Relationships at RPS

A Curious, Creative Community

Relationships, Learning and Behaviour Policy and Procedures

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Update: August 2024

1. Purpose

This policy and procedure is based on City of Edinburgh Council policy and procedure and the views of staff, parents and pupils within our learning community.

In Edinburgh every child or young person irrespective of identity, background or ability is part of a resilient and positive learning community where they feel;

We belong,

We contribute,

We learn,

We are supported and we help others.

Every child should feel secure; nurtured, valued, included and supported within our learning community. Our aim is that every child is present, participating, achieving and supported.

This policy and procedure should help to establish and maintain positive relationships and mutual respect resulting in a positive learning community and a supportive and restorative ethos.

2. SCOPE

All staff in our learning community are covered by this policy and procedure. It encompasses:

- Whole school approaches
- Clear expectations
- Building skills
- Additional Support Needs
- Responding to Dysregulated Behaviour
- Our Staged Approach to Positive Behaviour
- Professional Development

3. DEFINITIONS

Family: Describes those considered to be related to the child by birth, affinity, choice or close personal ties and who can be contributors to the wider care and wellbeing of the child.

Parent/s: Describes any person who has parental responsibilities and any person who has custody of a child, including foster carers and a parent who shares custody of a child.

Children's rights: Thesere protected by the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Children and Young People Act 2014. There is a shared understanding that these rights are unalienable entitlements which cannot be taken from children. These rights are not dependent on the child accepting certain responsibilities or on them feeling or behaving in a certain way. Children's rights will not be withdrawn as a consequence of behaviour.

Logical Consequence: This is a consequence which is directly linked to the behaviour or choice for example if a child has refused to complete work (appropriately set) they may have to work for part of break. A logical consequence is meaningful and links cause and effect, it is not a punishment.

Natural Consequence: This is a consequence that is a natural result of a behaviour or choice for example if a toy is broken it can't be played with.

Pastoral Notes: This is a SEEMIS based system for recording notes on significant events in a child's life.

4. POLICY CONTENT

Every child and young person has the right to a high quality education. Positive relationships are fundamental to enable effective teaching and learning to take place. We have adopted the following key principles to create a caring, supportive, learning environment:

- an ethos that values positive, restorative and respectful relationships and promotes shared values
- an inclusive and safe learning environment which supports children and develops their skills and resilience enabling them to become responsible for their own behaviour
- recognising that all behaviour is communication and that understanding what is being communicated and the underlying needs is crucial for assessing and meeting children's needs and finding solutions.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

Whole School Approach

Good organisation, lesson planning and preparation will help to create the right learning environment.[1] Flexibility, choice and, where appropriate, differentiation will also help to support individual needs and promote positive relationships and behaviour.

However, even in these conditions, some children and young people will present with behaviour that challenges or is difficult to interpret. The school uses approaches and strategies which are designed to help prevent and de-escalate difficult situations and identify and support individual support needs.

We understand that everyone learns best when they feel good about themselves. Punishments can make children feel bad about themselves. This can hinder their ability to engage in their learning, including their behaviour.[2] Positive approaches to support behaviour focusses on relationships, skills building, restoration and when appropriate logical or natural consequences appropriate to the child, rather than the implementation of punishments.

[1] CEC CIRCLE / Up, Up and Away resources include tools for Inclusive Learning environments and please also see RPS Classroom Environment Guidance
[2] Education Scotland – Parentzone Restorative Approaches

To achieve this positive ethos all staff are committed to;

- Relationships - *Developing positive relationships and being positive role models*
- Rights Respecting - *Respecting and protecting the rights of all children*
- Resilience building - *Through identifying strengths and developing skills*
- Restorative - *Acting restoratively to prevent difficulties and repair relationships when difficulties do arise.*

We want to engage directly with parents and carers to foster and develop our positive ethos. To work together to maintain and support shared learning community values and excellent home/school communication. We want to work together to address, prevent and resolve any difficulties should they arise and to build on our strengths together.

Clear Expectations

We have a small number of easily remembered ***values*** which everyone in our learning community knows. These are summarised in *short phrases*:

1. **Responsibility**
2. **Respect**
3. **Honesty**
4. **Kindness**
5. **Friendship**

These form the basis of all our conversations in relation to behavioural expectations. It is helpful if parents can also discuss these values with their children if there has been an incident in school. The purpose of these conversations is to find solutions and develop skills that will prevent problems in the future.

Our values are displayed throughout our building, shared with parents and carers and discussed regularly.

Building Skills for Relationships

The school uses lessons and activities that contribute to positive relationships and behaviour and support children to build the skills they need to develop positive relationships, resilience, be rights respecting and act restoratively.

This includes:

- **Restorative approaches**

  Restorative approaches, sometimes called Restorative practices, are all the ways that we, as a school community, **build, maintain** and **restore** relationships.

  Restorative approaches are both **proactive** and **reactive** in that we aim to teach our children how to have strong relationships with each other and all adults in school as well as supporting children to repair these relationships when they face difficulties.

- **Restorative conversations**

When things go wrong with relationships, we use restorative conversations to establish what happened and how the relationship can be restored. These conversations use the '**Restorative Questions'**

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done?
- In what way?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

These are accompanied by questions for the person who has been wronged:

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right

We also aim to **close the circle** where we feedback to the person who has been wronged about what has happened and what has been done to restore the relationship.

This approach places the emphasis on the wrongdoer to take **responsibility** and restore the relationship in some way. If a child were unable to take part in this process, then we would use Emotion Talks to allow the child to calm down, manage their emotions and reflect on what has happened and then take responsibility for their actions.

- **Relaxation techniques**

Teaching children how to relax can support the self-regulation of emotions and improve focus and concentration. We achieve this in a number of ways. These techniques are used when appropriate to meet the needs of the children in our classes.

- ✓ body scanning
- ✓ breath awareness
- ✓ abdominal (tummy) breathing
- ✓ deep breathing / breath counting
- ✓ directed breathing
- ✓ alternate breath
- ✓ active relaxation - stretches / yoga
- ✓ mindfulness
- ✓ meditation
- ✓ visualisation
- ✓ guided relaxation (scripts)

Some relaxation techniques have a grounding in religious practice and spiritual development. At Ratho Primary School, **we use relaxation techniques solely to support health and well-being and emphasise their role in supporting children to feel in control of their emotions and to self-regulate.**

- **Circle Time**

A powerful tool for whole classes to use where all children and adults sit in a circle and play games, discuss issues or themes in the wider world, school or within the class. All children are equal within the circle and all have a chance to speak and be heard by others. This helps develop active listening skills and an understanding of each other.

- **Emotion Talks**

Emotion Talks is a whole school programme, which teaches children about the names of different emotions, how they make our bodies feel, how strong these sensations can be, what behaviour they can cause and strategies for dealing with these emotions. For example, we teach about anxiety, how this can cause butterflies in our stomach, can make us want to run away and deep breathing can help manage these feelings.

This program is used to help children understand a range of emotions and how to **self-regulate** or manage these emotions in order to stay calm, focussed and ready to learn. It also helps children understand these emotions and their signals in others. We have **sequencers** in the playground which are large versions of the ones we use in the classroom.

- **Vision time**

Vision time is where our learners take part in activities run by staff, parents and carers and the children themselves. Each activity is explicitly linked to the three aspects of our vision namely **Curiosity, Creativity and Community.** By learning and working together children, build strong relationships across the school community.

- **Learning muscles: Metacognitive skills**

At our school, we build a culture of learning by talking about learning muscles. Children can use these skills across all subjects. The muscles are called:

- Concentrate
- Don't give up
- Be cooperative
- Be curious
- Have a go
- Use your imagination
- Keep improving
- Enjoy learning

We use these in our lessons to promote good learning and skills for life.

- **Growth mindset**

We refer to growth mindset in our lessons, a belief, based on research, that intelligence is not fixed and we can 'grow' our brains through practice. This supports to children to keep trying when they face challenges, knowing that hard work leads to success.

- **Emotion Talks focus groups**

  Emotion Talks can also be used with smaller groups of children to develop their understanding of emotions. A child might be referred by a class teacher to these groups, which are run by trained members of school staff and staff from the Additional Support for Learning team.

- **Building Resilience**

Building Resilience is our whole school programme that aims to support the development of mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing through learning and teaching in partnership with staff, parents and pupils. It aims to help children to function well, both at school and in life. It provides practical strategies to help them cope with the ups and downs of their everyday lives and tools they can use when they experience difficulties, frustrations and challenging times. Use of the Building Resilience materials will provide children with skills for life.

- **Peer Support**

All of our learners are expected to build relationships with one another and engage in restorative conversations when appropriate (as modelled by adults in school). This will enable them to adopt a problem-solving attitude to restoring relationships with one another. Our learners are supported in developing skills in conflict resolution but are also supported to understand when it is appropriate to seek help from an adult.

- **Seasons for Growth**

Seasons for Growth is a support group that we offer to the children in our school. This group is run by trained teaching and support staff and is designed to support children who are encountering big changes in their life. All children are informed about this group through an assembly, they then **refer themselves** to the group if they feel they would benefit from it. This group is run during school time and uses the imagery of the four seasons to teach children that change is a normal part of life.

- **Therapy Inclusion Project (TIP)**

The therapy inclusion project aims to:

- To improve concentration and focus
- To work on social communication skills
- To develop ability to listen to others and take turns
- To develop comprehension and problem solving skills
- To improve ability to work together
- To increase confidence in ability to take part in PE by working on motor skills in a small group setting

A class teacher would refer a child to this group and they take part in a range of games and activities in a large space in school to address the above skills. Children report enjoying the sessions and transfer the skills into the classroom.

- **Positive Behaviour Approaches**

Our school recognises the positive behaviour, achievements and successes of our pupils in the following ways:

- ✓ House Points
- ✓ Positive praise / Recognition Boards
- ✓ Sharing successes at assembly and in class
- ✓ Whole class rewards
- ✓ Star pupil awards
- ✓ Positive Notes home
- ✓ Vision Vouchers

End of year recognition awards

At the end of the school year, we recognise the achievements of individuals and groups of children in our school in the following ways:

Name of Award	Description
Anne Thomson Academic Endeavour award	This award is presented to a pupil for a great attitude to learning, perseverance/achievement. This does not have to be the highest attaining pupil, but perhaps someone who has made great progress. **Nominations from all staff welcome. Awarded at end of year celebration assembly.**
Gus MacKerracher School Vision Award	**Class teachers count vision vouchers** and pass on name and number to SLT. All nominees receive a badge and child who has embodied the vision to greatest extent receives the cup with a replica to keep. **Awarded at end of year celebration assembly.**
Commitment to Sport	**Class teachers nominate a child in their class** who has shown a 'commitment to sport' with great ability and/or attitude. **Awarded at end of year celebration assembly.**
Sports day participation medals	**Staff members nominate a child from his or her sports day house group** for a participation medal – to be given out at sports day.
House Cup	Awarded to the House with the most points over the year –**Shared with our learners at the second last week's assembly.** The winning house gets some sort of reward, e.g. a movie in the Gym Hall.
Sports day winning house cup	Awarded to the House with the most points at Sports Day. **Announced on Sport's Day and presented again at the End of Session Award's Ceremony.**

- **Additional Support Needs (see our ASL Policy for further details)**

We provide support that meets children's needs and identifies additional support needs as early as possible in order to prevent further difficulties developing later. The needs of most children can be met in class however for a small number of children an individual child's plan will outline additional supports that should be put in place. This is co-ordinated with parents through a child planning meeting and may involve partner services like our Educational Psychologist or Additional Support for Learning Service link. The school uses the following targeted supports:

- Key workers: a named person for specific children
- Link workers: pupil support officers
- Staff being available at critical times e.g. transitions, break times
- Nurture Groups
- Social Skills Groups

- **Responding to Dysregulated Behaviour**

The school recognises that supporting children and young people with their behaviour requires:

- acknowledgement that all behaviour is communication
- understanding how a child's needs and setting might impact on behaviour
- identifying any known 'triggers' and early warning signs
- considering the environment (also see Mapping Tool), body language and speech in this process
- intervening early if warning signs are detected to prevent a situation from escalating

We explore and establish "what's happened" with children. To do this we listen to their response whether that is given verbally or expressed non-verbally and act appropriately. Once the reason and purpose for the child's behaviour is known we explore how we can develop appropriate support or adaptations to address the issue by promoting well-being, offering coping strategies and agreeing constructive solutions.

Our Staged Approach to Positive Behaviour

Positive Relationships and Encouragement

All staff focus on positive relationships by looking for opportunities to encourage learner skills, recognise effort and build on strengths. Positive relationships form a foundation that minimises difficulties occurring. This includes:

- Positive communication home through postcards or calls
- Time to share success with a key adult
- Sharing achievements with peers
- Supporting peers with a skill mastered

When a difficulty does occur, we have a clear and consistent staged approach that all learners know and can predict:

- Reminder of school values and clear short instruction regarding expectation
- Caution with reminder of clear, logical consequence
- Final chance to engage and logical consequence carried out
- Time out of the classroom to get ready to learn
- Extended time out of the classroom with a supportive adult and a time for a restorative conversation agreed

Our staged process can be seen on the next page.

When a challenging situation develops our main objective is to reduce the level of arousal or distress. The school uses De-escalation Techniques found in Appendix 2 of the Council's Relationships, Learning and Behaviour procedures (appendix 1 here). All physical intervention to prevent harm is strictly in accordance with the city of Edinburgh Relationships, Learning and Behaviour Procedure. If a child has been

supported through physical intervention from an adult to prevent harm, parents will always be informed, and this will be recorded in pastoral notes.

Overly physical behaviour and aggression in the classroom, wider school and playground will result in removal from the classroom and or playground. This will be recorded in pastoral notes and/or on the SHE Portal (City of Edinburgh Council's recording system for incidents (or near misses) or physical harm.

Personal Support Plans

When a pupil requires additional support with their emotional regulation and behaviour then we will work in partnership with the learner and parents to create a Personal Support Plan to support our learners in using strategies for their emotional regulation.

Risk Assessment and Management Plan

In some instances (likely where there have been occurrences of overly physical behaviour and aggression) a Risk Assessment and Management Plan will be created. This will be created in partnership with the learner, parents, ASL Services and where appropriate other external partners e.g. Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy.

Our Staged restorative process – used to promote self-regulation, increase emotional intelligence and readiness to learn.		
Stage 1	**Reminder of school values**	Honesty, Kindness, Friendship, Respect, Responsibility "**I notice you are** (insert observed behaviour), **please show our school value of** (insert value) **by** (insert desired behaviour).**Thank you.**"
Stage 2	**Caution**	• A clear verbal caution delivered privately, wherever possible. • Make the child aware of their behaviour and clearly outlining consequences if they continue. • I **need** you to…**or** (insert consequence) • Is there anything you **need** to do that? Do you need to talk? • Name emotions to support self-regulation.
Stage 3	**Another chance**	• Speak to the child privately, give them a final opportunity to engage. • Carry through on proportionate consequence e.g. Move seats, sit closer to teacher, move to another part of the playground. • Remind them of previous positive behaviour. **This step should be followed up with a brief chat at the end of the lesson/break. 'It wasn't great that I had to move you today…'**
Stage 4	**Time out to reflect and regulate**	• A short time outside the class or at another space in the playground • Encourage child to calm down, breathe, think about the situation. • **The length of time out of class should be developmentally appropriate. 'Time- in' with the teacher or another adult might be more appropriate depending on the child.**
Stage 5	**Further time to regulate required.**	• Child is supported with behaviour and self regulation by a member of SLT outwith the classroom or playground • Restorative conversation takes place when all parties are ready. Restorative outcome agreed. • This could be a brief chat or a more formal restorative conversation. • Incidents at stage 5 would require a Well Being Concern Form or Serious Incident Form to be completed. • The incident would then be recorded on SEEMIS and/or SHE Portal by SLT.

Professional Development

We support all staff to develop their skills to support relationships learning and behaviour, this includes but is not limited to:

- *Use of the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom resource / Early Years Up, Up and Away resource (online training available)*
- *Understanding and implementing Edinburgh's Getting it Right for Every Child approach (online training available)*
- *Implementing strategies outlined in the CEC procedure Relationships, Learning and Behaviour*
- *Promoting Positive Relationships for learning and behaviour (online training available)*
- *City of Edinburgh Council Nurture Training*
- *City of Edinburgh Council Autism Training*

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **headteacher** has overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy. In particular, the headteacher ensures that the concerns of pupils are elicited, listened to and appropriately addressed and that the provisions of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' are taken into account when working in partnership with children, families, and other professionals on issues of communication and behaviour.

The **Behaviour Coordinator** (BeCo)/**Depute Head Teacher** has responsibility for recording Pastoral Notes and tracking Significant Occurrences. A Significant Occurrence is where someone has been hurt or nearly hurt due to the behaviour of a child in school. These will always be discussed with parents and a Personal Support Plan or Risk Assessment may be considered and/or reviewed and updated.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed. All staff encourage positive relationships and act as role models within our learning community.

Parents and families are regarded by the school as key partners who are asked to work in partnership with the school. Parents are expected to assist in maintaining positive relationships and support restorative approaches and high expectations for positive behaviour. Parents are invited to raise with the school any issues arising from the operation of the policy.

Learners participate in supporting this procedure and contribute to our positive school ethos. All learners know our school values. Learners are supported to ensure that incidents of disruption, aggression, bullying and any form of harassment are reported. The implementation of this procedure allows learners to understand the cause and effect of their behaviour.

7. EQUALITIES AND RIGHTS

All staff implementing these procedures have responsibilities under **The Equality Act** 2010. Having due regard for advancing equality includes;

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Addressing and preventing discrimination arising from disability
- Making reasonable adjustments in relation to the implications of a learner's additional support needs or disability and the impact this may have on their relationships and behaviour.
- Paying due regard to cultural factors that are relevant in ensuring that the school's ethos is inclusive.
- Implementing the local authority framework for preventing and responding to bullying.

CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS:

If you have a concern, complaint or compliment you should contact our school office in the first instance:

- Contact the school office on **0131 333 1293**
- Contact the school via e-mail on **admin@ratho.edin.sch.uk**
- Visit our school office

Our school office will be able to direct your concern, complaint or compliment to the correct member of staff.

8. RECORD KEEPING

Reflection, evaluation and de-briefing strategies

The school records any incidents of behaviour requiring significant support on the school database called SEEMIS. Details will include an interpretation of events by different parties (including the child), possible factors of settings, triggers, reasonable adjustments in place, an evaluation of how the incident was managed and 'lessons learned' to help prevent or better deal with a similar incident arising again.

Incidents that have resulted in physical harm or physical intervention being used to prevent harm are recorded on the council health and safety database (SHE portal).

The Senior Management Team reviews these records of incidents on a regular basis. Please find below a list of all Records, including completed forms that may be generated or amended by this procedure.

Record Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum retention period
Well Being Concern Forms	Ratho Primary School	Head Teacher	5 years after leaving date

Serious Incident Form	Ratho Primary School	Behaviour Coordinator/ Depute Head Teacher	5 years after leaving date

9. SELF EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be communicated to children through assemblies, class input and the Ratho Action Group. It will be communicated to parents through our parent council, our school website and by school correspondence. The policy will be communicated to all staff through a professional development session.

10. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Scottish Government

- Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000)
- Included, Engaged, Involved 2 (2017)
- Guidance on the Presumption to Provide Education in a Mainstream Setting (2019)
- Developing a Positive Whole School Ethos and Culture: relationships, learning and behaviour (2018)
- Additional Support for Learning Act (2004) - amended 2009
- Parental Involvement Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- UN Convention of the Rights of the Child
- Children and Young People Act 2014

City of Edinburgh Council

- Edinburgh Learns Framework: Inclusion (2019)
- Included, Engaged, Involved in Edinburgh Policy (2018)
- Relationships, Learning, Behaviour Procedure (2019)
- Managing and Reducing Risk Procedure (2019)
- Preventing and Responding to Bullying in Children and Young People (2019)
- City of Edinburgh Council Equalities and Rights Framework www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/9516/equality_diversity_and_rights_framework_2017-21)

School

- Ratho Primary School Anti-bullying & Equalities Policy

Record Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Education Records	Education Establishments	Headteachers/Managers	As per records retention schedule
Examples: Behaviour Incident	Pastoral Notes on SEEMIS	Head teacher and Depute Head Teacher	
Physical harm or physical intervention to prevent harm	SHE portal	Behaviour Coordinator / DHT	

Appendix One: De-escalation Techniques

Physical

- ☑ Think about your position in the room – make sure you are closest to the door. But do not stand across the doorway to block someone's exit.
- ☑ Respect personal space by keeping your distance (up to 4x more than normal) and turn your body so that you are presenting at an angle to the other person.
- ☑ Be aware of your body language – try to present with a relaxed and non-threatening stance with your hands open and visible.
- ☑ Stand on the same side as their dominant hand (reducing the likelihood that they will try to grab or hit out)
- ☑ Make only intermittent eye contact – more than this is threatening
- ☑ Adopt a 'slow motion' mode to offset the natural tendency to match the other person's behaviour – i.e. talk slowly, walk slowly, move your hands slowly.
- ☑ Lower your voice and try to retain a warm and empathic tone
- ☑ Make sure your facial expression is congruent with what you say
- ☑ Remain calm
- ☑ Where possible separate them from the others / or remove the audience
- ☑ Get everyone to sit down – sitting helps you to calm down

Communication

- ☑ Listen
- ☑ Use the young person's name
- ☑ Remember that all behaviour is communication
- ☑ Ask 'What's happened?'
- ☑ Give them a way out/offer 'time out' – "Would you like to take a break...?"
- ☑ Respond empathetically - recognise the emotions and feelings that the young person has by naming them.
- ☑ Tell them that it's ok to have these feelings.

- ☑ Separate the behaviour from the person
- ☑ Tell them that you want to hear what they have to say – "Help me to understand what you're saying to me"
- ☑ Reflect back to them – "Can I just check? I think what you're saying to me is that you are unhappy about.... Have I got that right?"
- ☑ Encourage the child or young person to reflect on the situation when calm, consider the impact on others and how to resolve the situation
- ☑ Use problem-solving skills with the young person – "What would help right now?" (This might only be possible once they have started to calm down)
- ☑ Offer praise where you can – "Well done! You're doing really well to control yourself. Keep on taking deep breaths."
- ☑ Soothing reassuring words can help the young person to feel calmer

Personal attributes that will help

- ☑ Always show warmth and positive regard for children and young people
- ☑ Try to be consistent and predictable
- ☑ Be calm and reassuring , model respectful interactions
- ☑ Know your limits - do not make promises you cannot keep and get help if you need it.

Feelings

Issues affecting the child / young person:

- ☑ All behaviour is a form of communication. The young person has something to communicate to you. Let them know that you want to listen to what they have to say and value them as an individual and their viewpoint. Make it clear that it is the way that they are communicating that is problematic and not them as a person.
- ☑ 'Challenging behaviour' often meets a need for the young person. For them it is a solution – a means to an end - and not a problem.
- ☑ Under stress, the young person's survival response may dominate their actions.

Issues affecting you:

- ☑ In response to a potential threat your defence/survival system may also have been activated – your brain will be sending signals to you to fight, flight or freeze.
- ☑ The use of de-escalation techniques is therefore counter-intuitive. It goes against our natural instinct in a threatening situation.
- ☑ You must try to appear to be calm and in control of yourself and try to engage the 'thinking' part of your brain.

What's not helpful?

Physical

Avoid

- ☑ Adopting a threatening stance or standing across the doorway to block someone's exit

- ☑ Invading the young person's space (unless you are moving towards them to restrain them)
- ☑ Compromising your own safety

Communication

Avoid

- ☑ Shouting, threatening, preaching, arguing etc.
- ☑ Pointing or shaking your finger
- ☑ Continuing to discuss the 'issue' or to ask 'why did you do that'?
- ☑ Trying to 'win' or have the last word
- ☑ Interrupting e.g. "No, you listen to what I'm saying for a change…"
- ☑ Saying anything that might connect the young person to strong feelings of guilt or shame. This is not the time.

Feelings

Avoid

- ☑ Telling them you know how they feel
- ☑ Dismissing their feelings
- ☑ Taking it personally. Even when comments or insults are directed at you, they are not really about you. Try not to respond to them and concentrate on calming the situation

Appendix 2: Letter to Parents August 2024

Dear Families,

We are writing to you about positive behaviour for learning in our school and what happens when children do not behave in the way we expect.

We aim to create the right environment for children to learn at Ratho Primary School through good organisation, lesson planning and preparation. However, even in these conditions, some children will behave in a challenging way.

Our school uses approaches and strategies to manage these situations. These approaches are set out by the City of Edinburgh Council and are influenced directly by Scottish Government policy. Therefore, every school in Edinburgh works in the same way we do.

First and foremost, all staff focus on building positive relationships by looking for opportunities to encourage, recognise effort and build on strengths. Fundamentally, if we have strong, positive relationships with pupils, they behave better.

To achieve this positive ethos, all staff are committed to;

- Relationships -Developing positive relationships
- Rights Respecting - Respecting and protecting the rights of all children
- Resilience building - Through identifying strengths and developing skills
- Restorative - Acting restoratively to repair relationships when difficulties do arise.

However, when a child doesn't behave well in our school, we have a clear and consistent approach:

1. A reminder of the school values
2. A caution
3. A final chance to change their behaviour.
4. A **'logical consequence'** or time out of the classroom
5. Extended time out of the classroom with an adult. The parent/carer of the child will be contacted at this point.

Research shows that everyone learns best when they feel good about themselves. Punishments can make children feel bad about themselves and can hinder their ability to engage in their learning. Therefore, these positive approaches to supporting behaviour focus on relationships, restoration and 'logical consequences' rather than of punishments.

'Logical consequences' are sanctions which are directly linked to the choice a child makes. For example, if a child throws food during lunchtime, a logical consequence would be to help the dining staff to clean at the end of lunchtime. Another example would be for a child to move seats if they weren't listening well in their current seat. These logical consequences are often decided by the child (with adult support) to help them to understand that their choices have repercussions.

As you know we have a **zero-tolerance policy towards physical aggression** in the playground and children are immediately sent inside for overly physical behaviour. They will also miss breaktimes for the following day. This is a logical consequence for such a choice. Parents are always contacted by school staff in the case of overly physical behaviour.

This restorative way of working forms the City of Edinburgh Council's approach to relationships, learning and behaviour. The following Education Scotland website has more details if you are interested:

https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/additional-support/specific-support-needs/social-and-emotional-factors/restorative-approaches#

As you can see working with large numbers of children and helping them learn best in a positive environment is a tricky business! But it's this business that we love and gives us the drive and energy to come to school every day and do our best for the families of Ratho. Families can really help and influence this too. If things go wrong at school for your child, you can help by reassuring them that you know the school will do everything it can to help and make it better for them. This trust in the school will help your child to feel more positive and resilient during hard times.

We are always happy to discuss incidents and issues with parents and to move forward together as a team.

We hope this has gone some way to help you understand the way we deal with issues around poor behaviour. It would not be appropriate for us to share what sanctions have been put in place for other children (just as I am sure you would not feel comfortable with us sharing widely issues around your own child), however, families can be assured that they are happening. The staff at Ratho Primary School are very proud of the way most of our children choose to behave.

We remain confident that we have a really positive and happy place to learn.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this.