Relationship and Behaviour Policy

September 2026

Introduction

George White Junior School's Relationship Policy embodies our culture and ethos developed through a Trauma Informed approach where relationship is at the heart of every interaction and supports the whole school community to include our staff, our pupils, parent(s)/carers and all other agencies working within the school.

Purpose

In George White Junior School we believe in providing every child with the opportunity to experience an outstanding education academically, emotionally and socially. We strongly believe that by identifying the barriers to learning, we can provide an inspiring and relevant curriculum that considers the whole child and provides the necessary support for pupils to achieve, develop and reach their true potential.

Through a trauma informed approach our focus is not only the physical environment, but the relational environment and the very culture and ethos of our school. This requires emotionally regulated and available adults who can provide essential calming and containing of our pupils, their parents/carers or each other when they are overwhelmed by an event, a situation or their feelings.

In practical terms it means that we try to not place the pupils in situations that they are unable to manage. It is vital that our response to their distress and often behaviours that challenge is supportive and focusses on how best to support the brain's frontal lobe functioning to be able to relate to the world and each other in a healthier way, rather than employing punitive sanctions that are detrimental and inappropriate to the child's development. If we are truly to protect our pupils and each other, our school approach needs to reflect a differentiated and developmentally appropriate response to behaviour by recognising that behaviour represents an unmet need, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and/or particular neurocognitive or neurochemical profile.

Whole School Approach

As a school we have embraced the definition of trauma to encompass any event that is experienced as frightening, painful or out of control, characterised by there being no one available to support or mitigate the impact of traumatic toxic stress. As such, even the day-to-day exposure to events such as divorce, loss of a loved one, illness within the family, moving house can be experienced as traumatic. Children and adults can be affected by toxic stress. Providing an environment that has safety, connection and compassion at its heart ensures that our school environments never unwittingly re-traumatise any of our school members and act to maximise protective factors through the conscious use of our relationships.

All adults in our school are aware of how to create an ethos and environment of both physical and psychological safety and have the skills to respond to those who have been impacted by traumatic stress. We fully understand and support the impact that connection with a trusted, emotionally available adult has on a child and seek to maximise this for those who are identified as requiring additional support.

Our positive behaviour management and relationship policies reflect a trauma informed approach, and our behaviour strategies are both developmentally and trauma informed. We do not operate a 'zero tolerance' or 'one size fits all' approach to distressed behaviour, however, we have high expectations of behaviour for all and support is offered to those having difficulty meeting those expectations.

''The ability to form meaningful relationships is fundamental to mental health and happiness. It's the quality of contact we have with other people that is arguably the most important determining factor in our quality of life. We can only truly develop ourselves through relationships with others'' (TISUK 2019)

''Just one emotionally available adult in the school, community or home can make all the difference'' (TISUK 2019)

PROTECT:

- Our school aims to increase 'safety cues' in all aspects of the school day for our pupils and each other, for example designed and timetabled interventions that create opportunities for the emotionally available adults to be alongside our pupils across the school day. This can take the form of check-ins and longer sessions with a range of staff including pastoral workers and SLT as well as classroom-based staff.
- Open door policy for informal discussions with parents/ carers.
- Encouragement through emails, newsletters for parents to contact the school with any concerns.
- We aim to increase our staffs' understanding in nurturing attachments and the PACE approach (Hughes, 2015). This means that our pupils are met with a warm emphatic, playful and curious staff team that will enable them to move out of flight/fight or freeze and into relationship and trust.
- As a school we ensure that interactions with pupils, their families/carers, other agencies and each other are socially engaging not socially defensive.
- Punitive approaches are not being used under any circumstances in response to pupils' behaviour, challenging or otherwise such as the use of harsh voices, shouting, isolating, secluding, denying curriculum access, withholding food and shame evoking behaviours (which are proven to be damaging psychologically and neurologically).
- All members of our school aim to interactively reflect and repair occasions when they themselves move into defensiveness.
- Our school staff adopt ways of developing relationships and understanding of our pupils, their families/carers and each other. Holding at the heart of our approach relationship as the key to personal, social and emotional development, (as well as academic achievement for our pupils).
- Our school staff adjust their expectations for our pupils, their families and carers in accordance with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress. This sometimes involves removing vulnerable and traumatised pupils in a kind and non-judgemental way from situations they are not managing well. As a staffing team we are also able to do this for each other.

- The use of a robust debrief system (see appendix B). Restorative conversation opportunities are available in several ways for staff and pupils to assist them in managing situations that have caused or may cause distress. An incident debriefing meeting assists people, particularly staff and pupils, to overcome the effects of an incident by:
- Talking about what happened
- Expressing how they feel as a result of the incident
- Identifying any individual stress reactions (i.e. physical, emotional, thinking, behavioural)
- Identifying some ways of dealing with stress reactions,
- If appropriate, staff are supported to access Norfolk Support Line which offers individual support, information and counselling to staff and their families.

RELATE:

- A whole school approach and commitment to enable our pupils, families/carers and staff to see themselves, their relationships and the world positively, rather than through the lens of threat, danger or self-blame.
- Our school provides everyone with repeated relational experiences (alongside emotionally available adults) to support everyone to move from 'blocked trust' (not feeling psychologically safe with anyone) to trust, and from self-help to 'help-seeking'.

REGULATE:

- As a school we use evidence-based interventions that aim to repair psychological damage and brain damage caused by traumatic experiences, through emotionally regulating, playful and enriched interactions.
  - Relational interventions specifically designed to bring down stress hormone levels (e.g. from toxic to tolerable) in vulnerable children, enabling them to feel calm, soothed and safe.
- In our school the emotional well-being of and emotional regulation of staff is treated as highly important to prevent burn-out, stress –related absence, or leaving the profession through stress- related illness, secondary trauma and/or feeling blamed or under-valued.
- Our school provides staff wellbeing spaces which are there to enable staff to take the space they need to reflect and rejuvenate which supports the release of natural anti-stress and pro-social neurochemicals (opioids and oxytocin).

REFLECT:

- The adults in our school feel confident to develop relationships with pupils, their families and each other and to have the courageous conversations about their experiences so far.
- Our school promotes the exploration of conversations with our pupils that helps to make sense of their life, to develop a language for their emotions and a narrative that makes sense of their experiences and how they feel. Supporting our pupils to understand their thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and reactions and in doing so enables them to identify and explore new options and strategies for ways forward with their challenges.
- Staff development and training to help children move from 'behaving' their trauma/painful life experiences, to reflecting on those experiences.
- A Positive Behaviour Support Policy based not on punishment, but sanctions, resolution and interactive repair (e.g. restorative conversations).
- Within the context of an established and trusted relationship with a member of staff, pupils are given the means and opportunity to symbolise painful life experiences through images as well as words, as a key part of 'working through' these experiences. Means include the provision of different modes of expression, e.g. art/play/ music/sand/emotion worksheets/emotion cards.
- A PSHE curriculum that encourages personal reflection and mindfulness that provides knowledge alongside personal decision-making.

- Staff training and development in the art of good listening, dialogue, empathy and understanding – and commitment to developing practice by practitioners.

UNICEF Rights Respecting School

We are proud to hold the Rights Respecting School silver accreditation award. The Rights Respecting school award (RRSA) is an initiative run by UNICEF to encourage schools to place the rights of the child at the heart of the school ethos and curriculum by embedding the United Nations convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC) into all aspects of school life.

George White Junior School aims to create an environment that not only fosters academic achievement but also meets the social, emotional and diverse needs of all children in a nurturing and respectful way. As we work towards our goal of becoming a Rights Respecting gold school, we are supporting our pupils, your children, to realise their own rights and the rights of other children, locally, nationally and globally enabling them to become citizens of the world.

Ultimately the award threads through all aspects of school life creating a positive and safe environment that fosters mutual respect for all children where they can reach their full potential and become confident, happy, tolerant and respectful individuals who are accepting of differences and diversity.

Additional information is available on the UNICEF website.

The Rights Respecting Schools Award | UNICEF UK

Safe Touch

Research shows clearly that healthy pro-social brain development requires access to safe touch as one of the means of calming, soothing and containing distress for a frightened, sad or angry child. It is essential for all children to learn the difference between safe and unsafe touch and to experience having their strongest emotions contained, validated, accepted and soothed by a significant adult.

If children are behaving in unacceptable, threatening, dangerous, aggressive or out of control ways, they have not yet learned how their strongest emotional reactions can be contained, channelled and communicated safely.

In recognition of this, under special, agreed and supervised conditions, specially trained staff will consider using safe touch as one of the means available to them, for example to calm a distressed child or encourage or affirm an anxious child or to support a child with low self-esteem.

Safe touch used to calm, soothe and regulate a child's emotions is a needed developmental experience. The brain does not develop neuronal pathways to initiate calming and self- soothing unless and until this safe emotional regulation has been experienced within a positive relationship with a significant adult.

The appropriate use of safe touch is defined by situations in which abstinence would actually be inhumane, unkind and potentially psychologically or neuro-biologically damaging. Refraining from physically, safely holding a child in the face of their intense grief, stress and/or rage reactions can lead to a state of hyper-arousal, in which toxic levels of stress chemicals are released in the body and brain. The severely damaging long-term effects of this state have been intensively researched worldwide and are well documented.

Rewards and Celebrations

House Points

House points can be earned for all positive and kind behaviours seen and shown. House points are totalled each week and shared with pupils in our Friday Celebration Assembly. The house with the most points receives the house point cup

Post Cards

Every week up to 3 pupils from each class are nominated to receive a post card award which is read aloud by the class teacher and presented in the Friday Celebration Assembly. Post cards are sent home with the child and 5 house points awarded.

The Role of the School Community

Children: • Work towards showing the school values *Be kind *Be confident *Be honest *Be respectful • Be open to reflecting on mistakes and open to learning opportunities.	Emotionally available adults at school (Class teachers, TAs and support staff): • Have high expectations and be ready to give high support for children to succeed in meeting this expectation. • Listen to verbal or non-verbal communication from children. • Be emotionally available.	Emotionally available adults at home (Parents and carers): • Be willing to work with school adults to support the emotional literacy and life chances of their children. • Attend school meetings such as parents evening and engage with school communications such as newsletters and phone calls. • Be emotionally available
Middle Leaders in school: • Be Visible and present around school and with the local community as appropriate. • Offer aid to other teachers when supporting children with behaviour. • Offer aid to other teachers when communicating behaviours to parents/carers • Uphold GWJS's high expectations by identifying CPD needs and through discussions with SLT	Senior Leadership Team, DSL, Pastoral team and SENCO: • Be visible and present around the school and local community. • Support with setting up positive behaviour plans. • Organising CPD for staff • Monitor CPOMS to support children and identify behavioural communication. • Monitor the relationship and behaviour policy. • Give the opportunity for staff to feel, felt, valued and heard. • Monitor and regularly review contributing factors such as RSE curriculum.	Trust: • Approval of policies • Support the school to ensure high expectations of behaviour are being met • Reviews of fixed term and permanent exclusions.

	• Guide staff, families and children through serious behaviour breaches.	

Staff wellbeing

Staff wellbeing is a priority at George White Junior School, and we acknowledge the challenges of being an emotionally available adult to children and school families and leading with empathy can have an emotional toll on school staff. We foster a culture of open and honest conversations and support each other as a school team and community. Pastoral support, supervision and informational conversations are built into school life within school and opportunities for conversation with outside members of the school's community are made known to staff.

Our Senior Mental Health Lead at George White Junior School is Leighane Waller.

Sanctions/consequences

Sanctions and consequences will be used to support children in their understanding of the actions of their behaviour. We use the steps to support (see appendix A) to give children support to reach the high levels of behaviour expectation we hold at George White.

Internal Exclusion

Internal exclusion within school may be used, usually as an interim step to avoid external exclusion. A child in internal exclusion will be given work by their class teacher – this will be completed under supervision by an adult. There will be no unsupervised access to the playground, cloakroom or hall during this time. Parents/carers will be informed, and a reintegration meeting will take place at the end of the internal exclusion period and before the child returns to class.

Exclusion

Continued breaches of discipline may lead to fixed term exclusion. Fixed term exclusion may also be used immediately where there has been a very serious breach of discipline. Further continued breaches of discipline may lead to permanent exclusion from George White Junior School. In all cases of exclusion, DFE advice and Local Authority advice and formal procedures will be followed. These include procedures for communicating with parents/carers.

Following the return to school after a fixed term exclusion, a reintegration meeting will take place with senior leaders, parents/carers and the child before returning back to class.

Safety

There may be rare occasions when a child puts themselves or others in danger or is hurting themselves or others. Staff may need to restrain them using a minimum of force for a minimum length of time. In extreme situations a 'Step Up' approach will be used to ensure recognised safe handling. All staff at George White Junior School have received 'Step On' training and all middle and senior leaders are trained in 'Step Up'. Following the use of force parents will be notified following school procedure with a form that will be sent via the school office within 24 hours.

Holly Greenwood has been trained by Norfolk Steps as a lead professional and is responsible for ensuring staff training is up to date and reviewed regularly.

Appendix A

Steps to Support

At Geroge White Junior School we have high expectations for all children we also acknowledge that for some children they may benefit from a high level of support to help them reach the expectations of the school. The steps to support are used by adults in school in partnership with the school community (parents/carers and children) as an example of steps that can be taken to engage children in their learning and to allow them to become a thriving member of our school community.

	Behaviour Displayed	Action Taken
Step 1	*Disengagement *Lack of focus *Emotional	*Understanding of why a child might be displaying this behaviour. *Consideration of Maslow's needs theory. *Consideration of children's ACEs. *Reflection of quality first teaching. *CPOMS monitoring
Step 2	*Not following instructions *Talking during lessons *Inappropriate words used.	*Adaptation to quality first teaching *Verbal behaviour reminders *Change to seating position in class *Positive praise and restorative conversations used *CPOMS monitoring
Step 3	*Persistently not following instruction *Swearing *Persistent talking in lessons *Disrupting others learning *Causing physical or emotional harm to others	*Conversation with a Middle Leader if appropriate *Spending break/lunch completing missed work- Acknowledgement is given that some children need increased movement breaks to support their behaviour needs. *Restorative conversation *CPOMS monitoring
Step 4	*Physical aggression towards a child or adult *Aggressive or hurtful language used towards someone else *Damage to property *Racist/discriminatory language *Attempting to leave the school site	*Possible internal exclusion *Possible FEX *Possible PEX *Parent Meeting *Possible involvement from another agency *Risk assessment created or reviewed. *Pastoral plan created or reviewed. *Plan for restorative conversations/education to be undertaken to support understanding. *CPOMS monitoring
Step 5	*Persistent serious and dangerous behaviour. *Aggression or damaging property in a manner that is serious and unsafe. *Committing criminal acts	Repeat step 4 *Application to SRBs completed. *Weekly meetings with parents.

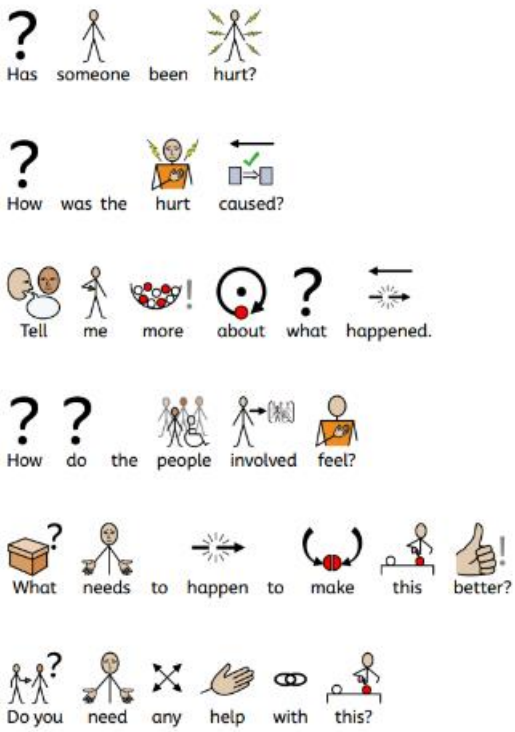
	*Persistent use of racist/discriminatory/deformational language used after education has been given.	*CPOMS monitoring

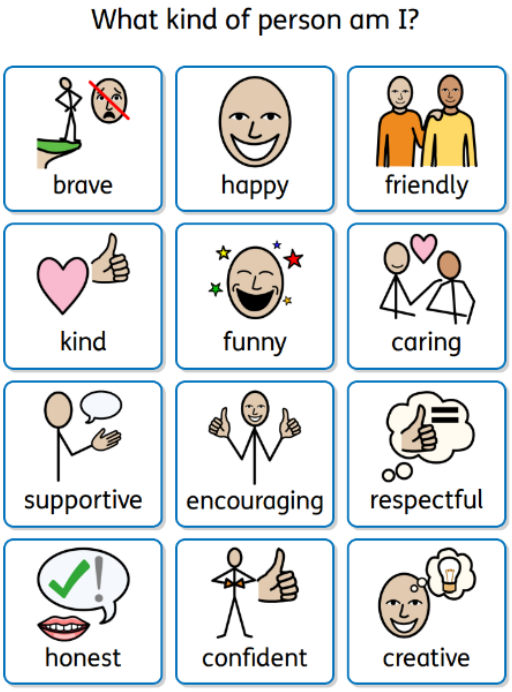
Appendix B

Restorative Practices

Being 'Restorative' focuses on building positive relationships based on respect and fairness. In turn this creates a community that is supportive, accountable and respectful. We believe that every individual is responsible for their own behaviour. The Restorative framework is based upon 'knowing the effect that I have on others'. Making changes to the way we approach incidences and issues provides children, and others, the opportunity to think about how they relate to each other and how they can find positive ways of repairing harm caused, rather than focusing solely on punishing poor behaviour or individuals avoiding taking responsibility for their actions. Children and adults are encouraged to put things right together. All members of staff understand the importance of modelling positive language, behaviour and take time to develop positive and meaningful relationships with colleagues and pupils. When positive relationships are developed and connections are made individuals are less likely to cause harm to others or choose to damage relationships.

Below are some examples of resources that could support restorative conversations.





There are many types of behaviour which may be encountered in school, including peer on peer abuse, discrimination and bullying. Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion, gender, identity or culture
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)
- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobic bullying)
- Bullying relating to hazing
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying relating to the financial situation of a pupil at home
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying
- Bullying via technology –"online bullying"

In order to help everyone understand the meaning of these terms we have produced the following explanations which we use within school.

Child on child abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child on child abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment (see below); physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. George White Junior School ensures all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

At George White Junior School we are aware that some groups are potentially more at risk: SEND and LGBTQ+ children are at greater risk.

At George White Junior School, it is made clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.

At George White Junior School, we do not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys/girls being boys/girls".

At George White Junior School we challenge behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Any allegations of sexual violence and harassment will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). Any decisions following investigation will be made on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL or DDSL taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

Discrimination

This is not giving equal respect to an individual on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. School will deal with any form of discrimination quickly, consistently and effectively whenever it occurs.

Bullying

This may be verbal, physical, written, telling others that they will be "getting done" or criticising their work. **Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated often over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves**. Bullying can be in many forms, for example:

Physical - hitting, kicking and taking belongings

Verbal - name calling, insulting and racist or hurtful remarks.

It is also bullying if someone is teased repeatedly

Indirect - spreading nasty stories or excluding someone from a social group

Written - notes, letters, messages

Cyber - text messaging, comments on social networking sites, e-mails, mobile phone photographs/video

It is not bullying if two pupils of equal power and strength have an occasional quarrel or fight.

Children can form and break friendships many times during their school life and this is part of normal development among children of primary school age. Learning to deal with disagreements, learning how to compromise and how to resolve arguments/conflicts are an important part of a child's social development. The school reinforces anti-bullying messages through PSHE lessons. Staff are expected to encourage children to talk about worries/concerns. They should also encourage children to report incidents at the time they take place in order for staff to be able to deal fairly and consistently with each circumstance in line with the Behaviour Policy. Any allegations of bullying are investigated fully and if substantiated then the person being bullied will be given support. This could be peer support from a willing trusted friend as well as clear procedures regarding which adults to go to if the problem persists or if they feel their concern has not been dealt with. Restorative practice techniques will also be implemented.

George White Junior School is a proud supporter of the Diana Project, an antibullying project that works with schools to help children understand bullying type behaviours. School staff and children support this initiative and regularly lead assemblies.

Staff at George White Junior School recognise that some children with special needs and/or disability (SEND) and/or medical issues or those who are 'looked after' (LAC) may become targets for bullying within a school setting because of their particular need. This may range from teasing about not being able to do a task, to intimidation and exclusion from friendship groups.

All staff are to be aware of the needs of such class members. Teacher focus will be on providing appropriate work where they can achieve, praise for their achievements in front of the other learners, adapting teaching to encourage paired, group and class work where their contributions are valued, and fully exploring any situations where the child may appear vulnerable to bullying.

The Leadership Team, and the Behaviours for Learning Lead, will consider time to talk to vulnerable pupils, discussions with other children and friendship groups, conversations with parents, support plans, and so on to prevent and/or reduce any situations where a child with needs may be open to bullying.

The Behaviour Policy and Anti-bullying Statement were written by Holly Greenwood September2026