Burbage Primary School

Trauma Informed Relationships, Behaviour and Well-being Policy

Date of approval:	13th March 2024
Approved by:	School Governors
Review date:	22nd October 2027

Registered Office: Excalibur Academies Trust, Granham Hill, Marlborough SN8 4AX
Registered in England and Wales
Company number: 8146633

Policy Aims:

To create a positive atmosphere where young people, feel listened to and supported, with high expectations for all and clear boundaries.

✓To ensure that all members of the school community feel safe
✓ To encourage relationships between all members of the school community that facilitate effective learning
✓ To allow children to develop a strong sense of morality that allows them to take on board the thoughts and feelings of others
✓ To teach children how to communicate their thoughts and feelings in a way that would be beneficial in their adulthood.

Purpose of the policy:

To provide guidance to staff and learners that can be:

✓ Accessible and applicable at all levels within the educational setting
✓ Used to create and embed a nurturing, inclusive whole school ethos that reflects the aims of the policy
✓ Monitored and evaluated as part of a plan-do-review cycle, with input from children, parents/carers and governors.

Ethos:

Burbage Primary School strives to create a community which is trauma informed. This approach is embodied by our aspiration to build a consistent and caring ethos which permeates our school environment, one in which staff "are aware of and explicitly focus on the quality of their interactions with students to develop classroom communities that promote academic, social, and emotional growth" (Reeves & Le Mare, 2017). We have developed a behaviour policy which places relationships at the cornerstone for children to thrive, both academically and in relation to their wellbeing. Interactions are positive, supportive, and non-judgemental, and for those who have experienced trauma are characterised by Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity & Empathy. We aim to have a personalised and differentiated approach to discipline and behaviour, to ensure all children are liked, listened to, and valued.

Additionally, "secure teacher–student relationships predict greater knowledge, higher test scores, greater academic motivation, and fewer retentions or special education referrals than insecure teacher–student relationships" (Bergin & Bergin, 2009). Research of this nature supports the use of trauma informed approaches to behaviour in schools and other educational settings, not only for children who have experienced trauma but for the whole school.

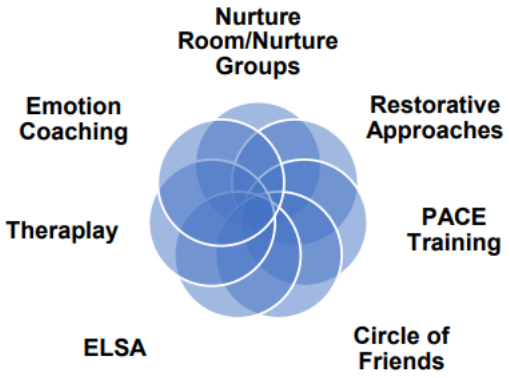
What is trauma?

Trauma may be defined as repeated cycles of stressful events and the inefficient turning on or off of stress responses. When in a heightened stress state, the brain automatically enters fight or flight survival mode, which can result in challenging behaviour. This is particularly pertinent for children who experience toxic shame. It is therefore fitting that the school's behaviour policy clearly recognises that some children will require a different, alternative approach to help them succeed.

Breaking the cycle of trauma -> stress->behaviour->restriction. The concept of coregulation, leading to eventual self-regulation can help support this process.

Whilst consistency of approach is important for children to feel safe and secure, it is also important to differentiate expectations and approach according to a child's abilities, needs and experiences. Whilst most children will thrive when a whole school approach to behaviour is applied, some will need further support and intervention, and a few will require more intensive, individualised support. This is particularly true for children who have experienced trauma.

Examples of trauma informed interventions:



Sanctions and Rewards:

Although behaviourist approaches (e.g. points systems, detentions, reward systems) can work for some children they are not successful with all. This is especially true for those who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – traumatic life experiences that occur before the age of 18 (see appendix). Consequences alone do not help put right a situation or prevent a repeat of behaviour, and so the school helps all children to learn how to manage their own behaviour through skill acquisition, coping strategies and managing emotions. By implementing the Zones of Regulation curriculum we aim to teach our pupils to identify emotions in themselves and others and provide them with bank of strategies to help regulate their emotions and improve their wellbeing.

Zones of Regulation:

The Zones of Regulation curriculum, from EYFS until the end of Year 6, helps children self-identify how they are feeling and categorise it based on colour, enabling them to better understand their emotions, sensory needs and thinking patterns. This helps children to recognise their own triggers, learn to read facial expressions, develop problem-solving skills, and become more attuned to how their actions affect other people.

There is progression across the curriculum with children in Early Years learning to identify different emotions to children in Upper Key Stage 2 discussing how behaviour can impact upon the feelings of those around us. This work sits alongside the schools' PHSE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) programme, delivered through Jigsaw.

Behaviour Support Plans:

Positive Behaviour Plans may be used for children, and these would outline how the child may present, what their triggers might be and how staff can support them, at each stage what works for them. These are written in conjunction with parents and the child themselves, and may be a simple ABC (antecedent, behaviour, consequence) analysis looking at what situations trigger the behaviour, and how children and adults respond to prevent behaviours occurring or escalating.

_Pupil Expectations:

- Be empathic and kind
- Keep themselves and others safe
- Learn how to take responsibility for their own actions.
- Be aware of the school values and show these through their actions and interactions.

Parent/Carer Expectations:

- Take responsibility for the behaviour of their child, both at school and elsewhere.
- Work in partnership with the school to support their child.
- Share key information about any events that may be affecting their child's behaviour so that the school is aware of this and can plan provision accordingly.
- Attend parent consultation meetings and develop working relationships with the school.

Staff Expectations:

- We value our relationships with children and their families
- We strive to understand the function behind a child's behaviour
- We consistently model the behaviour we wish to see
- We always give children fresh start as required
- We ensure that we support and implement the agreed trauma informed approaches (e.g. emotion coaching/responsive co-regulation plans)
- We use trauma informed language in our daily routine

Environmental Consistency:

At Burbage Primary School, we recognise that consistency and routines help children and young people to feel safe. We aim to ensure that:

- All school staff have read the school's behaviour policy and feel confident in applying the policy
- We refer to the school expectations every time we provide feedback or discipline, in which we explain how a behaviour has/has not embodied these expectations
- All school staff are aware of the strategies being used to support individual children with additional needs (including acknowledgement and awareness of the responsive co-regulation plans)
- All school staff are trained in and able to use Emotion Coaching to support children's emotional needs and provide consequences/problem solving opportunities when required.

Differentiation:

We will differentiate our behaviour policy as appropriate to the needs of all children within our school setting, in line with the Equality Act (2010). For some pupils this will require an individualised emotional regulation approach (e.g., emotion coaching/responsive co-regulation plan). It is our aim to inform parents/carers at the beginning of each year about this differentiated approach in order for them to understand that "being 'fair' is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity)" (Brighton and Hove Council, 2018).

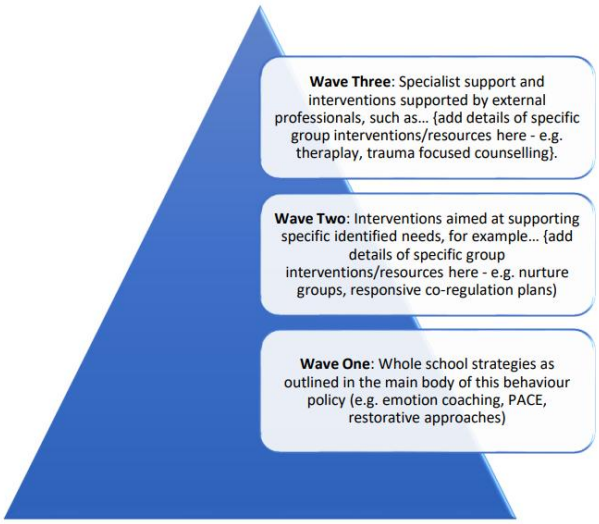
Children have a wide range of individual needs which change over time. As such, children require a flexible approach within an overall structure of consistency. Whilst we envisage that our Wave One behavioural approach (please see below) will be effective for the majority of children at Burbage Primary School, some children require extra support in order for us to ensure an equitable school environment.

A graduated response to behaviour allows staff to support children according to their current level of need. The pyramid below provides some examples of support offered at each wave of our graduated response. Children will be provided with support based on their level of need.
Given that Burbage Primary School views behaviour as a communication of need, frequent behaviour will be seen as an indication that level of support may need to be increased (e.g. a child receiving support at Wave One would begin to receive assessment and support at Wave Two). Decisions about the level of support required will always be made in consultation with the child, their parents/carers and external professionals as appropriate.

Wave Three: Specialist support and interventions supported by external professionals, such as. theraplay, trauma focused counselling.

Wave Two: Interventions aimed at supporting specific identified needs, for example nurture groups and responsive co-regulation plans.

Wave One: Whole school strategies as outlined in the main body of this behaviour policy (e.g. emotion coaching, PACE, restorative approaches)



Use of exclusion:

Burbage Primary School recognises the potentially detrimental impact of exclusion and consequently avoids using any form of suspension/ exclusion to respond to behaviour that challenges us.

In order to avoid exclusions, we:

- Identify and meet the need being communicated through a behaviour at the earliest opportunity (rather than using sanctions to reduce the behaviour). This will include informing services of the risk of a fixed term or permanent exclusion as soon as possible.
- Use restorative conversations alongside the child or young person to reflect on triggers, thoughts, feelings and what might help in the future.
- Use a relational approach to behaviour management.
- Use Emotion Coaching to provide co-regulation and to support a child or young person to understand their emotions.

On the rare occasions that exclusion is used, we will:

- Maintain contact with the child or young person and their family throughout the process.
- Use Restorative Practice to structure reintegration meetings and reduce blame.
- Hold a restorative group for staff involved in supporting the child or young person.
- Place the child or young person's (and parent's/carer's) voice at the heart of each step of the process.

Allegations against school staff:

The Department for Education (2016) requires that school behaviour policies "set out the disciplinary action that will be taken against pupils who are found to have made malicious accusations against school staff". In line with our trauma informed approach to behaviour management, any malicious and unfounded accusations made against school staff would be investigated on an individual basis, with staff, the child or young person and parents/carers working together to understand the possible functions of this behaviour. If appropriate, a Restorative Practice based approach (e.g. a restorative conference) would be used in order to repair relationships between the child or young person and the staff member, whilst aiming to avoid eliciting shame in the child or young person. The member of staff involved would also be provided with access to emotional support from staff on a more private basis, and/or counselling if required.

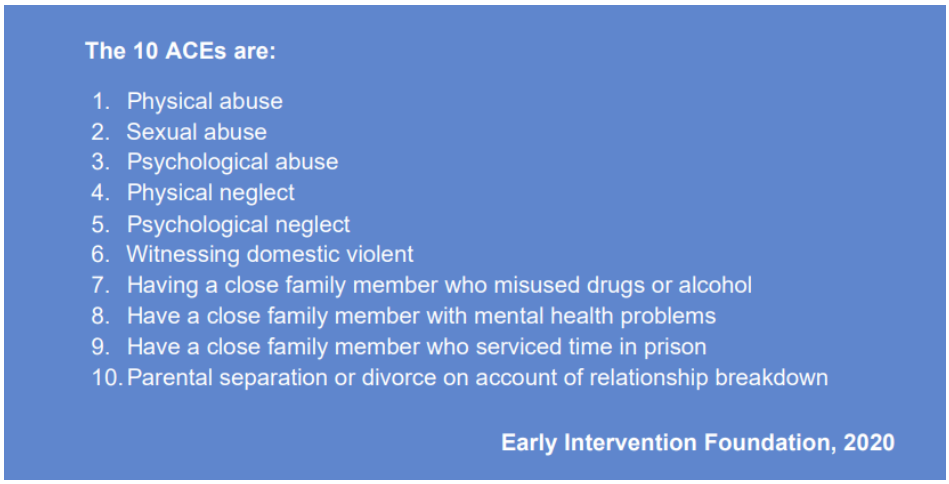
Engagement with parents / carers:

Burbage Primary School values parents/carers as experts in their own child/young person's life. We will provide feedback on your child's emotional wellbeing at parent/carer meetings but will also contact you immediately if we have any concerns about your child's wellbeing. We also place great value on feedback from parents/carers about the wellbeing of your child. If you have any concerns or would like to provide feedback on our behaviour policy, please do not hesitate to contact the Principal, Zoe Garbutt.

Appendix

Adverse Childhood Experiences:

Research into adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) consistently shows that a set of 10 adverse experiences in childhood are associated with an increased risk of mental health problems and other problems in later life (Early Intervention Foundation, February 2020). The likelihood of ACEs impacting future health is different in every individual and depends on a variety of factors, most particularly, levels of resilience.



Research has also explored what the mitigatory benefits may be if interventions are implemented for those people who have experienced adverse childhood experiences – how might we build greater resilience? Protective and Compensatory Experiences (PACEs) are experiences which buffer trauma and stress. A number of protective and compensatory experiences have been identified through research that can reduce the harmful impact of ACEs. These are:

- Unconditional love
- Connectedness
- Community engagement
- Security: order and predictability
- Mastery/self-efficacy.

Appendix 2:

The Zones of Regulation Curriculum:

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
Low	Happy	Wobbly	Angry
Running Slow	Good to Go	Caution	STOP
unhappy tired withdrawn tearful	positive proud calm focused	excited nervous frustrated annoyed	mad furious yelling aggressive