

# Shoscombe Church School

## Our Relational (Behavioural) Policy - Local Procedure

Issued: January 2023

Review due: January 2025

This local procedure policy should be read in conjunction with the Midsomer Norton Partnership Trust Behaviour Policy.

### Rationale

This Relational Policy sets out our expectations for the whole school community, which includes children, parents/carers and staff.

We are a church school and our Christian values permeate all aspects of school life. We expect our children and staff to act with respect and understanding towards each other. Our approach to conflict is based on the principles of forgiveness, reconciliation and restorative justice. Our goal for everyone in our school community is that “they may have life and have it to the full” (John 10v10)

The rationale for our Relational Policy is rooted in the Thrive Approach. Applying recent advances in our understanding of neuroscience, Attachment Theory and Child Development, the Thrive approach aims to optimise social and emotional development, which helps children to engage with learning. It is particularly beneficial for children who have experienced challenging life events or social environments. As a staff team, we work closely with pupils, parents/carers and Multi-Agency teams to ensure that all pupils’ are developing their social, emotional and mental health of every child is prioritised. A safe place for learning is established, which stems from fostering and maintaining nurturing relationships. Children are equipped with the skills to self-regulate their emotions and additional support is provided for pupils who are dysregulated to help all children reach their full potential and thrive. (More details about the neuroscience that underpins this approach may be found on the Thrive website. [www.thriveapproach.com](http://www.thriveapproach.com))

We aspire for Shoscombe Church School to always be a safe and happy environment. We work with our staff, parents and community and church to ensure our children are spiritually, emotionally and educationally equipped for life now and in the future

Persistent and sustained disruption to learning is not accepted and this Relational (Behaviour) Procedure is supported by the **MSNP Trust Policy** which identifies specific behaviours that are deemed unacceptable within our school community and appropriate consequences and/or individualised behaviour plans.

### Home/Parent Link

The behaviour of children is seen as the shared responsibility of parents/carers and staff. Parents/carers will be made aware of the schools’ expectations through the sharing of this Relational (Behavioural) Policy, the school website and our Behaviour Expectations and Core Values which are displayed around the school environment. Rewards, achievements and serious/persistent incidents will be shared with parents/carers on Class Dojo or through a phone call home.

## Inclusion and SEND

Shoscombe Church School actively seeks to include all pupils and to remove barriers to learning. It is recognised that children who present challenging behaviour need to be included too and every effort is made to provide support (e.g. through small targets, individual behaviour reward systems, academic and emotional support, social skills programmes and our Thrive and nurture provision) to enable them to develop strategies to manage their behaviour and be more able to participate in the curriculum provision. However, we recognise that disruptive behaviour affects the learning of all children.

In some circumstances, where the school has identified a pupil to have additional needs, our approach to managing behaviour may need to be adapted and personalised for the pupil. This will be with the full support of the adults in school, and where necessary, on advice from external professionals working with the school, who have detailed working knowledge of the pupil.

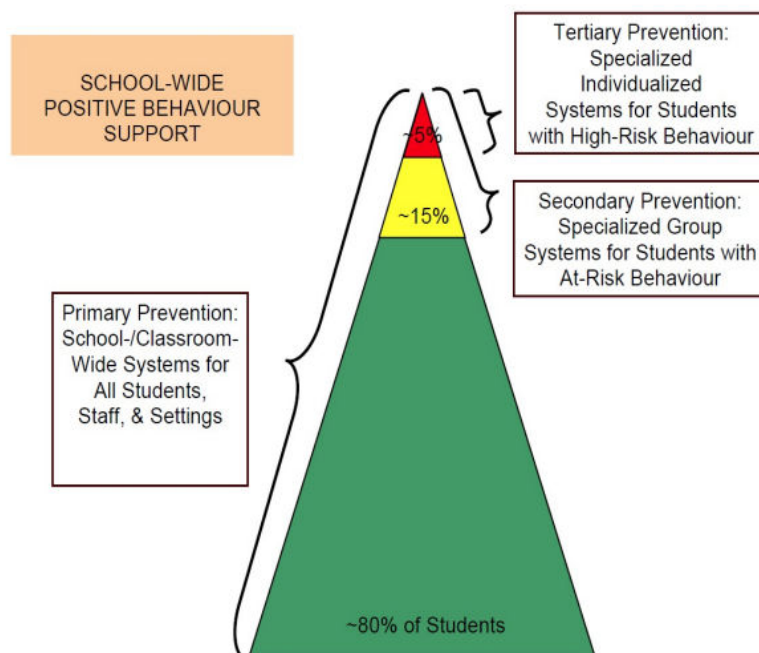
## Non verbal support

As a school we promote the use of non verbal cues, with regular visual routines, class planners and schedules as well as expectations for positive behaviour and relationships throughout the school to support all our children including those with SEND.

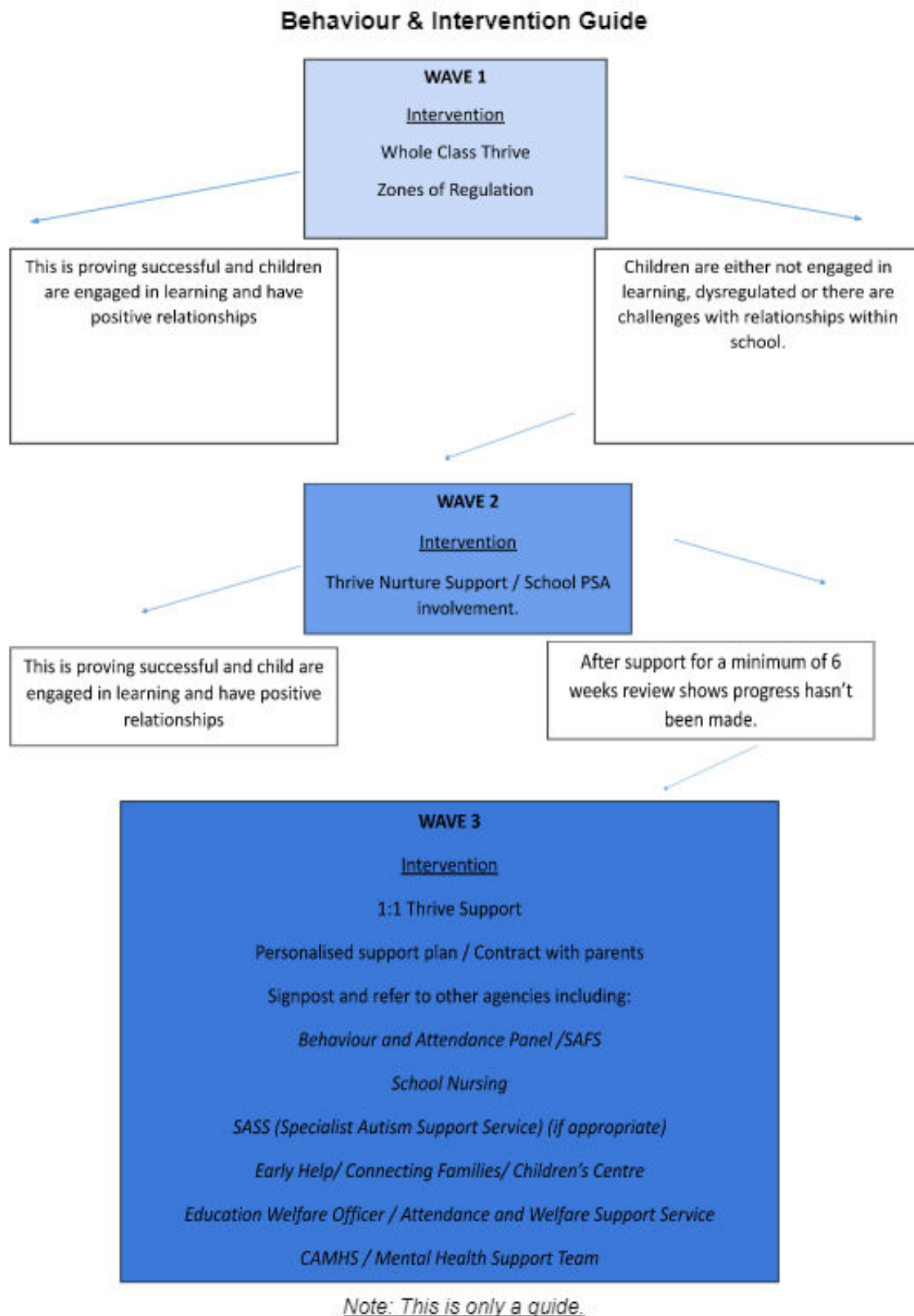
## Positive Touch

All staff receive in-house Thrive training. We have two qualified Thrive Practitioners (Mrs Rorison and Mrs Webb) who all staff can seek professional guidance from. The Thrive approach adopts the use of 'Positive Touch'. This refers to physical and safe touch as a developmentally appropriate intervention that will aid healthy emotional growth and learning. It is important for all our children to learn the difference between safe and unsafe touch and to experience having their needs met in a safe manner by a significant and safe adult. We recognise that in specific situations when children display dysregulated behaviour staff should consider using safe touch as one of the means available to them, for example to calm a distressed child or encourage an anxious child.

## Our Relational Policy in Practice



## How we support children across the whole school to make positive behaviour choices



At each wave SLT will consider the situation in conjunction with the MSNP Behaviour Policy

## **WAVE 1:**

Everyone feels that they belong at Shoscombe, we have healthy friendships and accept it is ok to disagree. Social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing is recognised and planned for as part of our whole school approach to good health.

- Every child has a Thrive Assessment and each class has a thrive plan which is reviewed three times a year.
- Children will be better engaged in learning with improved emotional resilience and relationships.
- Children and adults will be able to identify where they are in the Zones of Regulation and have strategies to move themselves into Zones of Regulations integrated into school day for adults and children
- All children have opportunities to take risks, experience and overcome challenges, and be successful in their learning.
- All children will be encouraged to build tolerance, make good choices and take responsibility for their actions.
- We want children to become enthusiastic, independent and self-aware learners – socially, emotionally and academically.
- Children will gain a sense of pride and build self-awareness through planned and incidental social and emotional learning and positive experiences as part of the ethos of our school.
- Children feel recognised for their positive behaviours.
- Our behaviour expectations and core values are adhered to and applied consistently.

### **Staff:**

- Staff use positive language to reinforce behaviour expectations.
- Staff place great importance on getting to know every pupil in their class and making every pupil feel special and safe.
- All staff will be trained to use VRFs and the Zones of regulation and role model strategies for the children. (The Vital Relational Functions (VRFs) and P.A.C.E. (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, empathy) are regularly and consistently used
- Staff support children to see themselves, their relationships and the world positively.

## **WAVE 2:**

We are all treated fairly – which may not be equally. Some children require more support to regulate than others. We will provide additional resources to support this as we would in other subjects and aspects of school life.

- Thrive profiles are used to enable a strategic response to specific individuals, small groups and class development.
- Repair and reconciliation is part of our policy to reline relationships.

### **Staff:**

- Staff are aware of their personal emotions and how these impact on their behaviour and responses and so regulate and respond in a calm manner.
- Staff actively support parental involvement in school and remind parents that they have a valuable role to play.

### **WAVE 3:**

- Individual Thrive Plan
- Referral to appropriate outside agency for support.

### **Staff:**

- Regular monitoring of support from outside agencies by SLT with parents/carers

## **Strategies and Definitions**

### **Positive Recognition**

Expectations around relationships, behaviour, rewards and consequences are reviewed regularly.

**Visit Another Member of Staff** - a pupil may be asked to celebrate their achievements with another member of staff.

**Celebration with Class** - a teacher may choose to praise and positively recognise a child in front of a group or class of children (always taking into consideration whether this is a suitable form of praise for the individual child).

**Stickers** - a reward sticker (or stamp) may be given for particularly good work and/or behaviour by a class, group or individual child. The Head Teacher may also award a 'Head Teacher's Award' sticker for good behaviour or work. The sticker is always given in conjunction with positive praise (either recorded in the child's work book or verbally).

**House Points** - these are given out readily in conjunction with praise for effort and achievement and recorded on Class Dojo. All children belong to a House (vertical grouping across the whole school) to earn House Points. House Captains collect the number of House Points earned each week and at the end of term the house with the highest number of house points earns a house treat.

**Celebration Assemblies** - children from each class receive an individualised certificates at a special end of week assembly recognising them for using and applying a Core Value (value leaf), achieving academically (achievement certificate) and going above and beyond with their learning, attitude and/or effort (star of the week certificate).

**Public Display of Work** - where children work hard and produce a piece of work that is to the best of their ability, teachers may choose to display this work within their classroom as a form of positive recognition.

**Positive Feedback to Parents** - this could be communicated verbally at the end of the day, a written note home, a message on Class Dojo or a phone call home.

### **Vital Relational Functions (VRFS)**

When managing all levels of behaviour and dysregulation, staff will use the VRFs to support and guide children by independently managing their emotions and well-being.

**Attune** - Be alert to how the child is feeling: demonstrate attuning to their emotional state showing you can catch how they feel through facial expression, body language, gesture, noises: ah, oo, oh, mm, eek etc. Demonstrate that you understand the intensity, pitch, pace, volume, expansiveness or spatial experience of the child's emotional state.

**Validate** - Be alert to the child's experience: validate their perspective/experience/feeling. This needs to happen before you move to help them regulate it. This is the beginning of being able to think about feelings. Avoid reassuring, persuading otherwise, contradicting.

**Containment** - Be alert to how they are feeling: demonstrate containment. Show that you catch and understand the pitch/intensity/quality of their feeling or mood and that you can bear it. Make their deep distress, raging anger or sorrow a survivable experience. Catch it, match it and digest it by thinking about it and offering it back, named, in small digestible pieces. This will make bearable the strongest emotional state. This shared experience builds trust for the child: in you, in adults and in the world.

**Regulate** - Be alert to how they are feeling: demonstrate emotional regulation by soothing and calming their distress. 'Catch' the emotion, 'match' it and help the child to regulate the feeling up or down. They need to experience being calmed before they can do it for themselves. You will be communicating the capacity to regulate emotional states by modelling how to do it.

### **Specific Behaviour support Strategies for using in conjunction with the VRFS**

#### **The Zones of Regulation -**

The Zones of regulation will be used by staff and children across the school to develop awareness of feelings, energy and alertness levels while using a variety of tools and strategies for regulation, prosocial skills, self-care, and overall wellness. The zones of regulation provides us an easy way to think and talk about how we feel on the inside and sort these feelings into four coloured Zones, all of which are expected in life. Once we understand our feelings and zones, we can learn to use tools/strategies to manage our different Zones in order to meet goals like doing schoolwork or other tasks, managing big feelings, and having healthy relationships with peers and staff. The simple, common language and visual structure of The Zones of Regulation helps make the complex skill of regulation more concrete for learners and those who support them.



#### **Problem Solving / Lending the Thinking Brain**

We aim to not give children the solution but support them in finding it. Again, use the language of 'I wonder' to explore incidents as this won't put pressure on a pupil who is already dysregulated or is not ready to share their experiences. For example, 'I'm wondering if this might have happened because...'. If they offer a solution, take it. It is then agreed. If another pupil was involved, try and

build in how that person might have been feeling, or how they were affected. Again, this could be through the language of 'I wonder'. For example, 'I'm wondering how that might have made xxxx feel?'

*A restorative conversation or problem solving may need to take place at a later point, depending on the level of dysregulation in the child. Regulation is the immediate priority, problem solving can come later.*

### **Notice afterwards...**

Once the child is completely regulated again and returned to learning or playing, begin to give specific praise again using the language of 'I notice'. For example, 'I noticed that you were very kind to xxxx because you shared the ball with them.'

Behaviour that is deemed unsafe or is persistent ie Wave 2 could result in contact to parents, internal exclusion and individual behaviour contracts. If behaviour is impacting on the classes learning or unsafe we will move straight to Wave 2. This is where dysregulation is judged to be having a serious negative impact on the safety, wellbeing or learning of the pupil and/ or others.

The pupil's parent/carer will be informed about the incident by the class teacher member of SLT at Wave 2.

### **Making Amends**

When a child has solved a problem, talk to them about making amends. Examples: tidying up if they have made a mess or damaged something, writing an apology letter, making a card, or simply giving someone a hug or playing a restorative game to rebuild connection. This is to support children to move on after an incident has been resolved with the support of staff and parents.

Restorative conversations or reflections will support adults to address and explore this further with a child. Examples of questions to support these conversations: What were you thinking or feeling at the time? What happened? Who was affected? How did this make people feel? How have you felt since? What could you do to put things right? How can we do things differently in the future?

### **Natural Consequences**

As part of our procedure we use natural consequences as an opportunity to allow children to experience the results of their choices in a safe and supportive environment. Consequences are very different from harsh punishments. The goal of natural consequences is not to make the child feel bad but is a learning opportunity. e.g. misusing resources results in the child cleaning up rather than continuing with the activity.

So while our goal is not to make our child feel bad, this does not mean children will be happy when faced with a consequence they don't like. A child disliking or being distressed by a consequence doesn't mean it's not a positive learning opportunity. When used as part of an overall positive behaviour approach, natural consequences are effective.

*"Just like children, emotions heal when they are heard and validated." — Jill Bolte Taylor.*