

RELATIONAL POLICY

Document History	
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By:	Principal
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At Easterside Academy we believe that every member of our school community should have an equal opportunity to achieve his or her full potential, both academically and personally, regardless of race, colour, gender, disability, special educational needs, sexual orientation or socio-economic background. Research evidence shows that education and health are closely linked and therefore we recognise that promoting the health and wellbeing of our pupils, including healthy relationships, has the potential to improve both their educational and health and wellbeing outcomes.

Our academy rules are:

Safe, Respectful, Ready

Our academy Values are:

Honesty, Teamwork, Respect, Self-Belief, Passion, Determination



This policy sets out the framework for the behaviour, responsibilities, values and attitudes expected of our community members within a relational and restorative practice philosophy. Both relational and restorative practice aim to build the Easterside Academy community and to repair and strengthen relationships.

1. Our Key Principles Linked to Theory

As an academy:

- We understand behaviour communicates unmet needs and we can separate the child from their behaviour.
- We understand that each developmental stage has a range of typical behaviours which provide opportunities for adult to role-model and explicitly teach appropriate behaviours.
- We provide containment, predictability and routine to build a sense of safety in the emotional and physical environment.
- We encourage children to become accountable for their actions and impact they may have on themselves and others, promoting a solution-based approach to change future behaviours.
- We keep in mind that we are the adults and the children in our settings are still growing, learning and developing.
- We seek to restore relationships and change behaviours rather than punish the actions a child may have taken. Although this does not exclude the use of sanctions, we seek the most appropriate way of supporting children to develop robust stress-regulation systems and therefore their skills of self-control, empathy and emotional management.

2. Our RSE / PSHE Curriculum

Our aim is for all children to develop into independent, confident, successful learners with high aspirations, who are resilient and know how to make a positive contribution to their own community and wider society. We uphold and teach pupils about British Values: democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Our PSHE curriculum follows the DfE statutory guidance and goes beyond. It is underpinned by three core themes: **Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World.** (See the academy's RSE/PSHE Policies).

3. Our Environment

At Easterside Academy, we have high expectations of all of our pupils. We encourage all children to try their best to achieve their goals. Every child **'is given the chance to shine'**.

It is the responsibility of all staff and pupils to uphold and maintain our school expectations, which all children know and understand. Through regular use of **meet and greet; check in's / check outs** and circle times, we build close class communities where all children feel valued and have a **strong sense of belonging. Adults actively model positive and respectful relationships.**

Our curriculum takes place the second a child walks onto our site both indoors and outside. We have **welcoming and inspiring indoor spaces** and **excellent outdoor grounds** and facilities for our children that include spacious grass areas, a wooded 'wild' area, allotment, orchard and outdoor classrooms. We recognise the impact being outside has on emotional wellbeing and how learning outside supports the building of strong, positive relationships. As part of our curriculum we are committed to ensuring that all children have meaningful, frequent, continuous and progressive access to Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activities.

4. The Thrive Approach

RSE/PSHE is embedded throughout daily life at Easterside Academy. We model positive relationships, self-image and communication skills with others in all our day-to-day interactions, as well as teaching skills explicitly within our RSE/PSHE lessons. As part of our RSE/PSHE curriculum at Easterside Academy we use the Thrive Approach.

The Thrive Approach has been developed over many years helping children to flourish. It supports their emotional and social development and helps them feel happy and secure, able to enjoy friendships, relate well to others and be ready and able to learn.

Thrive is a special way of working with all children that helps to develop their social and emotional wellbeing, enabling them to engage with life and learning. It supports them in becoming more self-assured, capable and adaptable. It can also address any troubling behaviours providing a firm foundation for academic attainment.

Positive relationships are at the heart of Thrive. We use these relationships, together with play and creative activities, to give children key experiences at each

different stage of their development. Repetition of these activities supports their development, helping them to:

- feel good about themselves and know that they matter.
- increase their sense of security and trust.
- increase their emotional well-being.
- improve their capacity to be creative and curious.
- increase their self-esteem and confidence to learn.
- learn to recognise and regulate their feelings.
- learn to think before behaving in a certain way.

...and much more.

Appropriate for all children from birth to adulthood, The Thrive Approach draws on the latest research into brain science, child development theory and attachment theory. It helps us to understand how babies' and children's brains develop, and how parents, teachers and other professionals can best support this development by providing the best experiences for the children at each stage.

Thrive also helps us to better understand the children's needs being signalled by their behaviour. Sometimes children may struggle as a result of temporary setbacks or other, longer term changes in their lives such as a separation, a bereavement, a family illness or accident, or even the arrival of a new baby. They may signal their distress by becoming more withdrawn, or distant, or perhaps more challenging or disruptive, or even by trying too hard to please. If this happens we use Thrive to look beyond the behaviour to give these children the support they need to get back on track. Sometimes they only need a little extra support in class and sometimes they may need additional one-to-one time to help them along.

We use a screening tool and activity planning resource called Thrive-Online. This allows us to check that children are working appropriately for their age and to develop the whole group with activities that ensure that they are as emotionally and socially supported as they can be. Using Thrive-Online will also identify any children in need of extra support. If the screening process suggests that a child would benefit from additional one-to-one support, the school will contact you and, with your consent and involvement, they will carry out a more detailed assessment to develop an action plan that gives specific strategies and activities for supporting your child within our school. This plan will be carried out by one of our four, trained **Thrive Practitioners**. The plan will also suggest specific activities that you can do at home, so that together with your school, you can help them through any difficulties they are experiencing.

The developmental stages within Thrive are:

Interdependence 11-18 years
Skills and Structure 7-11 years
Power and Identity 3-7 years
Thinking 18 months – 3 years

Doing 6 – 18 months
Being 0 – 6 months

PACE

All adults working with the Thrive Approach use PACE.

P	Playfulness Adults should be – open / available / flexible / engaged / have a sense of fun / imaginative and connected.
A	Acceptance Acknowledging the child and their emotional state as being true and valid, and representing this back to them.
C	Curiosity Showing authentic interest in finding out about the child and their experience.
E	Empathy Being alongside the child without negative judgement.

Vital Relational Functions (VRFs)

Teachers are trained to use Vital Relational Functions 'VRFs' which are tools used in Thrive to address a child's emotional state during a crisis.

Attune: This is where you are alert to how they are feeling. You demonstrate that you understand the intensity, pitch, pace, volume, expansiveness or special experience of the child's emotional state.

Validate: This is where you are alert to the child's experience. This needs to happen before you move to help them regulate it. This is the beginning of being able to think about feelings.

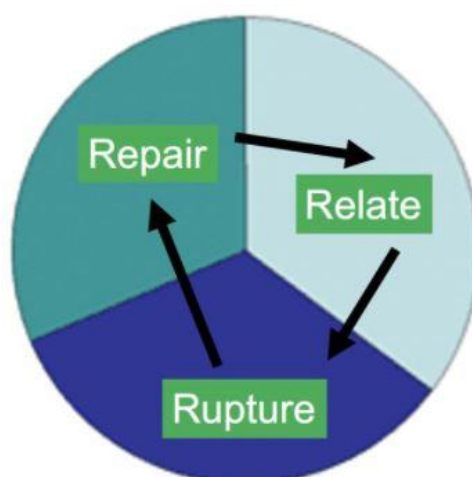
Containment: This is where you demonstrate that you understand the pitch, intensity, quality of their feeling or mood and that you can bear it. This is where you show that you can take their deep distress, raging anger or painful sorrow and make it a survivable experience. Catch it, match it and digest it by thinking about it and offering it back, named, in small digestible pieces. This builds trust for the child: in you, in adults and in the world.

Regulate, Soothe, Calm, Stimulate: This is where you must be alert to how they are feeling and demonstrate emotional regulation by soothing and calming their

distress. Catch it, match it and help the child to regulate the feeling up or down. They need to experience being calmed before they can do it for themselves.

5. The Relate – Rupture – Repair Cycle

Our policy is based around the ‘relate-rupture-repair cycle.’



As a ‘Thrive Approach’ school, we understand that distressed behaviour is a communication of unmet need. This understanding enables us to respond to the need by regulating and containing the emotion, rather than reacting to the behaviour. In turn, this helps the child to develop healthier ways of managing stress. Equally important to our ability to attune to the child’s needs, is being able to recognise ruptures in our relationship with a child and to repair them. Such ruptures are an inevitable part of relating and, provided we can repair them, help foster the child’s resilience. This is because the repeated experience of ruptures being repaired gives the child a sense of trust and safety that even when things go wrong in the relationship, they can be put right.

“Rupture and repair” refers to the breaking and restoring of connection with one another. Since humans are wired for connection, and connection is what researchers say brings most happiness, rupture and repair is a critical concept to learn about for wellbeing.

Movement through this cycle helps to strengthen our relationships.

6. The Restorative Approach

All staff are trained in the key principles of RP. We understand the importance of modelling **positive language and behaviour** and we take time to develop positive and meaningful relationships with colleagues and pupils. When positive relationships are developed and deep connections are made, individuals are less likely to cause harm to others or choose to damage relationships.

For occasions when behaviour shows an unmet need, we use restorative approaches as outlined in this policy, to help pupils understand the impact of their actions and behaviour. This is done through a structured reactive circle in which we

guide and teach the children how to make things right. This aligns with 'rupture and repair'.

We believe that by using this restorative approach we are giving pupils the skills to independently make better, more responsible and more informed choices in the future. Children at Easterside Academy are taught how to take responsibility for their own choices.

Restorative Practices Philosophy Statement

Effective Restorative Practices foster awareness of how others have been affected. This is done by actively engaging participants in a process which separates the deed from the doer and rejects the act not the actor, allowing participants to make amends for the harm caused. Restorative Practices acknowledges the intrinsic worth of the person and their potential contribution to the school community.

Restorative Practices framework will:

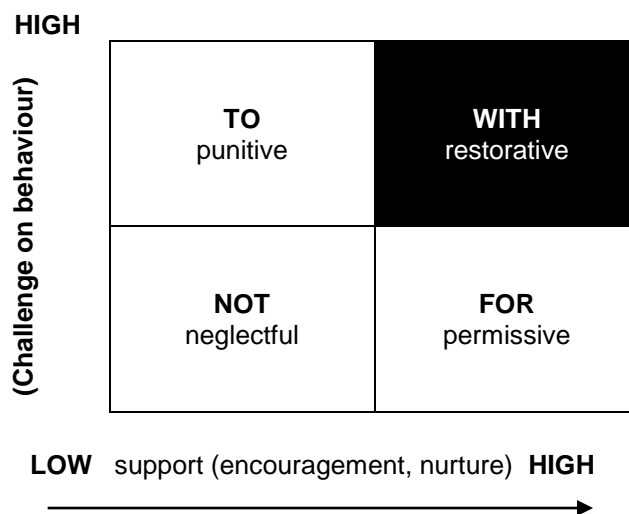
- Improve behaviour and attitudes.
- Provide explicit tools within a defined framework to appropriately challenge behaviour (rupture), resolve conflict and repair harm.
- Improve relationships, establish rights, accountabilities and responsibilities to the community.
- Provide a safe, philosophical basis for staff, pupils and parents to share ideas and discuss issues.

There are four key elements of Restorative Practices.

These are:

- Social Discipline Window.
- Fair Process.
- Restorative Questions.
- Free Expression of Emotions.

Social Discipline Window - (Framework for working with children)



Wherever possible we should try to work in the 'with box', offering high support, nurturing and encouragement in conjunction with consistently setting clear boundaries and expectations of behaviour. Staff should always, within their professional conduct, be positive and respectful role models to all children.

The Three Principles of Fair Process

1. Engagement – involving all participants in the process.
2. Explanation – shared understanding.
3. Expectation Clarity – clear vision for the future.

Key Restorative Questions - (for use in reactive circles)

When there is any rupture or conflict between children or adults they are dealt with in a restorative way, using a structured reactive circle. A 'no blame' approach is used. Reactive circles work through the 'Three Principles of Fair Process' where the language used is fair, consistent and respectful. Reactive circles are held in a calm, quiet place and must be led by an objective third party. All staff are trained to lead reactive circles.

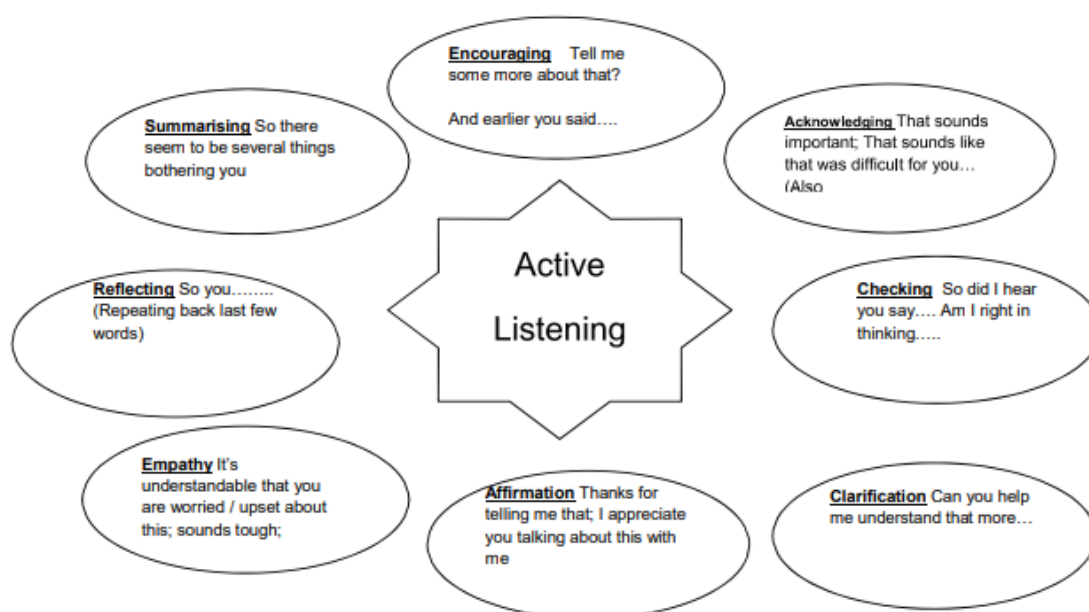
Both the victim and perpetrator attend the reactive circle and the following questions are asked:

1. To help those harmed by others actions:
 - **What happened?**
Drawing out each person's story one at a time, starting with the person who has caused the harm. The aim is not to come to a definitive conclusion on what has happened, but for each person to have their point of view listened to.
 - **How did you feel at the time?**
What each person was thinking and feeling at the time, before and since.
 - **What do you think needs to happen to make things right?**
How do those people agree and negotiate meeting the needs identified above and what support might they need to do this? Staff support pupils in this process but try to ensure the pupils form their own agreement when possible.
2. To respond to behaviours displaying an unmet need:
 - What happened?
 - How did you feel at the time?
 - How has the victim been affected by what you did?
 - What do you think you need to do to make things right?

The aim here is that the outcome is fair for everyone. If somebody is upset by a rupture, we aim to make them feel better. If someone has done something wrong, we expect them to take responsibility for their own behaviour and choices, and repair the situation by making things right with those who have been affected.

This approach encourages those involved to identify ways in which a relationship can be repaired or how they can move forward. By giving pupils this responsibility we are supporting them in developing their own strategies for avoiding and resolving conflict. We also believe that if pupils reach their own agreement as to how to move forward after a conflict, they are more likely to abide by it than if it is suggested by an adult or imposed upon them. By involving the pupils in the design of the agreement, we give them ownership over it and ensure it is helping them to resolve the situation and make amends in their own way.

All staff working within our school use active listening skills when dealing with a conflict. This enables them to draw out more from those involved.



All situations are dealt with fairly and promptly by using the above questions. Adults will consult with senior leaders and the academy's 'Care Team' to seek additional advice and support if required.

On occasions a consequence may be given following our behaviour flow chart and / or a 'Team around the Child' (TAC) meeting may be initiated; and / or a Formal - Restorative Practice Meeting put in place for a more serious conflict.

The Restorative Approach and the use of Consequences

When using consequences at Easterside Academy, the child(ren) should always be involved in a restorative conversation and be an active part of deciding upon any consequence. Staff ensure that these conversations are constructive and enable the child to learn from what has happened, as opposed to a sanction being imposed and the child seeing themselves as the victim of a punishment being done 'to' them.

If required we aim to help children look at the impact they have had on others and see that their consequence is a way of putting things right with the person who has

been affected, as well as with the school community, which expects a high standard of good behaviour.

Some children require time to regulate their emotions before any restorative conversation can be held. Adults recognise this. **'Time and Space'** and / or **'Reflection'** can be offered to children before a restorative conversation is held (repair).

7. Differentiation within a Restorative Approach

At Easterside Academy, we recognise that all children are unique individuals and therefore we are flexible in the manner in which we address any incidences of dysregulated behaviour. The stages of the restorative approach always underpin our methods, but we are conscious that we adapt our approach to ensure it is suitable for the pupil's age, needs and level of understanding.

When working with pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage our focus is on the initial stages of the Restorative Approach. Staff working with these pupils focus on helping them to grasp the concepts of feelings and how they are caused. Modelling, small group work, peer support and visual resources such as photographs are all used to support the pupils' understanding and development of empathy.

This approach is also adapted for other pupils throughout the school wherever required. Pupils where there is a disruption (Thrive Approach) or those with SEND needs can require support in recognising how their actions have affected others or how they feel about an incident. Pupils are supported in developing their understanding of the restorative approach using tailored resources, lessons and at their own pace and level. Visual prompts and social stories are used to support this teaching.

Children identified as having significant social, emotional or mental health needs may require an alternative approach, which will be discussed and decided upon by the team around the child on an individual basis. Staff use their discretion and in-depth knowledge of the child/ren involved to determine how best to implement this approach and who to involve.

It has been found that by using a flexible restorative approach, it can develop: **strong relationships, truth telling, responsibility, accountability, empathy, emotional literacy, conflict resolution skills, and a positive learning environment.**

8. Restorative Language

It is important that staff deal with situations in a restorative manner, to establish and develop their own relationships with children. We always aim to separate the deed from the doer and the act from the actor, as integral to Restorative Practice philosophy.

Listed below are some examples of affective statements and questions which all staff use with pupils:

Possible Statements

I am sorry that I misunderstood the situation

I feel really proud of you when I heard

I feel really pleased and encouraged that you made the right choice.

I respected your honesty and thank you.

I want to thank you for your cooperation.

I was very disappointed when you did that to

I am upset and angry by what has just happened.

I feel that all the work I have done has been wasted through your actions.

I feel that (describe action) was very disrespectful.

I feel disrespected and angry when you ignore me.

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9. Restorative Practice Meeting

A pupil may be asked to attend a Restorative Practice Meeting if they are having a more serious or regular conflict at school. This is a meeting with everyone involved and would always involve a Care Team or senior member of staff. The aim of the Conference is to:

- Discuss what is happening
- Look at who has been affected or upset
- Decide how it can be put right
- Find a way forward

- in a way that is fair to everyone.

This allows the school to:

- Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour choices.
- Give those affected the opportunity to be acknowledged.
- Support those displaying dis-regulated behaviour.

During a conference an agreement is made, this will list actions or promises that the individual/s need to agree to carry out so the conflict can be put right and doesn't happen again. Someone within school will make sure that everyone is keeping to the agreement.

Parents/carers may also be invited to attend a conference if it is felt that it would be helpful for their child.

10. Celebrations

At Easterside Academy we celebrate our pupils achievement in a variety of ways:

- *Teachers congratulate children with specific, positive praise.*
- *All school staff give children house points – added up and rewarded within own class.*
- *Each week we nominate 2 children from each class to be “Super Student”.*
- *Each week we nominate 2 children from each class for ‘Hot Choc Friday’ – this rewards those children that have demonstrated that they have gone ‘over and above’.*
- *Each week one child from both KS1 and KS2 are nominated for the Head Teacher award.*
- *We distribute stickers and certificates to children for good work or behaviour; demonstrating our school values; or to acknowledge outstanding effort or acts of kindness in school;*
- *We hold weekly achievement assemblies where children’s achievements are celebrated – achievements both within and outside of school.*
- *Awards are given to individuals/classes for exceptional attendance and punctuality.*
- *Marvellous Me is used in order to send positive ‘badges’ and ‘messages’ home to parents.*
- *Celebrate achievements on our Twitter feed.*

The school acknowledges all the efforts and achievements of children, both in and out of school.

11. Behaviour Incidents

If a child threatens, hurts or bullies another pupil, staff record the incident electronically on CPOMS as well as informing a member of the senior leadership team or Care Team. The Principal is made aware of any alleged incidents of bullying.

The school does not tolerate bullying of any kind. If we discover that an act of bullying or intimidation has taken place, we act immediately to stop any further occurrences of such behaviour. While it is very difficult to eradicate bullying, we do everything in our power to ensure that all children attend school free from fear. (See the academy’s Anti-Bullying Policy)

All members of staff are aware of the regulations regarding the use of reasonable force by teachers, as set out in DFE ‘Use of reasonable force: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies’ (2013). Using this guidance, staff will only intervene physically using positive handling for the following reasons:

- *Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.*

The actions that we take are in line with government guidelines on the restraint of children. Most staff are trained in “Team Teach” (positive handling).

12. Policy Addition – COVID-19 Changes

From September 2021, pupils will be expected to:

- Follow school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising.
- Move around the school as per specific instructions (for example, one-way systems, out of bounds areas, queuing).
- Follow expectations about sneezing, coughing, tissues and disposal ('catch it, bin it, kill it') and avoiding touching your mouth, nose and eyes with hands.
- Tell an adult if you are experiencing symptoms of coronavirus.
- Follow clear rules about NOT coughing or spitting at or towards any other person.

13. The Role of the Care Team

Easterside Academy still continues to promote the old Every Child Matters Agenda and has built a supportive school support team. This Care team fulfil a crucial role in the whole school relational policy and support the work of the teaching staff. The school has invested considerable resources in order to build a very effective team.

*The team consists of two **Pupil Parent Support Officers** (PSA/learning mentor role) and a **Pupil Well-being Leader**.*

Parents or carers are informed of these roles on the child's admission to school.

The Pupil Parent Support Officer plays a pivotal role in coordinating parent enquiries, concerns and complaints with regard to a range of issues including those linked to relationships and behaviour. The Care Team act as advocates for all pupils and provide them with counselling and mentoring on a needs basis. All pupils know who the staff are and what role they play. They keep records in relation to their work.

The Care Team monitor aspects of the Relational Policy. They provide supervision for internal exclusions. They play a leading role in developing meaningful SEN support Plans for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. They support transition and liaise with secondary school staff to ensure effective communication regarding the child's needs in relation to Key Stage Three. Their key role is to promote inclusion.

The academy has a graduated response to support pupils with SEMH needs.

14. The Role of the Principal

It is the responsibility of the Principal, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, to implement the school relational policy consistently throughout the

school. It is also the responsibility of the Principal to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children in the school.

The Principal supports the staff by implementing the policy, by setting the standards of behaviour, and by supporting staff in the implementation of the policy.

The Principal liaises closely with the Care Team and teaching staff regarding all reported serious incidents of dis-regulated behaviour.

The Principal has the responsibility for giving fixed-term or permanent exclusions to children. The Enquire Learning Trust (ELT) are also involved / informed at this point.

15. The Role of Parents/Carers

The school works collaboratively with parents/carers, so children receive consistent messages about how to behave at home and at school.

We explain the school rules on admission, and we expect parents/carers to know these and support them.

We expect parents/carers to support their child's learning, and to co-operate with the school, as set out in the home-school agreement. We try to build a supportive dialogue between the home and the school, and we inform parents/carers immediately if we have concerns about their child's welfare or behaviour.

16. Fixed-term and Permanent Exclusions

Only the Principal (or the acting Principal) has the power to exclude a pupil from school. The decision to exclude must be lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate. The Principal may exclude a pupil for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in any one school year. The Principal may also exclude a pupil permanently. It is also possible for the Principal to convert a fixed-term exclusion into a permanent exclusion, if the circumstances warrant this and evidence supports a fresh decision.

An exclusion may be given for behaviour within the school day; behaviour on the way to and from school and for behaviour that impacts on other pupils within school.

A permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort, in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

If the Principal excludes a pupil, s/he informs the parents or carers immediately, giving reasons for the exclusion. At the same time, the Principal makes it clear to the parents/carers that they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision to the Trust. The school informs the parents or carers how to make any such appeal.

The Principal informs the LA, and the Enquire Learning Trust about any permanent exclusion, and about any fixed-term exclusions.

The Trust itself cannot either exclude a pupil or extend the exclusion period made by the Principal.

The Trust has a discipline committee. This committee considers any exclusion appeals.

When an appeals panel meets to consider an exclusion, they consider the circumstances in which the pupil was excluded, consider any representation by parents or carers and the LA, and consider whether the pupil should be reinstated.

If the Trust's appeals panel decides that a pupil should be reinstated, the Principal must comply with this ruling.

(See also see Enquire Learning Trust's Exclusion Policy).

17. Monitoring and Review

The Principal monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis, liaising closely with teachers and the Care Team.

The Academy's Improvement Committee (AIC) challenges its impact.

The school keeps a variety of records. The Care team / senior leaders including the Principal monitor behaviour across the school and hold regular meetings each term.

The Principal keeps a record of any child who is excluded for a fixed-term, or who is permanently excluded. This is reported termly to the Enquire Learning Trust as well as governors.

This policy is reviewed every two years. The policy may, however, be reviewed earlier than this if required.

Principal: D. Linacre

Date: January 2022

Please see in school the following supporting documentation:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour Flowchart
- ELT – Exclusion Policy
- RSE/PSHE Policy

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