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SEMH: Embedding an inclusive relational approach

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SEMH: Embedding an inclusive relational approach

Editors: Professor Geraldene Codina, Dr Adam Brett, Dr Stephanie King (University of Derby)

This [Action Research](#) case study was completed as part of the Department for Education (DfE, UK) nasen Universal SEND programme.

Abstract

Context: This action research project was conducted in a federated mainstream primary school in response to a noticeable rise in pupils with social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs. The school sought to explore more inclusive, trauma-informed, and relational approaches to behaviour management, moving beyond traditional systems to foster emotional regulation and positive relationships.

Aims: The research aimed to determine whether relational behaviour policies could effectively support the teaching of social and emotional skills in mainstream settings. It also sought to assess the impact of embedding the principles of being 'Ready, Respectful, and Safe' across the school community.

Methods: The research follows a cyclical action research framework that includes planning, doing, and reviewing stages, allowing for the continuous refinement of research questions and strategies. Ethical consent was obtained for data publication to ensure anonymity and integrity throughout the research process.

Findings: The study emphasises the significance of positive relationships and language in addressing students' behaviour, and this includes teachers greeting children at the classroom door. The school's behaviour policy refers to children's underlying needs rather than 'misbehaviour'. Pupil voice is integrated into the decision-making process to enhance engagement and responsiveness.

Implications: The findings suggest that effective behaviour management requires an understanding of the broader context influencing students' behaviours, particularly for those with special education needs and disabilities. Teachers may glean insights into the importance of relational approaches and restorative practices in managing behaviour while emphasising emotional safety and personal connection. The emphasis on clear communication and consistency in language is likely to inform teachers' approaches to fostering a positive classroom environment and supporting children's positive behaviour.

Keywords

Inclusion, special educational needs and disabilities; social, emotional, mental health; whole-school approach; relational approach; trauma-informed; restorative approach

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Action Research for Inclusion and Special Educational Needs and Disability (ISEND): Case Study

Focussed on children’s social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH), embedding the three words **ready, respectful, and safe** has become the underpinning of our inclusive relational, restorative, trauma-informed approach to children’s regulation (Mainstream, Primary).

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Type of setting	Federated Church of England, Voluntary Aided Mainstream Nursery, Infant and Junior School
Age range of pupils	Staff who teach ages 3 – 11 and pupils aged between 5 and 11 contributed
Roles of the Research Team	The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) conducted research

ACTION RESEARCH CYCLES

[Appendix 1](#) illustrates the Action Research Cycles

Ethical consent has been sought to publish this data anonymously.

SUMMARY

Research focus	Social Emotional Mental Health, Social and emotional learning, whole-school approach, relational approach, trauma-informed, restorative approach.
Research question	Can relational behaviour policies support the teaching of social and emotional skills in mainstream settings?

<p>Overview/Key information</p>	<p>This project stems from an interest in how to support children in the school with their social, emotional, and mental health.</p> <p>This research project has taken our school on a journey towards relational, trauma-informed behaviour management.</p> <p>The process has taken time, and a key part of this journey has involved reading a range of literature and analysing data from children, school staff, CPOMs behaviour incident reports, and learning walks.</p> <p>Knowing the popularity of Zones of Regulation in schools, we carefully considered the evidence base for this approach and the effects we had noticed from introducing Zones. Having embedded the approach, we were surprised to find that the children rated the regulation (behaviour) of children in the school as 3.96 out of 10. As a staff team, we thought this rating from the children was too low.</p> <p>Utilising the Sharples, Eaton, and Boughelaf (2024) implementation process, we first worked together as a staff team to review our behaviour policy. Utilising Dix's (2017) suggestion to portray the behaviour expectations for the school in three key words, we agreed on the following three words:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ready, Respectful, and Safe</p> <p>These three words now underpin our feedback to children, and children can articulate their meaning in relation to their behaviour.</p> <p>Utilising another of Dix's (2017) strategies, we asked staff to try for 30 days to greet all pupils at the classroom door.</p> <p>Findings indicate an overall improvement in behaviour perceptions, with pupils reporting greater awareness of emotional regulation and staff noting increased consistency in behaviour management. When asked to rate behaviour for a second time, the children gave an average score of 6.43 out of 10, marking an improvement from the first research cycle.</p> <p>CPOMs data showed a reduction in recorded incidents, though variations between the Infant and Junior schools suggest further research is needed. Staff feedback highlighted positive changes, with 100% implementing the new policy and 87% observing its benefits. Learning walks confirmed that students were more engaged and responsive to expectations.</p>
<p>Evidence-informed theory</p>	<p>Focussed on children's social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH), embedding the three words ready, respectful, and safe has become the underpinning of our inclusive relational, restorative, trauma-informed approach to children's regulation.</p>

RESEARCH TIMELINE

May	June	July/Aug	September	October	November
Action Research Cycle 1 Step 1: Establish the research focus	Action Research Cycle 1 Step 2: Study Steps 3-5: Plan 1		Step 6: Do 1 Steps 7-8: Review 1 Action Research Cycle 2 Step 9: Study 2 Steps 10-12: Plan 2 Step 13: Do 2 Step 14-15: Review 2		Share and disseminate the research (anonymised) with other interested parties.

ACTION RESEARCH CYCLE 1

RESEARCH FOCUS: Step 1

Initial research interest aim/question (Step 1)	<p><i>Is Zones of Regulation¹ more effectively used as a small group intervention or as a whole school approach to social and emotional learning?</i></p> <p><i>Rationale</i></p> <p>Many professionals who observe and advise on individual pupils with SEND suggest using Zones of Regulation as an approach to support the learning of social and emotional skills. Over time, this has been increasingly suggested as a strategy and a local Pupil Referral Unit and specialist provision for Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, with whom we work closely, has adopted The Zones of Regulation curriculum for each child in the setting.</p> <p>Over time, needs across the school have changed, and the number of pupils with a primary need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs has increased. It is pertinent that further research is carried out to ascertain why there has been such a rise in this area, but this was not within the scope of this project.</p> <p>With the increased level of need in mind, a strategy that supports the needs of pupils was necessary to ensure that every child can flourish during their time in education. Observations show that the social, emotional and mental health needs of pupils can often impact the learning of all pupils in the classroom. A whole school approach could support the needs of pupils with SEND, those who require reasonable adjustments to their learning and further assist quality first teaching to mitigate needs escalating.</p>
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¹ Zones of Regulation (2025) *Learn More About the Zones of Regulation*. Minneapolis, MN.
<https://zonesofregulation.com/how-it-works/>

KEY LITERATURE SHAPING THE RESEARCH (STUDY 1): Step 2

<p>Reference</p>	<p>Education Endowment Foundation (2021) <i>Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools Guidance Report</i>. London: Education Endowment Foundation. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/primary-sel</p> <p>Kim L. E., Dundas S and Asbury K (2024) <i>'I think it's been difficult for the ones that haven't got as many resources in their homes': teacher concerns about the impact of COVID 19 on pupil learning and wellbeing</i>. <i>Teachers and Teaching</i> 30:7-8 884-889, DOI:10.1080/1354062.2021.1982690</p> <p>Kuypers, L M (2023) <i>The Zones of Regulation A Curriculum Designed to Foster Self-Regulation and Emotional Control</i>. Santa Clara: Think Social Publishing, Inc.</p> <p>Mason B K., Leaf J B, Gerhardt P F. (2013) <i>A research Review of the Zones of Regulation Program</i>. <i>The Journal of Special Education</i>. 1-11. DOI: 10.1177/00224669231170202</p> <p>Ohlbock, E, Stinson, M, McClintock, K, Turtle, B (2023) <i>Evaluating the effectiveness of key components of Zones of Regulation curriculum training on teachers' efficacy at managing self-regulation needs in autistic pupils</i>. <i>British Journal of Special Education</i>. 51-1 DOI:10.1111/1467-8578.12501</p> <p>Wolstenhome C and Willis B with Culliney M (2016) <i>Evaluation of the impact of Jigsaw the mindful approach to PHSE on Primary Schools</i>. Available at: https://shura.shu.ac.uk/13692/1/FINAL%20Jigsaw%20report%20CW.pdf</p>
<p>Key point(s) of note</p>	<p>Social and emotional learning refers to skills which children learn in order to manage emotions, empathise, reach their goals and establish positive relationships (Weissberg et al., 2015, cited by the Education Endowment Foundation, 2021).</p> <p>For this research project, the focus is on supporting children to understand and manage their emotions to make academic progress in the classroom. These skills will, in turn, support the development of other areas of social and emotional learning. There is extensive evidence which suggests that when children have a good understanding of social and emotional skills in childhood, they have improved outcomes in later life (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021). This suggests that ensuring effective social and emotional education will support pupils to reach their longer-term goals and aspirations.</p> <p>When deciding on additional learning, implications for the existing curriculum need to be considered. Personal, Social, Health Education (PHSE) is currently delivered through a program called</p>

Jigsaw². Research suggested a limited evidence base for the overall effectiveness of the Jigsaw PSHE scheme. One study suggested an increased emotional literacy score compared to standardised samples (Wolstenhome and Willis, 2016). It is important to note that the report did not elaborate on the number of schools for which this was the case, the demographics of these schools, or by what percentage the score was increased.

A secure evidence base is important, considering the vital role social and emotional education has on all stakeholders in a school setting. A large part of the role for all school staff, which often goes unrecognised, is about addressing the emotional needs of pupils (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021). Effective social and emotional learning can positively impact the behaviour, mental health and performance of pupils, but also members of staff (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021). The Education Endowment Foundation (2012) set out six key recommendations for schools, which include:

1. Teach social emotional learning skills explicitly
2. Integrate and model social emotional learning skills through everyday teaching
3. Plan carefully for adopting a social-emotional learning programme
4. Use a SAFE curriculum: Sequential, Active, Focused and Explicit
5. Reinforce social emotional learning skills at a whole-school level through ethos and activities
6. Plan, support, and monitor social emotional learning implementation.

As a result of this guidance and the evidence presented about Jigsaw, it was important to us also to consider the evidence base supporting the Zones of Regulation Curriculum before widening its use in the school. Kuypers (2023) describes the Zones of Regulation curriculum as designed for students who struggle with self-regulation, whether they are neurodivergent or neurotypical. It is indicated that staff delivering the Zones of Regulation curriculum can better understand their own states of emotional regulation (Kuypers, 2023), suggesting the content may align with guidance set out by the Education Endowment Foundation (2021).

That said, the Zones of Regulation (2023) does not meet the standards required to be implemented as evidence-based practice (Mason et al., 2023). The review carried out by Mason et al. (2023) concluded that only 3 studies could be considered viable research, and the outcomes raised further questions around the programme's efficacy. Nevertheless, used appropriately, Zones of Regulation can impact individual pupils. In some instances, it has been noted that the curriculum can support the self-efficacy and self-regulation skills of learners with autism (Ohlbock et al, 2023).

² Jigsaw (n.d.) Jigsaw. Leatherhead: Jigsaw PSHE. <https://jigsawpshe.online/>

	It was therefore sensible to reconsider implementing the Zones of Regulation and continuing with the same research question.
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PLAN 1: Step 3

As part of the process of planning Action Research Cycle 1 and having completed the ‘study’ phase, the research question can evolve and become further refined.

Revised research question	How can social and emotional learning be effectively implemented as a whole school approach in a mainstream school?
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PLAN 1 and DO 1: Steps 4 and 6

<p>Methods of data collection</p> <p>Creating a baseline for the social and emotional skills of the children in the school was imperative to considering the second phase of the research project. Formalised assessments were considered; however, although this may provide a quantitative measure, it did not give the qualitative data, which would better guide decision-making in this project. Therefore, pupil voice was gathered across the whole school to gain views about behaviour, emotional regulation and environment in the school.</p> <p>Following the information collected through pupil voice, data from the Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMs) was evaluated to consider the number of behaviour incidents logged by staff. A staff questionnaire was necessary to balance everyone's views before planning the second research cycle.</p> <p>Description of research sample, timing and location</p> <p><i>Pupil Voice</i></p> <p>4 children from each cohort across the school were selected by class teachers to discuss behaviour in the school with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). Due to other roles and responsibilities across the school, the SENCO was familiar to all participating children.</p> <p>One child from each of the following groups was chosen: pupil premium³, SEND, those who are learning English as an Additional Language (EAL), and those who have experience of working with a social worker⁴. In total this meant that 7 children from each group were represented in the conversation. The small sample could be seen as a limitation of this study.</p> <p>The questions asked can be seen in Appendix 2</p> <p><i>CPOMs Data Analysis</i></p> <p>As things happen in school, such as: a behaviour incident, contact with parents, or a safeguarding concern, staff members log this on this system. This instantly alerts the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and the deputies. When an incident is logged on CPOMs, categories are selected. There are 20 categories to select with the option of choosing more than 1. CPOMs creates reports of the incidents reported by category. Data was collected at the beginning to</p>
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³ Department for Education (2025) *Guidance – Pupil Premium: Overview*. London: Department for Education. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>

⁴ British Association of Social Workers (2023). *What social workers do*. Birmingham: British Association of Social Workers. <https://basw.co.uk/about-social-work/what-social-work/what-social-workers-do>

show the number of behaviour incidents that were being logged. As the study covered a federated Infant and Junior school, data were analysed from both schools.

Staff Questionnaire

A Microsoft Form was created to compare staff and pupils' views. The form was sent to all teachers, teaching assistants, and the senior leadership team. A total of 43 people received the form, and 42 responded. At the time of sending, 1 team member was on long-term sick leave. The staff questionnaire was created following pupil voice responses to gain further perspective.

PLAN 2: Step 5

Ethical consent was sought from each participant to publish this data anonymously.

REVIEW 1: Step 7-8

Data Analysis: process

Pupil Voice

After the data collection, the recordings were listened to, and notes of the main findings were taken. The recordings were listened to two or three times to ensure that everything was collected, especially as children were talking over each other during the conversations. Following this, a conversation was held with the rest of the senior leadership team to discuss the next steps that needed to take place.

CPOMs Data Analysis

Using the built-in data analysis options in CPOMs, pie charts were created to break down the number of categories selected across both schools. To further understand the category of behaviour, sub-reports were created to identify if different pupil groups had higher reports of behaviour concerns.

Staff questionnaire

Microsoft completes the analysis and highlights the most common answers, provides average scores, and the most common answers given. The option to look at individual responses is a possibility which allowed for follow up questions.

Summary of Findings

Research Question

How can social and emotional learning be effectively implemented as a whole school approach in a mainstream school?

Pupil Voice

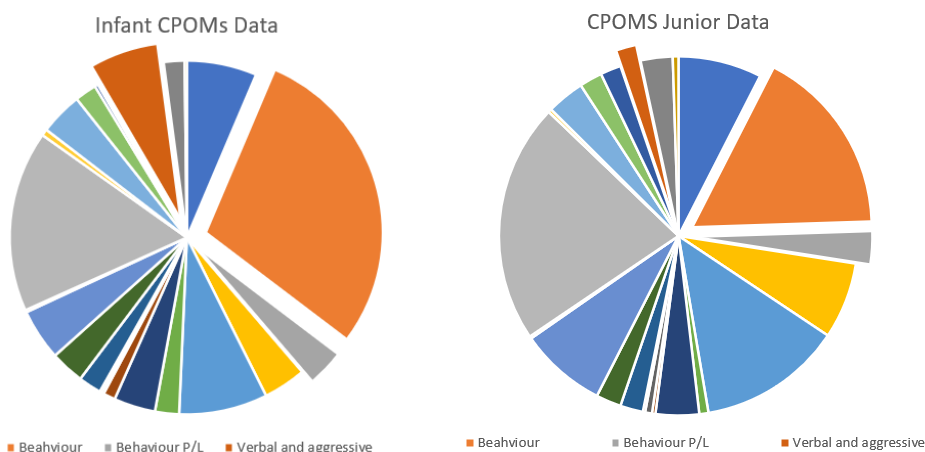
The questions asked in the pupil voice exercise are included in [Appendix 2](#).

- Children were asked how they would score behaviour in school out of 10. The average score for behaviour was 3.96.
 - This score was a lot lower than expected.
- Children were asked what they see in school that they would consider to be misbehaviour. Below is the list of things that children described. The number in brackets shows the number of times this behaviour was given.
 - Shouting Out (7)
 - Not listening (11)
 - Talking at the same time (20)
 - Fidgeting (15)
 - Using unkind hands and feet in the classroom and on the playground (16)
- Children were asked what they thought 'being ready to learn' meant. Below is the list of ideas the children gave, and the number in brackets shows the number of times this idea was given.

- Sitting quietly (14)
- Listening to the teacher (20)
- Completing the work (19)
- Not fidgeting (8)
- Children were asked if they felt behaviour was the same in all lessons. Below is the list of ideas the children gave.
 - All children commented that they felt the behaviour was the same across all lessons.
- Children were asked if they felt all adults in school managed behaviour in the same way. Below is the list of ideas the children gave.
 - All children felt that adults across the school did not manage behaviour in the same way.
 - 2 children commented that when they have 2 teachers (a job-share role), they do not feel that the teachers manage behaviour in the same way.
- Children were asked if they could talk about how they were feeling and if they understood the word 'regulation'. Below is the list of ideas the children gave, and the number in brackets shows the number of times this idea was given.
 - Children felt they could talk about when they were happy (7)
 - Some children felt that they could not talk about how they were feeling (7)
 - No children understood the meaning of the word regulation.
- Children were asked about strategies they had used when they found something difficult. Below is the list of ideas the children gave, and the number in brackets shows the number of times this idea was given.
 - Take a deep breath (2)
 - Yell (1)
 - Have a go and face my fear (1)
 - Ask a friend or teacher (5)
- Children were asked how their teacher greeted them in the morning. Below is the list of ideas the children gave, and the number in brackets shows the number of times this idea was given.
 - Tell us to get started on their morning task (6)
 - Hand in my reading record (1)
 - Say hello to me (1)
- Children were asked when they learn about behaviour. Only one child answered this question and responded by saying 'in Year 2'.
- Children were asked if they felt our school values (Aspiration, Thriving and Wellness) have a link with behaviour. All children agreed that they did.

CPOMS Data

Data from 3rd July 2023 - 3rd July 2024



- 692 behaviour incidents were logged.
- 9 of these incidents involved pupils who are on the SEN register at SEN support or with an Educational, Health and Care plan.
- Of these incidents, no children were previously looked after.
- 9 of these incidents involved pupils who were identified as pupil premium.

Junior School

- 453 behaviour incidents were logged.
- 32 were pupils on the SEN register as SEN support or having an Educational, Health and Care plan.
- Of these incidents, one of these was previously a Looked After Child.
- 18 of these incidents involved pupils who were identified as pupil premium.

Staff questionnaire

- 47% of the staff who responded to the survey described behaviour as good across the school. Other answers included manageable, average, ok and changing.
- Staff were asked to score behaviour from 0-10 in the classroom, 10 being the highest. An average score of 7.87 was given. This is significantly higher than the 3.96 average provided by the pupils. It should be noted that the sample size was smaller in the pupil voice.
- Staff were asked to score behaviour from 0-10 on the playground, 10 being the highest. An average score of 6.93 was given.
- 93% of staff felt they consistently greeted every pupil when entering the classroom. 7% of staff said they did greet pupils, but not consistently.
- 60% of staff felt all staff had consistent expectations for behaviour.
- 53% of staff felt that staff did not manage behaviour in the same way.

Analysis and next steps leading into Action Research Cycle 2

Based on analysis of data, it appears that before the implementation of a social and emotional curriculum is carried out across the school, the behaviour policy should be considered. As previously stated, research into the Zones of Regulation Curriculum showed impact in particular areas of special educational need (Ohlbock et al, 2023). The evidence from CPOMs shows only a small proportion of behaviour incidents recorded involved pupils identified as having SEND.

A limitation to this is the reliance on consistent recording and selection of a category by staff members. It is not known if all staff are consistently reporting behaviour incidents in the same way. Similarly, pupils noted they do not feel that behaviour expectations are consistent across the school, which could also suggest a lack of consistency within recording. Furthermore, the behaviours in the classroom reported by the children could be described as low-level disruption, and therefore, staff are unlikely to record this.

In this instance, the behaviours described by the children are important as they see them as a hindrance to their learning experience. The data show that although SEND must be considered within a whole school behaviour approach, pupils identified as having SEND are not the target group. This fits within the aim of the study to ensure that strategies are in place for the whole school to mitigate the escalating needs.

In addition, the sample group of children suggested they were not able to effectively recognise and regulate their emotions. Without this skill, pupils are unlikely to be able to succeed in making acceptable behaviour choices.

An interesting disparity can be seen between the average score that pupils and staff gave to behaviour at the school, leading to the question of why. Another significant difference comes through between staff and children, staff stating that they do consistently greet pupils when they

enter the classroom, whereas children see these exchanges as instructional, rather than relational.

Next Step(s): Action Research Cycle 2

Having analysed the data and completed key reading, the decision was taken to complete further research into whole school behaviour policies. The data analysis leads to curiosity about the relationships between staff and pupils and the impact this could have on behaviour and social and emotional learning.

ACTION RESEARCH CYCLE 2

KEY LITERATURE SHAPING THE RESEARCH (STUDY 2): Step 9

<p>Reference</p>	<p>Bomber, L M (2021) <i>Know Me to Teach Me</i>. London: Worth Publishing Ltd.</p> <p>Dix, P. (2017). <i>When the Adult Changes, Everything Changes</i>. Carmarthen, Wales: Independent Thinking Press.</p> <p>Education Endowment Foundation (2021) <i>Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools Guidance Report</i>. London: Education Endowment Foundation. https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/eef-guidance-reports/primary-sel/EEF_Social_and_Emotional_Learning.pdf?v=1743176714</p> <p>Emerson, A. (2022). <i>The Case for Trauma-Informed Behaviour Policies</i>. <i>Pastoral Care in Education</i>, 40:3, 352-359. DOI:10.1080/02643944.2022.2093956</p> <p>Whitaker, D. (2021) <i>The Kindness Principles. Making relational behavioural management work in schools</i>. Carmarthen, Wales: Independent Thinking Press.</p>
<p>Key point(s) of note</p>	<p>Teachers and other school staff often support behaviour policies as they provide solid guidance and a safety net for staff (Emerson, 2022). Furthermore, it helps pupils know the boundaries and supports them to build an understanding of what is fair and unfair (Emerson, 2022). Challenging behaviours are becoming one of the most difficult tasks school staff need to manage (Education Endowment Fund, 2021). Therefore, getting it right and keeping it simple is important to ensure success.</p> <p>Literature suggested a strong evidence base for consistency, which is often the most important area to address (Education Endowment Fund, 2021). Furthermore, Dix (2017) suggests that this is often the simplest way to improve behaviour in school. Research from the first cycle shows that this is something that needs improving within the setting. This felt imperative as consistency underpins everything we do to support behaviour management in schools (Education Endowment Fund, 2021). Without consistency and clear guidelines,</p>

staff quickly begin to feel disempowered (Dix, 2017). However, the behaviour policy should first be reviewed before consistency can be established.

There is a continuing misunderstanding of behaviours we see in mainstream settings (Emerson, 2022). This leads us to question, do we want children to behave because they fear a consequence, or do we want them to know and understand the right thing to do? (Whitaker, 2021).

The Education Endowment Fund (2021) recommended that relationship building be a fundamental pillar to any behaviour policy and highlighted a strong evidence base for this. We are designed to function at our best when we feel connections in our relationships (Bomber, 2021).

Over recent years, trauma-informed practice has become somewhat of an 'education buzzword'. It is undoubtedly more than this. It is a way of working with a focus on kindness, compassion, the building of self-regulation and giving pupils an insight into why they acted in a certain way and how to repair this (Emerson, 2022). This view is echoed by Whitaker (2021), who emphasises how complex children are, and therefore, a behaviourist approach which ignores emotions and does not demonstrate the values of empathy and compassion will not create adults who know and fully understand the right choices. Bomber (2022) calls for us to rethink the word discipline and view this as another form of learning.

Developing a relational behaviour policy requires consideration of different elements in order for it to be successful. They also take time. To ensure success, it must meet the needs of the school culture and be embedded within the foundations (Whitaker, 2022). Dix first introduced the idea of 3 simple words to portray behaviour expectations in schools in 2017.

Ready Respectful Safe

Research has shown this to be effective across various settings (Dix, 2017) and will become the basis of the relational policy implemented in this research project. A limitation to this data is that the creators themselves referenced it, and thus it could be considered as not evidence-based practice. In contrast to the evidence previously presented about the Zones of Regulation (Kuypers, 2023), there is a strong evidence base supporting relational behaviour policies (Education, Endowment Foundation, 2021).

In guidance created by the Educational Endowment Foundation (2021), 6 principles were outlined, which fall within recommendations made by other experts, including Dix (2017) and Whitaker (2021):

1. Know and understand your pupils and their influences.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Teach learning behaviours alongside managing misbehaviour. 3. Use classroom management strategies to support good behaviour. 4. Use simple approaches as part of a regular routine. 5. Use targeted approaches to meet the needs of individuals. 6. Consistency. <p>The use of restorative practices is one simple suggestion which supports the teaching of learning behaviours whilst still managing incidents. If we want to see well-rounded, connected individuals in a society that cares for each other, then it is important for children to understand the impact their behaviour has on others (Dix, 2017). This requires staff to allow themselves to be curious and not react, and doing so consistently is one of the biggest challenges (Whitaker, 2021).</p> <p>An important part of the success is the behaviour of the adult, including body language and tone of voice. Beginning a conversation with a frustrated tone may cause the child to become hyper vigilant and lose its effectiveness (Dix, 2017). Further to this, Dix (2017) explains that adults modelling apologies when they have been frustrated can also be a useful teaching tool within this process. All adults in children’s lives are constant models of behaviour, and they will trust us to be open in conversations if they feel cared for (Whitaker, 2021).</p> <p>Complementary to this is greeting pupils at the classroom door, as the instant connection children feel when this is in place has been known to increase their productivity with learning by an average of twelve minutes an hour (Education Endowment Fund, 2021). This is believed to occur because praise and connection delivered by an adult provides children with a dopamine release (Whitaker, 2021).</p> <p>Every staff member is accountable for a behaviour policy within a school (Emerson, 2021). Greetings should not just be the sole responsibility of the teacher, but also senior leaders placed strategically around the site in the mornings (Dix, 2017) can make a significant contribution to this process. Imagine the impact of a child having four positive interactions before reaching the classroom. Relational behaviour policies, and in turn trauma-informed practice, are about building communities which connect well and promote safety, well-being and secure relationships for everyone (Bomber, 2021).</p>
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PLAN 2: Step 10

Revised research question	Can relational behaviour policies support the teaching of social and emotional skills in mainstream settings?
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PLAN 2 and DO 2: Steps 11 and 13

Methods of data collection	
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Before data could be collected, a new behaviour policy needed to be written and agreed with other senior leaders and the school governors. For reference, an anonymised version of this can be found in

[3](#) of this case study. Implementation then needed to take place. This was carried out using the implementation process outlined by the Educational Endowment Foundation.



Sharples, J, Eaton J, Boughelaf, J (2024) *A School's Guide to Implementation Process*. London: Education Endowment Foundation. Available at:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/implementation>

The 'explore' portion of this process was carried out through the first action research cycle and the second literature review. Preparing and delivering involved introducing and explaining the rationale of the new policy to staff. Staff training slides can be seen in [Appendix 8 – Training Slides](#). This took place during a Professional Development Meeting, held weekly for teaching staff and again at a meeting for support staff, which is held monthly. The timing of these was considered to ensure that a launch could take place when it was fresh in everyone's mind. The new policy was shared with parents, and an assembly was held to introduce the 'Ready, Respectful and Safe' approach to the children. These were not one-off sessions, and revisiting took place in meetings with staff, further assemblies and newsletters to parents. To increase the awareness of 'Ready, Respectful and Safe', children have been recognised for showing these behaviours in assemblies.

Data was collected in the same way to analyse progress and understand the impact of changes made. Alongside this, learning walks took place during whole-class teaching and at the start of the day to gather evidence in meetings. Further research could have been undertaken to gather information on children's productivity in lessons, but it was not possible within the timescale. This could be seen as a limitation to the research and an area for development.

Description of research sample, timing and location

Pupil Voice

Class teachers selected four children from each cohort across the school to discuss behaviour in the school with the SENCO. Again, children were chosen to represent each of the groups: pupil premium, SEND, children who are learning English as an Additional Language (EAL), and children with experience of working with a social worker. In total, this meant that seven children from each group were represented in the conversation. The small sample could be seen as a limitation to this study.

CPOMs Data Analysis

Up-to-date data was collected to show the number of behaviour incidents being logged. As the study covered a federated Infant and Junior school, data were analysed from both schools.

Staff Questionnaire

Microsoft Forms was used to create a questionnaire for staff to gain their views on the impact of the new behaviour policy. The form was sent to all teachers, teaching assistants, and the senior leadership team. To allow consistency, those who work in the admin team, kitchen and maintenance team were not included in the second questionnaire. A total of 43 people received the form, and 42 responded. At the time of sending, one member of the team was on long-term sick leave. This was not the same member of staff who did not respond to the previous questionnaire.

Learning Walks⁵

These were casual Learning Walks, and teaching was not commented on. Staff were aware these would take place, but were not aware when. When in the classrooms and around the schools, notes were made about where a consistent approach was followed, positive learning behaviours were noted, and relational practice was taking place. These also took place at the start of the day and after break times for 2 weeks to gain insight into the greetings being used by members of staff. Witnessing these first-hand allowed for stronger triangulation of data collected in the pupil voice and staff questionnaire.

PLAN 2: Step 12

Ethical consent was sought from each participant to publish this data anonymously.

REVIEW 2: Steps 14-15

Data Analysis: process

Analysis of data mirrored that of Research Cycle 1.

Pupil Voice

Following the data collection, the recordings were listened to, and notes of the main findings were taken. The recordings were listened to two to three times to ensure that everything was collected, especially as children were talking over each other during the conversations.

CPOMs Data Analysis

Pie charts were created using the built-in data analysis options to break down the number of categories selected across both schools. To further understand the category of behaviour, sub-reports were created to identify if different pupil groups had higher reports of behaviour concerns.

Staff questionnaire

Microsoft completes the analysis and highlights the most common answers, provides average scores, and the most common answers given. The option to look at individual responses is a possibility to allow for follow-up questions.

Learning Walks

A table was created to identify positive and negative examples of the behaviour policy in practice. When something was noted, it was written down, and a subsequent tally took place where this was seen in other places. Positive greetings were included on this list. Alongside this, qualitative evidence was noted to support statements made by staff and pupils.

Summary of Findings

⁵Sherringham, T., (2022) Making the Most of Learning Walks. Teacherhead.
<https://teacherhead.com/2022/09/04/making-the-most-of-learning-walks/>

Action Research Cycle 2 Research Question

Can relational behaviour policies support the teaching of social and emotional skills in mainstream settings?

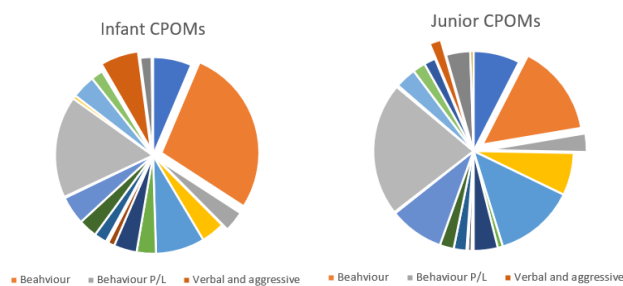
Pupil Voice

- Children were asked how they would score behaviour in school out of 10. The average score for behaviour was 6.43.
 - This score had increased significantly since the first research cycle. This could suggest a positive impact of changes, but it should be noted that the group of children was not exactly the same. Therefore, it cannot be seen as comparable.
 - Where a child scored less, they gave further details about feeling upset following a falling out with a friend. Further questioning clarified that an adult had dealt with each incident, often through a Restorative Conversation. For more information about Restorative Conversations, see: [Appendix 5 – Visual to Support Restorative Conversations](#) and [Appendix 6 – Restorative Conversations](#). As a result, they felt supported and understood.
- Children were asked if they felt behaviour in the school had improved since we had started to use 'Ready, Respectful and Safe'.
 - All children felt that they had seen an improvement in behaviour in their classroom.
 - "I like it when my teacher notices if I have been ready, respectful or safe".
 - "I like it when people tell me I have been safe when I am walking around school".
- Children were asked what they thought 'being ready to learn' meant. Below is the list of ideas the children gave, and the number in brackets shows the number of times this idea was given.
 - Sitting quietly (12)
 - Listening to the teacher (25)
 - Completing the work (28)
- Children were asked if they felt behaviour was the same in all lessons. Below is the list of ideas the children gave.
 - Most children felt that behaviour was the same in all lessons, but one child commented that in Physical Education, children are sometimes not safe.
- Children were asked if they felt all adults in school managed behaviour in the same way. Below is the list of ideas the children gave.
 - All children agreed that staff are using ready, respectful and safe.
 - "We have a different teacher today (supply teacher), she doesn't do it the same way."
- Children were asked if they could talk about how they were feeling and if they understood the word 'regulation'. Below is the list of ideas the children gave, and the number in brackets shows the number of times this idea was given.
 - One child answered: "Regulation is when you are calm and ready to do your work". The rest of the children then agreed.
 - As previously stated, it is important to note that it was not the same group of children as before.
- Children were asked about strategies they had to use when they found something difficult. Below is the list of ideas the children gave, and the number in brackets shows the number of times this idea was given.
 - Take a deep breath (17)
 - Ask for help (3)
- Children were asked how they were greeted by their teacher in the morning. Below is the list of ideas the children gave, and the number in brackets shows the number of times this idea was given.
 - High five (7)
 - Saying good morning or hello in Spanish
 - Say hello to me
 - Ask me if I am okay (3)
 - Smile (2)

- Headteacher says good morning at the gate (3)
- They say good morning using my name.
- I feel safe coming in every morning because I know they are happy to see me.
- I get greeted with a smile, and it makes me ready to achieve.
- Children were asked when they learn about behaviour.
 - Children discussed the 'Ready, Respectful and Safe' assembly, which had taken place.
 - When my teacher made me do a restorative conversation after playtime yesterday.
- Children were asked if they felt our school values (Aspiration, Thriving and Wellness) have a link with ready, respectful and safe.
 - "Yes, because if I want a job, I need to know how to act".
 - "If people are behaving, then we are all happy".
 - "Thriving and wellness link to safe".
 - "Aspirations link to being ready. If we learn, we do well".
 - "Wellness links to ready because we will be ready to learn if we are feeling well".
 - "Ready, Respectful and Safe links with Aspirations, Thriving and Wellness because altogether they make us good people".

CPOMs Data

Data from 30th January 2024 - 30th January 2025



Infant School

- 668 behaviour incidents across the above categories were logged.
 - 24 fewer incidents were recorded within a 12-month period.
 - 8 of these incidents involved pupils who are on the SEN register as SEN support or having an Education, Health and Care plan.
 - Of these incidents, no children were previously Looked After.
 - 9 of these incidents involved pupils who are identified as pupil premium.

Junior School

- 403 behaviour incidents across the above categories were logged.
 - 50 fewer incidents were recorded within a 12-month period.
 - 28 of these involved pupils who are on the SEN register as SEN support or having an Education, Health and Care plan.
 - Of these incidents, 3 involved children who were previously looked after.
 - 15 of these incidents involved pupils who are identified as pupil premium.

A consideration when analysing this data is that as the 12-month periods cover more than one academic year, children have moved on to other settings during this time.

Staff Questionnaire

- 50% of staff said they would describe behaviour as good.
 - Other responses included respectful, consistent, mixed, lovely and improving.
 - Staff were asked to score behaviour from 0-10 in the classroom, 10 being the highest. An average score of 7.93 was given. This is a slight increase from the previous score.

- Staff were asked to score behaviour from 0-10 in the classroom, 10 being the highest. An average score of 7.07 was given. This is a slight increase from the previous score.
- 87% of staff reported that they consistently greet children when they enter the classroom. Further exploration into the responses given highlighted that two members of staff were finding this particularly challenging due to questions parents had first thing in the morning. Support was given.
- 82% of staff felt that all staff have consistent behaviour expectations. An increase of 22%.
- 100% of staff had implemented Ready, Respectful and Safe in their classroom with 87% noticing a positive impact.
- Staff were asked to rate how useful they felt the Professional Development Meeting introducing Ready, Respectful, Safe on a scale of 0 to 5, 5 being the highest. An average score of 3.87 was given.

Learning Walks

- In all classrooms across the school, from Nursery to Year 6, staff were seen to be using the terminology of Ready, Respectful and Safe.
- Children were on task during lessons, and low-level behaviours described by the children in the initial pupil voice could not be seen in most cases.
- Children responded quickly to reminders of the expectation on behaviour.
- More experienced teachers used the terminology in their classrooms less than the Early Career Teachers.
- Greetings were consistently occurring in the morning but were less so during break and lunch times. This could be due to staff having other responsibilities during these times and not being ready to carry out greetings.
- Initially, restorative conversations were taking place more in Key Stage 2, but with prompting, were being used with visuals in Early Years and Key Stage 1. Repeated incidents were decreasing in the Early Years following the introduction of the restorative conversations.
- Staff commented that they take up time during the day and felt further guidance on these was needed.

Analysis and next steps leading into research conclusion

The quantitative data presents the beginnings of positive outcomes for the changes which were implemented with the revised behaviour policy. Although only small increases can be seen in places, these suggest the beginnings of positive steps. Furthermore, the qualitative statements collected, mostly from the children and observations, show shifts in the culture across the school, with responses appearing more positive and consistent. Whitaker (2021) states that relational policies take time to embed, so the impact would need to be continually reviewed. The CPOMS data collected over 12 months still shows high numbers of incidents being recorded. From the 12 months of data collected from CPOMS, the new behaviour policy was only in place for 4 of these. It could therefore be suggested that a reduction in incidents is a reflection of changing cohorts, natural shifts in children's experiences or other factors related to the day-to-day running of schools. Further questions should be explored to understand the difference between the number of incidents logged in the Infant school compared to the Junior school.

- Early data analysis shows areas where there are examples of increased social and emotional learning taking place. For example:
 - "I like it when my teacher notices if I have been ready, respectful or safe".
 - "I like it when people tell me I have been safe when I am walking around school".
 - "Regulation is when you are calm and ready to do your work"
 - "Yes, because if I want a job, I need to know how to act"
 - "If people are behaving, then we are all happy"
 - "Thriving and wellness link to safe"
 - "Aspirations link to being ready. If we learn, we do well"

- “Wellness links to ready because we will be ready to learn if we are feeling well.”
- “Ready, Respectful and Safe links with Aspirations, Thriving and Wellness because altogether they make us good people”

Previous data highlighted that children had limited understanding of how to regulate their emotions and were not able to give answers about emotional learning in the same detail as they did in the second research cycle. As previously noted, the group of children was not identical to the initial research cycle due to the project spanning two academic years. Thus, this group of children may have already had a greater social and emotional literacy baseline.

CONCLUSION

Research aim/question
Can relational behaviour policies support the teaching of social and emotional skills in mainstream settings?
<p>Conclusion(s)</p> <p>Following an increase in social, emotional, and mental health needs across the school, this action research project explored ways to ensure that every child can flourish during their education. A whole-school approach was to be explored to support those with SEND of any category, those who require reasonable adjustments, and to develop quality first teaching.</p> <p>The first research cycle focused on Zones of Regulation (Kuypers, 2023) as a whole school approach. Although Zones of Regulation (Kuypers, 2023) has shown some evidence of effectiveness in specific areas, the lack of academic research in this area, coupled with surprising responses in the first cycle, discounted it as a whole school strategy in this case. Initial evidence explored in the literature during the first action research cycle strongly supported the importance of explicitly teaching social and emotional learning as key to children's success in later life (Educational Endowment Foundation, 2021). While this may be true, a further review of the literature in the second action research cycle demonstrated a place for exploring social and emotional learning using trauma-informed and relational behaviour policies.</p> <p>At the start of this action research project, Social and Emotional learning was referred to as the skills which children learn to manage emotions, empathise, reach their goals and establish positive relationships (Weissberg et al., 2015, cited by Education Endowment Foundation, 2021). Qualitative evidence presented within the second action research cycle illustrates that small adjustments to whole school policies can increase social and emotional skills. While there may be limitations to the results presented in a small-scale study such as this, positive impact can be seen across the school, and outcomes are beginning to improve.</p> <p>In conclusion, relational behaviour policies have begun transforming practice and attitudes across the school. This will not become embedded and developed overnight into individual practice and whole school ethos (Whitaker, 2021). However, with one step at a time and a promise to follow a 30-day trial period suggested by Paul Dix (2017), you can begin to make small steps to whole school transformations.</p>
Next Steps
<p>Further research into this should continue, with data being reviewed six months and a year after implementation. Moreover, to maintain a high profile of the new policy, training for all staff should continue, with induction information for staff and new parents updated.</p> <p>Reasons for disparity between infant and junior behaviour data should also be explored, along with reasons for the increase in social, emotional and mental health needs in school. It would be interesting to compare our data with that of other local schools to determine larger patterns of</p>

change. As this information is collected, a long-term study into the number of pupils entered onto the SEN register with a primary need of social, emotional and mental health could take place to see if there is a reduction over time.

Appendix 1 – Action Research Cycles

Action Research Cycle 1	<u>Establish the research focus</u>	Step 1: Identify the ISEND area for development which requires research.	
	<u>Study 1</u>	Step 2: Review the research literature.	
	<u>Plan 1</u>	<u>First Plan</u>	
		Step 3: Start the process of refining the research.	
		Step 4: Decide what kind of direction you are going to take (direct or enquiry).	
		Step 5: Consider research ethics (engage with the ethics checklist).	
	<u>Do 1</u>	Step 6: Implement the first plan (either direct action or enquiry as action).	
	<u>Review 1</u>	Step 7: Review and Reflect.	
Step 8: Analyse the meaning of the data gathered.			
Action Research Cycle 2	<u>Study 2</u>	Step 9: Review further literature if required.	
	<u>Plan 2</u>	<u>Second Plan</u>	
		Step 10: Based on the 'reflect' phase, refine the research (this may involve revising or developing the research questions) and plan the next actions.	
		Step 11: Decide what kind of action you are going to take (direct or enquiry).	
		Step 12: Seek any further ethical permissions if needed (engage with ethics checklist).	
	<u>Do 2</u>	Step 13: Implement the second plan – (either direct action or enquiry as action).	
<u>Review 2</u>	Step 14: Review and reflect.		
	Step 15: Analyse the meaning of the data gathered.		

Appendix 2 – Pupil Voice Questions

Action Research Cycle 1	Action Research Cycle 2
What score would you give behaviour out of 10? (10 being the highest)	What score would you give behaviour out of 10? (10 being the highest)
What do you see in school that is misbehaviour?	Do you think behaviour has improved in school since we started talking about 'ready, respectful and safe'?
What do you think being 'ready to learn' means?	What do you think being 'ready to learn' means?
Do you feel that behaviour is the same in all lessons?	Do you feel that behaviour is the same in all lessons?
Do you think all the adults in the school manage behaviour in the same way?	Do you think all the adults in the school manage behaviour in the same way?
Do you feel that you can talk about which emotion you are feeling?	Do you feel that you can talk about which emotion you are feeling?
Do you know what the word regulation means?	Do you know what the word regulation means?
What can you do when something feels difficult?	What can you do when something feels difficult?
Does your teacher greet you in the morning? How do they do this?	Does your teacher greet you in the morning? How do they do this?
When do you learn about behaviour?	When do you learn about behaviour?
Do you think our school values have a link to behaviour?	Do you think our school values have a link to behaviour?

Appendix 3 – Behaviour Policy

1. Introduction and aims

At XX School, we believe that every member of our school community should feel valued, respected and treated as an individual. We aim to prepare all our children for the path of life and support them to overcome challenges, including the skills to regulate their emotions and behave appropriately. This will enable pupils to achieve our school vision of **“We have come so they may have life and have it to the full” John 10:10** within the themes of aspirations, wellness and thriving.

We expect all children at XX Schools to display high standards of behaviour, and treat other people, as they would wish to be treated themselves, in accordance with our main school rules.

We will be ready to learn, show respect and be safe at all times.

This policy aims to:

- Provide a **consistent approach** to behaviour management
- **Define** what we consider to be unacceptable behaviour, including bullying and harmful sexualised behaviour.
- Outline **how pupils are expected to behave**
- Summarise the **roles and responsibilities** of different people in the school community with regards to behaviour management
- Outline our system of **rewards and sanctions**

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

It is also based on the [special educational needs and disability \(SEND\) code of practice](#).

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school’s duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils
- Sections 88-94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which require schools to regulate pupils’ behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate pupils’ property
- [DfE guidance](#) explaining that maintained schools should publish their behaviour policy online
- Behaviour in schools – advice for headteachers and school staff. February 2024...

3. Definitions

Misbehaviour is defined as:

- Disruption in lessons, in corridors between lessons, and at break and lunchtimes
- Non-completion of classwork or homework
- Poor attitude
- Incorrect uniform

Serious misbehaviour is defined as:

- Repeated breaches of the school rules
- Any form of bullying
- Sexual assault, which is any unwanted sexual behaviour that causes humiliation, pain, fear or intimidation
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Fighting
- Smoking
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory behaviour
- Possession of any prohibited items. These are:
 - Knives or weapons
 - Alcohol
 - Illegal drugs
 - Stolen items
 - Tobacco and cigarette papers
 - Fireworks
 - Pornographic images
- Any article a staff member reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)

4. Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Bullying can include:

Type of bullying	Definition
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites
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See also school's anti-bullying policy

Details of our school's approach to preventing and addressing bullying are set out in our anti-bullying strategy.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The governing board

The **governing board** is responsible for reviewing and approving the written statement of behaviour principles

The **governing board** will also review this behaviour policy in conjunction with the headteacher and monitor the policy's effectiveness, holding the headteacher to account for its implementation.

5.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for reviewing this behaviour policy in conjunction with the **governing board** giving due consideration to the school's statement of behaviour principles (appendix 1). The headteacher will also approve this policy.

The headteacher will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deal effectively with poor behaviour and will monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure rewards and sanctions are applied consistently.

5.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the behaviour policy consistently
- Modelling positive behaviour and developing a calm, safe environment.
- Providing a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of pupils
- Recording behaviour incidents on CPOMs and sharing with parents.

The senior leadership team will be visible and routinely engaging with pupils, parents and staff on setting and maintain the behaviour culture and an environment where everyone feels safe and supported.

5.4 Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Support their child in adhering to the pupil code of conduct
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the class teacher promptly
- Support their child to understand the consequences their behaviour can have on later life.

6. Pupil code of conduct

All pupils deserve to learn in an environment that is calm, safe and supportive.

All pupils have a duty to:

- Follow the school behaviour policy.
- Always show respect to others.
- Show a readiness to learn.
- Remain safe in the environment.

7. Rewards and sanctions

7.1 List of rewards and sanctions

Positive behaviour will be rewarded with:

- Praise and positive verbal feedback
- House points
- Letters or phone calls home to parents
- Giving children the opportunities to succeed through responsibilities such as opportunities to be part of the school council, class responsibilities and other roles, however seemingly small.
- Gold book and celebration worship.

Staff may use the following strategies on the first instance of misbehaviour:

- Planned ignoring
- Non-verbal signals
- Identifying and praising excellent behaviour in others
- Verbal reminders of school and class rules and then re-engagement with the learning

The school may use one or more of the following sanctions in response to unacceptable behaviour:

- A verbal reprimand
- Expecting work to be completed at home, or at break or lunchtime
- Referring the pupil to a senior member of staff
- Letters or phone calls home to parents
- Completing a restorative act. This may include a verbal or written apology.
- Through a private discussion, children should be made to understand what they did, why it was wrong and what the consequences are for themselves and others.
- Make an agreement as to what they can do in the future.
- Move the child within the classroom or be separated from others for a specific period.
- Completion in work in a separate area
- Have their position in class changed to prevent recurrence and remove temptation.
- Miss golden time or removal privileges.
- Restorative conversations should be held using appendixes below.

7.2 Off-site behaviour

Sanctions may be applied where a pupil has misbehaved off-site when representing the school, such as on a school trip or on the bus on the way to or from school.

7.3 Malicious allegations

Where a pupil makes an accusation against a member of staff and that accusation is shown to have been malicious, the headteacher will discipline the pupil in accordance with this policy.

Please refer to our [safeguarding policy](#) for more information on responding to allegations of abuse.

The headteacher will also consider the pastoral needs of staff accused of misconduct.

8. Behaviour management

8.1 Classroom management

Teaching and support staff are responsible for setting the tone and context for positive behaviour within the classroom.

They will:

- Create and maintain a stimulating environment that encourages pupils to be engaged
- Display the pupil code of conduct or their own classroom rules
- Implement trauma informed practices and PACE principles in the classroom, see appendixes below. This may include beginning to refer to the Zones of Regulation to support some pupils with special education needs.

Develop a positive relationship with pupils, which may include:

- Greeting pupils in the morning/at the start of lessons
- Establishing clear routines
- Communicating expectations of behaviour in ways other than verbally
- Highlighting and promoting good behaviour
- Concluding the day positively and starting the next day afresh
- Having a plan for dealing with low-level disruption
- Refer to the words 'ready', 'respectful' and 'safe'.

8.2 Physical restraint

In some circumstances, staff may use reasonable force to restrain a pupil to prevent them. See safeguarding policy. Some staff may be trained in Team Teach as a next step.

- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property

Incidents of physical restraint must:

Always be used as a last resort

- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded and reported to parents (see appendix 3 for a behaviour log) bound book

8.3 Confiscation

Any prohibited items (listed in section 3) found in pupils' possession will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to pupils.

We will also confiscate any item which is harmful or detrimental to school discipline. These items will be returned to pupils after discussion with senior leaders and parents, if appropriate.

Searching and screening pupils is conducted in line with the DfE's [latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).

8.4.1 Pupil support

The school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent pupils with a protected characteristic from being at a disadvantage. Consequently, our approach to challenging behaviour may be differentiated to cater to the needs of the pupil.

The school's special educational needs co-ordinator will evaluate a pupil who exhibits challenging behaviour to determine whether they have any underlying needs that are not currently being met.

Where necessary, support and advice will also be sought from specialist teachers, an educational psychologist, medical practitioners and/or others, to identify or support specific needs.

When acute needs are identified in a pupil, we will liaise with external agencies and plan support programmes for that child. We will work with parents to create the plan and review it on a regular basis.

9. Pupil transition

To ensure a smooth transition to the next year, pupils have transition sessions with their new teacher(s). In addition, staff members hold transition meetings.

To ensure behaviour is continually monitored and the right support is in place, information related to pupil behaviour issues may be transferred to relevant staff at the start of the term or year. Information on behaviour issues may also be shared with new settings for those pupils transferring to other schools.

10. Training

Our staff are provided with training on managing behaviour, including proper use of restraint, as part of their induction process.

Behaviour management and trauma informed practices will also form part of continuing professional development.

11. Monitoring arrangements

This behaviour policy will be reviewed by the headteacher and governing board every year. At each review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher.

The written statement of behaviour principles (appendix 1) will be reviewed and approved by the governing board every year.

12. Links with other policies

- This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies:
- Exclusions policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Anti bullying policy

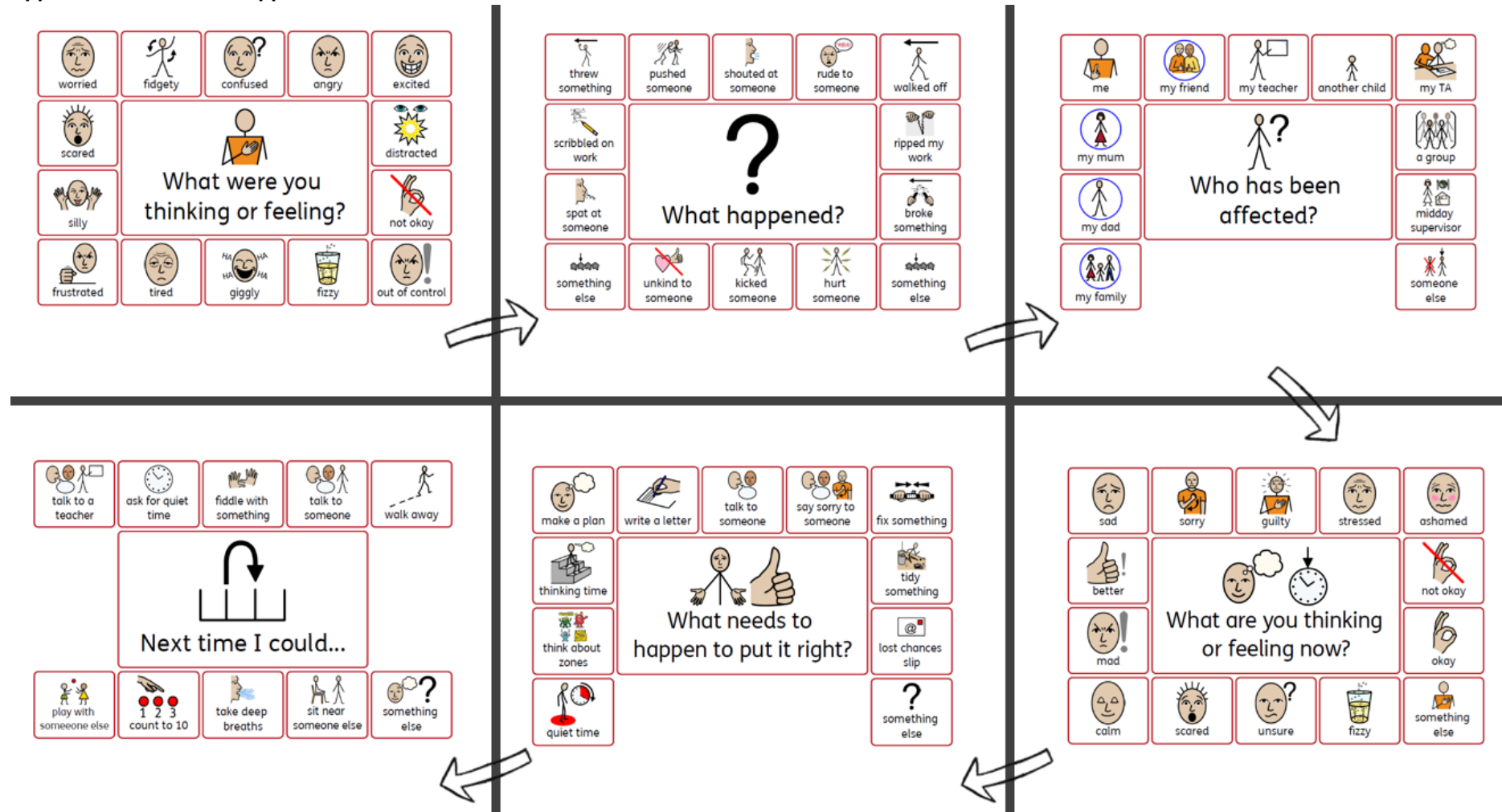
Appendix 4 – Statement of Behaviour Principles

- Every pupil understands they have the right to feel safe, valued and respected, and learn free from the disruption of others
- All pupils, staff and visitors are free from any form of discrimination
- Staff and volunteers set an excellent example to pupils at all times
- Rewards, sanctions and reasonable force are used consistently by staff, in line with the behaviour policy
- The behaviour policy is understood by pupils and staff
- The exclusions policy explains that exclusions will only be used as a last resort, and outlines the processes involved in permanent and fixed-term exclusions
- Pupils are helped to take responsibility for their actions
- Families are involved in behaviour incidents to foster good relationships between the school and pupils' home life

The governing board also emphasises that violence or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated in any circumstances.

This written statement of behaviour principles is reviewed and approved by the **governing board** every **year**.

Appendix 5 – Visual to Support Restorative Conversations



Appendix 6 – Restorative Conversations

Name	Date
What happened/Why were you kept safe?	
What were you thinking/feeling at the time?	
What do you think/feel about it now?	
Who else has been affected? How?	
What needs to happen to put things right?	
What could we do differently next time?	
Other comments	

Appendix 7 – Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy

Playfulness

The use of joyful and creative interactions to build connections and create a safe space for emotional expression with children, especially those who have experienced trauma or adversity.

P



A

Acceptance

Acceptance, within the framework of PACE parenting, involves providing unconditional love and validation to children, allowing them to feel valued and understood regardless of their emotions or behaviors.

Curiosity

Curiosity, as a component of PACE parenting, encourages a genuine interest in a child's thoughts, feelings, and experiences, fostering an environment where their perspectives are acknowledged and explored without judgment.

C



E

Empathy

Empathy, a crucial element of PACE parenting, entails understanding and sharing in a child's emotions, demonstrating genuine compassion and connection to their feelings, and providing comfort and support during their emotional journeys.

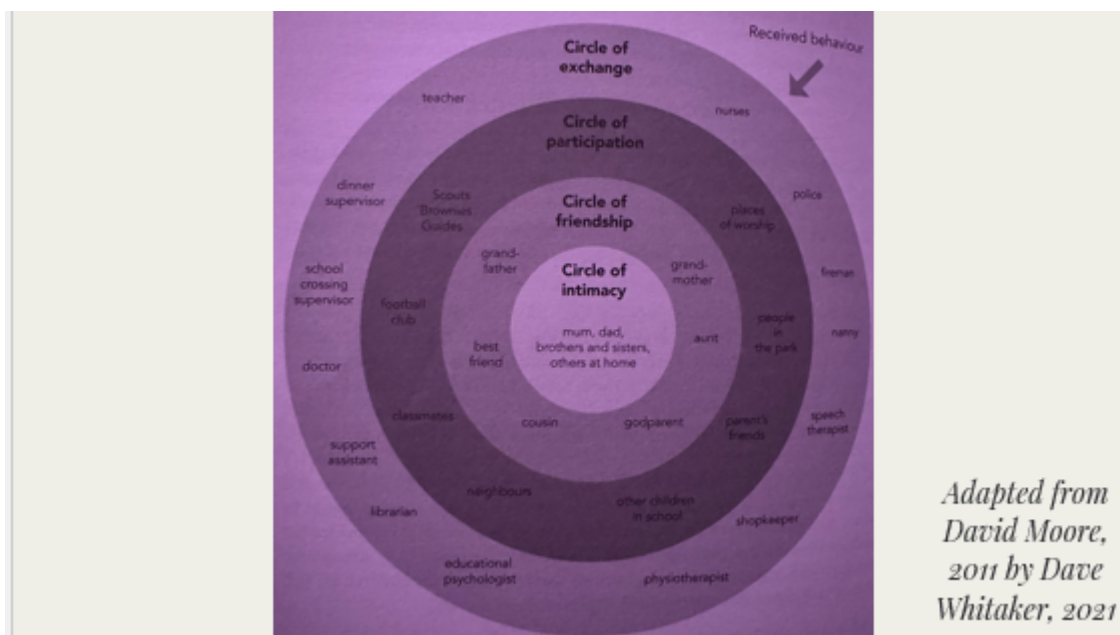


Ready, Respectful, Safe

RELATIONAL BEHAVIOUR STRATEGIES

Are we preparing the path
for the children or the
children for the path?

*Carol
Dweck*

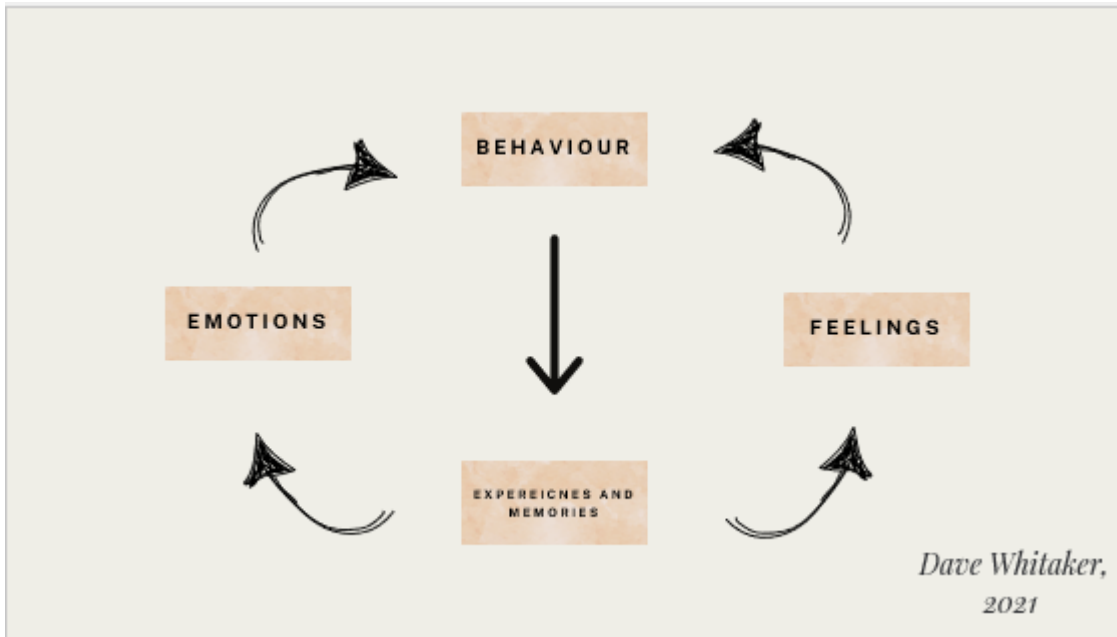


*This is an example of the frustration that we feel.
 Teachers, along with doctors, nurses and the police, are in the circle of exchange.
 Meaning they are exposed to the behaviour that has already been learnt
 and embedded by all those people before us.
 At best this is 3 years or so, if a child starts in year 5, it is 10 years.
 That is without the specific challenges of pupils with SEND.
 In many cases, behaviour is a symptom. We need to be curious.
 Doctors don't just treat symptoms; they look for the overall cure (in most cases)*

Document was last saved: Just now

**“The challenge is to allow
 yourself to be curious
 rather than reactionary”**

Dave Whitaker, 2021



*Remembering we are dealing with a fight or flight response
When we are dealing with any behaviour.
In the classroom or on the playground.
The behaviour and the response creates a experiences and
memories which leads to the cycle beginning again.
If a child feels accepted, they are far more likely to make the
emotional connections with us that we need to order to be
able to influence any change in their behaviour.
This is why all interactions and all language
we use with children is so important.*

READY, RESPECTFUL, SAFE

<p>These words have been evidenced to work in some schools across the country due to their simplicity.</p> <p>It leads naturally into restorative conversations making behavior incidents learning opportunities.</p>	<p>In this school we are ready to learn.</p> <p>In this school we are respectful.</p> <p>In this school, we are safe.</p>
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Language we use is key when interacting with children,

we know this, but it is even more important when dealing with behaviour.

We should use carefully considered sentences, while remaining assertive,

1. avoid demanding language.

2. do not plead for compliance. Replace 'a' if you do then this you can with a when you do this... then

....

Now and next works well for ASD but the shift to when and then works in other situations.

3. not resorting to shouting, humiliation or aggression.

An outline of behaviour boundaries supports this and makes it more likely to stick.

Therefore moving to a 3 word list of boundaries keeps it that way.

Restorative Conversation	
Name	Date
What happened/Why were you kept safe?	
What were you thinking/feeling at the time?	
What do you think/feel about it now?	
Who else has been affected? How?	
What needs to happen to put things right?	
What could we do differently next time?	
Other comments	

Poor behaviour choices are still going to happen. we can't get away from that.

Restoring and repairing are shown to teach behaviour,

maintain positive relationships and develop

consistency across the school.

Paul Dix, and Dave Whitaker both talk about restorative conversations

and this is a format taken and adapted from Nyland's.

Our previous restorative forms are lengthy and wordy.

People have done the research into this so we don't have to.

5 questions is about right.

I have also produced a document that supports the conversation.

It does not need to be for everything but when trust is

broken between staff and pupil, or between pupil.

To do this effectively:

** Don't sit behind a desk*

** However irritated you are, focus on the outcome you want. Focus on your tone of voice.*

** Resist the urge to take notes.*

** Offer them to bring their water bottle.*

**Be careful not to sound judgmental*

**Resist interruptions*

** End the conversation well. They are working on making things right.*

SOME OTHER IDEAS

- Catch children being good and praise them in ear shot.
- This works well alongside tactical ignoring of some other behaviours.
- Say 'thank-you' rather than please.
- Offer a limited option, and give the desired option last. There are 5 minutes left of the lesson. You can choose if you are going to complete the work now or at breaktime.
- Be positive, yet assertive.
- Remember other reasonable adjustments to learning and visual timetables.
- 3 is the magic number. 3 minute warnings have shown to reduce the anxiety in children, help them feel more prepared and therefore increase positive behaviours.

*Alongside this, keep in mind, the idea of unconditional positive regard.
How do you want to be spoken to?*

30 DAY MAGIC

Been there, done that.

That won't work

Tried that. It didn't work.

From tomorrow, everyone needs to be using these 3 words to guide positive behaviour. I am hoping we will start to hear it from the children soon enough.

