


Relationships at Work Policy



Oastlers Policy

Approved by Governing Body On	April 2020
To be Reviewed On	April 2022
Signed on Behalf of the Governing Body	

Aims of the policy:

In September 2019, Oastlers School secured its status as a 'Nurturing School', following the guiding principles set out by the Nurture Group Network UK Programme. What this means is at its core, the approach is the understanding that all behaviour is driven by feelings and is communication.

In order to even begin to understand how our learners feel, we have to try to 'put ourselves in the shoes of our learners' and only then can we begin to make sense of their behaviours and see their situation from their emotional point of view.

As a Nurturing School, we want to support learners in developing healthy and supportive relationships. The Nurturing programme enables adults and children to manage and understand their feelings to develop those healthy relationships. When an approach such as this is consistently applied, learners attitudes towards learning improves.

The nurturing approach is summed up in six principles, which are:

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives

The policy should be read in conjunction with *The Teaching Puzzle: Your guide to social and emotional learning* (Centre For Emotional Health, 2017 edition)

*'I have come to the frightening conclusion that
I am the decisive element in the classroom.
It is my personal approach that creates the climate.
It is my daily mood that makes the weather.
As a teacher, I possess tremendous power
To make a child's life miserable or joyous.
I can be a tool of torture,
Or an instrument of inspiration.
I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal.
In all situations, it is my response that decides.
Whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated
And a child humanized or de-humanized'.*

Haim Ginott

Modelling

All staff are role models for all our learners in school. This means they need to:

- Think about what behaviours they are modelling
- Be calm in tricky situations
- Have a positive attitude to learning
- Act in a respectful way towards people, the environment and things
- Carefully and skilfully share how you are feeling (tired, fed up or frustrated for example)

Staff behaviour is as equally important as learners behaviour – they are intertwined and inter-dependant. Our learners will develop their own strategies for coping with life's setbacks if they are allowed to share with staff their own frustrations or anxieties, without prejudice, that will enable them to develop coping strategies going forward.

Self-reflective staff

Staff must get into the habits of daily reflection. There are questions that staff must consider regularly to ensure they are in tune with their own emotional well-being. Staff in Oastlers have had training on emotional intelligence and will continue to benefit from training such as emotional intelligence so that they can be in touch with how well they know themselves.

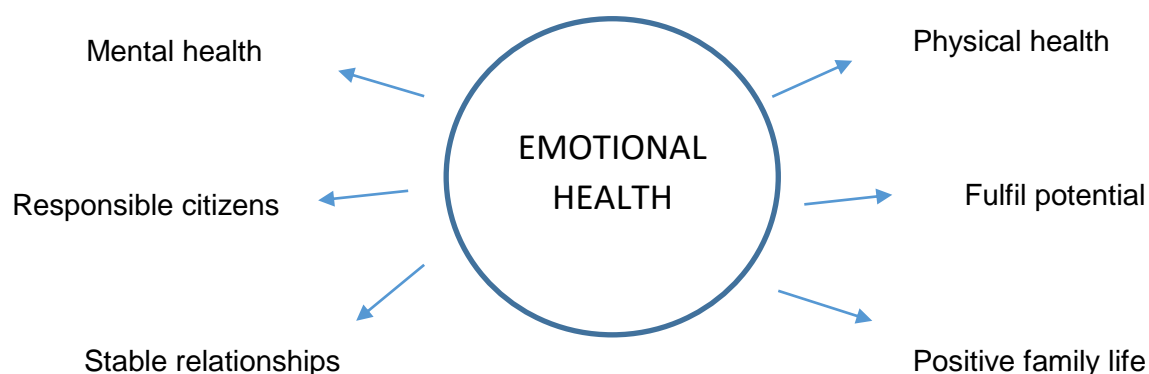
Some daily questions should include:

- What have I done well today?
- How could I have managed a situation differently today?
- Did I say or do anything that provoked a situation?
- What would I do differently next time?

These questions are not designed to lead to self-criticism or condemnation, but to encourage positive reflection that may lead to better practice.

Staff have a duty to ensure they take care of their own mental health so that they can be an active contributor to an emotionally healthy school. Children with emotional problems are much more likely to do poorly in school and twice as likely as other children to have marked difficulties in reading, spelling and mathematics (Green et al 2005).

Therefore, to ensure optimum emotional health, staff should work on key areas:



Nurturing your own soul

Staff at Oastlers have a duty to support learners who have complex mental health disturbance and in order to do this effectively it is their own responsibility to:

- Know their own emotions
- Manage their own emotions
- Motivate themselves
- Recognise emotions in others
- Handle relationships positively

Once staff have some command of their own emotional health they are in a better position to get the best out of learners and reach out to them emotionally. Teaching can be stressful but it is important in our setting that staff find ways of nurturing self.

This policy supports staff to consider the **do's** and **don't's** of any lesson so that conflict can be avoided.

The DO's of an Oastler Lesson:

1. Deliver good lessons that are engaging and differentiated
2. Take moments in your lessons to enjoy a simple conversation with learners
3. Ensure the class rules are consistently applied
4. Ensure your points are awarded fairly and consistently
5. Make sure learners know you mean what you say!
6. Focus on the positives of the lesson
7. Provide genuine and specific praise when it is due
8. Be firm when necessary using a firm but calm tone, avoiding conflict at all times
9. Manage behaviour positively but be consistent with your approach
10. Persevere with learners who you find more challenging
11. Provide clear instructions and expectations
12. Remember your own behaviour – you are a role model
13. Reflect daily on your own practise and learn from it
14. Enter your classroom renewed each day
15. Nurture yourself and your colleagues
16. Listen carefully to what learners are saying before making final decisions
17. Use a 'mood thermometer' to measure the emotional climate in your classroom and adjust accordingly
18. Remember to note the little things and acknowledge them
19. Remind learners about consequences of unacceptable behaviour
20. Seek support from the Help Team when situations are becoming unsafe
21. Take time to meet with your line manager if you feel you need support at any time

The DON'T's of an Oastler lesson:

1. Do not humiliate learners or speak about their 'crimes' in front of others
2. Do not create an audience for a learner to misbehave to.
3. Do not chase learners out of classroom, down corridors or otherwise to finish off a dispute
4. Do not physically Intervene with learners – leave this for the Help Team
5. Do not shout or use a confrontational manner with learners

6. Do not use missing trips or rewards as a consequence of poor behaviour
7. Do not forget what you have promised the day before

Using praise in school:

What you pay attention to, you get more of.

The Teaching Puzzle, 2017

This is also central to the policy and staff must:

- Praise learners genuinely and deliberately. Do not over praise as it will lose its value and don't praise things that are expected. Pick out the special behaviours or work or effort and focus in on realistic praise
- Use praise in a variety of ways – verbal, a smile, thumbs up, a gently tap on the shoulder (see safe Touch Policy) or issue tangible rewards/points
- Make sure learners are praised for acts of kindness awards
- Praise at all times responsible behaviour, good manners, respect and learners who make positive choices
- Praise individuals and whole classes at times when the group have achieved something collectively
- Praise your colleagues and model the idea of positive reinforcement

Rewards at Oastlers:

The school has a rewards system that is linked to end of term trips and visits through the collection of points. It is therefore essential that the manner in which points are awarded and recorded are accurate and learners know and understand how they can be rewarded and what their points score is at any time.

Once points have been awarded, they **MUST NOT** be taken away or the trip or associated reward removed for subsequent poor behaviour.

Managing behaviour:

Effective behaviour management in Oastlers school is secured through positive, meaningful relationships with learners.

Some tips to support staff in managing challenging behaviour include:

- ✓ Is work sufficiently differentiated?
- ✓ Are you using the behaviour board consistently?
- ✓ Praise learners positively when on task
- ✓ Have an unexpected break - a surprise conversation, a distraction, a game then return to task
- ✓ Offer learners support
- ✓ Remind learners of past success in the task
- ✓ Gentle reassuring touch
- ✓ Use humour when appropriate

- ✓ Distraction
- ✓ Offer choices
- ✓ Tactically ignore some behaviours (but return to it later with individual)
- ✓ Reward those who have completed task with alternative activity (game for example)
- ✓ Set challenges that are fun
- ✓ Recognise the learners emotional temperature and respond accordingly
- ✓ Use silence to wait for individual or whole class to re-focus
- ✓ Use soft music in the background if appropriate
- ✓ Offer those who fidget opportunities to help in class so they can stretch their legs
- ✓ Use non-verbal signs and signals
- ✓ Change seats
- ✓ Change the pace of your lesson
- ✓ Express belief in your learners
- ✓ Remain optimistic at all times, even if Help Team summonsed
- ✓ Use class monitors to help the lesson run smoothly

The list is not definitive but staff must find ways to engage with learners and avoid conflict at all times.

Consequences:

- Break time detentions
- Lunch time detentions
- After school detentions

Be consistent in your approach and ensure you see through the consequence but understand that every situation is different and every learner is different.

Staff body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions must remain calm in any challenging situation.

Further discussions about challenging behaviour must be held privately – do not tackle difficult situations immediately and in front of others.

Staff must strive to diffuse situations, de-escalate potentially challenging behaviours before they escalate and become something more serious. Refer to the Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA) training for de-escalation strategies to use.

If staff follow all of the above rarely will situations escalate beyond the point where the situation is lost.

Time out:

When learners receive an exit from the classroom this provides staff with the opportunity to discuss with learners what has led to the exit and how they may support the learner to return to the classroom successfully. Staff may also feel it appropriate to offer learners the chance to leave the classroom before an exit is reached to avoid negative behaviours escalating.

Reflection Room:

Staff cannot refer learners into Reflection Room. Permission from the Behaviour Manager must be sought first. Once a learner has been referred to Intervention, the learner will then be expected to take part in the school's 'Cycle of Repair'

The purpose of Reflection Room is to provide learners with the opportunity to calm themselves when time out has failed. The use of the room is NOT a consequence. It is a strategy used

to help learners to regain their composure and dignity to a situation that was fact becoming undignified. It is a considered first 'response' to bring about calm.

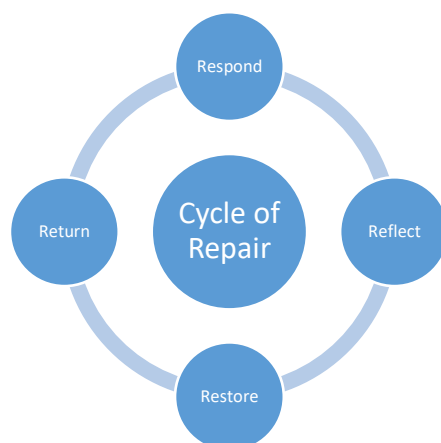
No investigation into the incident will take place in Reflection Room, which will be followed up in the school's sanctuary where the process or 'repair' will begin. This is likely to include 'restorative' justice to bring about a conclusion before 'return' to class.

These approaches are the core of the school's repair and must be followed by all staff.

Physical Intervention:

This is the schools last resort and can only be administered by the school's Help Team who have further training in MAPA to ensure they use the holding techniques to bring about 'good order' when a learner's crisis jeopardises the health and safety of all involved. Please refer to the school Care & Control Policy and Safe Touch Policy for more information about physical intervention.

The school's cycle of repair is illustrated below.



Unacceptable behaviours and staff responses:

- ✗ All forms of fighting, including play fighting
- ✗ Refusal to follow instructions
- ✗ Swearing and abusive language towards others
- ✗ Hurting others, including emotionally harming others
- ✗ Encouraging others to make poor choices
- ✗ Spitting
- ✗ Deliberate damage to property

Staff responses:

- ✓ Allow time out for opportunity to 'recalibrate'
- ✓ Opportunity for a walk within school grounds for fresh air and talk
- ✓ Provide additional staff support to prevent crisis
- ✓ Discuss choice and consequence with learner
- ✓ Use behaviour board fairly and consistently when appropriate
- ✓ Use active ignoring if appropriate to avoid conflict
- ✓ Discuss the issue at a later stage in a dignified manner
- ✓ Call the Help Team if the situation is UNSAFE

Staff must remember that learners need our attention and will do all that they can to get it but it has to be considered that Oastlers school has learners with highly complex needs and that their fidgeting, awkwardness, challenging behaviours and irritating habits are simply that.

Staff are in a position to teach learners how to manage stressful situations. The purpose of this policy is to help staff achieve just that – and it starts by nurturing each other and modelling that behaviour for our learners to adopt.



The Teaching Puzzle 2017

Policies that must be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Behaviour Policy
- MAPA Care & Control Policy
- Safe Touch Policy
- Safeguarding and Code of Conduct Policy