a racist nature, without realising the hurt and damage these names cause. In some cases, young children are unaware what some racist terms actually mean. With our youngest children, it is often enough to discuss why such name-calling is so unacceptable.

However, we work to support the victim, who may be anxious and upset; and also work to support the perpetrator realise the harm their actions have caused, in order to bring about a positive change in such behaviours.

Our curriculum offers opportunities for our children to discuss respect towards others, regardless of their race or religion. Through assemblies, and embedded curricular work, opportunities to celebrate diversity are sought.

We strive to create an environment where racism, or any other kind of prejudice, will not be able to thrive.

### **Resources to support our Relationship Policy:**

**Building Resilience** is a primary school resource which explores ten tools that promote mental health and wellbeing. It engages pupils, families and staff in order to raise awareness and understanding of these tools.

The **One Trusted Adult** approach is an evidence-based intervention. This approach emphasises the importance of a dependable adult who can support and protect the mental well-being of a child and or young person. We have dedicated time for children to spend with their one trusted adult throughout the term as well as children having access to their one trusted adult if they need any help, support or someone to talk to.