



Relationships Policy

" Where young people feel included, respected, safe and secure and when their achievements and contributions are valued and celebrated, they are more likely to develop self-confidence, resilience and positive views about themselves."

Ed. Scotland, 2014

In Aberuthven Primary School, we are committed to providing a happy, safe, welcoming, nurturing, calm and purposeful school environment in which: every member of the school community feels valued, respected and treated fairly; our young people can learn effectively and reach the highest standards of which they are capable.

Good behaviour choices are essential in ensuring that high quality learning and teaching can take place and we believe that a positive whole school approach is the most appropriate means to achieving this goal.

The aim of our Relationships Policy is to ensure consistency of approach within our school community. This Policy links directly to and complements our school Anti-Bullying Policy which upholds and aims to maintain the same values across our school community.

The Ethos of the School

The ethos of our school is built on our core values of 'Respect and Opportunities for All'. These values are the basis for the social, intellectual, emotional and moral development of the whole young person. We encourage pupils to consider these values, thereby acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes which enable them to develop as responsible citizens, successful learners, effective contributors and confident individuals.

We aim:

- To encourage every child to do their best at all times, to take responsibility for their work and by encouraging a positive attitude enhancing their skills and knowledge.
- To support every child to adopt a Growth Mindset.
- To promote a culture that encourages children to be aware of their rights and responsibilities. They are also to be aware of the rights of others.

Respect

Strong relationships based on mutual respect are at the heart of our school. Every member of Aberuthven Primary School must respect each other's rights to;

- feel safe and happy within our school
- be treated with courtesy and consideration
- learn and work

Nurture

A whole school 'nurturing' approach is key to ensuring that every young person in Aberuthven Primary School feels valued, cared for, listened to and respected.

All members of staff have a responsibility for ensuring that every classroom provides a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment where positive behaviour and relationships based on trust and respect are promoted. Research shows us that when children have safe and secure relationships with staff in schools, learning is optimised.

Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour (Scottish Government, 2013) states:

'Research demonstrates that investing time and resources into improving relationships and behaviour in establishments leads to positive outcomes around inclusion, engagement and achievement in the short term, and community safety and cohesion in the longer term'

In addition, Nurture activities are used within Aberuthven Primary School to provide extra, targeted support for young people who are struggling to manage their behaviour and/or experiencing difficulties establishing and maintaining positive relationships with others.

Rewards and Merit

Staff will consistently recognise positive behaviour and achievement in a variety of ways:

- verbal praise
- written praise on work
- certificates
- VIP Card for achieving our 'Circle of Success'
- comments on report card
- regular verbal encouragement
- high quality feedback
- use of visual recognition of achievement e.g. stamps, stickers
- praise postcards/ certificates/ pupil of the day
- classroom displays
- celebrating achievement on Notice boards/Displays/Assemblies/Newsletter
- other rewards as appropriate

Responsibility

All members of staff have a responsibility to model positive and respectful behaviour and to ensure that this policy is consistently applied.

All pupils have a responsibility to ensure that their behaviour meets the expectations of the school.

The whole school can promote positive behaviour with:

- consistent high expectations
- positive ethos based on our school values
- celebrating achievement
- supporting all within our School Community to promote positive behaviour

Equality

All members of the school community should be valued and supported equally.

All pupils in Aberuthven Primary School must be treated fairly and equally, and in turn are expected to treat others in the same way.

Fair and consistent, restorative processes have been established in Aberuthven Primary School for dealing with behaviour issues.

Teamwork

Staff are expected to work together with, and support other members of teaching staff, support staff, clerical staff and Headteacher to promote positive behaviour and positive relationships within the whole school community.

Partnership between parents and school plays a vital role in ensuring that high standards of behaviour are upheld and enforced. The school will work together with parents to support young people in maintaining good behaviour choices.

Achievement

Members of staff will promote Aberuthven Primary School's ethos of achievement by having high expectations of all pupils and using learning and teaching methodologies which encourage positive behaviour and effective learning for all.

All pupils are expected to give of their very best in every aspect of their school life in order to achieve their full potential as successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals.

Restorative Practice

At Aberuthven Primary School staff are encouraged to adopt a restorative approach to dealing with challenging behaviour and conflict focusing on building, maintaining and, if necessary, repairing relationships rather than managing and controlling behaviour. We aim for an environment where bullying cannot thrive.

Principles of Restorative Practice:

1. Fostering strong relationships. This includes staff working with other staff, pupils working together with other pupils, and pupils and staff working together as a team.
2. Respecting other people, their views and feelings.
3. Being responsible for our actions and their impact on others.
4. Empathising with other people's feelings.
5. Being fair and committed to equitable processes.
6. Everyone in school being actively involved in decisions about their own lives.
7. Returning issues of conflict to the people who are directly involved.

Values of Restorative Practice:

1. Young people are social beings- they prefer to feel they belong rather than to feel isolated or rejected.
2. Young people develop a sense of fairness, justice, right and wrong.
3. Young people change and their behaviour can change.
4. The way staff work with and relate to a young person can influence his /her feelings, thoughts and actions.

Restorative approaches help ensure that pupils, staff and parents can be part of a fair process, while helping all involved to understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Whether they are a perpetrator or victim, their focus is not on winning or losing, but on trusting in a fair process.

Restorative approaches can:

- Help develop a whole school positive ethos.
- Encourage members of the school community to effectively resolve and learn from conflict in a way which maintains relationships.
- Support any necessary sanctions by processes of learning and reconciliation.

Restorative approaches can be used at different levels in school:

- As preventative- to promote positive relationships within the whole school community.
- As responsive- to deal with problems and repair relationships when difficulties arise
- As part of support and intervention for more long term and persistent difficulties.

Any incidents which arise during a school day will be dealt with by a member of staff using Restorative Practice as soon as staff are able, preferably that day. Restorative Practice encourages pupils to learn from choices they have made and find a positive pathway forward, which in turn helps to restore any damage done to relationships between members of our school community. Any necessary consequences will be discussed during the restorative conversation and agreed by some of those involved. Staff encourage pupils to help set consequences which aim to restore any damage which may have been done. To protect and restore dignity of pupils following an incident, consequences are not always shared with all involved in the incident.

Staff aim to share details of any incident with families as soon as we are able to via J2E. We encourage carers and parents to discuss the incident at home with their own children.

It is important that our school community hold a shared understanding of what bullying is. In our school community, bullying will be recognised as negative behaviours which are apparent over a period of time, targeting an individual or group of individuals.

Self-Regulation

We believe it is important to help children learn how to regulate their behaviour so that they deliberately act in a way that is consistent with school and social rules and the needs of others, and that is also strategic in relation to their learning and academic success. We know that self-regulation has a positive input on pupil wellbeing and ability to problem solve. Self-regulation strategies and Bounce Back themes and techniques are explicitly taught during weekly Assemblies.

Staff encourage all pupils to access mindful strategies (this may be as part of their personal 'Goal, Plan, Do, Review' regulation strategies) to help pupils return to the 'neutral zone' thus enable pupil ability to access their learning. Staff model strategies for pupils and are able to co-regulate along side our pupils to support de-escalation and a return to the 'neutral zone'.

Self-regulation (sometimes referred to as executive functioning) develops very gradually in children, beginning in infancy and continuing through the adolescent years. The development of self-regulation is positively influenced by:

1. Neurologic maturation, especially development of the frontal lobes of the brain;
2. Stability, organisation, and predictability in environment;
3. Reasonable emotional attachment of children to important adults in their life;
4. Adequate opportunities for children to exercise control over events in their life;
5. An environment that models, values, and rewards self-regulation, autonomy, and personal responsibility;
6. Ability to communicate their feelings;
7. Positive adult-child interactions that include the regulatory words, procedures, and themes that will eventually be internalised by children to become their internal self-regulatory system.
8. Development of a coherent and positive sense of self.

(Adapted from paper written by Mark Ylvisaker, Ph.D. with the assistance of Mary Hibbard, Ph.D. and Timothy Feeney, Ph.D.)

Rights Respecting Schools

Staff as duty bears, support pupils to explore, respect and embrace their rights and the rights of others through the Rights Respecting Schools initiative. We believe Rights are inherent, inalienable, indivisible, universal and unconditional.

This encourages our pupils to consider their own lives as well as lives of others, as citizens of the world. Pupils are taught about their rights during weekly assemblies, class lessons and whole school lessons. We believe in equality and fairness for all, with pupil all provided with the support they need to succeed and promote dignity and non-discriminative attitudes across our whole school and wider world community.

Staff and Pupils are encouraged to use the language of 'rights' during everyday learning in school, particularly during restorative discussions. This reinforces pupil understanding of why positive behaviour is necessary in school eg. Behaviour may have been inappropriate as it prevented themselves or others from accessing their right to an education etc.