

Birkhill Primary School

Relationships & Learning Policy

Our Vision

Here at Birkhill we foster positive relationships, where children, parents and the community feel valued and respected, and are **at the centre of everything we do**. We provide a safe, nurturing and effective learning environment where all children and staff are supported to achieve more than they thought they could.

Our Values

We are **READY** to learn
We are **RESPECTFUL** of others
We are **SAFE**



Our Aims



At Birkhill Primary School, we work as a community to create an ethos where everyone feels they are included, they belong and are cared for. We want our children to become responsible and successful citizens. We are committed to creating an engaging and empowering climate for learning.

Our Relationships and Learning Policy has a strong focus on positive behaviours and intrinsic motivation. It focuses on strong and solid relationships and a Restorative Approach. Building strong relationships is at the heart of everything we do at Birkhill and we believe this goes hand in hand with learning. It is something we pride ourselves on and strive to continuously develop.

Our core values of **READY, RESPECTFUL** and **SAFE** underpin all that we do in the school.



As a school, we use the tagline...

...because we care

We often refer to our school motto in everyday conversations. The wellbeing of our learners is at the forefront of everything we do. At Birkhill, our daily actions and choices come about ...because we care.



Our School Song

Working in collaboration with Angus Youth Music Initiative (YMI) and singer/songwriter Be Charlotte, we wrote a song about our school values. This can be viewed by scanning the QR code below:



Roles & Responsibilities of Duty Bearers

Relationships and communication between all adults and children should show respect, cooperation, tolerance, compassion and trust. They should reflect the underlying principles of nurture and restorative practice.

School Staff will:

- Refer to the Birkhill school values: **READY, RESPECTFUL** and **SAFE**.
- Create a safe, secure and caring environment where everything is done...**because we care**.
- Look for opportunities to recognise pupils who are displaying our school values & aims.
- Establish and foster positive relationships with all members of the Birkhill community.
- Model positive behaviours and the skills/strategies that build positive relationships.
- Plan lessons that engage, challenge and meet the needs of all learners.
- Be consistent and always use a calm voice.
- Uphold the rights of all children (as stated in The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)).
- Be led by our Learning, Playground and Dinner Hall Charters which establish an agreed set of rights based principles.
- Use scripted restorative conversations to encourage and guide children to consistently take responsibility for their choices and actions.
- Providing a rich, stimulating, varied and challenging curriculum which fosters high levels of pupil engagement
- Have responsibility to be the initial point of contact with families through phone calls or via Seesaw.
- Make families aware of repeated poor choices at a low-level or of more significant incidents.
- Follow clear pathways to identify and support young people both internally and in partnership with specialist services.

Senior Leadership will:

- Be a visible presence around the school; especially at changeover times.
- Celebrate learners whose effort consistently meets or exceeds expectations.
- Regularly share good practice.
- Support staff when the behaviours of learners are more complex and/or when learners have not responded to class level interventions.

At Birkhill Primary, we strive to work in partnership with our families to ensure the best possible outcomes for our learners.

Parents/Carers will:

- Promote and uphold the Relationships & Learning Policy
- Ensure that school staff are aware of any additional needs or personal circumstances which may result in their child displaying behaviours which are not typical of them.
- Attend meetings with the Head Teacher or other staff to discuss their child's behaviour.
- Address concerns with the Class Teacher in the appropriate manner.
- Discuss all concerns regarding their child/children with a member of staff and trust that the matter will be investigated, addressed and that appropriate action will be taken.
- Work with the school to support their child's positive behaviour.

Celebrating Success

We recognise and reward learners who consistently meet and exceed our expectations. Our staff understand that a quiet word of personal praise can be as effective as a larger, more public, reward. The use of praise in developing a positive atmosphere in the classroom cannot be underestimated. It is the key to developing positive relationships, including with those learners which are hardest to reach.

Each term, staff will identify pupils who have consistently demonstrated our school values or aims. We will celebrate the achievements of our learners each term in our digital school news broadcast, the Birkie Bulletin, which is posted on our school website.

Rights Respecting School

Birkhill Primary School aims to be a school where children's rights are at the heart of our ethos and culture, to improve well-being and to develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential. As part of this plan we are working towards recognition as a 'Rights Respecting School', an award given to schools on behalf of UNICEF UK.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.



We created a short video to introduce the UNCRC and the ABCDE of Children's Rights. You can view this by scanning the QR code below:



As part of our Rights Respecting Schools journey all members of our school community worked hard to develop a set of charters for the school. A charter is a visual document that establishes an agreed set of rights-based principles upon which relationships can be based and which provide a language for shared values.

'Creating a charter helps to make the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) more prominent and relevant. It should be seen as a framework for both adults and children and young people on how to respect each other's rights. A charter not only provides an opportunity to learn about specific articles from the CRC, but helps to establish and build shared values and relationships for creating a rights respecting ethos.' UNICEF UK

Birkhill Primary School has charters for learning, for the playground and for our dinner hall.



13 I have a right to find out and share information.



17 I have a right to get information in lots of ways, so long as it's safe.



23 If I have a disability, I have the right to special care and education.



29 I have a right to an education which develops my personality, respect for others rights and the environment.



42 Everyone should know about the UNCR.

To make sure that everyone enjoys their rights while learning...

Children should...

- Try to show our school aims & values
- Take pride in their work & try their best with all tasks
- Be able to talk to each other to discuss & share ideas about important issues
- Have access to a wide range of resources & services to support them with learning
- Use technology safely & responsibly
- Be able to ask for help, if needed
- Have opportunities to join & be part of school clubs and groups that help them develop their personality
- Respect & follow everyone's rights



Learning Charter



Adults will...

- Teach us about our school aims & values
- Create safe & welcoming learning spaces
- Make lessons interactive, engaging & enjoyable
- Teach us about how to stay safe
- Listen & help provide the right care & support
- Provide a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and share their views
- Make pupils aware of global issues and the positive impacts they can make
- Teach us about our rights in class & in assemblies



12 I have a right to be listened to, and taken seriously.



19 I have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated.



39 I have a right to get help if I have been hurt, neglected or badly treated.



31 I have a right to relax and play.



15 I have the right to meet with friends and to join groups.

To make sure that everyone enjoys their rights in our playground...

Children should...

- Be gentle, kind & respectful
- Make safe choices
- Play fairly
- Make sure everyone is included
- Follow instructions from adults & Peer Mentors
- Tell an adult or Peer Mentor if there is a problem
- Look after the environment by binning/collecting litter
- Have fun!

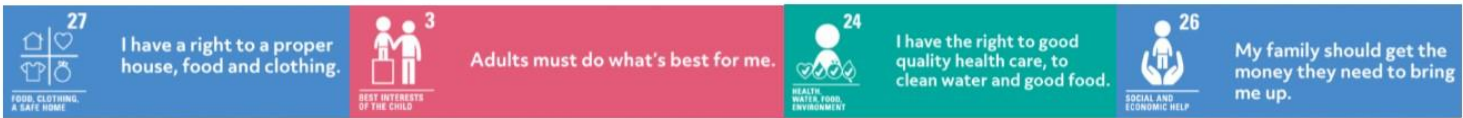


Playground Charter



Adults will...

- Be friendly, kind & respectful
- Make sure children are safe
- Be fair
- Make sure everyone is included
- Listen when there is a problem
- Help when it is needed
- Encourage us to help with regular litter picking tasks
- Have fun!



To make sure that everyone enjoys their rights in our dinner hall...

Children should...

- Line up respectfully
- Use good manners
- Be kind & listen to others
- Use quiet, indoor voices
- Try to make healthy choices & try new things
- Keep the floor and tables clean by picking up leftovers & litter
- Try to reduce waste

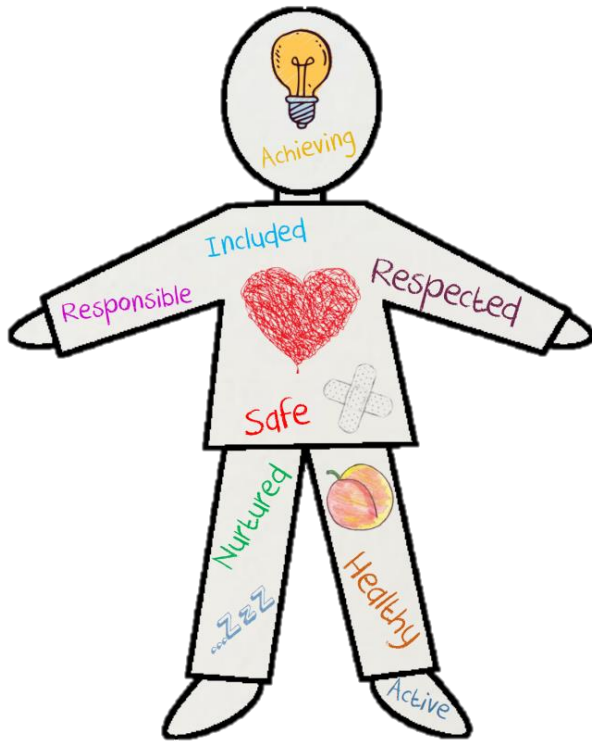


Dinner Hall Charter



Adults/Helpers will...

- Make our dinner hall comfortable & safe
- Encourage us to show our school values at all times
- Be kind & listen to us
- Help us when we need it
- Provide a variety of foods
- Encourage us to try new things & reduce our waste
- Clean our tables and help us to keep the hall tidy



Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

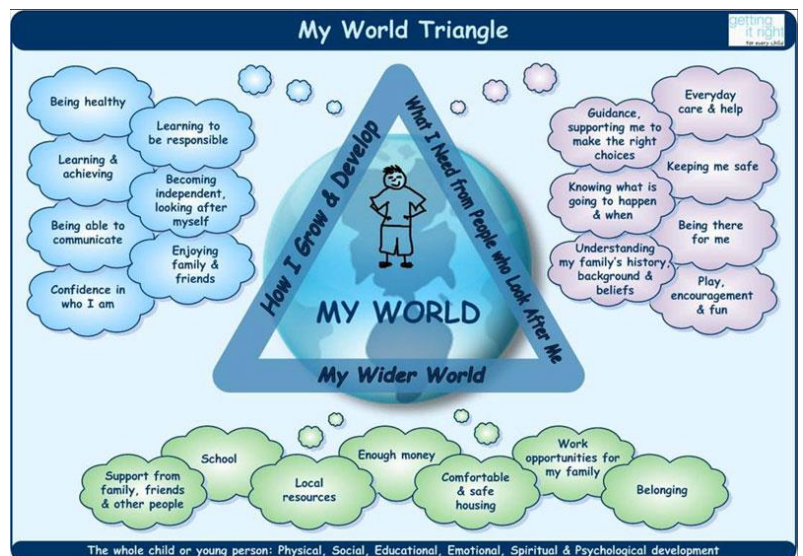
Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) supports families by making sure children and young people can receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people. The aim is to help them to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected so that they can realise their full potential.

Most children and young people get all the help and support they need from their parent(s), wider family and community but sometimes, perhaps unexpectedly, they may need a bit of extra help.

GIRFEC is a way for families to work in partnership with people who can support them, such as teachers, doctors and nurses.

At home, in school or the wider community, every child and young person should be:

- **Safe**
- **Healthy**
- **Achieving**
- **Nurtured**
- **Active**
- **Respected**
- **Responsible**
- **Included**



These eight factors are often referred to by their initial letters – **SHANARRI**.

We refer to the SHANARRI indicators in our daily conversations with the children and in our Health & Wellbeing lessons. We aim to ensure that all our children are familiar and have an understanding of what each of these mean.

We will differentiate our strategies according to the needs of our learners and will have compassion for those who are experiencing difficulties.

Reading & Research Evidence Informed Practice

Visible Learning – John Hattie

Birkhill is a Visible Learning school and we understand the impact that relationships have on learning. Relationships are key to better learning and the research of Professor John Hattie has evidenced this through his extensive research. Our aim is to foster these relationships through implementing the mindframes below.

He talks about these 8 mindframes of teachers as being central to the learning of the pupils:

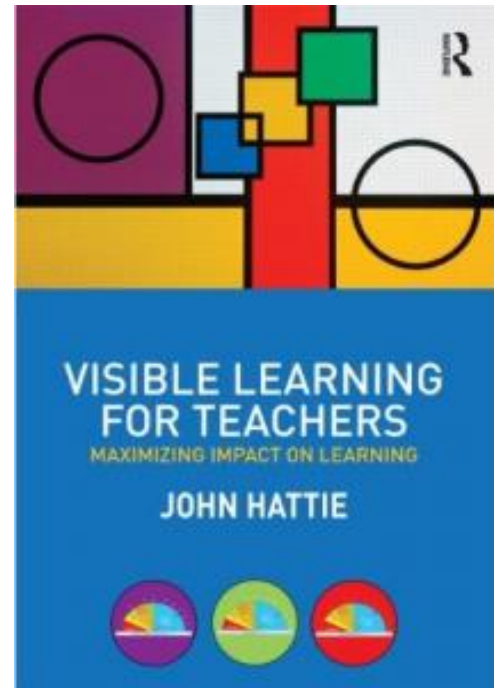
<https://youtu.be/6xpcXobZF1k>

1. My fundamental task is to evaluate the effect of my teaching on students' learning and achievement.
2. The success and failure of my students' learning is about what I do or don't do. I am a change agent.
3. I want to talk more about learning than teaching.
4. Assessment is about my impact.
5. I teach through dialogue not monologue.
6. I enjoy the challenge and never retreat to "doing my best".
7. It's my role to develop positive relationships in class and staffrooms.
8. I inform all about the language of learning.

Paul Dix 'When the Adults Change Everything Changes'

As a result of our engagement with this book we will:

- Meet and greet our children every morning before they enter the classroom.
- Make learners feel important, valued and like they belong.
- Simplify rules.
- Always use a calm voice.
- Give first attention to those doing the right thing.
- Use scripted conversations so that children experience consistency across the school.
- Use our 3 school values (**READY**, **RESPECTFUL** and **SAFE**) in our daily conversations with all children.



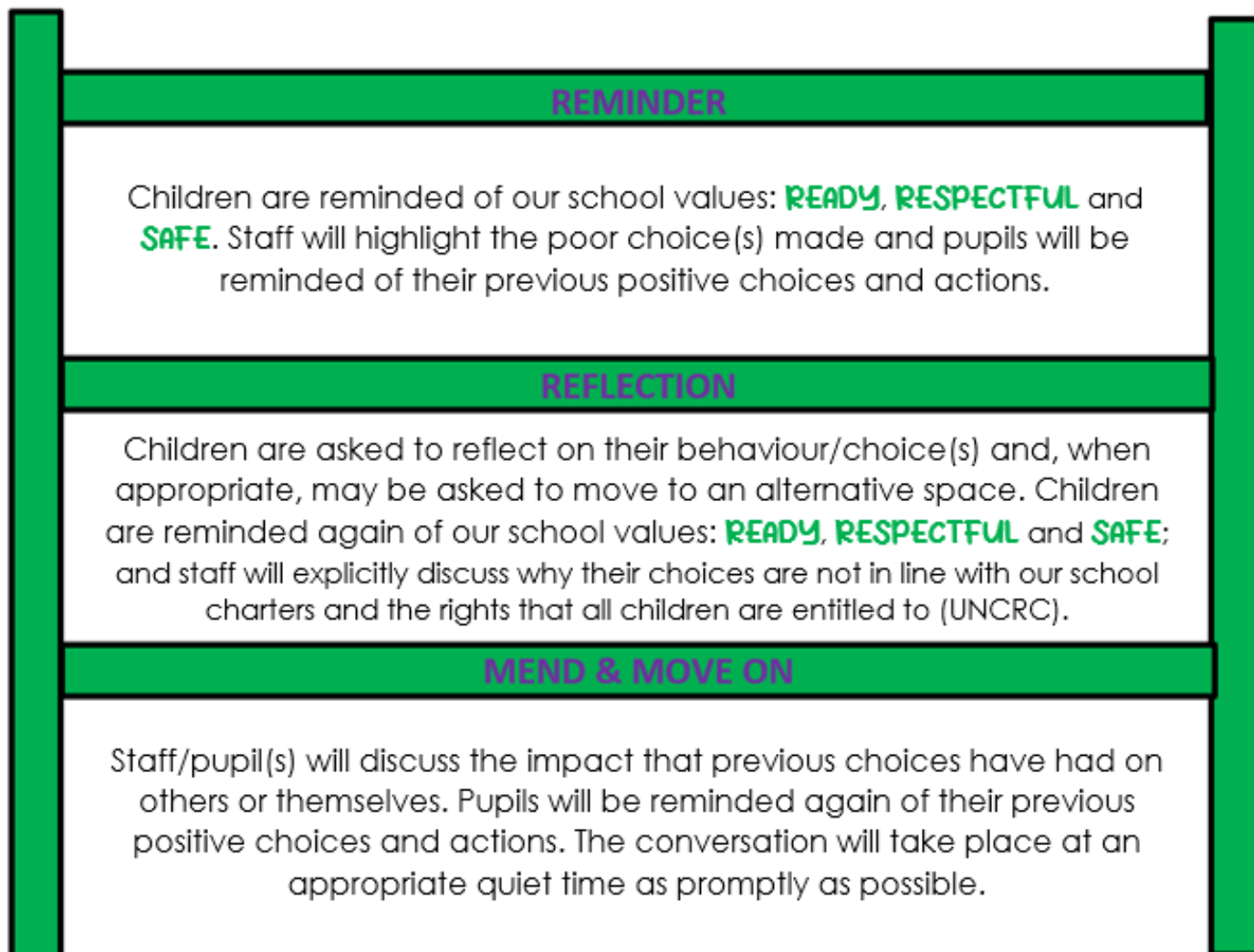
**WHEN THE
ADULTS
CHANGE
EVERYTHING
CHANGES** PAUL DIX
SEISMIC SHIFTS IN SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR

Supporting Positive Behaviour

Classroom/Teaching Space

Engagement with learning is always the primary aim. For the vast majority of learners a gentle reminder or nudge in the right direction is all that is needed. Staff will consistently praise the behaviours that they are looking for first. When learners make poor choices the steps outlined below will be followed consistently with care and consideration; taking individual needs into account where necessary. Learners will be given 'reflection time' in between steps and staff will not leap or accelerate steps for repeated low-level disruption. We will work in partnership with parents to support positive outcomes for our learners and will ensure that parents are informed of any concerns and are involved in any decisions.

Staff will follow these steps shown on the ladder below...



There are times when children may consistently display repeated or challenging behaviours. In these cases we may need some additional measures. It is important that these are restorative and appropriate for the emotional development of the child involved. These may include:

- A more in-depth conversation with teacher and/or Senior Leadership Team
- Time out for restorative approaches
- Missed interval or lunchtime to reflect
- Daily/weekly communication with parent/carer

Playground

The playground is a less structured environment which can be more difficult for our learners to navigate. Some children may struggle with social interactions or bring a differing understanding of behaviour from home. It is important that minor disagreements are dealt with quickly and proportionately within the playground in the form of 'Restorative Conversations' between our learners and Support Staff/Peer Mentors.

Restorative Conversations

Restorative practice is a term used to describe behaviours, interactions and approaches which help to build and maintain positive, healthy relationships, resolve difficulties and repair harm where there has been conflict. Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them (Article 12 of the UNCRC), and to have their views considered and taken seriously. A restorative approach empowers young people to voice their feelings and ideas and seek solutions for problems when they arise.

Staff in our school facilitate and support restorative conversations following incidents which have occurred. You can learn more about this by reading our 'Restorative Approaches - Information for Staff, Students & Families' information booklet (See Appendix 1).

Support Beyond The Classroom

More complex and challenging behaviour may need additional support beyond what is possible to achieve in class. Staff and Senior Leaders will be responsible for ensuring we are meeting the needs of all of our learners and for building strong relationships with their families. Additional support might include:

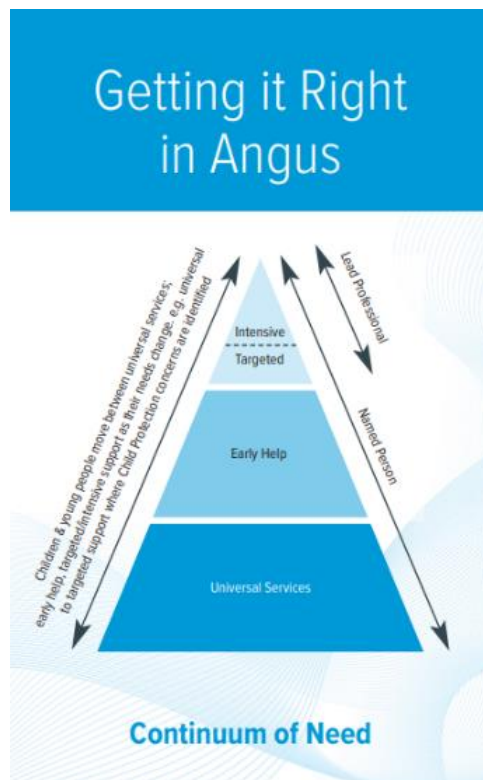
- Friendship groups, use of cosy corners (Pre-School) and Lego therapy.
- Support from other agencies such as Educational Psychology, ASD or ASN team.
- Use of Wellbeing Webs, behaviour protocols, IEPs or Child's Plan

Meeting Learning Needs Through Staged Intervention

We ensure that all children and young people, will become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. We believe that early intervention and a co-ordinated approach by education, social services and health services are essential in supporting our most vulnerable pupils and ensuring success. We ensure our pupils receive support at levels required to meet their additional support needs by using the Continuum of Need approach.

This may include:

- Child's Plan Meeting
- Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Working with partner agencies and other professionals
- Using other, nonspecific, supports, resources, charities and programmes



Cooperating and moving forward

When an issue arises, emotions can be heightened and those closest to the situation can struggle to see the picture clearly. When adults describe a situation it gives children time to tell themselves what to do. When children are given information they can often figure out for themselves what needs to be done. We begin with acknowledgement of the good choice that has been made by meeting to resolve the issue and set ground rules to ensure all viewpoints will be listened to and a full picture will be established. In a restorative school we use a process of enquiry that includes asking simple questions to establish the following:

- The facts and feelings about the situation and exploration about who else had been affected
- Subsequent thoughts and feelings about the situation
- Identifying what each party needs to do to make things better

Alternatives to punishments

As a restorative school children experience the consequences of their actions by engaging in a restorative discussion as described above. This helps them to see how their behaviour has impacted on others and provides them with the opportunity to learn from what has happened and move forward constructively.



Partnerships

Restorative approaches have been adopted as part of the Getting It Right Framework. The ethos and strategies are cross sector and used in each local authority pre-school, primary and secondary school in the Monifieth cluster. As a restorative school, where appropriate, we adopt a multi-agency approach to meet the needs of each child. Partner agencies support a restorative approach. However, the strongest support network is and always will be between **home** and **school**.



Birkhill Primary School

Information for Staff, Students & Families

Restorative Approaches

Restorative Approaches - Why?

Developing good relationships and positive behaviours in the classroom, playground and wider community is essential for creating the right environment for effective learning and teaching. Here at Birkhill we foster positive relationships, where children, parents and the community feel valued and respected, and are at the centre of everything we do.



Our School Values

We are **READY** to learn

We are **RESPECTFUL** of others

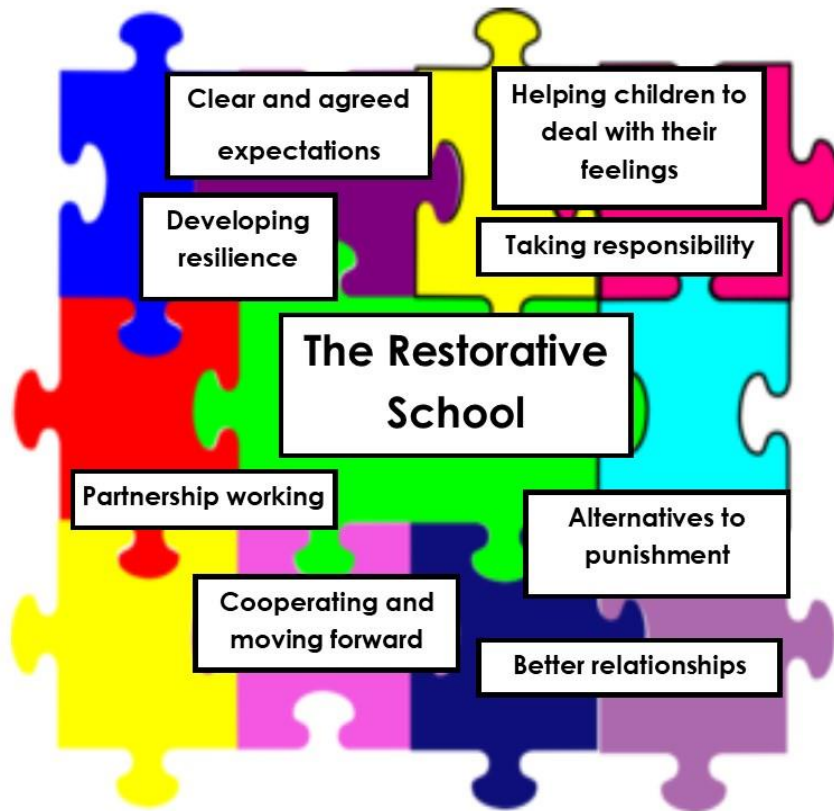
We are **SAFE**

...because we care

Research carried out by and for the Scottish Government indicates that restorative approaches help schools to create peaceful learning environments in which children are successful learners; confident individuals; responsible citizens and effective contributors.

What is a Restorative Approach?

Restorative practice is a term used to describe behaviours, interactions and approaches which help to build and maintain positive, healthy relationships, resolve difficulties and repair harm where there has been conflict. Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them (Article 12 of the UNCRC), and to have their views considered and taken seriously. A restorative approach empowers young people to voice their feelings and ideas and seek solutions for problems when they arise.



Clear and agreed expectations

As a Rights Respecting School, we have developed our own charters for learning, for the playground and for our dinner hall. Each of our Birkhill charters have been co-developed by staff and pupils and are founded on articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Our relationships policy is regularly reviewed with representatives of our whole school community. We make daily reference to our school values.

Helping children to deal with their feelings

Children have to cope with a range of situations and feelings. At times your child may feel happy and excited and at other times they may feel frustrated, upset or angry. This is all part of growing up. All children have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated (Article 19 of the UNCRC) and, as adults, we are here to ensure this right is met. As a restorative school we will take time to listen and value each child's feelings and work with them as an individual or in a group to make things better.

Developing Resilience

Resilience helps children see challenges, both academic and social, as a normal part of life. As a restorative school we help children to develop the skills, willingness and strategies to face issues, conflicts or feelings using a range of resources that help to build resilience.

Encouraging responsibility and autonomy

To help discuss a situation, questions are phrased in a simple, non-judgemental and consistent way. This encourages children to acknowledge their part in the situation. We ask the following questions, ensuring children have ample time to think and respond:

What happened?

How are you feeling?

How do you think others are feeling?

How can we make things better?

As a restorative school we place most emphasis on making things better and moving forward.