



# **Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy**

Rudyard Kipling Primary School

**Where Learning is an Adventure!**

**February 2025**



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### SECTION I – OUR AMBITION

Our Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy follows the model developed by Changing Chances called The Empowerment Approach. All staff have received training and support to develop and embed the Empowerment Approach at RKPS.

Our overarching ambition is to create an inclusive school where children are supported to become confident, prosocial members of our school community who have both the skills and the intrinsic motivation to do the right thing, whether or not someone is watching. We believe our responsibility lies not only with the present but also ensuring children develop the skills to become great future citizens who contribute positively to the communities in which they live.

We recognise that, as with all learning, children will enter our school gates at very different stages. Some children will already have developed a good level of pro-social and pro-learning skills due to the support and experiences they have enjoyed. It will be easy for them to learn and play successfully. Other children will not have been so lucky and may have greater needs and difficulties than their peers. This means it will be much harder for them to follow routines, work with others and meet the daily demands of school and they will need greater support. Our inclusive school needs to be a place where **every** member feels safe, content and able to learn; as such, our approach ensures that, whilst we meet the needs of the most vulnerable, those of the group also holds paramount importance.

We want to inspire children to set aspirational goals for themselves and be intrinsically motivated to achieve them. We know that a person never rises to low expectations and so we will always insist children work hard to become the best they can possibly be, in every way. We also know that some children will find meeting our high expectations much harder; as such we will always combine our very high expectations with equally high support. Every child deserves a champion - we will never give up on a child.

We recognise that learning means children will not always get things right. This is true of the skills associated with behaviour as it is with reading, writing, swimming or maths. We are educators, not controllers. When children do not meet expectations, we will therefore focus on working **with** them so they can do better next time. We do not just 'manage' children, solving issues on a transitory basis by sitting an adult by their side to 'keep them on task'. We will keep working with a child to build their skills and ensure they make ongoing progress until they can succeed independently. At the same time, we will make sure things are in place to ensure all those around them are safe, content and able to learn.



# Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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## **SECTION 2: OUR GOALS**

**For all children to:**

- Build the learning skills needed to achieve well in the classroom and beyond.
- Develop strong pro-social skills so they talk and act in ways that are good for those around them and contribute positively to the groups and communities in which they belong.
- Become strong and positive self-advocates so they secure their individual needs successfully and in ways that work for others.
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## **SECTION 3: AIMS OF THE POLICY**

- To secure a calm, supportive and enjoyable environment for children and adults alike.
- To support all children in meeting their physical, emotional and learning needs fully and with increasing independence so they feel great and can learn and play at their best.
- To support all young people in developing the skills needed to learn and play successfully and with increasing independence.
- To have a consistent approach to behaviour throughout the school community and beyond so that all adults supporting our children use a shared language and a consistent approach.
- To establish clear procedures for agreeing expectations with children, supporting children to prepare and plan to meet them and for responding and following up when they do not manage to do so.
- To ensure that all members of our school community are aware of these procedures and follow them consistently.
- To agree clear expectations with children ahead of tasks and events and provide opportunities for them to plan and prepare to be at their best.
- To teach children about pro-social and pro-learning behaviours through our PSHE programme and to promote British values.
- To promote the RKPS School Values; Positivity, Respect, Teamwork, Kindness, Equality.
- To recognise and celebrate progress in all areas of learning, including pro-social and pro-learning behaviour.

## **RKPS School Values**



## **Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy**

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Positivity, Respect, Teamwork, Kindness and Equality are celebrated every week with 'Together time' (on a Friday afternoon), with marble jar celebrations and star badges.

### **SECTION 4 – OUR STRUCTURED & SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO IMPROVING BEHAVIOUR**

We utilise a systematic way of preparing young people to be at their best and a clear structure for responding when children do not meet the expectations agreed. We use straightforward strategies to respond in the moment and a consistent method of follow-up to ensure children make sustained progress.

#### **Key elements of our approach**

- Teaching children about their brains
- Agreeing high expectations
- Supporting children to prepare and plan to be at their best for learning and play
- Responding by connecting when things go wrong
- Following up every incident and solving problems together
- Coaching young people to resolve unhelpful behaviour patterns

#### **Cultural shift**

Our approach is not simply a strategy for managing behaviour but rather a cultural shift in how difficulties are perceived and children are supported in securing long-term essential life skills, mental well-being and future success. It utilises neurobiology and the neuroscience of safety and threat to support young people, their teachers and families in understanding the factors underlying unhelpful behaviours.

It provides a clear and structured approach based on this scientific evidence for responding to concerns and difficulties, problem solving and working towards future progress. The structured nature of the approach, along with its clear principles, mantras, tools and visual supports, ensures it is easily accessible for all ages, from nursery upwards.

#### **Beyond the Classroom through a Shared Language**

Our approach to behaviour is not limited to the classroom. We believe that real impact requires all adults around our children to adopt a shared language and consistent techniques. As such, we ensure that training, information and support extends to all members of our community, from staff and governors to volunteers,



## Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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parents and carers. There is an emphasis on developing a shared language accessible to all, from the youngest pre-schooler to an elderly grandparent.

### SECTION 5 – WHAT WE BELIEVE

#### Key principles of our approach to behaviour:

- **Be Curious Not Furious:** maintaining a calm, investigative and solution-focused mind-set towards behaviour that can be unhelpful for the individual and those around them; training and supporting all adults in the school to respond by acknowledging and addressing the unmet needs and missing skills that underlie the behaviour, rather than focusing on the behaviour itself.
- **Positive, kind, unconditionally positive relationships:** prioritising strong, kind, trusting relationships between staff, children and their parents/carers. Adults must position themselves **for** rather than **against** the child, with the core belief that when people **feel** better, they **do** better.
- **High expectations, high support:** expecting all children to achieve their very best and make good ongoing progress; providing high quality, systematic and carefully planned support (**with** the child, **not done to** the child) for any pupils who are not yet able to meet those expectations. High expectations should always be teamed with a spirit of kindness and unconditional support.
- **Teach children (and adults) about their brain:** placing a high priority on developing children's understanding of themselves and their brains; recognising that knowledge of oneself is empowering and is the first step towards progress – one cannot change what one doesn't know or understand.
- **Understand needs (5C needs):** when emotional, physical, sensory and learning needs aren't well met, challenging behaviour may be the outcome for some children and young people. By understanding needs, one is in a better position to prepare to meet them well

5 C needs:



## Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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- **Follow-up is essential** – ‘without follow-up, there will always be mopping up’. We believe that, like all other areas of learning, we must have a systematic and rigorous approach to improvement and consistently follow-up any times when a child does not meet the agreed expectations. Consistent follow-up is essential in securing good progress.
- **Children’s voice at the centre** – supporting children to understand their behaviour and decide on goals and how to achieve them should be at the heart of our work; by doing so, we secure intrinsic motivation and positive self-advocacy.
- **Teach Executive Function Skills:** attention control, impulse control, processing speed, working memory; cognitive flexibility and emotional regulation are key skills for life. They need to be taught and practised.

There are four main elements to preparing children to how adults can support young people to achieve the best they can:

- I. **Teach children about their brain** so they can prepare to meet their needs positively:
  - a. All classes will follow teaching plans which ensure children learn about their brains, their needs and are taught the skills needed to learn and play successfully on their own and with others.
- II. **Agree expectations** with children so they feel a sense of control over what happens to them and an ownership of boundaries.
- III. **Help children to plan and prepare to be at their best:**
  - a. All adults will follow a routine in which expectations are agreed ahead of a task or event and children are given the opportunity to consider what they may need in order to work at their very best.



## Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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- IV. **Show unconditional support** – work with children and put preserving good relationships first.
- All adults will work hard to establish secure, positive relationships with children. If the relationship is not positive, the adult will take responsibility to put this right.

### Just Right



To be able to focus and learn we know that children need to feel 'just right'. Children need to feel calm and safe for them to learn to their best ability. The coloured tower helps children to recognise and identify their emotional and sensory state. Children need to be in the 'green zone' to be safe and calm and ready to learn. Children working in the 'blue zone' may be feeling lethargic or shut down and need upregulating. Children who are 'in the orange zone' are starting to feel 'fizzy', this is when they need support and intervention to down regulate. Children in the 'red zone' will find managing their feelings very challenging and could consequently display unsafe behaviour. Children will develop an understanding of these different zones and how this feels, alongside strategies and tools to self-manage when they are not feeling in the 'green zone'.

All classes have a space, perhaps a 'calm corner', resources and strategies to help children who need support to calm before they reconnect and reflect. The first 10 minutes of the morning and afternoon session is called 'calm time' providing children with a calm start to their learning and to support their transition into class from both home and the playground.

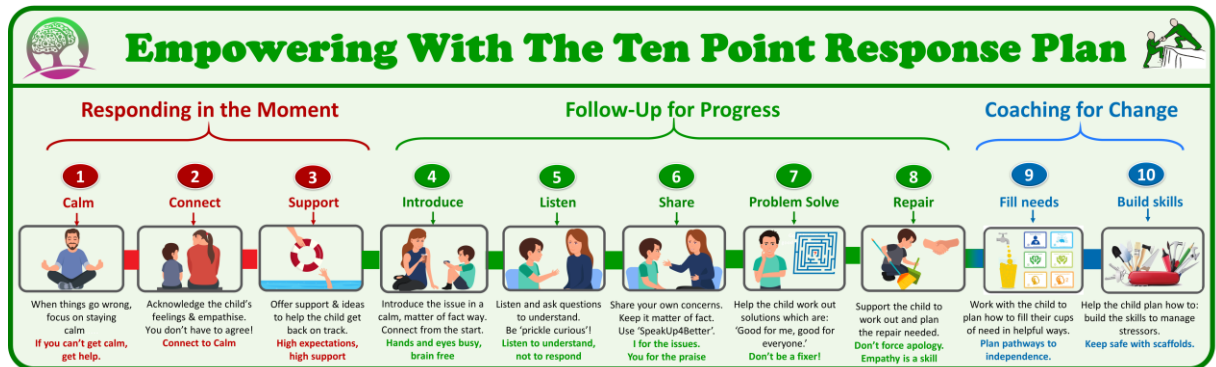


# Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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## How adults should respond when children do not keep to expectations:

If a child does not manage to keep to expectations, all staff and adults supporting within the school should follow the '**10 Point Response Plan to Challenging Behaviour**'.



The 10 Point Response Plan has been carefully designed using evidence from neuroscience, psychology and coaching in the most effective strategies for supporting young people.

The 10 Point Response Plan is divided into three clear stages:

- I. Responding in the Moment** – how adults should respond at the time when a child presents with unhelpful behaviours.
- II. Following-up for Progress** – the way we follow-up after an incident to ensure the child does better next time
- III. Coaching for Change** – how we support children who present with more significant difficulties to ensure ongoing improvement.

It is essential that these stages are followed consistently and systematically; without doing so, the approach will not be as effective and the child will be prevented from making the progress they deserve: the progress which is so essential for their own success and the well-being and achievement of those around them.

### **Stage I Support: Responding in the Moment (think paramedic):**

Whenever a child is not meeting the expectations agreed, the adult should respond through Calm, Connect, Support:

- **Calm:** the adult needs to find their own calm.





## Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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All adults will model self-regulation at all times, helping the child to regulate their own emotions.

- **Connect:** acknowledge and empathise with their feelings, you don't have to agree.

When things go wrong, the adult will say things which help the child to feel supported and understood.

- **Support:** Help them to get back on track for the moment. Working out steps for next time comes later.

Adults will always offer ways to help the child get back on track, such as a different space to learn or other available supports.



### Why should adults use this approach when responding to unhelpful behaviours?

We know from neuroscience that when children deregulate, the areas of the brain responsible for rational thinking, reasoning and problem solving are inhibited. This means that the first priority is to regulate the child. We know that, when someone is given support and empathy, oxytocin is released into the body which in turn speeds up the regulatory system. Adults should therefore always respond with support and empathy, even when a child has done things we don't agree with. Showing support and empathy does not mean we have to agree with or condone the action.

Another reason for responding with Calm, Connect Support is that we know that responsive, positive relationships are crucial to long term well-being and success. When adults respond in cross or disappointed ways, the child begins to feel adults are not on their side. Relational safety is crucial for children and if this is damaged, it becomes a significant unmet need which can further exacerbate the stressors contributing to unhelpful behaviours.

In addition, negative responses from adults can lead the child to self-identify as 'bad' or 'naughty' (and for her / his peers to label them as 'naughty'). When a child 'feels



## Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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naughty', they feel worse about themselves and their responses can spiral downwards; in many schools, children become trapped in the 'punishment cycle'. It is therefore crucial that adults **always** respond calmly and supportively so that a child's self-concept is protected. When people feel better, they do better!

**However, embracing a spirit of support and empathy does not mean lowering expectations and holding children to account.** Maintaining high expectations is crucial; it is therefore vital that there remains a consistently tight focus on the importance of pro-social and pro-learning skills and there is **always** follow-up when a child does not meet expectations. Every member of the school community should know that children who aren't managing to keep to expectations will be given lots of extra help, just like someone in reading might receive if they are struggling, and they may have to work harder and give extra time until they can manage successfully.

### **Stage II and III Support: Follow-up for Progress - (think surgeon):**

Follow-up involves two elements: a) Reflection and coaching and b) Repair Time.

Repair Time should always be carried out separately if the child's words or actions had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

### **Reflection and Coaching: How all adults should follow-up every incident:**

Every time a child does not meet the expectations agreed at the start, it should be followed-up at a time when everyone is calm using Reflection and Coaching.

Reflection and Coaching helps develop children's understanding of needs, building skills and planning how to do better next time.

We use this method because we know that punitive consequences are good at making children feel bad but are very poor at helping children to:

- a) work out how to meet their needs better next time
- b) build their Executive Function skills
- c) develop their Emotional Intelligence.

Reflection and Coaching support children in all these vital areas.

During Reflection and Coaching the concerns of the child **and** the adult are explored and ways to meet both are discussed.



## Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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### Stage II Support: Reflection and Coaching with a trusted adult

- **Introduce the concern** in a way that keeps the child regulated and feeling supported
- **Listen to the child** – listen to understand, not to respond.  
  
Ask questions until both you and the child really understand the needs and missing skills behind the issue. Ask questions in a way the child feels heard and their perspective understood.
- **Share** your concerns and your point of view using the 'Speak Up for Better' technique (start with evidence and how you are interpreting it, use 'I' rather than 'you').
- **Problem-solve** together – always ask for the child's ideas first; expect the child to work hard at thinking of solutions which are 'Good for Me, Good for You, Good for Everyone'. If they really cannot think of solutions, despite trying hard, the adult should make suggestions and encourage the child to decide which would be best. The principle is that the child feels authorship of the solution as this will make it more likely they will follow it through.



**Things adults should keep in mind to secure sustained ongoing progress**



## Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

Where Learning is an Adventure!

- **Real, long-term change takes time** – our job is to help children and young people to create new neural pathways, and to recognise that they can't do this overnight. This means that the first Coaching Conversation is unlikely to lead to instant change – 'Change needs more than a chat'.
- **Scaffolding pathways to independence:** Children and adults need to be clear about the end goal. Small steps should be planned with the child, and successes recognised and celebrated.

It may be necessary to put scaffolds in place for a while, but it is essential that over time these are reduced and removed as the child develops the skills to function independently. When supports and scaffolds remain static, children become dependent.

### **Repair Time: a restorative justice technique (used at all stages):**

Repair Time should **always** take place if a child's words or actions have had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

Repair Time is separate to the Reflection and Coaching and has a distinct and separate purpose.

Repair Time should be scheduled to take place as soon after the incident as possible but only once the child is calm. It is preferable that the adult first involved in the incident leads Repair Time, wherever possible.

During this stage, the child is supported to consider the perspectives of others; they are helped to think through whether the needs of other people were compromised in any way – the natural impact that their words or actions may have had. By exploring this in a matter-of-fact way and in a spirit of support, the 'repair stage' supports improved skills within the areas of social cognition and empathy.



## Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

Where Learning is an Adventure!



If a child says they do not care about the impact on others and do not want to make things better, they should never be forced. The adult should simply show them the Control Centre Skills card for Emotional Intelligence (gold needs card) and explain that this just means they haven't learned the skills yet to either feel what others feel or want others to feel better. The adult should also emphasise that:

- These are really important skills for everyone in the world to have to make sure it is a pleasant place for us all to live
- As the child's educator, we have a duty to help them improve in these skills so some extra help will be put in place.
- Reassure them that any extra sessions will be within a spirit of support and as enjoyable as possible.
- **Stage 3: Nurture and Coaching**
- Nurture and Coaching should take place in the event that Reflection and Coaching has been used several times yet not led to any noticeable improvement.
- It is vital that the child does not see Nurture and Coaching as a punishment but rather as a commitment to wanting them to do better so they can achieve well. This message should be emphasised to the child and everything should be done to ensure the experience is a positive one for the child, whilst also firmly holding them to account for making progress.
- Nurture and Coaching incorporates the following different elements:



# Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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## Consequences:

The consequences of keeping and not keeping to the expectations are focused first on the **natural impact** i.e. If we are kind and calm in how we respond to others, they will feel safe. If we respond unkindly and aggressively, others will feel unsafe and may feel scared. They may then not wish to spend time with us.

**The reason for this is that a focus on the natural impact supports the development of:**

- Emotional intelligence
- Empathy
- A strong moral compass
- Intrinsic motivation to do the right thing

**We know that, if consequences are focused on the rewards children will get or the punishments they will suffer, it leads to children:**

- Thinking about what's in it for themselves rather than developing social and emotional intelligence
- Doing things because they think they may be seen or get caught rather than developing a strong moral compass
- Becoming dependent on authority rather than developing the independence to think through the right thing to do for the well-being of themselves and others
- Relying on extrinsic motivation rather than feeling internally motivated to make moral decisions.

Internal motivation, independence and a clear moral compass are crucial for children's futures; by building these early, they will be better equipped to avoid the





## Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy

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common pressures experienced in teenage hood and beyond which lead to substance abuse, risky behaviours and crime.

At RKPS we hold children tightly to account by always following-up every incident of unhelpful behaviour through Reflection and Coaching, if the unhelpful behaviour continues, supporting ongoing progress through a programme of Nurture and Coaching.

### **What happens if a child continues to fail to meet expectations?**

Every child deserves to feel safe, happy and be able to learn. It is therefore vital that, if a pupil in the class is putting this at risk, the right support is put in place so that other children are protected.

If a child displays very physically harmful behaviour, the support and follow up will be provided by a senior member of staff at an agreed time that is appropriate for all involved.

On the rare occasion, children may reach a point of unsafety. If a child is behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every non-physical strategy will be used to manage the behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation. Staff should view physical intervention with a child as a 'last resort' and for the purposes of maintaining a safe environment. If a child is putting themselves or others at risk of harm and there is no other option,

The DfE guidance on the Use of Reasonable Force provides that teachers can use reasonable force:

- To remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- To prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- To prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground;
- To restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

(DfE, Use of Reasonable Force, July 2013)

Children who do present with these behaviours will have individual risk assessments and support plans to ensure the whole staff team are doing all they can to prevent this occurring.



## **Rudyard Kipling Primary School Positive Relationships Behaviour Policy**

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If the Empowerment Approach and coaching support isn't proving sufficient, it may be the child needs some different provision within the school whilst they develop the necessary skills. This may include Nurture provision, social skills support, emotion coaching, protective behaviours, a Just Right profile, consultation and support from Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service (BHISS).