



Small Isles Primary and ELC

Relationships Policy (Sep 2024)

1.1 Purpose, Vision & Values and Aims

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for parents, pupils, and teachers about our relationships-focussed approach to behaviour management. Relationships and behaviour will be a specific focus of school inspections by HMIE, and we recognise that the two are inextricably linked. Positive relationships are also central to GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child) and the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on The Rights of The Child). Positive relationships are central to a positive school ethos, which supports the inclusion, equality, and wellbeing of everyone in the school community.

Positive relationships play a key role in underpinning our vision and values, which are;

Our Vision

At Small Isles we want our children to flourish, be caring local and global citizens, be themselves and be celebrated for who they are.

Our Values

Ambition
Compassion
Respect



Aims

We aim to:

- Ensure our children reach their potential and be ambitious by supporting them to achieve and persevere through a Growth Mindset.
- Recognise our children's' achievements inside and outside of school.
- Display kindness and empathy towards all, supporting each other on our school journeys.
- Listen to each other and make sure everyone has a voice.
- Ensure that Children's Rights are at the heart of everything we do!

Our relationships-focused approach emphasises the importance of wellbeing as the first vital step in ensuring meaningful learning and teaching can take place.

We understand the importance of fostering meaningful relationships and restoring these when things go wrong and understand the importance of co-regulation and de-escalation as vital tools to ensure a calm and caring environment.

We recognise that there may be some people in our learning community who might require further help and support with self-regulation, and we are committed to ensuring we work alongside those that experience these challenges to allow us to respond appropriately.

We understand the importance of using language that is non-dispositional, so we use the term "distressed" when describing "challenging behaviour".

Our approach to relationships-focused practice will prioritise, as far as possible, a solution orientated approach.

The main purpose of this policy is to promote positive relationships within our learning community, with the common purpose of ensuring that everyone experiences a nurturing, empathetic and respectful environment.

2.1. Expectations, Consequences and Boundaries

It is important to emphasise that a relationships-focused approach does not mean there is a lack of expectations or boundaries.

At Small Isles, we have expectations in place that apply to everyone and are inclusive and achievable by all.

Our children recognise the responsibility for each of them to:

Listen to adult's advice, communicate with each other and adults, display a Growth Mindset, show kindness and compassion, be happy and respectful. Ensure Children's Rights underpin all decisions that are made.

The whole learning community has a shared understanding of wellbeing and the children's rights:

Small Isles is a Silver Status Rights Respecting School and our children continually learn about the Rights of the Child. Each class has a Class Charter which acts as a set of class rules to help every child achieve and feel safe and secure in the classroom. Children's Rights underpin all that we do at Small Isles.

All stakeholders promote a climate where children and young people feel safe and secure

All staff and partners model behaviour which promotes and supports the wellbeing of all.

All staff and partners are sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each individual child and colleague.

Staff, children and young people know, understand and use the wellbeing indicators as an integral feature of school life.

Staff and partners have created an environment where children and young people feel listened to and are secure in their ability to discuss personal and sensitive aspects of their lives because they feel cared about.

All staff and partners take due account of the legislative framework related to wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

All staff engage in regular professional learning to ensure they are fully up-to-date with local, national and, where appropriate, international legislation affecting the rights, wellbeing and inclusion of all children and young people.

The curriculum provides children and young people with well-planned and progressive opportunities to explore diversity and multi-faith issues, and to challenge racism and religious intolerance.

Children and young people are knowledgeable about equalities and inclusion. They feel able to challenge discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance when they come across it.

Outdoor spaces are used effectively to promote positive relationships and wellbeing. Staff take account of research linking benefits of outdoor learning and green space with wellbeing.

We recognise the importance of the adults modelling these expectations to ensure that learners know what is expected of them.

At Small Isles, we understand the importance of the physical school environment in supporting our expectations and fostering a sense of belonging.

Linked to our physical environment everyone can expect:

Classroom (Nurturing Principle 2: Environment offers a safe base)

There are clear routines visible in the classroom, for example, welcome, check ins, review of lesson.

Clear and consistent expectations and boundaries are set within the class – orally, visually, written.

The classroom has designated safe areas that children and young people can go to if they find the general classroom areas overwhelming or challenging. Children and young people have a choice in how they use these areas.

Staff are aware of their own reactions and take steps to try and help themselves to feel calm, for example, walking away from situations, seeking support.

De-escalation practices are evident within the classroom, for example, staff member waits for pupil to calm down before discussing incidents, language is kept to a minimum.

Staff inform children and young people when there are changes to the routine, offer reassurance and time for questions, for example, "We are going to change the planned lesson today - does anyone have any questions?"

Staff model positive relationships with other members of staff in the room, for example, "Hello Mrs..., how are you feeling today?" OR "It would be really great if you could help me to distribute these books to the children and young people Mr..."

Staff speak in appropriate tones of voice and volume within the classroom. A usual tone would be calm and warm but a firmer tone may be used when appropriate so that children and young people see appropriate firmness being modelled.

Appropriate adult support and structure is provided to children and young people who need it, for example, adults stay closer to children and young people in class who may need regular checking in and feedback.

The language used by staff in the classroom clearly communicates to children and young people that they are welcome and will be supported to achieve and feel safe and happy within the class, for example, "Hello Carol, it's lovely to see you."

Staff make good use of positive relationships to help encourage and guide children and young people in appropriate behaviour and avoid an over-reliance on rewards and punishments as a way of managing or controlling behaviour.

There is a clear balance between support and challenge within the curriculum, for example, children and young people are given work that they are comfortable doing alongside some tasks that may be more challenging. Adults mediate this learning and provide a safe base for learners when learning is more challenging

Staff build up resilience in children and young people by helping them to achieve small successes in tasks before setting them more challenging tasks - feedback is given on how they have managed to achieve this.

Our school expectations exist in order to establish the appropriate boundaries that will support effective learning and teaching. We understand that it is natural for individuals to push boundaries, but, when this happens, we are committed to reinforcing boundaries in an attuned manner. It is important to acknowledge that we will not prioritise a punitive approach when members of our school community fall short of achieving our expectations, instead, we will explore consequences that are proportionate, natural, and collaborative in nature.

Our approach will always be solution-orientated and restorative in the first instance to ensure that those involved are able to learn and implement change for themselves. Where an individual is struggling to meet our expectations, we will work collaboratively with everyone involved to ensure the appropriate support is in place

3.1. Key Relational Practice

At Small Isles, all of our staff understand the vital role that positive relationships play in fostering our school ethos. Our staff understand the impact of trauma on brain development and self-regulation skills and are attachment and trauma informed. Understanding these key concepts equips us with the ability to ensure that we see distressed behaviour in the wider context of the individual's circumstances.

Positive relationships are inextricably linked to positive educational outcomes, so the ways in which we actively promote positive relationships are outlined below.

At whole school level, we use

- Respecting approach-Learning about and through rights
- PAThS Programme;
- Caring and Compassionate classrooms;
- Restorative conversations;
- HWB curriculum-linked to Wellbeing Indicators;
- Celebrating wider achievements; celebrate at assemblies
- Extra-curricular clubs;
- Residential trips
- Cluster transition activities

At classroom level, we use

- Daily check-ins where children can share feeling either whole class or privately.
- Soft starts
- Welcome at the door -Varied welcomes (high five/hug, fist bump, wave)
- Co-regulation strategies where the class of individuals will support each other with solutions and support.
- Circle Time
- Play-based learning
- Buddies
- Child of the Day
- Staff supporting lunch duty
- Whole school activities and assemblies (Fun in 31)

At the individual level, we use nurture strategies to support children who may need a more one to one approach. We may also refer children to our Educational Psychologist. This will always be done in consultation with parents. Our parents play in vital part in our approach as all support should be delivered in a collaborative way involving all.

The aim of these approaches is to promote positive relationships and make them visible within our school community. These approaches help to foster an inclusive environment where people feel they belong and in which the wellbeing of everyone is prioritised in order to achieve our individual successes.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

To ensure that the policy is up to date and adhered to throughout the establishment. To ensure staff are confident with key messages, put these into practice and continue to receive relevant training.

All staff

To ensure that they are aware of and adhering to the policy.

Policy Review Date: September 2025

