

Onthank Primary School

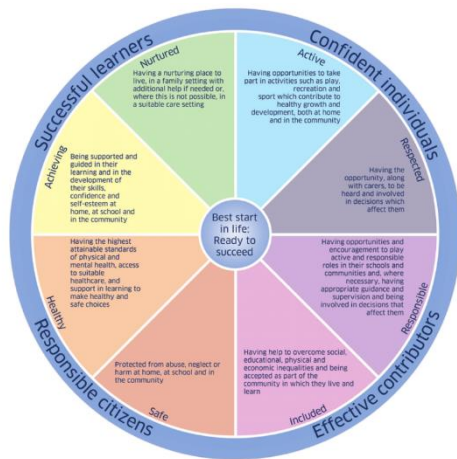
Respectful Relationships Policy



2023 – 2024



Rationale



The purpose of this policy statement is to provide guidance for teachers, pupils, parents and carers on our restorative and relationships-focused approach to building positive interactions throughout our school. This will allow our whole school community at Onthank Primary School to enjoy a calm and caring environment which supports each child both educationally and emotionally to give them the best possible chance to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their journey.

Children's wellbeing is at the heart of Getting it Right for Every Child. This means focusing on the wellbeing of every child to ensure they are safe, healthy,

achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. Our Respectful Relationships Policy begins with a promise from all adults within our establishment to provide a clear, consistent and calm approach to promoting positive behaviour and to build a climate where learning happens in a nurturing, inclusive, empathetic and respectful environment. Approaches used to develop this learning space are underpinned by children's rights.

Rights Respecting School



Onthank Primary School is a UNICEF Gold Rights Respecting School. This means that the rights of each child as defined in the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child are at the core of our ethos and underpin everything we do.

In 1989, governments worldwide promised all children the same rights by adopting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These rights are based on what a child needs to survive, grow, participate and fulfil their potential.

They apply equally to every child, regardless of who they are, or where they are from. Human rights are founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, gender, language, religion, opinions, wealth or ability and therefore apply to every human being everywhere. The Convention recognises the human rights of children, defined as any person under the age of 18. It is the only international human rights treaty which includes civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. It sets out in detail what every child needs to have for a safe, happy and fulfilled childhood.

At Onthank Primary we believe that every child has the right to an education which ensures they learn successfully in a safe and secure environment. We have high aspirations for our students and passionately believe in a shared responsibility between parents, staff and pupils to uphold the rights of all children and strive to encourage a strong moral understanding of our social responsibilities across all aspects of school life.





Aims

We believe that for our children to be Successful Learners and take their valued place in society as Responsible Citizens, they must be part of a supportive, caring ethos in which relationships are managed positively and consistently. It provides children with a secure framework in which they will develop skills and strategies to help them take responsibility for their own behaviour. Subsequently, the relationship between pupil, teacher and wider staff will be built on mutual trust and respect, allowing our school to achieve the following aims:



- To ensure our school values underpin our climate and relationship-focused approach.
- Establish open, positive and nurturing relationships across the community, where children and young people feel that they're listened to, and where they feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of their life.
- To provide a clear, fair and consistent approach to managing all types of behaviours, based upon nurture principles and restorative practice.
- To ensure flexibility in supporting behaviours that might be the result of Adverse Childhood Experiences and/or Additional Support Needs.
- To provide a safe, respectful, equitable and happy school climate where learning opportunities are maximised.
- To provide all of our school community with the tools to support de-escalation, co-regulation and resilience building.

School Values

Taking into account our foundation of Getting It Right For Every Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), we have developed our school values.

Each class takes these values and creates a charter where they explore how they will meet the values and therefore afford everyone their rights. We use these values and charters as expectations and boundaries in our classes, around our school and in our playground. We have high expectations for all of our young people.



"Our values help us to know what each teacher expects of us. My favourite value is confidence because it gives me self-belief."

We give recognition to all pupils who go 'over and above' by those who demonstrate an ability to exceed our school values, impacting the wider #OurOnthank community and demonstrating initiative. This is recognised through our PATHS compliments, Star Pupil certificates, regular use of house points, positive reinforcement strategies and class awards.

'If you consistently reward minimum standards then children will strive for minimum standards. If you reward children for going over and above, then there is no limit to their excellent behaviour.'

Paul Dix



Class Charter

Every class also has a Class Charter, linked to our Rights Respecting Schools, which is created by our young people at the start of each academic year. This is referred to on a regular basis throughout the school day with high expectations set on children following the agreed class charter in addition to our school values.

'The foundation of every school must be excellent behaviour. We should be keeping the focus on a visible culture of impeccable conduct, and making the consistency palpable, audible and highly visible.'

Paul Dix

"The Class Charter helps me because I know what's allowed and what's not allowed in the classroom. It also allows me to concentrate a lot better in class."

Supporting High Expectations

Whilst we set high expectations for our children we also understand that we are all human. Sometimes we all struggle to stay within boundaries or follow rules either because of our additional needs, developmental stage or our strong emotions. We recognise that we must provide the tools and learning experiences to allow our young people to demonstrate our school values in all aspects of their life. We teach these skills by offering a safe and supportive school environment and through our approaches, practice and development and review of our school curriculum.

Our approaches to creating a safe, structured and supportive environment at Onthank

Good Morning or Goodbye



Welcome

Staff will create a welcoming environment by greeting pupils every morning through a formal meet and greet in either the playground, or as they enter the classroom. This may be a simple, 'Good morning' or offering a handshake to provide a consistent check in and enthusiastic welcome for every child each day.

Communication with our parents and wider community is also a key part of this welcoming ethos. There are opportunities for parents and the #OurOnthank community to say hello and speak to our Senior Leadership Team and wider staff team at the start and end of each day. We also hold various parent and community events throughout our school year to encourage these relationships.

NME

At Onthank Primary School we are embedding the Neuro-sequential Model in Education (NME) across our school day. Working in collaboration with our school Educational Psychologist, we have created a framework for practice (Appendix 1).

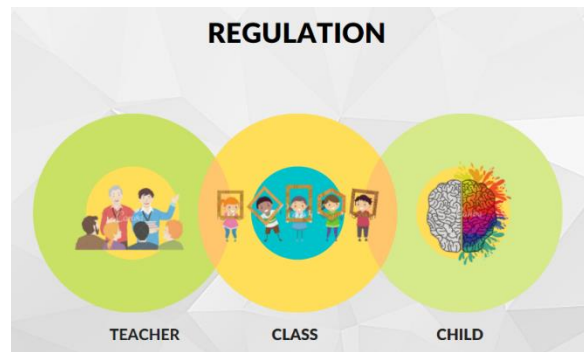
Our framework is based on how school environments support children & adults to be calm, regulated & to experience meaningful attuned relationships allowing them to reason, learn and achieve to the best of their ability. This framework sets out how we begin to do this universally across **every classroom** in our school to ensure **every child feels safe, connected and is more likely to be able to engage cognitively in learning.**

We have learned that these approaches benefit **all** children but mostly benefit children who have over-sensitised stress responses more often seen in children who have experienced developmental trauma and additional support needs that pose barriers to learning, for example Autism, ADHD, Social and Behavioural Needs etc.



The framework focuses on what's in our gift as teachers/support staff to help our children, ourselves and the school stay calm and regulated, with a clear focus on the following areas:

- Relationships & Attunement,
- Routine & Structure,
- Rhythm,
- Regulation,
- Transitions and
- Dosage.



Teaching explicit emotional and relational skills at Onthank

In terms of lifelong success we know that social and emotional skills are imperative. As well as building relationships between staff and pupils we have to consider how we will enable the pupils to function interpersonally.

“Social and emotional skills are crucial for children’s health, wellbeing and future success, including their educational attainment.” (Goodman et al., 2015)

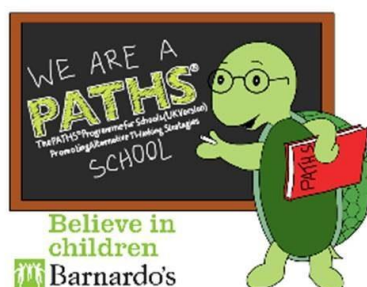
Below are the programmes and interventions used across the school to teach emotional and relational skills at Onthank Primary School.

PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)

Onthank Primary is a PATHS model school. Our PATHS programme teaches and promotes social and emotional learning (SEL). This is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. The five key areas that we focus on through our PATHS programme are:

- self-awareness,
- self-management,
- social awareness,
- relationship skills, and
- responsible decision making.

“We learn feelings change all the time and it’s ok to have these feelings.”



The involvement of the whole school community ensures the PATHS programme is a key element in our educational journey and learning experiences. Through wider engagement of the programme outside of the classroom and in the home, the children will be able to utilise key concepts in real-life situations. The involvement of our support staff and wider team helps to also ensure that consistent language and strategies of PATHS are used throughout the school.

Key elements of our teaching of PATHS includes;

- Pupil of the Day – on display and occurring on a consistent time each day
- 1 hour of PATHS a week approximately
 - P1 – P2: 2 x 15 minute sessions a week & POTD
 - P3 – P7: 2 x 30 minute sessions a week & POTD
- Feelings check-in – encouraging young people to change throughout the day
- PATHS space identified in the classroom for displays / posters
- Generalisation
 - Using the PATHS language unplanned and when it arises in class naturally
 - Using PATHS language / discussion around strategies in a planned, purposeful way e.g. during a novel study, drama etc.
- P5/P6 PATHS Pals – working with our younger children in developing positive play experiences in the playground

“PATHS is helpful because it gives you strategies to get along with friends or to solve an argument between them.”

Restorative Practice

‘Punishment doesn’t teach better behaviour, restorative conversations do.’

Paul Dix

Restorative practice is a **way of working with conflict that puts the focus on repairing the harm that has been done**. It is an approach to conflict resolution that includes all of the parties involved and identifying together a natural consequence. Experience and evidence at local and national levels has shown that restorative processes have a positive impact in changing school cultures, especially with regard to attendance and behaviour.



Every adult in our school is important, has the skills and uses the same tools to deal with behavioural incidents. If an incident takes place in the playground, this will normally be responded to by support staff who use the same strategies and process as teaching staff. This allows an intervention to take place immediately and may involve a restorative conversation. If this cannot be done in the playground, ‘restore’ time can be used following breaks as it is important that children are settled and ready to learn when they return to class. It will not usually then be revisited by the class teacher or management team unless further action is required or unless the person is being monitored by SLT (Senior Leadership Team). Teachers will address almost all behaviours which take place in the classroom. In order to minimise loss of teaching and learning time, the management team may become involved in a variety of ways, e.g. releasing the class teacher to have a restorative meeting with a child.

Restorative Conversations

The positive relationships you form with pupils depend on a restorative approach being your default mode.'

Paul Dix

At Onthank Primary, we believe that nurturing and restorative practice, as well as high expectations, are key to building positive relationships. Restorative conversations aim to help the child realise how their behaviour impacts others, learn what appropriate behaviour looks like and equip the child with the tools to discuss their feelings whilst taking ownership of repairing a relationship and having an active voice on how they wish to move forward. This creates a plan they can use to avoid a similar incident occurring in the future.

Restorative Questions



1. What happened? (...and then what happened?)
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. How do you feel about what's happened?
4. Who else has been affected by this? How have they been affected?
5. What do you need from this meeting to make things better/improve the situation/to help you to move on?

"Restorative Conversations help us because you get to listen to both sides of the story and you can get to a simple conclusion with the help of a member of staff."

These restorative questions will be used to structure restorative conversations. Depending on developmental stage, up to five questions will be used. The teacher may decide it would be more appropriate to start with two questions and build on these as the child develops socially and emotionally.

Anti-bullying: Respect for All

Every child and young person in East Ayrshire should grow up free from bullying behaviour. Our 'Anti-bullying: Respect for All' Establishment Statement (Appendix 2), details the ways in which we work with children, adults and our wider community so that all parties are enabled to prevent and respond effectively to incidents of bullying behaviour.

In line with national guidance, the term bullying is used in this statement for incidents where someone is physically, mentally or verbally hurt by another individual or group of people. The statement builds on East Ayrshire's Respect for All Anti-bullying Policy and outlines the steps that will be undertaken in Onthank Primary to provide guidance to staff, parents/carers and young people on the prevention and management of bullying behaviour to make learning settings safe, respectful and positive environments where bullying behaviour is never acceptable.

These include; Raising Awareness and Prevention, Recording and Monitoring Strategies and reporting and feeding back about bullying incidents. A key area of this statement is our work on Respect Me, where we actively, openly talk about, and discuss promoting respectful relationships and what this means and looks like in our school. This involves pupil and parent workshops where we aim to build the capacity of adults to effect change and challenge bullying and stigma at an individual, school, family, community and societal level.



Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile (GMWP)

In the 2022-2023 Academic Session we also hope to implement the Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile across our school. This intervention elicits children and young people's views of themselves and their emotions; it gives them an opportunity to reflect on their feelings and current experiences and encourages them to consider how they can increase their own determination, motivation and sense of wellbeing.

Enhanced supports in developing pupil wellbeing and positive relationships

In this policy we are endeavouring to align school culture and environment to facilitate safety, support and social and emotional learning to enable pupils to achieve their best and with teachers able to provide engagement and challenge throughout the curriculum. However, we also recognise that for some of our young people there may be times when they may find aspects of their life challenging and greater support is required.

Some examples of the enhanced supports offered by our local authority include:

East Ayrshire Psychological Services

East Ayrshire School Counselling Service (The Exchange)

Should you feel your child would require these supports, please speak to a member of our Senior Leadership Team.



Appendix 1 Embedding the Neuro-sequential Model in Education (NME) across the School Day at Onthank: A Framework for Practice

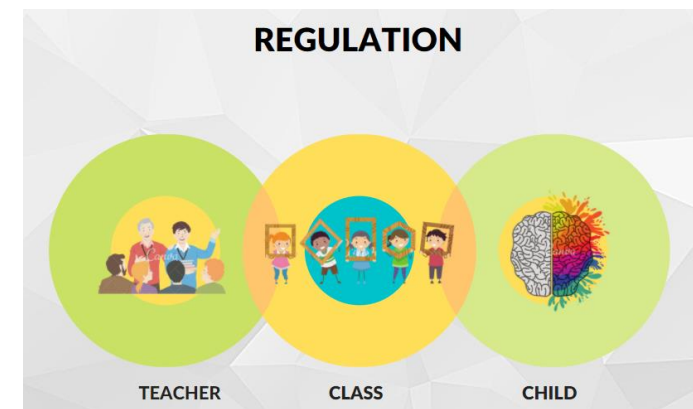


This is a framework for us to 'hang our practice on'. It helps us structure our day, but the balance in each class will vary depending on how adults in the school tune in to the needs of their class. Our framework is based on NME and particularly on how school environments support children & adults to be regulated & to experience meaningful attuned relationships in order that children are able to reason and learn to the best of their ability. This framework sets out how we begin to do this universally across **every classroom** in our school to ensure **every child feels safe, connected and is more likely to be able to engage cognitively in learning**. We have learned that these approaches benefit **all** children but they most benefit children who have over-sensitised stress responses more often seen in children who have experienced developmental trauma and additional support needs that pose barriers to them accessing their learning such as Autism, for example.

Regulation means that our nervous system is in balance – we feel safe & social & ready to learn. Schools are living systems. We need our school and classes to stay in balance, to be regulated. This paper focuses on what's in our gift as teachers to help our children, ourselves and the school system stay regulated.

The three crucial elements to ensuring a safe regulating learning environment mean ensuring that we as adults are in balance and in our safe & social state, our class are in a safe & social state and individual learners are in their safe and social state. Safe & Social does not necessarily mean calm, it means ready to learn and ready to relate to others.

This paper is about how the structure of our day can help to keep all of us in our Safe & Social, ready to learn and relate, state. This is focussed on whole class approaches, not individual children, as yet. For more information as to why we are doing this please watch this <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqW2Xv16bWw>



NME across the school day in Onthank – our Key Elements

Relationships & Attunement

- Dr. Dan Siegel states ‘When we **attune** with others we allow our own internal state to shift, to come to resonate with the inner world of another’
- This is the most important element of NME practice- & on a whole class level – it means tuning into our learners, getting to know them as wee people in their own right, but also by tuning into their verbal & non-verbal behaviours as a group. Some classes will need much more teacher led support than others. Some will need much more motivation than others, some classes appear to seek more adult support than others. Good teachers do this quite instinctively. It’s noticing the need & tuning in, for example how a class begins each morning will differ depending on the age & stage & needs of a group.
- Effective teachers are aware of how we appear to children, we get down to their level, we are mindful of our body language, we smile often, we use children’s names, we remember things about them, we use a storytelling rather than an overly directive voice. All of these things help regulate children and keep them in their safe & social state. That’s why we expect to see them in every class

Routine & Structure

- Structure is one of the most useful tools we have in the face of uncertainty. School days should have a clear rhythm & structure to them. Clear beginnings, middles & endings for the day & for learning & teaching that allow children to predict what will happen next. The day should be predictable with the same routines and structures in place each day, e.g. a warm welcome, a morning starter activity, visual timetable on display etc.
- This reduces stress and helps children be in their safe & social state
- Visual structures & classroom organisation also help with this
- In this way, children spend less time feeling anxious about what may happen & are safe within the structure of the class
- This does not mean that we don’t change an activity where it is clearly not working or causing dysregulation in a class. It means that we as practitioners are predictable in how we are and what we do & try to be flexible within a routines structure
- E.g. we always greet children in the same way, standing at the same spot, we always gather lunches in the same manner, we end the day with a check out, we use music to signify the end of an activity, we have a meaningful visual map of the day etc

Rhythm – see above video

- Rhythm is one of the most fundamental ways in which human beings regulate, through music, through walking through movement. Having a rhythm to the day, as above, is a key starting point
- Maximising rhythm as it naturally occurs, through song, literacy drills reciting words & times tables for example
- Using music which is 60-80bpm in the background may help to settle most children in a class
- Using 100-120 or above will help children feel more up-regulated
- Using approaches such as the daily mile, music & movement & cardio drumming can also help children feel more regulated and in their safe & social state
- Repetitive experiences that co-occur will be remembered by the brain, therefore routine & structure of how we embed these approaches

<p>Regulation through somatosensory experiences: including up & down regulation see above video</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation activities are predominantly those that help children be more able to learn. They are not ‘brain breaks’ or movement breaks. They are designed around the needs of your children in your class and thus vary depending on their presentation. • For example, one class may need a lot of physical activity and have regular short doses of cardio drumming, for example, throughout the day while another class may need periods of stretching, calm yoga and sensory playdough type experiences or repetitive bead works, jigsaws, aquabeads etc to help them feel more ready to learn. • Most classes will need a combination of up-regulation & down regulation throughout the school day and week • In addition humour and ‘cuteness’ can also help us feel safe & social so experiences that facilitate laughing & smiling together & watching cute baby animal or young children being silly can also help a children regulate
<p>Dose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruce Perry thinks these activities are most effective when happening regularly in short bursts throughout the day, not saved up for an hour long session twice a week. By attuning to your class, you will be able to work out how frequently and what regulation activities are required to support them. • If you notice that you are feeling dysregulated as an adult in the class, you too can implement a whole class regulation activity as you need a dose of regulation • As such, dosage is about building short bursts of both somato-sensory & relational regulation into your daily routine in response to the needs of your class
<p>Transitions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most issues occur in a classroom around transition points e.g. queuing, finishing an activity quickly, tidying up, when things move from structured to unstructured time & vice versa • Well managed transitions maximise learning & teaching time & reduce anxiety • Using a short dose of regulation at a transition point, along with sensory cues such as an image on the board, a count down (can increase anxiety in some situations) verbal & visual reminder that a change is happening and well managed routines and classroom organisation around them, keep children & adults in their safe & social state

*Please note that somatosensory approaches in the absence of relational regulation & routine & structure, will be less effective as they will be perceived as a sudden, unpredictable change. The more unpredictability in the classroom the higher the likelihood of dysregulation. Being flexible within a routined structure is preferable.

Appendix 2

Anti-bullying: Respect for All Establishment Statement



Onthank Primary School



Anti-bullying statement for Children / Young People in Onthank Primary School

Vision

Every child and young person in East Ayrshire should grow up free from bullying behaviour.

Across all sectors, those working with children and young people in East Ayrshire are already aiming to fulfil the Scottish Government and local government commitment to ensuring children and young people become confident individuals and responsible citizens. It is our aspiration that all those who play a role in the lives of children and young people are enabled to prevent and respond effectively to incidents of bullying behaviour.

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) in East Ayrshire ensures that the child and their family are at the centre of policy and practice and that the views of the child, young person and their parents/carers are sought, listened to and taken into account when decisions are being made.

Policy Statement Purpose

In East Ayrshire learning settings promote respectful relationship approaches but in line with national guidance the term bullying is used in this statement for incidents where someone is physically, mentally or verbally hurt by another individual or group of people.

This document builds on East Ayrshire's Respect for All Anti-bullying Policy and outlines the steps that will be undertaken in Onthank Primary to provide guidance to staff, parents/carers and children / young people on the prevention and management of bullying behaviour to make learning settings safe, respectful and positive environments where bullying behaviour is never acceptable.

Raising Awareness and Prevention

Staff and Volunteers

In addition to promoting and role modelling positive relationships and positive behaviour, all staff and volunteers in Onthank Primary with a responsibility for children / young people will participate/have participated in the training and development listed below:-

- PATHs Training
- NME Training
- RespectMe Training
- EAC CLPL Site
- PRD

Our Senior Leadership Team and staff have completed CLPL Training on the neurosequential model in education with the Deputy Psychologist, a focus on brain development to support child regulation and achieve a deeper understanding of individual needs. Onthank continues to embed this ethos across the school, allowing staff to put each learner and their story at the heart of success, safety and living the school values.

Pupils

In Onthank Primary we actively, openly talk about, and discuss promoting respectful relationships and what this means and looks like in our school. Young people create and deliver our school values based assemblies and work closely with RespectMe, culminating in their pupil led presentation being used across East Ayrshire schools to promote best practice.

Listed below are the strategies / resources which will be used to raise the children / young people's awareness and prevent bullying:-

- Health & Wellbeing CFE Lessons
- PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) Lessons
- RespectMe Based Activities
- Restorative Practice
- Expressive Arts Role Play
- Pupil Led Values Assemblies
- Whole School Values Themed Days/Events

Parents/Carers

In order to raise parental awareness of positive relationships and positive behaviour, all parents in Onthank Primary will be provided with the information listed below:-

East Ayrshire Respectful Relationships Policy
East Ayrshire Parental HWB Information Site
RespectMe Anti-Bullying Site (parent/carer specific support resources)
Onthank Bespoke RespectMe Parent Led Workshops
Onthank Respectful Relationships Parent Group
Restorative Practice Workshops
Volunteer Opportunities (when safe to do so)

Recording and Monitoring Strategies

In Onthank Primary incidents of bullying are recorded and monitored, in accordance with the guidance in East Ayrshire Respectful Relationships Policy, in the SEEMIS Bullying and Equality Module.

Reporting and feeding back about bullying incidents

In Onthank Primary children/ young people, staff and parents will be made aware of the friendly, confidential and safe ways to report bullying behaviour:

Pupils: Ways to report bullying behaviour:

- With an adult in our school who they feel confident and safe with. This could include their teacher, classroom assistant, Home Link Worker etc.
- Senior Leadership Team will then be informed and begin the process of parent/carer communication and resolving the concern with those involved.
- With parents/carers at home leading to conversations with Senior Leadership Team and staff.
- Worry/Suggestion Box

Parents: Ways to report bullying behaviour:

- Contact the school via telephone/ email - 01563 525477
- Forms and surveys - available on our school blog

Staff: Ways to report bullying behaviour:

- Directly to the Senior Leadership Team
- Health and Wellbeing Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring all parties are actively informed of progress made.

Following the reporting of bullying behaviour a thorough investigation will take place, led by the Head Teacher consulting all parties involved, ensuring clarity and detailed confirmation of all incidents and facilitating a respectful, solution-focused meeting with parents/carers (if agreed by both parents/carers).

The voices of the young people directly involved, and their wishes, opinions and choices moving forward will also be at the heart of decision making as Onthank respect, listen to, respond and action their wishes.

The Senior Leadership Team will actively and positively aim to resolve and restore relationships between young people and parents, ensuring the safety and happiness of all, following the guidance from East Ayrshire Council and Education Services at all times.

Children / young people's views on respectful relationships

We have included and consulted our children / young people in the creation of this statement and some of their comments are shown below:-

"I feel safe in school and teachers help me."

"We have restorative conversations and we listen to each other."

Parent's views on respectful relationships

We have included and consulted our parents in the creation of this statement and some of their comments are shown below:-

"The school worked closely with us to resolve any issues."

"We were keen to work with the school and felt listened to."

Policy statement reviewed date: 30.09.24

Signature: 

Date: 30.09.24

Head Teacher
Onthank Primary School