

Accountability, relationships and responsibility Policy
(Expectations for behaviour, learning and wellbeing at Oakmeadow)



Oakmeadow C E Primary & Nursery School

Reviewed: February 2019

Next Review due: Autumn 2020

Taken from Shropshire 'Behaviour Regulation Policy- Jan 2019':

The philosophy of the behaviour policy at Oakmeadow CE Primary and Nursery is that we recognise that understanding our emotions is a key aspect of understanding and managing behaviour. Through Emotion Coaching and being attachment aware, both children and adults are able to both manage their behaviour and to create an environment that is conducive to learning. We understand that part of our role, in partnership with home, is to help pupils to understand what is right and wrong ...

Underpinning the behaviour policy is the belief that everyone can learn to self-manage/self-regulate their own emotions and behaviour. Through this we encourage reflective thinking and do not accept prejudice in any form. Ultimately, we wish to give our children confidence about their capacity to think for themselves and to make sense of their own lives and experiences, hopefully beyond school and into the "real" world".

This policy was based on Guidance provided by Shropshire Local Authority.

This policy is developed to ensure guidance for staff in order to promote positive behaviour in school. The procedures and guidance in this document provide a consistent approach across the school and enables students, parents and staff to understand our approaches to the management of behaviour in school. It is also recognised that for some pupils, variance on these procedures will be made in order to meet any specific social, emotional, learning or other needs which require a personalised approach; guidance for this appears in the appendix and approaches can be discussed with the Inclusion leader or member of SLT.

We fully endorse and support at Oakmeadow the following:

- **Being 'fair' is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity).**
- **Behaviour is a form of communication.**

The change in terminology in the 2014 Code of Practice of Special Educational Needs (SEN) - which replaces the Behaviour and Social Difficulties (BESD) with

Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties – helps to promote a shift towards viewing **behaviour as a communication of an emotional need** (whether conscious or unconscious) and responding accordingly.

- **Taking a non-judgmental, curious and empathic attitude towards behaviour.** We encourage all adults in schools to respond in a way that focuses on the **feelings and emotions that might drive certain behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself**. CYP with behavioural difficulties need to be regarded as **vulnerable rather than troublesome**, and we all have a duty to explore this vulnerability and provide appropriate support.
- **Developing relationships.**
This requires a school ethos that promotes strong relationships between staff, CYP and their parents/carers. It also relies on creating a positive school culture and climate that fosters **connection, inclusion, respect and value** for all members of the school community.
- **Maintaining clear boundaries and expectations around behaviour.** Changing how we respond to behaviour does not mean having no expectations, routines or structure. To help CYP feel safe, their educational environment needs to be high in both nurture and structure. CYP need predictable routines, expectations and responses to behaviour. These must be in place and modelled

appropriately, within the context of a safe and caring school environment. However, we do advocate "Connection Before Correction". We advise the vehicle of the relationship as important in managing behaviour and helping CYP develop positive ways of regulating their own behaviour.

- **Not all behaviours are a matter of 'choice'** and not all factors linked to the behaviour of CYP are within their control. Therefore, the language of choice (e.g. 'good choice/bad choice') is not always helpful.
- **Behaviour must always be viewed systemically and within the context of important relationships** (i.e. a relational communication pattern rather than an internal problem).
- **Encouraging parental engagement and involvement is absolutely crucial when addressing and planning support for CYP's SEMH needs.**

"The parent-child connection is the most powerful mental health intervention known to mankind"

(Bessel van der Kolk)

Our school is committed to the emotional mental health and well-being of its staff, pupils / students and parents/carers. We wish to work towards this in all aspects of school life, and to provide an ethos, environment and curriculum that supports the social, emotional and mental health of the whole school community.

It is acknowledged that members of the school community may have very different parenting experiences and views on behaviour.

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY – A "CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY"

Aim

- *To maintain a caring, orderly community in which effective learning can take place and where there is mutual respect between members*
 - *To help children develop a sense of worth, identity and achievement*
 - *To help all children to become self-disciplined, able to accept responsibility for their own actions and make positive choices*
 - *To develop in all children the ability to listen to others; cooperate and to appreciate other ways of thinking and behaving*
- **To promote a system of responsibility for actions which sets the foundation for a 'Culture of Accountability' where the children will learn to accept responsibility for meeting the rules and expectations, not just in school but everywhere.**



What is a "Culture of

Accountability?"

A culture of accountability means the following:

- **Each person** in the family/team is responsible for their **own** actions and behaviours;
- **Each person** is responsible for following the rules and expectations set (either at home, school or club, or anywhere they need to play **their** part);
- **Each person** is responsible for how **they** respond to stressful or frustrating situations.

Why is it necessary?

Children need to learn this as they develop and grow. They do not take responsibility for their actions immediately; this is a process to be learnt. Without accountability in place, children may:

- blame others for their own actions;
- sometimes deny their actions;
- refuse to follow rules;
- argue they find them unfair, and find ways to justify their behaviour; or
- exhibit physically challenging behaviour towards others.

The above responses are often observed during the developmental process. Children sometimes have difficulty in seeing a situation from another child's perspective and, therefore, believe that their reaction to a situation is appropriate. (The term used by Dan Siegel to explain understanding others perspectives/empathy is 'mindsight', <https://www.drdansiegel.com/about/mindsight/>)

By teaching children more about empathy alongside creating a "culture of accountability", it is hoped that the children will understand that, whoever was perceived to be the instigator of a particular incident,

- **our behaviour can change how others feel**
- **everyone is responsible for their own behaviour;**
- **everyone has to follow the rules.**

"Accountability" - How does it work?

Reaction and Response

1. The children are encouraged to understand the **meaning and importance of taking full responsibility for their actions.** Sometimes, due to the emotions evoked by certain situations, children (and adults) may 'react' rather than respond. The 'behaviour' is a symptom of the emotion.

Therefore, if a member of staff recognises that a child is becoming upset and/or angry, the child will be encouraged to talk about the situation and asked to think about his/her responsibility **before** simply 'reacting'.

We appreciate that this process can be complex and that a key part of this response is the need to first listen to the thoughts and feelings of each individual child and then ask them to consider their individual role within this situation.

At the heart of our curriculum, we explore teaching children about their feelings and emotions, support them in recognising and communicating how they feel more easily. We also support children to self-regulate, with the recognition that sometimes this requires a multi-sensory approach than the spoken word alone. We believe that situations of conflict can be used as an opportunity to teach the children how to develop more effective self-regulation skills and responsibility for their actions.

However, if a child **unexpectedly** demonstrates unacceptable behaviour towards another, that child is asked to think about his/her responsibility and the impact that those actions have had on the other child. The recipient of this behaviour will then be given time to talk about his/her feelings. We are aware that children need to be supported to understand the feelings and perspectives of others through different means and as a school, have identified that building empathy is an area that requires ongoing development. We fully believe in the importance of supporting the children 'stand in someone else's shoes' more effectively.

How are the children introduced to a culture of accountability?

All of this work is encapsulated in our schools values, which are visual and feature in our everyday life at Oakmeadow:

- **Respect-** for self, each other and the communities we live in
- **Honesty & Integrity-** in our thoughts, words and actions
- **Having faith, reflection and taking responsibility-** to understand ourselves, each other, to learn and develop

- **Teamwork, Co-operation and courtesy-** that learning and working together are social experiences
- **Perseverance and resilience-** the strength to overcome challenges and grow strong
- **Love, Patience, tolerance and consideration for others-** knowing that some goals will take some time to achieve and we must love and care for each other.

These values promote and uphold the schools expectations as a church school. These shared values apply to all who are part of our school community, both in school and beyond. They enable our children and adults to work actively in partnership to enable all members of our school community to realise their potential to enhance their own lives and the lives of others. As a church school we have a high regard for living these values daily.

At Oakmeadow we:

- want to help children grow up with a clear view of what is right and wrong and an appreciation of the needs of others and society around them.
- we value ensuring our children are taught to live a harmonious life, where they work to their best potential.
- are the role models for the children and take this responsibility very seriously in that we endeavour, at all times, to treat each other and the children as we, ourselves, would wish to be treated.

Rules and Expectations

In partnership with parents/carers

- We believe parents/carers have a vital role in promoting and supporting good behaviour and so effective home/school liaison is very important. Being positive about school is a crucial part of this relationship and ensures we have open communication at all times.
- It is important that teachers work alongside parents/carers concerning the attitudes to learning and life and this is documented in the Home/School Agreement. (see appendix 2)
- We expect parents/carers to sign and return the Home/School agreement to demonstrate their support of the school.
- We welcome an open discussion with parents in these situations and so we can ensure it is dealt with fairly and without prejudice. These discussions are between home and school. (*Exposure to these on social media sites is not expected, is not fair and not acceptable*).

Expectations of children

We know that children will;

- have high expectations of their behaviour;
- learn to understand that they are responsible for their own actions;
- develop an increasingly sound understanding of right and wrong;
- co-operate and work together in a mindful way;
- learn to sort out disagreements and frustrations sensibly and constructively, developing their emotional resilience and regulation;
- be reliable, trustworthy and responsible;
- behave in a safe manner at all times;
- respect the school's environment and belongings;
- take care of their belongings and those of other children;
- show respect to each other;
- act with equal respect to all staff.

Promoting a mindful and emotionally intelligent school:

It is when everyone understand what is expected of him/her and has a commitment to this that a school can be at its best.

Expectations of staff

We know that all staff will recognise:

- **High self-esteem** promotes good behaviour, effective learning and positive relationships.
- **Independence and self-discipline** promote each child to learn about being responsible for their own behaviour.

- **Respect** for their own and each other's belongings and taking pride in our environment at all times. We know that we are responsible for our classroom, but also every part of our school. Every child should be made to **feel valued** regardless of any disability, nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender or sexuality.

We expect from each other;

- that communicating clearly to children and adults respectfully is a key essential;
- praising children, recognising when they have demonstrated our values and worked in a positive way (this can be done using non-verbal signals, positive verbal comments or positive written comments);
- to be given responsibility, relevant to our age and position;
- referring to and consistently applying school and classroom expectations;
- that everyone is allowed to learn in their way, given what they need to be successful and supported;
- regularly communicating with home for a real team approach;

We also know that all children meet expectations in different ways, have different understanding of these and come to school with different needs and, we commit to understanding that all children need guidance and support at their level.

We full commit to the Shropshire Attachment Aware Schools Pledge:

Our school Oakmeadow signs up to the following Attachment Aware principles:

1. Attachment is 'everybody's business' and underpins all our practice. We will endeavour to train most of our staff in the Level 1 training.
2. We recognise that all our behaviour is a communication and respond accordingly, with awareness of our own attachment styles.
3. We use our Attachment Aware Self-Evaluation Form as a working tool to guide our whole school practice.
4. We know that our school will succeed, and achieve good attendance and results, when the Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs of staff, children/young people and families is prioritised.
5. We recognise the importance of reflective practice, and support staff to build this into their everyday work, to effectively manage their roles.
6. We will do all we can to enable children and young people to remain securely based in our school, through the vehicle of positive relationships.
7. We know that children and young people do best when professionals work collaboratively and harmoniously together with families/the wider community to address their needs.
8. We recognise that good leadership in schools will achieve these principles of inclusion.






Supported by Shropshire Virtual School

What strategies help children to understand the importance of accountability?

At the very first instance various strategies are discussed on a daily basis and, in their curriculum work, the children are helped to problem-solve around situations they may encounter, by being asked questions such as:

- “What can you do to help meet our rules and expectations?”
- “What could have happened to move this forward positively?”
- “What do we know now for next time?”

STEP 1		Barton Primary Emotion Coaching Core Value RESPECT
Recognising, empathising, validating the feelings and labelling them.		
‘Connection before correction’		
STEP 2		Barton Primary Emotion Coaching Core Value POSITIVITY
Setting limits on behaviour		
‘Rapport before reason’		
STEP 3		Barton Primary Emotion Coaching Core Value COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY
Problem-solving with the child or young person		
‘Explore, Scaffold, Empower’		

We then have a whole school approach to emotional regulation, where we focus on open dialogue with pupils about how they feel, how it affects them and others and what they can do when they need to move their emotions positively forward. We support our pupils to have strategies to engage when they feel they need to and give time for them to reflect, supporting them to respond not react in situations. We explain that sometimes consequences are needed to help us learn.

When consequences are put in place these are discussed with the child to ensure they understand what has happened, what impact it has had and how it could look different next time. We take time to understand what can change for a child to help them manage: These images are taken from

www.innerworldwork.co.uk.

What I look like in Fight ...

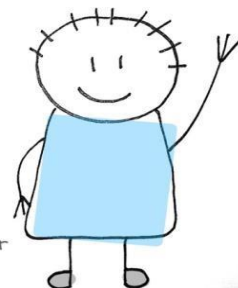
- × Hot & bothered
- × Angry & aggressive
- × Controlling
- × Lie or blaming
- × Shouty & argumentative
- × Pushing away friends
- × Demanding
- × Inflexible



www.innerworldwork.co.uk

You can help me feel safe with the following ...

- ✓ Give me a role
- ✓ Support me socially
- ✓ Match my energy
- ✓ Make things predictable
- ✓ Deep breathing
- ✓ Connect & show empathy before exploring the consequences of my behaviour



www.innerworldwork.co.uk

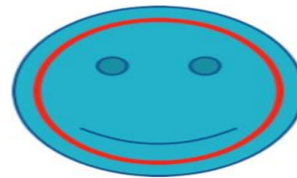
Emotion Coaching is a relational approach which develops internal regulation

- External Frameworks
- External regulation



Sanctions and Rewards

- Internal Frameworks
- Internal regulation



Emotion Coaching



The following principles are central to Emotion Coaching:

- All emotions are natural and normal, and not always a matter of choice
- Behaviour is a communication
- Emotional 'first aid' (calming, soothing) is needed first: 'Connect before re-direct' (Siegel, 2013), 'Rapport before reason' (Riley, 2009)
- 'Emotion coaching builds a power base that is an emotional bond – this creates a safe haven, a place of trust, a place of respect, a place of acceptance, a sense of self. This in turn leads to children and young people giving back respect and acceptance of boundaries' (Rose and Gus, 2017)
- Children cannot successfully self-regulate their emotions unless they have experienced and internalised co-regulation (i.e. an adult tuning in/empathising with their emotional state and thus 'containing' - sharing, supporting and carrying - their emotional state). This also involves explicit teaching and modelling.

The following animations give helpful summaries of EC:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KJa32r07xk>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8bKit_VZ3k

- Emotion Coaching is an approach that focuses on the development of emotional regulation through **supportive relationships**. It can benefit not only CYP but also parents/carers and professionals, to better understand and regulate their emotions, to manage strong feelings and take ownership of behaviour.
- Emotion Coaching offers practical steps for responding to behaviour, and is linked to key attachment concepts, such as the importance of connection.
- Emotion Coaching is an evidence-based approach that provides an understanding of the neuroscience behind behaviour.
- Research also indicates that staff in schools feel more confident managing behaviour when they have increased knowledge of the link between behaviour and emotion.

Five Steps of Emotion Coaching

Dr. John Gottman

STEP 4: Communicate empathy and understanding.

STEP 5: Set limits and problem solve.

STEP 2: Recognize emotion as an opportunity for connection or teaching.

STEP 3: Help your child verbally label emotions.

STEP 1: Be aware of your child's emotions.

The Gottman Institute

We know how important it is for children to learn to reframe their choices:



If a situation would benefit from home engagement, we will contact home to look at how we can work together to move positively forward. In very rare cases, exclusions may be required. However, this would be a very last resort. (Appendix 1)

In addition to this, we also then have interventions, play therapy, music therapy, art therapy and counselling. Alongside these, we also have other programmes that we use to help connect the children to their emotional needs, understand themselves and others and be able to adapt, regulate and reframe their behaviours.

This policy is also linked to:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- E-safety policy
- De-escalation and positive-handling Policy
- SEND Policy

APPENDIX 1: Exclusion- a last resort for Oakmeadow

Exclusion:

This is never something we want to do and will only be used if there is a danger to others within school, or there has been an action that is repeated, aggressive and caused harm to others.

Where exclusion is used the school conforms to the Local Authority and DfE Guidance. If a child is excluded for a period of less than 5 days the school will provide work – it is the parent's/carers responsibility to ensure the child completes the work and returns it to the school for marking (NB parents/carers can be fined if their child is found in a public place during an exclusion). From Day 6 of exclusion, temporary alternative arrangements for schooling will be made for the child. In the event of a permanent exclusion the Local Authority will contact parents/carers with details of the Day 6 provision.

In most cases fixed or permanent exclusion will be the last resort after a range of measures have been tried to improve a child's behaviour. A decision to exclude a child will be taken only when the school feel that all other strategies have been used and that the pupil s a danger to themselves or others within the school. **This is seen as a serious situation and a fixed or permanent period may be taken in response to serious and significant breaches of the school's behaviour policy, including persistent disruptive behaviour with aggression.** If this occurs parents/carers may be asked to remove their child for a specific, short term period while intervention strategies are put in place to help the child improve. Exclusions whether fixed term or permanent can **only be imposed by the Head teacher or in his/her absence a designated representative, normally the Deputy Head teacher.**

perceive the management of rules, rewards and sanctions to be fair and consistent. Lunchtime Activity Leaders and Teaching Assistants play an important part in managing children's behaviour and can make a big difference to a child's day.

Positive consequences may include:

- Verbal praise/sticker.
- A postcard home.
- Certificates given in assembly

Negative consequences may include:

- Warning (rule reminder)
- 2nd warning (choices given)
- Discussion for consequences

The power to discipline beyond the school gate

Disciplining beyond the school gate covers the school's response to all non-criminal bad behaviour and bullying which occurs anywhere off the school premises and which is witnessed by a member of staff or reported to the school. The Governing Body must be satisfied that the measures proposed by the head teacher are lawful (see appendix).

Searching and confiscation

The Head teacher and Deputy Head teacher have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they suspect the pupil has certain prohibited items. The items that can be searched for under this power are knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items. School staff can seize any banned or prohibited item found as a result of a search or is considered to be harmful or detrimental to school discipline (see appendix).

The use of reasonable force (please also refer to Positive movement and restrain policy)

The use of physical intervention is rare and wherever possible is avoided. However, there may be occasions where the use of reasonable force or physical restraint is appropriate; for example, if a child is hurting him/her self and/or others or making a threat to injure using a weapon.

At Oakmeadow we do not feel it is appropriate to handle (move/pick up or carry) children unless there is a justified reason and this action is conducted by a trained member of staff.

Any intervention used will always be minimal and in proportion to the circumstances of the incident. All physical intervention will be recorded. A team of staff have had Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training (refer to restrain policy) and this strictly follows the rules and regulations of this training (CPs).

Equal Opportunities (see Equal Opportunities Policy)

Equal opportunities is about ensuring that every member of the school community is regarded as being of equal worth and importance, irrespective of culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, learning abilities, sensory or physical impairment, social class or lifestyle. It is about recognising differences, meeting individual needs and taking positive action, so that everyone has equal access to the educational opportunities offered by the school; it is also about regularly monitoring that each child has the opportunity to achieve.

Assessment and reporting

Following any incident where a child is aggressive, violent towards another child or a member of staff, a violent/aggressive behaviour incident form will be completed and passed to the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher.

Outside Agency Support

- CAMHS
- Behaviour Support Service or Woodlands Outreach
- Support from LA
- Family and Education Support Worker

Appendix 2



HOME-SCHOOL AGREEMENT

Our Commitment

We demonstrate our commitment to working as a caring and mindful school by striving to:

- Encourage children to do their best at all times
- Ensure your child's physical and social well-being at all times, and to foster feelings of confidence, self-worth and belonging.
- providing the best possible learning environment that is safe, attractive and caring
- Deliver a balanced and carefully planned curriculum, which meets the needs of your individual child.
- Provide a range of after school extracurricular activities designed to enrich your child's experience.
- Ensure that all homework tasks reflect your child and their learning needs.
- To actively welcome parents/carers into the life of the school and to ensure that teaching staff are always available, by mutual arrangement, to discuss any concerns you might have about your child's progress or general welfare.
- Keep you informed about the school's policies and guidelines on behaviour and equal opportunities, other general school matters and about your child's progress in particular
- Ensure that all teaching staff keep up to date on important educational developments and initiatives which might affect your child, and to inform you of these at given meetings where appropriate.

Signed:

(Head Teacher)

Parent/carers commitment

I/We understand and will be accountable for:

- Ensuring my child attends school regularly, is punctual and ready for learning. Ensuring absences are properly notified and understand that holidays during term time will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.
- Ensuring that my child wears their school uniform and arrives ready for the school day with all appropriate equipment
- Supporting the school's policies and guidelines, to fully embrace the schools commitment to being an emotionally focused school, mindful and accountable school and work as an integral part of the team that helps my child/children succeed.
- Supporting my child in his/her homework and wherever possible promote opportunities for home learning.
- Attending Parent/ teacher consultation meetings to discuss my child's progress at school.

Sign:

Date:

Childs commitment:

- Always do my best in my lessons.
- Always remember to be polite and thoughtful towards others, being mindful of myself and my impact on others.
- Come to school regularly and be on time.
- Talk to an adult in school if I have any worries or concerns.
- Keep to the school expectations.
- Do my homework on time and bring it back to school.
- Bring all the equipment I need every day.
- Wear my school uniform and represent my school well.

Sign:

Date: