

# Golfhill Primary School

# Relationships Policy

Updated *April 2021*

## Statement of intent

At Golfhill Primary we aim to equip all our pupils with the skills and understanding to successfully develop and maintain positive, healthy relationships. We will draw from the latest research and theories to help promote this.

*If children know we will be relentless in our support of their endeavours, forgive them the errors they make along the way, and maintain our determination that they will live up to their potential and our expectations, then the relationships will follow.*

Kristen Souers, *Fostering Resilient Learners*, 2016

The following steps will help to guide us in this endeavour...

- |   |                   |  |
|---|-------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>Learning</i>   | Link to values, rights, responsibilities, citizenship    |
| 2 | <i>Empathy</i>    | Consider how different behaviours might make others feel |
| 3 | <i>Boundaries</i> | Understanding what happens when relationships break down |

We are also mindful of the Equality Act 2010, and our statutory duty to keep those with protected characteristics from discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

- |                                |   |                                |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <i>i) Age</i>                  | <i>ii) Disability</i>                   | <i>iii) Race</i>               |
| <i>iv) Sex (Gender)</i>        | <i>v) Pregnancy/maternity</i>           | <i>vi) Religion/belief</i>     |
| <i>vii) Sexual orientation</i> | <i>viii) Marriage/civil partnership</i> | <i>ix) Gender reassignment</i> |

## Our values

We held a consultation on our values across May and June 2019, with a view to reducing the number from five to three. All stakeholders (parents, pupils and staff) were given the opportunity to vote, and the following values were chosen...

**Respect** We respect ourselves and each other. We respect our school, our community, our city and the environment.

**Safe** We keep ourselves and others safe from danger and harm, by considering our actions. We know school is a safe space to be who we are, and to learn from our mistakes.

**Equality** Everyone is protected from all forms of discrimination regardless of age, colour, disability, family structure, gender identity, nationality, religion, sex or sexual orientation.

## Our vision and aims

The following statements have been developed following a survey of families, where we asked why they chose us for their children's education:

Golfhill Primary School cherishes its place at the heart of the Dennistoun community.

We celebrate our diversity and tolerance, and provide a welcoming and nurturing environment where everyone is accepted and supported.

Our aim is to develop resilient, responsible and creative citizens, who enjoy learning and embrace all the opportunities we provide.

## Nurture principles

In line with all schools across the authority, we recognise and understand the six nurture principles:

- Children's learning is understood developmentally  
*Staff responding to children at their emotional / developmental level enables them to move on. The response to the individual child is underpinned by a non-judgemental and accepting attitude.*
- The classroom / playroom / school offers a safe base  
*Importance of structure and predictability with firm clear boundaries and adults working together supportively. Adults become reliable and consistent in their approach. Recognition of the link between emotional containment and cognitive learning.*
- Nurture is important for the development of self-esteem  
*Staff listening and responding to children in ways that show they are valued and thought about and kept in mind.*
- Language is understood as a vital means of communication  
*Language understood as more than words. It can be a way of putting feelings into words. Children helped to understand and thus to express their feelings and given opportunities for extended conversations.*
- Transitions are significant in the lives of children  
*Staff who acknowledge the feelings aroused by transitions and who understand even small changes in routine can be overwhelming and unsettling for some children.*
- All behaviour is communication  
*Given what I know about this child and their development, what is this child trying to tell me? If a child senses their feelings are understood it can help to diffuse difficult situations.*

The nurturing approach gives our pupils the social and emotional skills to do well at school and with peers, and to develop their resilience and capacity to deal more confidently with the trials and tribulations of life, for life.

## Teaching

*Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies* (PATHS) is our principle resource for teaching emotional literacy.

PATHS is a model of Social and Emotional Learning which aims to:

- Recognise and manage emotions
- Develop caring and concerns for others
- Establish positive relationships
- Make responsible decisions
- Handle challenging situations effectively

PATHS will enable pupils to:

- Increase self-control
- Enhance self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improve communication about emotions and feelings
- Improve understanding of how one's behaviour affects others
- Enhance motivation and creativity
- Improve logical reasoning
- Improve problem solving skills
- Increase respect for others

<i>Agreed administration</i>	F	Follow the sequence
	I	Include <i>Pupil of the Day</i> daily
	D	Display resources
	E	Ensure generalisation
	L	Language used consistently
	I	Integrate throughout the curriculum
	T	Teach PATHS weekly
	Y	You can make a difference

## Strategies

In our school we will:

- Create an environment of respect
- Give our children opportunities to make choices, and to have a sense of agency and control in their own lives
- Talk about safety and the steps necessary to make everyone feel, and be, safe
- Connect children with appropriate resources and people (i.e. SLT, nurture, CAMHS)
- Have a predictable environment with clear expectations for behaviour
- Have *cool-down* or *time-out* areas for children: quiet, comfortable and safe spaces
- Provide a range of sensory materials and relaxation activities
- Recognise early warning signs, and use verbal and non-verbal cues to distract and distance children from potential triggers or flashpoints

Responsibility for behaviour management strategies is devolved to class teachers, and may include (but not be limited to):

- Individual or group targets
  - Points systems
  - Whole class incentives
  - Creation of class charters
  - Praise and encouragement
- NB:** Charts where pupils' names are moved up and down depending on their actions will not be used

It is recognised that some pupils will require additional support to develop and maintain relationships, and to display appropriate behaviours. Risk Assessments and/or Wellbeing and Assessment Plans for those who need them can be created. These will be developed between the class teacher and a member of the Senior Leadership Team, shared amongst all relevant adults, and reviewed regularly.

## Restorative approaches

Students need to be held accountable for their actions, but not by being shamed into submission. Students who act out have often experienced shame and have low self-esteem, so must demonstrate a different way of managing how they handle their emotions.

Restorative approaches are a set of principles and practices that encourage children to take responsibility for their behaviour by thinking through the causes and consequences.

*It's all about developing, maintaining and repairing relationships, building a community based around empathy and self-learning, where children take responsibility for their behaviour.*

Chris Straker, *Restorative Justice Council*, 2019

Where there has been an issue, restorative conversations will be facilitated between those involved. The following questions will be used...

### Responding to challenging behaviour

What happened?  
What were you thinking about at the time?  
What have your thoughts been since?  
Who has been affected by what you did?  
In what way have they been affected?  
What do you think needs to happen next?

### Responding to those harmed

What happened?  
What were your thoughts at the time?  
What have been your thoughts since?  
How has this affected you and others?  
What has been the hardest things for you?  
What do you think needs to happen next?

When we believe we are being heard and understood, we are far more inclined to engage in healthy conversations that lead to positive resolutions. We all need to be able to process our feelings of stress and frustration, and know that others understand what we are experiencing.

*Thank you to Martine Leitch (Head Teacher, Croftfoot Primary School) for sharing her work in this area.*

## What happens if...

We have high expectations for all our pupils, but realise that there are times when these expectations fall short. Research confirms that all behaviour is communication, and we need to understand why children are displaying the behaviours they sometimes do.

*[Adults] are patient, encouraging and kind. Through the fog of anger they keep everyone safe. In the calm light of day they build rapport and emotional currency. Their expectations are always high and they never drop their own standards because of the poor behaviour of a learner.*

Paul Dix, *When the Adults Change, Everything Changes*, 2017

For low-level behaviours, teachers should refer back to their classroom behaviour management strategies and restorative approaches. If this does not result in a positive change, the following may be considered:

- Planned ignoring
- Moving where child sits in class
- Target sheet to promote positive behaviour
- Time-out with Support for Learning Worker
- Informal conversation with parents (at end of day / via telephone)
- Alternative playtime arrangements

*A teacher's response has crucial consequences. It creates a climate of compliance or defiance, a mood of contentment or contention, a desire to make amends or seek revenge.*

Haim Ginott, *Teacher and Child*, 1972

If the behaviours being displayed continue, and all the strategies described above and outlined in Risk Assessments / WAPs (if in place) have been exhausted, the following may be considered:

- Formal meeting with child and parents (initially with class teacher, then SLT)
- Referral to SLT
- Peer-mediation
- Support with targeted interventions
- Multi-agency support referrals
- Internal exclusion
- External exclusion

*If we can provide consistency, positivity, and integrity in all our interactions with our students, we'll establish a relationship that is safe enough for them.*

Kristen Souers, *Fostering Resilient Learners*, 2016