

Freegrounds Infant School  
Supporting Pro-Social and Pro-Learning Skills Policy  
(Behaviour Policy) 2025-2026

**Section 1 - Introduction**

Freegrounds Infant School is a Rights Respecting school. Children and adults work together to recognise and act upon the rights of the child within our school, our local community and the wider world. We believe that by understanding their own rights children learn to respect and value the rights of others. This policy exemplifies these rights and our practise aims to ensure that the following rights are adhered to:

Article 3 The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 19 Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally.

Article 28 Every child has the right to an education.

Article 29 Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

In addition we want to support our children in developing positive learning behaviours. We do this through promoting our school values of Teamwork, Independence, Creativity, Thinking, Resilience and Respect and celebrate them when the children demonstrate them in their interactions with one another and learning.

**Section 2. - Our Ambition**

Our overarching ambition is to create an inclusive school where children are supported to become confident, prosocial members of our school community who have both the skills and the intrinsic motivation to do the right thing, whether or not someone is watching. We believe our responsibility lies not only with the present but also ensuring children develop the skills to become great future citizens who contribute positively to the communities in which they live.

We recognise that, as with all learning, children will enter our school gates at very different stages. Some children will already have developed a good level of pro-social and pro-learning skills due to the support and experiences they have enjoyed. It will be easy for them to learn and play successfully. Other children will not have been so lucky and may have greater needs and difficulties than their peers. This means it will be much harder for them to follow routines, work with others and meet the daily demands of school and they will need greater support. Our inclusive school needs to be a place where every member feels safe, content and able to learn; as such, our approach ensures that, whilst we meet the needs of the most vulnerable, those of the group also holds paramount importance.

We want to inspire children to set aspirational goals for themselves and be intrinsically motivated to achieve them. We know that a person never rises to low expectations and so we will always insist children work hard to become the best they can possibly be, in every way. We also know that some children will find meeting our high expectations much harder; as such we will always combine our very high expectations with equally high support. Every child deserves a champion - we will never give up on a child.

We recognise that learning means children will not always get things right. This is true of the skills associated with behaviour as it is with reading, writing, swimming or maths. We are educators, not controllers. When children do not meet expectations, we will therefore focus on working with them so they can do better next time. We do not just 'manage' children, solving issues on a transitory basis by sitting an adult by their side to 'keep them on task'. We will keep working with a child to build their skills and ensure they make ongoing progress until they can succeed independently. At the same time, we will make sure things are in place to ensure all those around them are safe, content and able to learn.

## Section 3. Our Approach to supporting Behaviour: Adopting Evidence based practice

### **3.1 – The Empowerment Approach**

We have adopted The Empowerment Approach to behaviour which has been developed by a team of educationalists, psychologists and coaches. It uniquely brings together a range of disciplines, including neuroscience, neurobiology, psychology, coaching and education, ensuring the strategies we use with children to support their behaviour are firmly evidence-based.

The approach incorporates the ideas and theories from a range of seminal authors, such as Albert Bandura (self-efficacy), Alfred Adler (unmet emotional needs), Rudolf Dreikurs (emotional drivers), John Bowlby (attachment) and Eric Berne (transactional analysis). It combines these with the work of current experts such as Jack Shonkoff at the Harvard Center on the Developing Child (neuroscience & brain development), Bruce Perry (the neurobiology of threat and safety), Stuart Ablon (Collaborative Problem Solving); Peter Fonagy (mentalisation), Lisa Feldman-Barrett (emotional literacy); Stuart Shanker (self-regulation) and improving Executive Function Skills (Ellen Braaten, Peggy Dawson & Richard Guare) to name just a few.

Approaches to managing and changing behaviour in schools can be placed along a continuum, with behaviourist approaches at one end and attachment-aware, therapeutic approaches at the other. The approach set out in this policy sits firmly at the therapeutic end of that continuum, based on a wide and growing body of evidence that such approaches are most effective at building skills for success at school and into adult life.

### **3.2 – Therapeutic Approaches**

In recent years, there has been a growing body of evidence demonstrating that while behaviourist approaches can be effective in the short-term, they do nothing to help young people to build the self-knowledge and skills that will help them into the future.

The Empowerment Approach adopts the principles of a therapeutic, attachment and neurodiverse-informed approach to working with children. It is underpinned by the belief that when a child presents with challenging behaviour, the first step should be to work with the child to identify the stressors and missing skills. Once the stressors are identified, adults should work with the child to reduce these stressors and build the skills they need to respond better next time.

New skills need to be taught and practised. Change will not necessarily be quick as new neural pathways take time to build; the child may therefore require additional supports whilst they build skills and new strategies.

## **SECTION 4 – Our structured and systematic approach to improving behaviour**

We utilise a systematic way of preparing young people to be at their best and a clear structure for responding when children do not meet the expectations agreed. We use straightforward strategies to respond in the moment and a consistent method of follow-up to ensure children make sustained progress.

Key elements of our approach

- Teaching children about their brains
- Agreeing high expectations
- Supporting children to prepare and plan to be at their best for learning and play
- Responding by connecting when things go wrong
- Following up every incident and solving problems together
- Coaching young people to resolve unhelpful behaviour patterns

### **4.1 - Cultural shift**

Our approach is not simply a strategy for managing behaviour but rather a cultural shift in how difficulties are perceived and children are supported in securing long-term essential life skills, mental well-being and future success. It utilises neurobiology and the neuroscience of safety and threat to support young people, their teachers and families in understanding the factors underlying unhelpful behaviours.

It provides a clear and structured approach based on this scientific evidence for responding to concerns and difficulties, problem solving and working towards future progress. The structured nature of the approach, along with its clear principles, mantras, tools and visual supports, ensures it is easily accessible for all ages.

#### **42 - Beyond the Classroom through a Shared Language**

Our approach to behaviour is not limited to the classroom. We believe that real impact requires all adults around our children to adopt a shared language and consistent techniques. As such, we ensure that training, information and support extends to all members of our community, from staff and governors to volunteers, parents and carers. There is an emphasis on developing a shared language accessible to all.

#### **4.3 - Putting the child at the centre**

At the core of the approach is ensuring the young person's voice remains central. In order to have a genuine voice, it is crucial that children are supported to understand their behaviour and develop strong metacognitive skills. Knowledge is power. By understanding their own responses to situations and the responses of others, we give children an authentic opportunity to voice their thoughts, concerns and develop solutions that last.

### **SECTION 5 – What we believe**

Key principles of our approach to behaviour:

- **Be Curious Not Furious:** maintaining a calm, investigative and solution-focused mindset towards behaviour that can be unhelpful for the individual and those around them; training and supporting all adults in the school to respond by acknowledging and addressing the unmet needs and missing skills that underlie the behaviour, rather than focusing on the behaviour itself.
- **Positive, kind, unconditionally positive relationships:** prioritising strong, kind, trusting relationships between staff, children and their parents/carers. Adults must position themselves for rather than against the child, with the core belief that when people feel better, they do better.
- **High expectations, high support:** expecting all children to achieve their very best and make good ongoing progress; providing high quality, systematic and carefully planned support (with the child, not done to the child) for any pupils who are not yet able to meet those expectations. High expectations should always be teamed with a spirit of kindness and unconditional support.
- **Teach children (and adults) about their brain:** placing a high priority on developing children's understanding of themselves and their brains; recognising that knowledge of oneself is empowering and is the first step towards progress – one cannot change what one doesn't know or understand.
- **Understand needs:** when emotional, physical, sensory and learning needs aren't well met, challenging behaviour may be the outcome for some children and young people. By understanding needs, one is in a better position to prepare to meet them well.
- **Follow-up is essential – 'without follow-up, there will always be mopping up'.** We believe that, like all other areas of learning, we must have a systematic and rigorous approach to improvement and consistently follow-up any times when a child does not meet the agreed expectations. Consistent follow-up is essential in securing good progress.
- **Children's voice at the centre – supporting children to understand their behaviour and decide on goals and how to achieve them should be at the heart of our work;** by doing so, we secure intrinsic motivation and positive self-advocacy.
- **Teach Executive Function Skills:** attention control, impulse control, processing speed, working memory; cognitive flexibility and emotional regulation are key skills for life. They need to be taught and practised.

### **Section 6 – What our beliefs mean in practice**

Building the Foundations: how adults should prepare for children to be at their best:

There are four main elements to preparing children to how adults can support young people to achieve the best they can:

- I. Teach children about their brain so they can prepare to meet their needs positively:
  - a. All classes will follow teaching plans which ensure children learn about their brains, their needs and are taught the skills needed to learn and play successfully on their own and with others.
- II. Agree expectations with children so they feel a sense of control over what happens to them and an ownership of boundaries.
- III. Help children to plan and prepare to be at their best:
  - a. All adults will follow a routine in which expectations are agreed ahead of a task or event and children are given the opportunity to consider what they may need in order to work at their very best.
- IV. Show unconditional support – work with children and put preserving good relationships first.
  - a. All adults will work hard to establish secure, positive relationships with children. If the relationship is not positive, the adult will take responsibility to out this right.

What this looks like in practice at our school:

### **6- Teach children about their brain**

All classes will follow specific curriculum plans related to The Empowerment Approach as part of our PSHE (personal, social, health & economic) education programme. These plans will focus on helping children to better understand their physical, emotional and learning needs and the needs of those around them so that they can learn and play at their best. The plans will also focus on supporting all children in building strong prosocial and pro-learning skills.

### **6.2- Agree Expectations: Our School Charter**

We believe the key to teaching children pro-social and pro-learning skills is to provide as much practice as possible in thinking through how people would need to talk and act for everyone to feel safe, content and able to learn and play at their best – for it to be, 'Good for Me, Good for You, Good for Everyone!'

Pro-social and pro-learning expectations can vary widely for different situations. What is considered acceptable in a mosque, temple or church is very different to how people expect us to talk and act in a playground. Social etiquette is different in a cinema than it is in a vibrant café. Having static 'rules' which are given to children rather than being agreed collaboratively strips children of the opportunity to develop their skill at thinking through the needs of all parties in varying situations.

An essential element of our approach therefore includes agreeing expectations prior to any activity or event and helping children think through and agree what will help everyone to feel safe, content and able to learn or play at their best, what they might find difficult in keeping to that agreement and what will help them manage it well. We call this strategy 'Prep4Best' and it is explained in further detail in the following section.

At the same time, there are some expectations we can have which are common to all situations: talking and acting in ways which mean the people around us feel safe and respected; looking after our physical world so it is in a good condition for others to enjoy.

It is equally important for children to have a role in thinking these wider expectations through and we do this through our 'School Charter'. The process of establishing our School Charter each year enables children to feel greater authorship in boundaries and leads children to have a greater investment in keeping to these. It also means children understand the purpose of the expectations; knowing the 'why' results in individuals feeling less controlled and better motivated to keep to the boundaries agreed.

### **6.3 - The process of agreeing Our School Charter:**

- Each class contributes, by first agreeing the behaviours which would ensure every member feels safe, content and able to learn in the different situations they experience within school.
- Each class discusses the natural consequences of keeping to and not keeping to these expectations. E.g. If I fidget around a lot in class, the natural consequence is that others won't be able to focus so well and they may not enjoy sitting near me and want to sit away from me.
- Each class list is shared across the school and a whole school class charter, based on all the suggestions, is designed. (see Appendix 2: 'Ten Steps to creating Class Charters' document).
- Class Charters are referred back to at all times to ensure that children understand the natural consequences of both showing pro-social and pro-learning behaviours and also the natural consequences of showing anti-social and anti-learning behaviours.

### **6.4 - Should our expectations be the same for everyone?**

Yes. We believe it is important for everyone to feel safe, happy and to be able to learn at their best. This will only happen if every person in the class (including adults) keeps to the charter.

However, we also know that there will be genuine reasons why some children find it much harder to keep to the expectations agreed and these children will need adjustments and additional support and scaffolds to ensure they can succeed.

Further information on the reasons why some children may have greater difficulty in keeping to expectations and what we can do to support their progress is contained in Appendix \*.

### **6.5 - Help all children to plan and prepare to be at their best (Prep4Best):**

Whilst some children with higher needs and poorer EF skills may require 'Pre-mortem' and 'Prep4Best' which is individual to them, these strategies should also be a routine element of daily practice in every class and for all children.

Prior to any activity or event, adults should routinely use our 'Prep4Best' sequence (with the visual cue so children know it is 'Prep4Best' time), during which the class think through their needs, what might go wrong and decide what will help them to prevent this so they can be at their best. This may not need to be repeated for regular activities once all children have established how they will be at their best but should be repeated regularly as a reminder and always take place prior to any new or unfamiliar task.

Prep4Best is a crucial element of our approach to behaviour since it ensures all staff set consistently high expectations and ensures a proactive rather than reactive approach to behaviour.

Prep4Best is also a good habit for children to develop and prevents an individual from launching into a task without preparation. It is a habit that which will be of great help far into their future studies and work.

### **6.6 - Show unconditional support**

Every child needs a champion; research has shown that just one supportive adult in a child's life can make all the difference. We are educators, and as such, will ensure every child in our school feels unconditionally supported and cared for, whatever the challenges. We recognise that children can sometimes present with behaviours that are incredibly challenging and upsetting for those around them; whilst securing the safety and well-being of all within our school community, this will always be teamed with a spirit of unconditional support and kindness for the individual child. This support does certainly not have to be at the expense of high expectations – we can be kind without agreeing or condoning an unhelpful behaviour.

## 6.7 - How adults should respond when children do not keep to expectations:

If a child does not manage to keep to expectations, all staff and adults supporting within the school should follow the '10 Point Response Plan to Challenging Behaviour'.

All staff will receive training in all elements of the approach and it will be a core aspect of our Induction Programme. Any staff who are struggling with any of the different elements of the 10 Point Response Plan should speak with their Line Manager and request support and coaching so they can secure improvement as soon as possible.



The 10 Point Response Plan has been carefully designed using evidence from neuroscience, psychology and coaching in the most effective strategies for supporting young people.

The 10 Point Response Plan is divided into three clear stages:

- I. **Responding in the Moment** – how adults should respond at the time when a child presents with unhelpful behaviours.
- II. **Following-up for Progress** – the way we follow-up after an incident to ensure the child does better next time
- III. **Coaching for Change** – how we support children who present with more significant difficulties to ensure ongoing improvement. It is essential that these stages are followed consistently and systematically; without d

It is essential that these stages are followed consistently and systematically; without doing so, the approach will not be as effective and the child will be prevented from making the progress they deserve: the progress which is so essential for their own success and the well-being and achievement of those around them. Procedures for the different elements of the Ten Point Response Plan and when to use them are contained in Appendix \* of this policy.

Stage I Support: Responding in the Moment (think paramedic):

Whenever a child is not meeting the expectations agreed, the adult should respond through Calm, Connect, Support:

- **Calm:** the adult needs to find their own calm. All adults will model self-regulation at all times, helping the child to regulate their own emotions.
- **Connect:** acknowledge and empathise with their feelings, you don't have to agree. When things go wrong, the adult will say things which help the child to feel supported and understood.
- **Support:** Help them to get back on track for the moment. Working out steps for next time comes later. Adults will always offer ways to help the child get back on track, such as a different space to learn or other available supports.



### Why should adults use this approach when responding to unhelpful behaviours?

We know from neuroscience that when children deregulate, the areas of the brain responsible for rational thinking, reasoning and problem solving are inhibited. This means that the first priority is to regulate the child. We know that, when someone is given support and empathy, oxytocin is released into the body which in turn speeds up the regulatory system. Adults should therefore always respond with support and empathy, even when a child has done things we don't agree with. Showing support and empathy does not mean we have to agree with or condone the action.

Another reason for responding with Calm, Connect Support is that we know that responsive, positive relationships are crucial to long term well-being and success. When adults respond in cross or disappointed ways, the child begins to feel adults are not on their side. Relational safety is crucial for children and if this is damaged, it becomes a significant unmet need which can further exacerbate the stressors contributing to unhelpful behaviours.

In addition, negative responses from adults can lead the child to self-identify as 'bad' or 'naughty' (and for her / his peers to label them as 'naughty'). When a child 'feels naughty', they feel worse about themselves and their responses can spiral downwards; in many schools, children become trapped in the 'punishment cycle'. It is therefore crucial that adults always respond calmly and supportively so that a child's self-concept is protected. When people feel better, they do better! However, embracing a spirit of support and empathy does not mean lowering expectations and holding children to account. Maintaining high expectations is crucial; it is therefore vital that there remains a consistently tight focus on the importance of pro-social and pro-learning skills and there is always follow-up when a child does not meet expectations. Every member of the school community should know that children who aren't managing to keep to expectations will be given lots of extra help, just like someone in reading might receive if they are struggling, and they may have to work harder and give extra time until they can manage successfully.

Stage II and III Support: Follow-up for Progress - (think surgeon):

Follow-up involves two elements: a) Coaching Conversation and b) Repair Time.

Repair Time should always be carried out separately if the child's words or actions had a negative impact on anyone or anything. Repair Time is separate to a Coaching Conversation and they have very different purposes: the purpose of the Coaching Conversation is to problem-solve the concerns and needs of all parties and find a solution to enable the child to do better next time. Repair Time on the other hand is about reflecting on any amends that should be made and building the skills of social cognition and empathy.

Coaching Conversations: How all adults should follow-up every incident:

Every time a child does not meet the expectations agreed at the start, it should be followed-up at a time when everyone is calm using a 'Coaching Conversation'.

Coaching Conversations are a problem-solving technique which focus on understanding needs, building skills and planning how to do better next time.

We use this method because we know that punitive consequences are good at making children feel bad but are very poor at helping children to:

- a) work out how to meet their needs better next time
- b) build their EF skills
- c) develop their Emotional Intelligence.

Coaching Conversations support children in all these vital areas.

During a Coaching Conversation, the concerns of the child and the adult are explored and ways to meet both are discussed.



### Stage II Support: The Coaching Conversation

- Introduce the concern in a way that keeps the child regulated and feeling supported.
- Listen to the child – listen to understand, not to respond. Ask questions until both you and the child really understand the needs and missing skills behind the issue. Ask questions in a way the child feels heard and their perspective understood.
- Share your concerns and your point of view using the 'Speak Up for Better' technique (start with evidence and how you are interpreting it, use 'I' rather than 'you').
- Problem-solve together – always ask for the child's ideas first; expect the child to work hard at thinking of solutions which are 'Good for Me, Good for You, Good for Everyone'. If they really cannot think of solutions, despite trying hard, the adult should make suggestions and encourage the child to decide which would be best. The principle is that the child feels authorship of the solution as this will make it more likely they will follow it through.

### Things adults should keep in mind to secure sustained ongoing progress

- Real, long-term change takes time – our job is to help children and young people to create new neural pathways, and to recognise that they can't do this overnight. This means that the first Coaching Conversation is unlikely to lead to instant change – 'Change needs more than a chat'.

- Scaffolding pathways to independence: Children and adults need to be clear about the end goal. Small steps should be planned with the child, and successes recognised and celebrated.

It may be necessary to put scaffolds in place for a while, but it is essential that over time these are reduced and removed as the child develops the skills to function independently. When supports and scaffolds remain static, children become dependent

**Repair Time: a restorative justice technique (used at all stages):**

Repair Time should always take place if a child’s words or actions have had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

Repair Time is separate to the Coaching Conversation and, as noted on Page 14, has a distinct and separate purpose.

Repair Time should be scheduled to take place as soon after the incident as possible but only once the child is calm. It is preferable that the adult first involved in the incident leads Repair Time, wherever possible.

During this stage, the child is supported to consider the perspectives of others; they are helped to think through whether the needs of other people were compromised in any way – the natural impact that their words or actions may have had. By exploring this in a matter-of-fact way and in a spirit of support, the ‘repair stage’ supports improved skills within the areas of social cognition and empathy.



If a child says they do not care about the impact on others and do not want to make things better, they should never be forced. The adult should simply show them the Control Centre Skills card for Emotional Intelligence (gold needs card) and explain that this just means they haven’t learned the skills yet to either feel what others feel or want others to feel better. The adult should also emphasise that:

- These are really important skills for everyone in the world to have to make sure it is a pleasant place for us all to live
- As the child’s educator, we have a duty to help them improve in these skills so some extra help will be put in place.
- This may mean some extra learning before or after school but it is not a punishment – it is because you care about them and those around them deeply – we want them to achieve well and for others to feel safe and content.
- Reassure them that any extra sessions will be within a spirit of support and as enjoyable as possible.

Stage 3: Coaching Time

Coaching Time should take place in the event that a Coaching Conversation has been used several times yet not led to any noticeable improvement.

It is vital that the child does not see Coaching Time as a punishment but rather as a commitment to wanting them to do better so they can achieve well. This message should be emphasised to the child and everything should be done to ensure the experience is a positive one for the child, whilst also firmly holding them to account for making progress.

Coaching Time should be carried out in a spirit of support with an adult with whom the child has a good relationship. It is ideal if this is the adult who teaches the child most. Coaching Time can take place in groups, if necessary.

Coaching Time incorporates the following different elements:



If three Coaching Times have taken place and these have not led to a change to the unhelpful behaviour, an individual plan and a coaching programme should be put in place.

#### Support Stage 4: Coaching for Change Programme

If Coaching Time has taken place on three occasions and sufficient progress has not been achieved, the child should be placed on a Coaching Programme. The Coaching Programme is a more intensive level of support for children who have higher levels of difficulty; it involves a series of sessions which should ideally take place outside of the school day.

The Coaching Programme involves the following elements:



At Support Stages 3 & 4 a child will always have an individual plan which identifies and plans for unmet needs and the building of any lacking Executive Function Skills.

#### 3.1 Rules

The rules we have were devised by the children and staff and reflect our work on Rights and Respect,. They are designed for the safety and welfare of the school community.

C. Consequences:

The consequences of keeping and not keeping to each expectation on the charter are focused first on the natural impact i.e. If we are kind and calm in how we respond to others, they will feel safe. If we respond unkindly and aggressively, others will feel unsafe and may feel scared. They may then not wish to spend time with us.

The reason for this is that a focus on the natural impact supports the development of:

- Emotional intelligence
- Empathy
- A strong moral compass
- Intrinsic motivation to do the right thing

We know that, if consequences are focused on the rewards children will get or the punishments they will suffer, it leads to children:

- Thinking about what's in it for themselves rather than developing social and emotional intelligence
- Doing things because they think they may be seen or get caught rather than developing a strong moral compass
- Becoming dependent on authority rather than developing the independence to think through the right thing to do for the well-being of themselves and others
- Relying on extrinsic motivation rather than feeling internally motivated to make moral decisions.

Internal motivation, independence and a clear moral compass are crucial for children's futures; by building these early, they will be better equipped to avoid the common pressures experienced in teenage hood and beyond which lead to substance abuse, risky behaviours and crime.

At Freegrounds Infant School, we hold children tightly to account by always following-up every incident of unhelpful behaviour through Coaching Conversations and, if the unhelpful behaviour continues, supporting ongoing progress through a programme of coaching.

Unlike the consequences commonly used in schools such as missing play and detentions, we use Consequences; the difference is that a Consequence is focused on helping the child to do better rather than feel worse; the child may therefore be asked to stay for coaching outside of school hours, but this will be carried out with a spirit of support and kindness – like all learning, we want the child to learn the skills to do better and enjoy the experience along the way.

6.8 - What happens if a child continues to fail to meet expectations on the charter?

Every child deserves to feel safe, happy and be able to learn. It is therefore vital that, if a pupil in the class is putting this at risk, the right support is put in place so that other children are protected.

If the use of Calm Connect Respond, Coaching, support on skill building and scaffolds and adjustments to help whilst these are still developing, isn't proving sufficient, it may be the child needs some different provision within the school whilst they develop the necessary skills.

This might be an alternative timetable with shorter sessions in class for tasks in which they are able to achieve well along with sessions within the Nurture or similar room to practise key Executive Function skills; it might also include working within other contexts in the school, such as in younger classes (if appropriate) or other departments where the child can build confidence and skills, for example with the ELSA or support following recommendations from a Thrive assessment.

In all contexts, the specific skills which will be a focus to build should be explicit, decided with the child and progress tracked. In the diagram on Page 8, an overview is provided of the steps that will be taken when children aren't keeping to expectations set out in the School Charter.

1. 10 Point Response Plan
2. Follow up with a Coaching Conversation: follow-up is crucial, without it, children won't make progress
3. Individual action plan if there is a pattern of not meeting expectations
4. Adjustments and scaffolds put in place
5. Alternative provision arrangements may need to be made within the school whilst skills being developed

## Section 7 - Monitoring

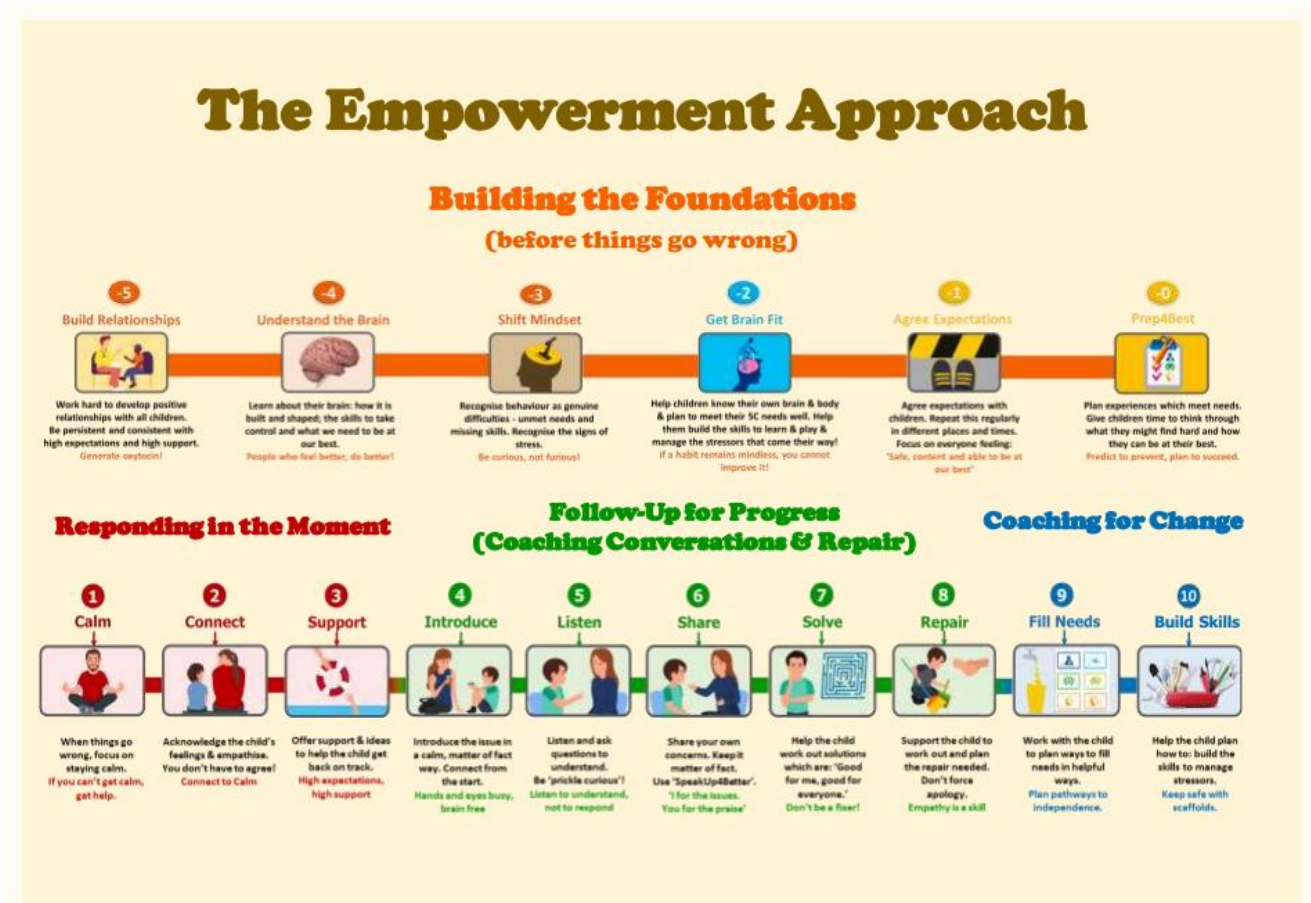
The policy will be monitored by the SLT and reviewed by Governors annually.

Agreed by Governors 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011,

Reviewed, September 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, December 2016, September 2017, 2018, 2019, September 2020, October 2020, September 2021, September 2022, September 2023, July 2024, September 2025

Review annually

<b>Version control:</b>	V2 September 2025 Change of date for when policy was renewed.
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## Appendix Item 2



## Procedure for Children Experiencing Difficulty in Meeting Agreed Expectations

**Key purpose: to help child regulate & get back on track.**

**Dual purpose: to repair & ensure child can do better next time.**

### RESPONDING IN THE MOMENT:

**Child does not meet one of the pro-social or pro-learning expectations....**

**Stage 1 Support: Calm Connect Support**  
A. Adult uses Calm, Connect Support to help the child get back on track



If not successful, move to Step B  
If high or extreme level behaviour, move to Step D (see notes)

**B Adult repeats Calm Connect Support**

If not successful and disrupting others, move to C.

**C. Child given limited choice of space away from main group (see notes)**

Carry out Coaching Conversation later in day or as soon as logistically possible.  
If not successful, move to D.

**D Child given limited choice of space away from class (see notes)**

Carry out Coaching Conversation later in day or as soon as logistically possible.

Only if a child refuses should a Senior Leader be called.

### FOLLOW-UP FOR PROGRESS

**Follow up with Repair**

Repair should take place at ALL stages if the young person's actions have had any impact on others around them.



**Stage 2 Support: Quick Coaching Conversation**



If Coaching Conversation needed 3 times or more

**Stage 3 Support Coaching Time (can be with group)**



If Coaching Time needed 3 times or more

**Stage 4 Support Coaching Programme (with child, teacher, parent & SLT member)**



# Empowerment Approach

## Our Values

- Respect
- Creativity
- Teamwork
- Independence
- Thinking
- Resilience

## Adult Behaviours

- Consistent, Persistent, Insistent
- Always give first attention to pro-social behaviour expectations
- Build relationships to connect
- Be Curious: Unmet needs? Missing skills?
- Co-regulate: Calm, connect, support
- Unconditional positive support for all

## 5C Needs:



Skills: 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- Impulse control
- Attention control
- Emotional regulation
- Flexibility
- Working memory
- Thinking speed

## Prep 4 Best

Agree expectations with the children

Prep 4 best: predict to prevent, plan to succeed

'Good for me, good for you and everyone'

## All of the time support

- Open measures
- Recognise achievement
- Headteacher award
- Marble reward
- Value Bricks
- Class responsibility

## When Expectations are not met

Calm, Connect, Support...

1. Reminder of expectations
2. Coaching prompt/response in the moment
3. Protective consequence (natural/time out)
4. Follow up conversation & repair
5. Co-create a plan to build missing skills/meet needs (educational consequence)
6. Coaching for Progress

At any stage, if behavior improves: Thank you for...

## Coaching prompt/response in the moment

'I notice that...'

'The thing is...'  
(expectation not met and impact)

'What would be good for you, me, everyone is...'  
(Child to provide solution or adult if needed)

## Protective consequence (time out)

'To help keep others safe/happy/able to learn...'

Work in a different area, sit on a bench, move seat,

## Follow up Coaching Conversation & Repair to build empathy

(record on CPOMS)

- I noticed that... / What happened?
- What were you thinking and feeling at the time? (explore unmet needs/ missing skills)
- How has your action affected others? (The thing for me / others is... unmet needs)
- What could we do to repair/put things right so that...? (build empathy, link to charter and 5C needs of others)



## Coaching Plan: Create a plan to build missing skills/meet unmet needs in helpful ways (record on CPOMS)

- Use plan template and executive function skills doc
- Communicate to parents and staff
- Set a review date
- Adapt as needed

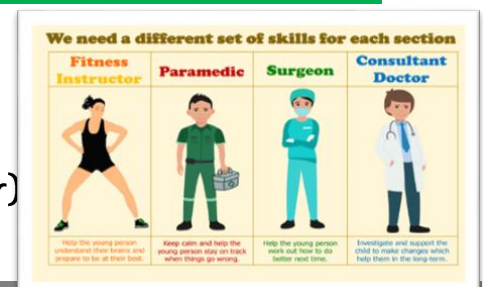
## 6. Coaching for Progress (record on CPOMS)

- SENCO led (Inclusion)
- Longer term but time limited
- Pathway to independence
- Communicate & review

Supporting pro-social & pro-learning skills

Appendix Item 4

## All of the time Support – Universal (Fitness Instructor)



## How adults will follow this approach

- \* **Be Curious Not Furious:** in your tone, words and actions maintaining a calm, solution-focused mindset towards behaviour that can be unhelpful for the individual and those around them; training and supporting all adults in the school to respond by acknowledging and addressing the unmet needs and missing skills that underlie the behaviour, rather than focusing on the behaviour itself.
- \* **Positive, kind, unconditionally positive relationships:** prioritising strong, kind, trusting relationships between staff, children and their parents/carers. Adults must position themselves **for** rather than **against** the child, with the core belief that when people **feel** better, they **do** better.
- \* **High expectations, high support:** expecting all children to achieve their very best and make good ongoing progress; providing high quality, systematic and carefully planned
- \* **Support (with the child, not done to the child)** for any children who are not yet able to meet those expectations. High expectations should always be teamed with a spirit of kindness and unconditional support.
- \* **Teach children (and adults) about their brain:** placing a high priority on developing children's understanding of themselves and their brains; recognising that knowledge of oneself is empowering and is the first step towards progress – one cannot change what one doesn't know or understand.
- \* **Understand needs:** when emotional, physical, sensory and learning needs aren't well met, challenging behaviour may be the outcome for some children and young people. By understanding needs, one is in a better position to prepare to meet them well.
- \* **Follow-up is essential** – 'without follow-up, there will always be mopping up'. We believe that, like all other areas of learning, we must have a systematic and rigorous approach to improvement and consistently follow-up any times when a child does not meet the agreed expectations. Consistent follow-up is essential in securing good progress.
- \* **Children's voice at the centre** – supporting children to understand their behaviour and decide on goals and how to achieve them should be at the heart of our work; by doing so, we secure intrinsic motivation and positive self-advocacy.
- \* **Teach Executive Function Skills:** attention control, impulse control, processing speed, working memory; cognitive flexibility and emotional regulation are key skills for life. They need to be taught and practised.

Appendix Item 5

### When children do not meet expectations:

The following Response Plan will be used when children present with challenging behaviours:

#### Stage 1

# Coaching Prompts - Responding in the moment (Paramedic)

Whenever a child is not meeting the expectations agreed, the adult should respond through Calm, Connect, Support:

1. **Calm:** the adult needs to find their own calm. All adults will model self-regulation at all times, helping the child to regulate their own emotions.
2. **Connect:** acknowledge and empathise with their feelings, you don't have to agree. When things go wrong, the adult will say things which help the child to feel supported and understood.
3. **Support:** Help them to get back on track for the moment. Working out steps for next time comes later. Adults will always offer ways to help the child get back on track, such as a different space to learn or other available supports.



Why should adults use this approach when responding to unhelpful behaviours?

We know from neuroscience that when children deregulate, the areas of the brain responsible for rational thinking, reasoning and problem solving are inhibited. This means that the first priority is to regulate the child. We know that, when someone is given support and empathy, oxytocin is released into the body which in turn speeds up the regulatory system. Adults should therefore always respond with support and empathy, even when a child has done things we don't agree with. Showing support and empathy does not mean we have to agree with or condone the action.

Teachers will:

- \* Give up to three Coaching Prompts over a day before moving to Stage 2
- \* Adults to use set scripted phrases to validate and connect with a child
- \* Refer to School Expectations & Class Charter
- \* After two prompts – child may need time out of the classroom to reflect
- \* Use the Support Card if a child is struggling to regulate and a change of face adult is required to support them to feel calm and regulated

## Stage 2 Coaching Conversations (Surgeon)

Follow-up involves two elements: a) Coaching Conversation and b) Repair Time.

Repair Time should always be carried out separately if the child's words or actions had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

Repair Time is separate to a Coaching Conversation and they have very different purposes: the purpose of the Coaching Conversation is to problem-solve the concerns and needs of all parties and find a solution to enable the child to do better next time. Repair Time on the other hand is about reflecting on any amends that should be made and building the skills of social cognition and empathy.

Teachers will:

- \* Have three Coaching Conversations over a short period of time (two weeks or so) before moving to Stage 3
- \* Class teacher to talk to child for first two CC
- \* Year Leader to talk to child on third CC
- \* Protective measures (scaffolds) in place depending on the low-level disruption or specific problem
- \* Natural Consequence

Every time a child does not meet the expectations agreed at the start, it should be followed-up at a time when everyone is calm using a 'Coaching Conversation'.

Coaching Conversations are a problem-solving technique which focus on understanding needs, building skills and planning how to do better next time.

We use this method because we know that punitive consequences are good at making children feel bad but are very poor at helping children to:

- a) work out how to meet their needs better next time
- b) build their Executive Function skills
- c) develop their Emotional Intelligence.

Coaching Conversations support children in all these vital areas. During a Coaching Conversation, the concerns of the child and the adult are explored and ways to meet both are discussed.



## Stage 2 Support: The Coaching Conversation

4. **Introduce the concern** in a way that keeps the child regulated and feeling supported
5. **Listen to the child** – listen to understand, not to respond. Ask questions until both you and the child really understand the needs and missing skills behind the issue. Ask questions in a way the child feels heard and their perspective understood.
6. **Share your concerns** and your point of view using the 'Speak Up for Better' technique (start with evidence and how you are interpreting it, use 'I' rather than 'you').

7. **Problem-solve** together – always ask for the child’s ideas first; expect the child to work hard at thinking of solutions which are ‘Good for Me, Good for You, Good for Everyone’. If they really cannot think of solutions, despite trying hard, the adult should make suggestions and encourage the child to decide which would be best. The principle is that the child feels authorship of the solution as this will make it more likely they will follow it through.

**Things adults should keep in mind to secure sustained ongoing progress:**

- \* Real, long-term change takes time – our job is to help children and young people to create new neural pathways, and to recognise that they can’t do this overnight. This means that the first Coaching Conversation is unlikely to lead to instant change – ‘Change needs more than a chat’.
- \* Scaffolding pathways to independence: Children and adults need to be clear about the end goal. Small steps should be planned with the child, and successes recognised and celebrated.

It may be necessary to put scaffolds in place for a while, but it is essential that over time these are reduced and removed as the child develops the skills to function independently. When supports and scaffolds remain static, children become dependent.

**Repair Time: a restorative justice technique (used at all stages):**



Repair Time should **always** take place if a child’s words or actions have had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

Repair Time is separate to the Coaching Conversation and has a distinct and separate purpose.

8. Repair Time should be scheduled to take place as soon after the incident as possible but only once the child is calm. It is preferable that the adult first involved in the incident leads Repair Time, wherever possible.

During this stage, the child is supported to consider the perspectives of others; they are helped to think through whether the needs of other people were compromised in any way – the natural impact that their words or actions may have had. By exploring this in a matter-of-fact way and in a spirit of support, the ‘repair stage’ supports improved skills within the areas of social cognition and empathy.

If a child says they do not care about the impact on others and do not want to make things better, they should never be forced. The adult should simply show them the Control Centre Skills card for Emotional Intelligence (gold needs card) and explain that this just means they haven’t learned the skills yet to either feel what others feel or want others to feel better. The adult should also emphasise that:

- \* These are really important skills for everyone in the world to have to make sure it is a pleasant place for us all to live
- \* As the child's educator, we have a duty to help them improve in these skills so some extra help will be put in place.
- \* This may mean some extra learning before or after school but it is not a punishment – it is because you care about them and those around them deeply – we want them to achieve well and for others to feel safe and content.
- \* Reassure them that any extra sessions will be within a spirit of support and as enjoyable as possible.

## Stage 3 Coaching Time (Surgeon)

Coaching Time should take place in the event that a Coaching Conversation has been used several times yet not led to any noticeable improvement.

It is vital that the child does not see Coaching Time as a punishment but rather as a commitment to wanting them to do better so they can achieve well. This message should be emphasised to the child and everything should be done to ensure the experience is a positive one for the child, whilst also firmly holding them to account for making progress.

Coaching Time should be carried out in a spirit of support with an adult with whom the child has a good relationship. It is ideal if this is the adult who teaches the child most. Coaching Time can take place in groups, if necessary.

Coaching Time incorporates the following different elements:



Teachers will:

- \* Spend 30min meeting with the child with a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) during the school day
- \* Discuss expectations and address skills difficulties
- \* Complete a Coaching Conversation slip for the child to work through
- \* Record 'Coaching Time' conversation on CPOMS with targets recorded
- \* Inform parents/carers to outline what expectation/success looks like
- \* Set a measurable time frame (approx. two weeks) for child to work on skills with teacher support
- \* Set out protective measures / scaffolds in place

If Coaching Time conversations have taken place and these have not led to a change to the unhelpful behaviour, an individual plan and a coaching programme should be put in place.

Repair Time: a restorative justice technique (used at all stages):



Repair Time should **always** take place if a child's words or actions have had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

Repair Time is separate to the Coaching Conversation and has a distinct and separate purpose.

1. Repair Time should be scheduled to take place as soon after the incident as possible but only once the child is calm. It is preferable that the adult first involved in the incident leads Repair Time, wherever possible.

## Support Stage 4 Coaching for Change Programme (Consultant)

2. Fill needs
3. Build Skills

If Coaching Time has taken place and sufficient progress has not been achieved, the child should be placed on a Coaching Programme. The Coaching Programme is a more intensive level of support for children who have higher levels of difficulty; it involves a series of sessions which should ideally take place outside of the school day and it is expected that parents/carers attend these planning meetings with their child.

The Coaching Programme involves the following elements:



At Support Stages 3 & 4 a child will always have an individual plan which identifies and plans for unmet needs and the building of any lacking Executive Function Skills. Individual plans will be overseen by SLT at Stage 3 and the school's SENCO and the inclusion team for Stage 4. The class teacher is responsible for identifying key skills and areas of need which need support around and will meet with senior leaders.

Teachers will:

- \* Arrange to meet with parents/carers after school with child and/or SENCO/SLT
- \* Needs and Skills central to planning with clear outcomes identified

- \* Coaching programme provision to be agreed with measurable time frame i.e; a six-week period of intervention support, x2 30min sessions per week.
- \* Agree with parent's clear support to be put in place at home as well as school for positive outcome
- \* Review protective measures in place and skills developed at end of provision.
- \* Includes bespoke individual plans for children with SEND with SEMH as main barrier of need – developed by the SENCO including IBMPs

Repair Time: a restorative justice technique (used at all stages):



Repair Time should **always** take place if a child's words or actions have had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

Repair Time is separate to the Coaching Conversation and has a distinct and separate purpose.

1. Repair Time should be scheduled to take place as soon after the incident as possible but only once the child is calm. It is preferable that the adult first involved in the incident leads Repair Time, wherever possible.