

# Aycliffe Community Primary School

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## A WHOLE SCHOOL Trauma Informed Relationships and Behaviour Policy

Signed:

Date: September 2024

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*Chair of Governors*

Next Review Date: September 2025

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## **Make a Difference Make a Difference Make a Difference Make a Difference**

**Aycliffe Community Primary School is a community where children's rights are learned, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted. Pupils and the school community learn about children's rights by putting them into practice every day.**

- **Article 28: Every child has the right to an education. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights.**
- **Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.**
- **Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.**
- **Article 13: Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.**
- **Article 17: Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.**

### **Introduction**

At Aycliffe Community Primary School, we strive for excellence and believe that through a culture of support and guidance, which is fair and restorative, pupils will develop and reach their fullest potential. It is the belief that every child should be given unconditional positive regard. Through research, evidence and trauma informed practice, staff are able to guide and lead pupils effectively.

This policy is designed to promote a positive ethos of good behaviour in which children can work and play well together with others. There is a high expectation of behaviour in all aspects of the school day which places the needs of the child at its centre.

The development of positive relationships throughout the school is central to the effectiveness of this policy. The school uses the curriculum to support the teaching of emotional development, with a focus on developing positive relationships. All adults support the development of learning behaviour and recognise and reinforce good learning behaviours through positive relationships throughout the school. "It is the positive relationships and a sense of belonging that a good school culture provides that give children the comfort, confidence, competence, and motivation to learn," (Dr James P Comer, Professor of Child Psychiatry, University of Yale, 2005).

We support all children including those displaying social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties. We maintain the belief that pupils' behaviour should be understood and can be modified, managed and enhanced in order to enable them to access learning. In addition, we use our positive reinforcements and sequential sanctions to support effective classroom management.

All adults at Aycliffe CE Primary School have a shared responsibility to ensure the implementation of the trauma informed relationships and behaviour policy.

### **Ethos and Aims:**

A trauma-informed school approach is one in which all staff work with children to support their emotional and social wellbeing. It is based on comprehensive and extensive research in neuroscience, attachment theory and child development. We recognise that in order to fully meet the needs of pupils, of which some present with complex needs, it is a necessity that the school is

'attuned, attachment friendly and nurturing' (Wall; 2018). It is integral that work is carried out to co-regulate behaviours, but also to provide the skills for pupils to identify their own needs and to educate and upskill pupils so that they become skilled in self-regulating and managing their own feelings. Work is carried out with parents to understand pupils' needs and difficulties, as well their experiences and to help and provide support for them so that any unmet needs away from the school can be achieved.

Aycliffe Community Primary School aims to provide a caring, calm and secure environment in which tolerance, understanding and respect for others is fostered. Emotional and learning behaviours are at the heart of our behaviour procedures and approaches. As a trauma-informed school, we use our understanding of social and emotional development and learning within all our approaches to behaviour. We aim to promote a positive culture and to encourage in all pupils a sense of responsibility to themselves, to our school and to the wider community.

We aim to achieve this through a whole school approach to promoting effective learning and providing pupils with systems that ensure they feel safe. All staff take a positive approach to improving pupils' behaviour and self-esteem, taking every opportunity to find out why a pupil behaves as they do, exploring factors that influence a pupil's behaviour and identifying early warning signs to prevent escalation. As an inclusive learning community, our school focuses on learning and ensuring pupils are ready to learn. We encourage children to take risks with their learning, challenge themselves through their choice of learning task, engage with the curriculum and take personal responsibility for their development.

Our caring and nurturing environments provide and ensure:

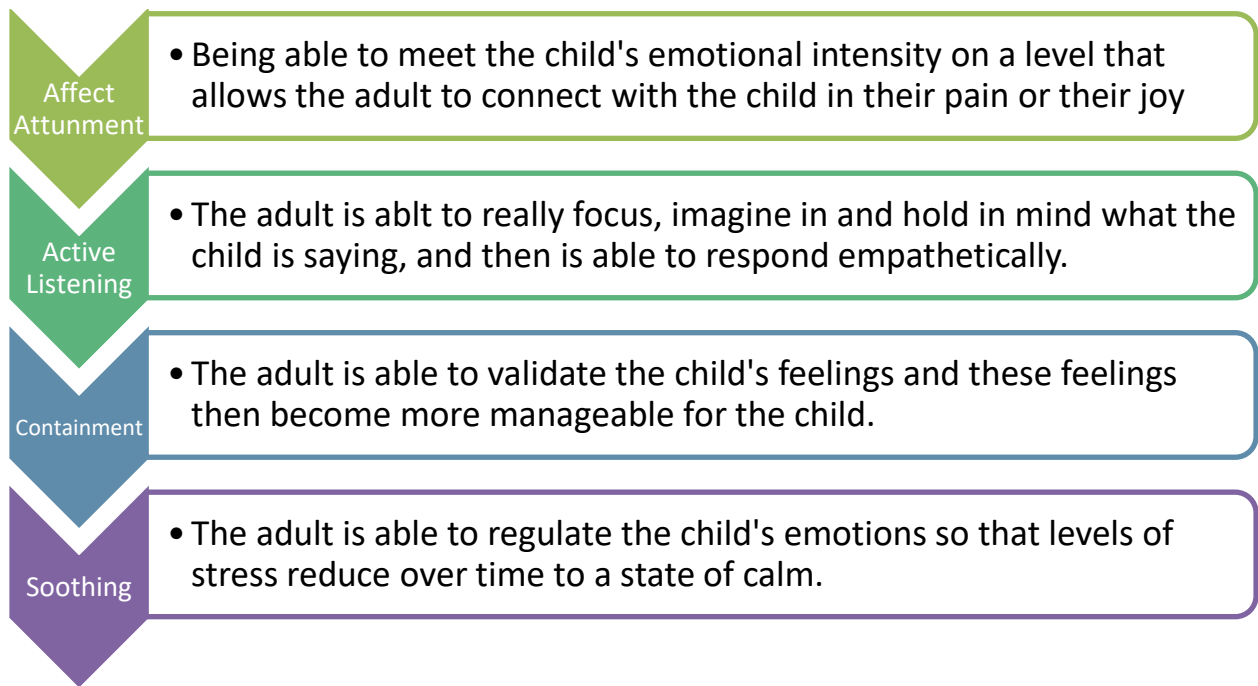
- Consistent trauma-informed approach to behaviour management
- Six Principles of Nurture
- Encouragement
- Recognition
- Self-regulation strategies
- Constructive feedback
- Equal opportunities
- Development of all pupils
- Attention to individual needs
- An emotionally available adult for all pupils
- Managing pupil transition
- Support for parents
- Trained staff

Aycliffe Community Primary School has an expectation of effective learning in all lessons. This can only be achieved through effective pupil learning behaviours and good classroom management skills in securing appropriate behaviour. Additionally, high expectations of manners and courtesy are embedded within school.

### **Trauma-Informed Schools**

Trauma-informed behavioural approaches prioritise relationships, empathy and feeling safe. The four steps of Emotion Coaching (see diagram below) provide a useful outline for embedding principle within a relational approach.

**Key Relational Skills that support vulnerable children:**



**Our school is committed to Educational practices which Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect (PRRR approach)**

#### **PROTECT**

- Increased 'safety cues' in all aspects of the school day
- 'Meet and greet' as children enter the school premises and as they enter the classroom – adults have space to attune to the children at the start of the day
- 'Soft starts' for pupils who need extra support to ease into the school day in a calm and focused manner
- Reducing expectations to match developmental capability
- Removing vulnerable children from a situation they're not managing
- Safe spaces for children in different parts of the school
- Reducing stress for the traumatised child and emotional-based school avoidance interventions/strategies
- Staff understand the impact of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)
- Nurture groups
- Staff are supported to interact throughout the school day with positive social engagement
- Leaders model positive social engagement and the language of an emotionally available adult

#### **RELATE**

- Staff trained in 'PACE' modes of interaction (Hughes 2015); being warm, emphatic, playful and curious (proven to shift children out of flight/fright/freeze positions) which support the development of secure attachments
- All adults understand and use the WINE approach (I wonder, I imagine, I notice, empathy)
- Children have easy access to an emotionally available adult
- A whole-school commitment to enabling children to see themselves, their relationships and the world positively
- Emotion coaching approach (see below)
- Staff are skilled in using de-escalation techniques
- Key relational skills (see above)
- Vulnerable children are provided with repeated relational opportunities with an emotionally available/key adult in order to build trust and the willingness to seek help when it is needed

#### **REGULATE**

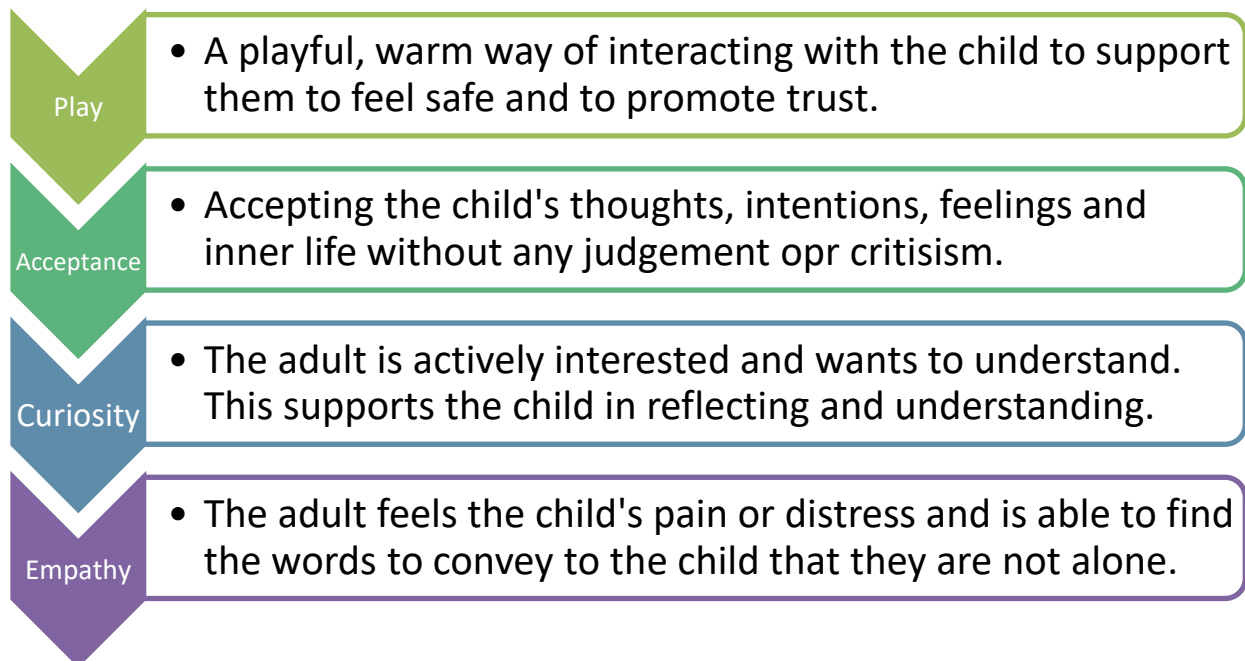
- Adults listen

- Adults find words for feelings
- Relational talk
- Children feel understood
- Emotion coaching (see below)
- Collaborative problem-solving (see below)
- Mindfulness
- Woodland
- Sensory room
- Sensory circuits
- Boxall profile assessments and nurture approaches to support strong understanding of children
- Nurture groups: approaches to support emotional and stress regulation
- Enrichment activities – creative activities, including art and craft, D&T, cooking
- Autism bucket

### REFLECT

- Staff continued development and training support children in moving from their behaviour, and 'behaving' their trauma/painful life experiences, to reflecting on those experiences and events
- Staff understand and use de-escalation techniques
- Adults use a range of resources to support children in reflecting on their behaviour, for example: symbolization using a sand tray, big empathy drawings, comic strip conversations, use of emotion cards
- Staff use collaborative conversations (see below): show me rather than tell me, exploring ways to respond differently in the future
- The school's PSHE curriculum enables children to make informed choices about how they relate to others, how they live their lives, and how they treat their brains, bodies and minds.

### PACE approach

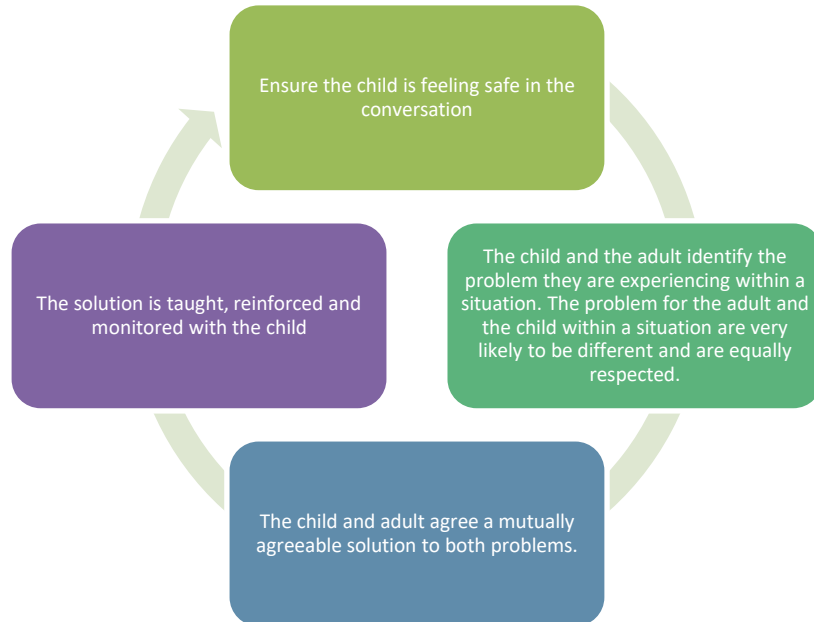


### Collaborative Conversations

All staff identify situations when pupils are experiencing difficulty, log the difficulty and identify the skills or understanding the child needs to be taught.

Staff engage in collaborative conversations with pupils to problem solve and change their behaviour.

A Collaborative Conversation has the following stages:



### Zones of Regulation and Emotion Coaching

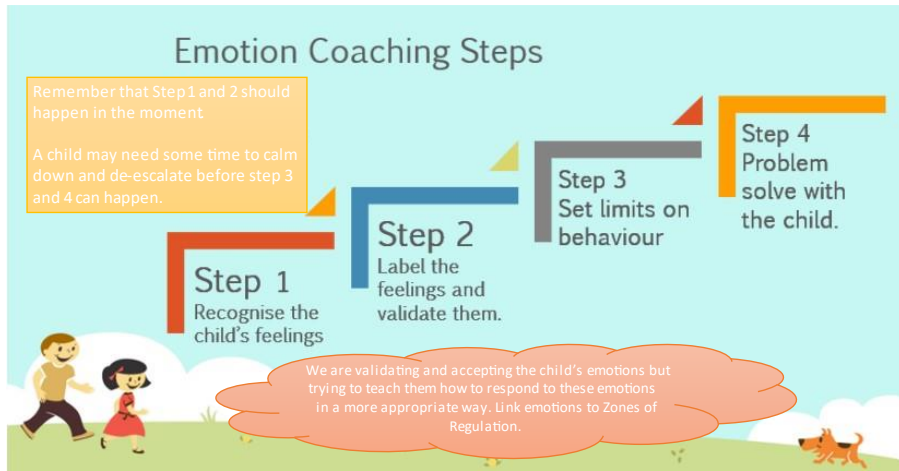
All staff have been trained in the use of the Zones of Regulation and Emotion Coaching to support the building of safe, supportive environments that foster learning and well-being for all.

The Zones of Regulation are taught and used in school to enable the children to identify their own emotions and the emotions of others. Pupils are also taught tools that can help them to move between zones and ultimately learn to self-regulate.

Emotion Coaching is a four-step approach that is used in conjunction with the Zones of Regulation and de-escalation. It is used to recognise and validate pupils' emotions and is then used to support a de-briefing and collaborative conversation, helping pupils to reflect on their emotions and behaviour and to identify beneficial strategies for responding to their emotions in an appropriate way.

## The ZONES of Regulation™

<b>BLUE ZONE</b>	<b>GREEN ZONE</b>	<b>YELLOW ZONE</b>	<b>RED ZONE</b>
Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Relaxed	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Mad/Angry Terrified Elated/Ecstatic Devastated Out of Control



## Rewards and Consequences

### School and Class Rules

Aycliffe Community School has developed and updated school and class rules in collaboration with pupil voice. Pupils reflected on pupil learning behaviours that are important to the ethos and values of our school, as a Rights Respecting School at Gold level. Adults form positive relationships with children and use these rules to reinforce and develop the desired behaviours.

The following rules were selected by pupils at Aycliffe Community Primary School:

- We care and are helpful
- We are honest
- We are polite and courteous to staff, each other and visitors
- Respect everyone and be a role model for others
- Respect the environment and keep it tidy
- We walk sensibly in School
- We listen carefully to adults and peers
- We wear our uniform with pride
- We are punctual for school and lessons
- We try our best and work hard

### Acknowledgement/rewards

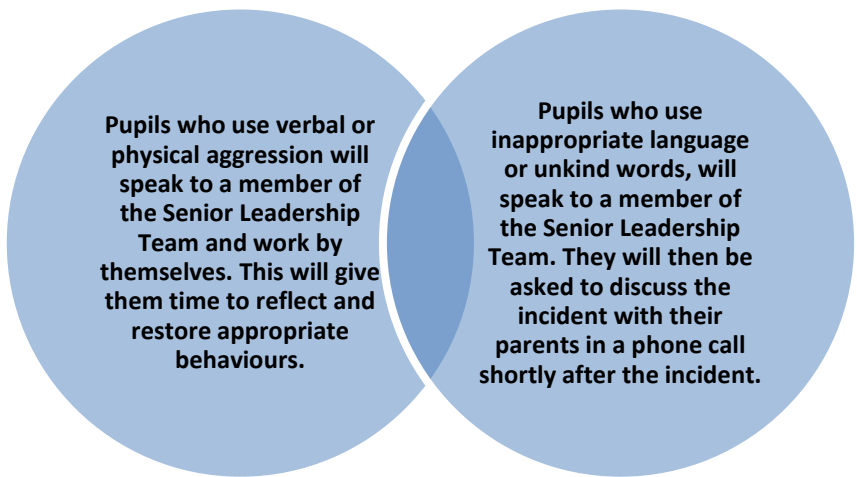
Pupils' good learning behaviours are recognised through ClassDojo points and certificates. During our weekly Celebration Assembly, pupils also receive certificates recognising their achievements, which reflect the school's learning value. Every pupil in our school is entitled to 30 minutes golden time each week. The school actively seeks to make golden time special for all pupils and Pupil Panels engages in evaluating and developing golden time. Pupils also receive headteacher stickers for good learning behaviours and achievements.

### Consequences

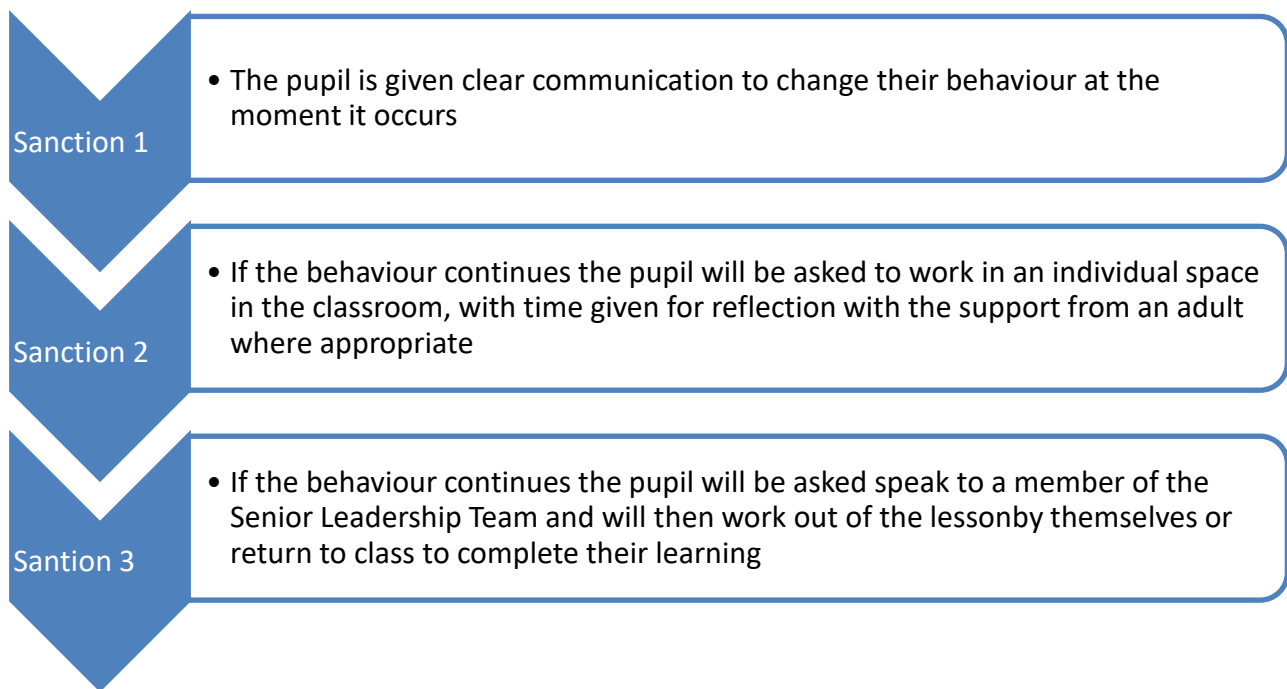
Our staff understand that all behaviour is a form of communication and that some presented behaviours are often an outcome or a response to Adverse Childhood Experiences ( ACEs). In these cases, adults will adopt and implement trauma-informed strategies (**PRRR** approach) that pre-empt unacceptable behaviour.

Although our school aims to focus on positive behaviour management through the building of strong relationships that allow practices which **Protect, Relate, Regulate** and **Reflect**, there are unfortunately occasions when some pupils may display unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour. We want pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and will encourage pupils to do this through approaches which enable pupils to reflect upon their behaviour and to make amends. This process does not, however, replace consequences.

Aycliffe Community Primary School does not countenance the use of any verbal or physical aggression or the use of inappropriate language.



To support classroom management the school has a clear system of sequential consequences teachers can use to address inappropriate learning behaviours that might arise during a lesson, or during the school day. These consequences are reinforced regularly and the first sanction is highlighted as the most important as pupils can change their behaviours immediately so that they and others can learn effectively. Alongside this sequence of sanctions, the child may lose minutes of their golden time; adults work with the child to re-instate these minutes at a later time.

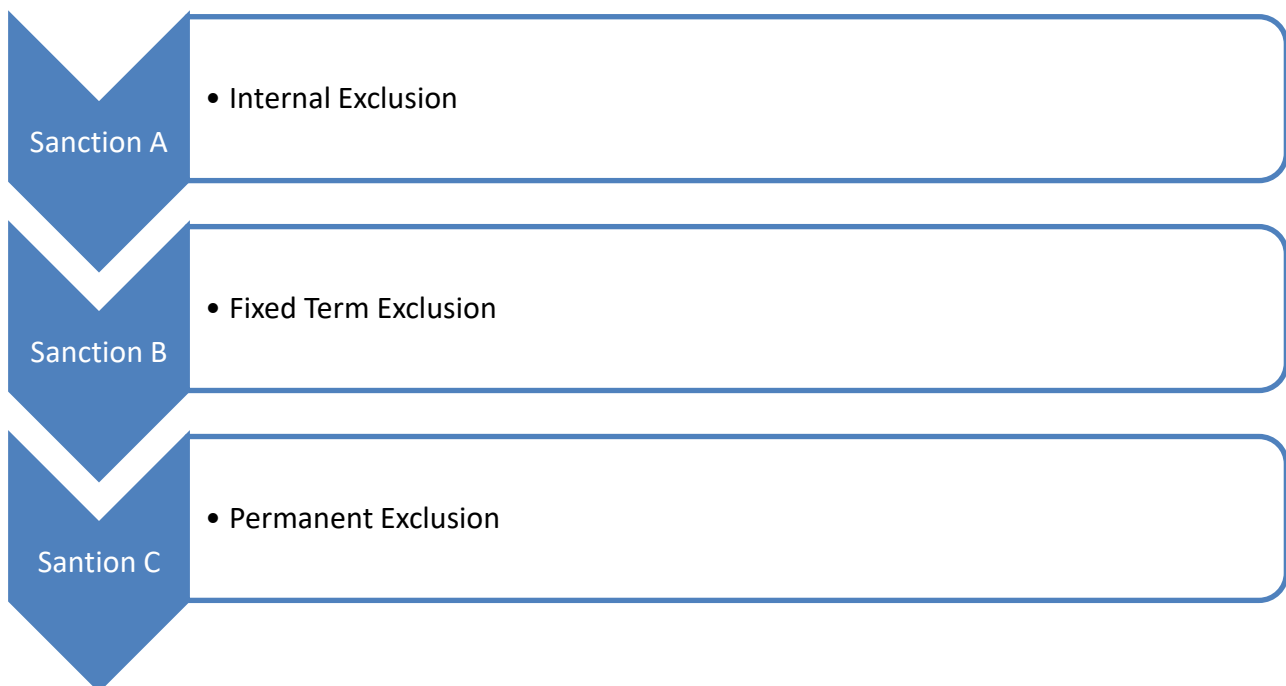


Exclusions are used as a sanction in line with the guidance from the DfE, Kent LA and the school's 'Suspension and Permanent Exclusion' policy. The additional sanctions would address extreme behaviours that require individual responses. This could include persistent disruptive behaviours or the refusal to follow Sanction 3.

The school makes every effort to prevent a child from being excluded from school, since we believe that supporting children to stay in school may lead to higher educational attainment and more opportunities in the future, and ensures that children remain in a safe environment. To this end, we ensure that a number of provisions for the child have been explored. In addition to the above

approaches that aim to create positive school environments, underpinned by strong pupil-adult relationships, that promote good mental health and behaviour, learning and safety, these provisions may include:

- Mentor within school
- Early intervention support, both within school and from external organisations, to support both the child and the family
- Use of the Local Inclusion Forum Team (LIFT) to discuss the child: the aim of these groups is to find solutions to problems and offer advice
- Pastoral Support Plan: a school-based intervention to ensure that the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of pupils is cared for. The commitment to pastoral care feeds into everything a school does to ensure their pupils have the best chance at success
- Enlisting the support of the school's Educational Psychologist
- Flexible curriculum with 'soft starts' (learning breaks in which the child may engage in alternative activity to help regulate emotions and avoid the build up of stress), for example: sensory circuits, physical outdoor activity, sensory room activity
- Change of adult/face strategy
- Therapeutic techniques to help students regulate their behaviour and develop appropriate coping strategies
- Counselling
- Referral for support from CAMHS and the services offered by Kent Family Support Framework where appropriate
- Requesting support from external stakeholders such as Specialist Teaching and Learning Services, and from the local authority SEND team and health services
- The organisation of an emergency review meeting for those pupils who have an Individual Health Care Plan (EHCP)



Following a fixed period exclusion, the school has a process for reintegration. A meeting will take place which involves the family, child, Headteacher and any other relevant staff members, for example, the child's key adult and the school's SENCo. The purpose of the meeting will be to clearly explain the school's reintegration strategy and the support that the school will continue to offer, and will also be an opportunity to answer any questions that parents/carers and/or the pupil may have.

The headteacher and key staff members attending the meeting will communicate to the pupil that they are valued and that their previous behaviour will not be seen as a barrier to future success. During the reintegration meeting the pupil will be offered a fresh start and supported to:

- Understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others
- Meet the high expectations of behaviour as outlined in this policy
- Foster a renewed sense of belonging within the school community
- Build engagement with learning

The child will remain on a Pastoral Support Plan in order to continue to support the well-being of the child and manage the child's needs, and to set targets to monitor and measure the child's progress.

## **Anti-Bullying**

Aycliffe Community Primary School is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where no bullying is tolerated.

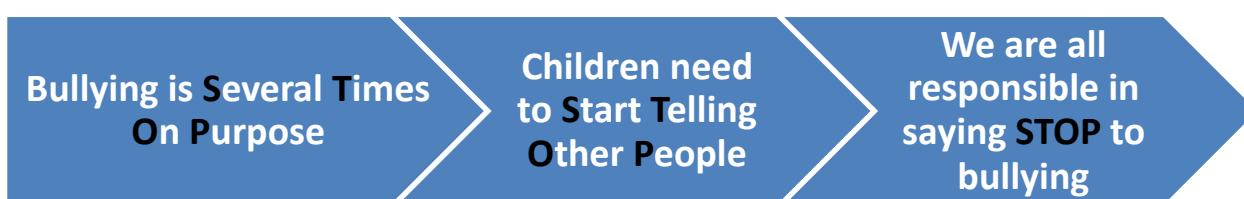
Our school ensures that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns are dealt with:

- sensitively and effectively
- so that pupils feel safe to learn
- so that pupils abide by the behaviour policy

We ensure that all parents know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and know where to access independent advice about bullying. We report back to parents regarding their concerns on bullying and deal promptly with complaints.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally. This includes the same inappropriate and harmful behaviours expressed via digital devices such as the sending of inappropriate messages by phone, text, Instant Messenger, through web-sites and social networking sites, and sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet. Bullying could happen to anyone and may include bullying related to race, religion or culture; bullying related to learning difficulties or disability; bullying related to appearance or health conditions; bullying related to sexual orientation; bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances; sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying.

The children are encouraged to use the three 'STOPs' so that they know what to do about bullying.



Pupils are encouraged to use the worry boxes in each classroom to raise any concerns with teachers. Pupils who bully will receive a sanction appropriate to the school's behaviour policy.

Additionally, the school will use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied. This would include actively providing systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.

Our school considers all opportunities for addressing bullying including through the curriculum, through displays, through peer support, home & school partnerships and through pupil voice. Our schools promote STOP regularly in assemblies. We train all staff to identify bullying and follow school policy and procedures on bullying, including recording incidents of bullying. Each school works with parents and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.

## **Collaboration with other agencies**

Aycliffe Community Primary School actively seeks support from different agencies when it requires additional advice to support collaborative problem-solving strategies. The school uses early intervention through the common assessment framework, specialist teaching service, and outreach from specialist provisions or Educational Psychologists as required.

### **Partnership with Parents**

Our school understands the central importance of good working relationships with parents to support all children and this is especially important when changing a pupil's approach to learning.

Parents, where possible, should:

- Get to know the school's relationships and behaviour policy and reinforce it at home where appropriate
- Support their child in adhering to the school's relationships and behaviour policy
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the class teacher promptly
- Take part in any pastoral work following inappropriate behaviour (for example: attending reviews of specific behaviour interventions)
- Raise any concerns about the management of behaviour with the school directly, whilst continuing to work in partnership with the school
- Take part in the life of the school and its culture

The school will aim to build a positive relationship with parents and carers by keeping them informed about developments in their child's behaviour and the school's policy, and working in collaboration with them to tackle behavioural concerns. The school holds fortnightly meetings for pupils and parents working within a Pastoral Support Plan to ensure that the school and parents are working collaboratively.

### **Use of Reasonable Force**

Reasonable force covers a range of interventions that involve physical contact with pupils. All members of staff at Aycliffe Community Primary School have a duty to use reasonable force, in the following circumstances, and in line with the DFE Guidance: *DFE Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies*, to prevent a pupil from:

Causing disorder

Hurting themselves or others

Damaging property

Committing an offence

Incidents of reasonable force must:

Always be used as a last resort

Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible

Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned

Never be used as a form of punishment

Be recorded and reported to parents (see appendix 3 for a behaviour log)

### **Team-Teach**

The school's teachers and members of the senior leadership team and management team have been trained in the use of physical interventions. The programme used in this school is Team-Teach which has a proven track record, is nationally accredited by The Institute for Conflict Management (ICM), and locally recognised by KSENT (Kent Special Educational Needs Trust). In addition to de-escalation techniques and the focus on a positive approach to behaviour management, the programme also outlines the context for physical intervention and practical guidance on the

application of a range of strategies and techniques to keep everyone safe during the physical management of behaviour. All staff understand that the use of restrictive physical intervention is a 'last resort strategy' where - as part of an ongoing dynamic risk assessment - it has been decided that there is no alternative strategy or response that can be used to maintain safety.

When considering using reasonable force, staff at Aycliffe Community Primary School, in considering the risks, will carefully recognise any specific vulnerabilities of the pupil, including SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions.

For additional guidance, please see attached Appendix 1: *DFE Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies - July 2013*

## **Confiscation and Searching**

### **Confiscation**

Any prohibited items (knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images, any article a staff member reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person, including the pupil) found in a pupil's possession as a result of a search will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to the pupil.

Aycliffe Community primary School will also confiscate any item that is harmful or detrimental to school discipline. These items will be returned to pupils after discussion with senior leaders and parents, if appropriate.

### **Searching a pupil**

Searches will only be carried out by a member of staff who has been authorised to do so by the headteacher, or by the headteacher themselves.

Subject to the exception below, the authorised member of staff carrying out the search will be of the same sex as the pupil, and there will be another member of staff present as a witness to the search. An authorised member of staff of a different sex to the pupil can carry out a search without another member of staff as a witness if:

- The authorised member of staff carrying out the search reasonably believes there is risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not carried out as a matter of urgency; and
- In the time available, it is not reasonably practicable for the search to be carried out by a member of staff who is the same sex as the pupil; or
- It is not reasonably practicable for the search to be carried out in the presence of another member of staff

When an authorised member of staff conducts a search without a witness, they should immediately report this to another member of staff, and ensure a written record of the search is kept.

If the authorised member of staff considers a search to be necessary, but is not required urgently, they will seek the advice of the headteacher, designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) or pastoral member of staff who may have more information about the pupil. During this time the pupil will be supervised and kept away from other pupils.

A search can be carried out if the authorised member of staff has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item or any item identified in the school rules for which a search can be made, or if the pupil has agreed.

An appropriate location for the search will be found. Where possible, this will be away from other pupils. The search will only take place on the school premises or where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil, for example on a school trip.

Before carrying out a search the authorised member of staff will:

- Assess whether there is an urgent need for a search
- Assess whether not doing the search would put other pupils or staff at risk
- Consider whether the search would pose a safeguarding risk to the pupil
- Explain to the pupil why they are being searched

- Explain to the pupil what a search entails – e.g. I will ask you to turn out your pockets and remove your scarf
- Explain how and where the search will be carried out
- Give the pupil the opportunity to ask questions
- Seek the pupil's co-operation

If the pupil refuses to agree to a search, the member of staff can give an appropriate behaviour sanction.

If they still refuse to co-operate, the member of staff will contact the select appropriate [headteacher / designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) / well-being mentor], to try and determine why the pupil is refusing to comply.

The authorised member of staff will then decide whether to use reasonable force to search the pupil. This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration whether conducting the search will prevent the pupil harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder.

The authorised member of staff can use reasonable force to search for any prohibited items, but not to search for items that are only identified in the school rules.

The authorised member of staff may use a metal detector to assist with the search.

An authorised member of staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers.

Outer clothing includes:

- Any item of clothing that is not worn immediately over a garment that is being worn wholly next to the skin or being worn as underwear (e.g., a jumper or jacket being worn over a t-shirt)
- Hats, scarves, gloves, shoes, boots

### **Searching pupils' possessions**

Possessions means any items that the pupil has or appears to have control of, including:

- Desks
- Lockers
- Bags

A pupil's possessions can be searched for any item if the pupil agrees to the search. If the pupil does not agree to the search, staff can still carry out a search for prohibited items.

An authorised member of staff can search a pupil's possessions when the pupil and another member of staff are present.

If there is a serious risk of harm if the search is not conducted immediately, or it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff, the search can be carried out by a single authorised member of staff.

### **Informing the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)**

The staff member who carried out the search should inform the DSL without delay:

- Of any incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of a prohibited item listed above
- If they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk

All searches for prohibited items (listed in section 3), including incidents where no items were found, will be recorded in the school's safeguarding system.

Informing parents

Parents will always be informed of any search for a prohibited item (listed in section 3). A member of staff will tell the parents as soon as is reasonably practicable:

- What happened
- What was found, if anything
- What has been confiscated, if anything
- What action the school has taken, including any sanctions that have been applied to their child

### **Support after a search**

Irrespective of whether any items are found as the result of any search, the school will consider whether the pupil may be suffering or likely to suffer harm and whether any specific support is needed (due to the reasons for the search, the search itself, or the outcome of the search).

If this is the case, staff will follow the school's safeguarding policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The DSL will consider if pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

### **School Transition**

On transition into and out of our school, vulnerable pupils are given extra support and guidance. This might take the form of familiarising the pupils with the expectations of their new school by forming a relationship with an adult, having additional visits or transition work with support staff. The school aims to acquire and share information that enables the planning of provision for a successful transition.

\*

**We recognise that all pupils are equal regardless of cultural or ethnic background, religion, social circumstances, gender, sexual orientation, ability and disability. The curriculum and whole ethos of the school demonstrates that diversity is understood, is welcomed and appreciated within the school. Equal opportunities means that all children have the right to a broad and balanced curriculum with which all pupils can engage and achieve.**

Jacky Cox, Headteacher

September 2024