



St Meriadoc Nursery & Infant Academy  
St Meriadoc Junior Academy

## Behaviour & Emotional Regulation Policy

<b>Approved by:</b>	LGB	<b>Date:</b> Jan 2025
<b>Last reviewed:</b>	N/A	
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## Aims

At St Meriadoc we want every member of the school community to feel valued and respected and to behave in a considerate and respectful way towards others. We want to help our children to grow in a safe, secure and inspiring environment, and to become positive, responsible and increasingly independent members of the school and the wider community. Our Behaviour and Emotional Regulation Policy is designed to ensure that our school vision 'Let your Light Shine' is embedded in everything that we do. Emotional wellbeing and self-regulation strategies to improve children's behaviour, self-esteem and their ability to learn are central to this.

## Our Ethos

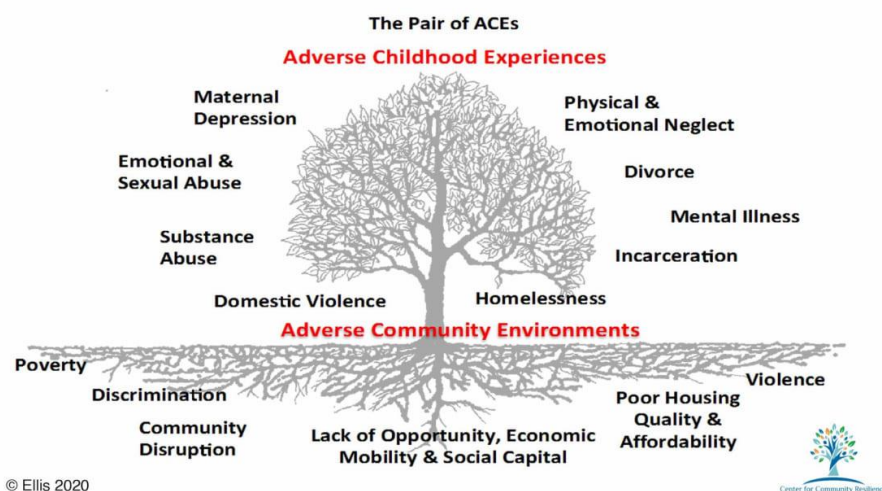
*A child's behaviour reflects the on-going interactions between experiences, environments, and their relationships with adults - (Gilbert et al, 2021, p.15).*

At St Meriadoc we recognise that all behaviour is viewed as communication and behaviour that challenges is a way in which a child or young person may express negative emotions such as frustration, anger, distress, anxiety, fear, shame, or sadness. Behaviour that challenges also occurs when the demands of a situation are beyond the child's capacity to respond, due to individual needs or a combination of both (Greene, 1998).

Behaviour that challenges may not always make sense to the observer, but it is likely to reflect a learnt response to adapt to a current or past situation, as an attempt to get needs met.

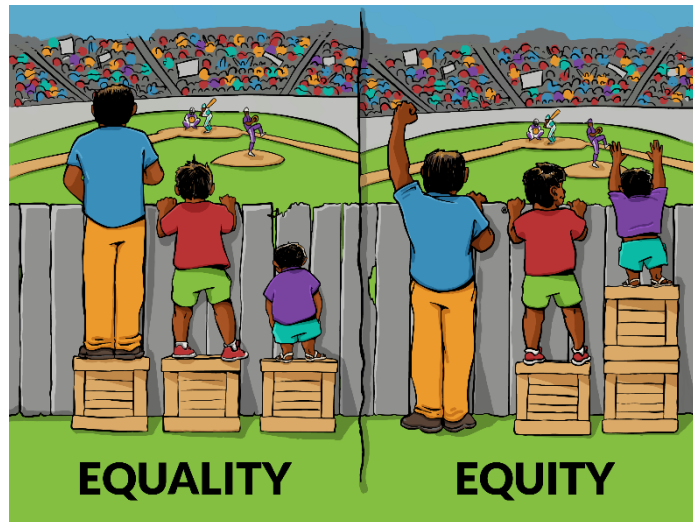
We value and understand that every child has had a unique set of early life experiences, and we recognise that a child's ability to self-regulate can be impacted by many things. At St Meriadoc we understand that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that occur in childhood, which potentially affect development and can have a long-term impact into adulthood. This could be a single event, or long term, repeated experiences.

However, many individuals do not experience subsequent difficulties despite experiencing one or more ACEs. Protective factors and Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) that can counter the impact of ACEs include: a positive relationship with an emotionally available adult, talking about feelings, friendships, a sense of belonging at school, community engagement, and supportive employers and services (Bethell et al, 2019). At St Meriadoc we recognise the importance of the impact of ACEs, and how to support children who have experienced them to recover and thrive.



We consider each child as an individual and we cultivate a non-judgmental, curious and empathic attitude towards behaviour. We maintain clear boundaries and high expectations around behaviour and understand

that in order to help children feel safe, their educational environment needs to be high in both nurture and structure. Some children need more support than others to manage their emotions and self-regulation skills, in order to meet our behaviour expectations. We therefore understand that being 'fair' is not about every child getting the same (equality) but about every child getting what they need, at their individual stage of development.



A fundamental part of our philosophy is our 'Relational Approach' - developing positive relationships with all of our children, our families and all adults. We define 'relational' as 'Being mindful of our relationship with all children and adults and using opportunities to support them by forming and sustaining quality relationships'.

### **Our Approach to Promoting Emotional Regulation**

At St Meriadoc we have adopted key principles that have been derived from theories, research and good practice.

- All adults working with children and young people have high expectations for their emotional wellbeing, mental health, safety, behaviour, engagement in learning, inclusion, progress, achievements, and aspirations.
- The whole school community should value diversity and challenge discrimination and prejudice, including being actively anti-racist, anti-homophobic, anti-transphobic, and anti-ableism. The environment should feel like a place of emotional and physical safety and inclusion for all.
- The most effective way to support a child to develop their emotional relational skills, social interaction skills, empathy, and resiliency, and therefore positive behaviour, is through supportive relationships with attuned, emotionally available adults, who promote and model safe and appropriate boundaries and behaviours through positive interactions. Children need to consistently experience co-regulation, a supportive process that occurs between emotionally responsive adults and children, that fosters the development of self-regulation. If children/young people feel safe, heard, understood, and cared about, they are more likely to begin to express their challenging feelings in a more constructive way.

## How do we do this?

### Supporting our children's mental health and well-being

At St Meriadoc we understand the importance of supporting all of our children's mental health and well-being. This is fundamental to what we do and forms an integral part of our curriculum. We support our pupils in a variety of ways, here are a few examples:

We develop relationships with our children so that they have trusted adults in school.

We foster a culture of belonging so everyone feels a valued part of our school.

We teach our children to recognise their emotions.

We provide our children with strategies to help manage their emotions.

We ensure our pupils are given lots of opportunities to be active.

Through our curriculum we teach our children how to keep themselves and their bodies healthy.

Our staff carefully assess the social, mental and health and well-being of all our pupils.

We provide support for our families through our pastoral team. This includes signposting families to services to support their own mental health and well-being.

### Trauma Informed approach

Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) is an approach we use that recognises that anyone may have experienced trauma or ACEs and that individuals with a history of trauma may experience barriers to engaging with school life. We understand that some children may require additional support to recover and thrive.

#### PACE

The PACE framework, developed by Dan Hughes (Clinical Psychologist), enables adults to show unconditional positive regard so that the child or young person can feel warmth, nurture and connection. It is a way of thinking, feeling, behaving, and communicating to enable a child or young person feel safe. It is built on the importance of relationships where the child or young person can feel special, loved, and held in mind. By experiencing an adult demonstrating the aspects of PACE, children are enabled to feel good about themselves, worthy of attention, and able to form meaningful and trusting relationships.

**Playfulness** is about creating an atmosphere of lightness and interest when you communicate. Using a light, story-telling tone to your voice, having fun, and expressing joy. Being playful helps a child or young person to cope with their positive feelings, develop a sense of humour, and to be open to and experience what is positive in their life, one step at a time.

**Acceptance** is about creating a sense of safety by communicating to the child or young person that their feelings, thoughts, urges, motives, and perceptions are accepted without judgement. This does not mean accepting harmful or hurtful behaviour, it is about setting limits on behaviour whilst accepting their motives for it.

**Curiosity** is when we help a child or young person to become reflective and aware of their inner self and the drives of their behaviour, and to be able to communicate this to others. Curiosity helps adults to attempt to understand what drives behaviour without judgement or shame and in turn helps the child or young person to start to understand themselves.

**Empathy** allows the child or young person to understand that the adult cares about their feelings and experiences through the adult's understanding of their experiences and emotions. An empathic adult will stay with the child or young person emotionally and will provide comfort and support until they no longer need it, so that they understand that they are not alone.

DDP Network (Accessed 2022)

### **Emotion coaching**

Emotion Coaching is an evidence-based approach which draws upon neuroscience and attachment theory. It focuses on developing and maintaining relationships with children and young people to support their social, emotional, and mental health through experiencing co-regulation. This is when an attuned adult empathises with the emotional state and provides a sense of containment and support to respond to the emotions through modelling and teaching. Emotion coaching enables children to develop skills in managing their own feelings and behaviour over time, through helping them to understand the different emotions they experience, why they occur, and how to respond to them positively and constructively.

- Step 1: We recognise the child's feelings - (STAR - Stop, Think, Attune, Reflect): We make a connection with the child before we correct their behaviour. We are curious and try to think what feelings might be behind the behaviour. We empathise with their feelings, (not their behaviour).
- Step 2: We validate their feelings and label them: 'I noticed you looking sad... or 'I can see that you get angry when that happens'.
- Step 3: When the child is calm we set limits (if needed) We discuss that although it is ok to feel a particular way it is not ok to behave in a certain way. We will also talk about school rules or expectations that may have been broken.
- Step 4: We problem solve with the child. We support them to identify how to make the situation better, identifying what needs to happen as a result. This aims to empower the child to do something positive about their behaviour and supports them to self-regulate if faced with a similar situation in the future

### **Restorative Approaches**

Restorative justice is an approach to responding to negative behaviour impacting upon others which focuses on rectifying and repairing situations and relationships, rather than assigning blame and giving punishments. As adults, we need to enable children/young people to learn from experiences and move forward constructively with more developed social interaction skills and self-esteem; sanctions alone may not achieve this. Restorative approaches involve much more than just saying sorry, they encourage individuals to care about consequences rather than simply fearing them and require adults with a high level of skill to facilitate successfully. Restorative approaches take the view that individuals are more likely to co-operate and make positive changes when authority figures do things with them, rather than to them or for them.

Restorative approaches are built on values which separate the person from the behaviour. They promote accountability and seek to repair any harm caused in a situation. The approach enables those who have been harmed to convey the impact of the harm to those responsible, and for those responsible to acknowledge this impact and take steps to put it right. A restorative approach may include having a 'restorative conversation' facilitated by an adult, or with more serious incidents, a formal meeting which involves parents or families where appropriate.

### **Consequences that Teach**

The following stages will be used to support the behaviour of pupils. Regular behaviour incidents may lead to a child being put on a positive behaviour plan.

A serious breach of the behaviour policy both inside and outside of school or online may lead to a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

### **Level 1**

- Refer to the school rules regularly 'Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe'
- Use whole class communications 'Is everyone showing me that they are ready?'
- Give a reminder of the expectations to individuals 'Be Ready, Respectful, Safe delivered privately wherever possible. Empathise with how the child may be feeling and show you care.

**'I've noticed that... you were not ready.'**

**'You know the school rules ready, respectful, safe.'**

**'I expect you to... Thank you for listening'.**

**Walk away as soon as you have finished and praise pupils who are getting it right.**

### **Level 2**

Should a pupil continue to not follow the school rules the adults will:

- Direct the child to a regulation area inside or outside of the classroom this will give the child an opportunity to calm and regulate themselves. This may include breathing exercises, sensory resources or activities.
- An adult will then support the child to identify their emotion and make a plan for them to return to learning.

**'Are you okay? I thought it would be better to talk away from everything. I wondered what was up.'**

**'I asked to speak to you because I noticed you were struggling to keep to our rules ready, respect, safe.'**

**'This is a just a pause I want to get you back to learning.'**

**'We have agreed that ..... is one of our rules. I need you to .....'**

**'What do you need most right now to help you get back to learning?'**

**'Okay ,we need to get back into learning. When you go back, I will make it easier to go back by.....(move desk, adult support)**

### **Level 3**

Should a pupil's behaviour become unsafe or disruptive towards other, children then will be supported by a member of staff to go to a safe space within the school grounds. Our emotion coaching approach will be used to try and deescalate the pupil's behaviour.

Once calm, a restorative process will begin. This will only happen once the child is regulated and ready. **See Appendix 1 for Reflect and Reset storyboard which may be used with the child.**

### **The Restorative Process**

When the child is calm and regulated, we begin the storytelling process. It allows the children to share their version of what happened. If more than one child is involved in an incident, they may use a 'Reflect and Reset' storyboard at the same time to share their version of what happened. This supports children to process the connections between their thoughts, feelings and behaviour before sharing verbally. It also gives the child an opportunity to reflect on the impact of their action. The story telling boards are stage and age appropriate.

Once children have completed their storyboard, they are supported by an adult to come to an agreement about a possible resolution. This is framed as 'What can you do to make it right?' Children are given a visual before the conversation to give them time to think and have some starting points.

Adults will talk through the story board with empathy giving children an opportunity and guiding discussion about impact. The adults reassuring the child that the issue can be resolved and ways in which they can help prevent this from happening again. The adult supports the child to create a plan in which they can use in the future.

The purpose of this restorative conversation is to teach children strategies and life skills that they can use to make positive behaviour choices and recognise and manage their emotions effectively whilst maintaining high expectations of behaviour.

### **Serious incidents**

Depending on the age of the children these incidents will be dealt with at the discretion of the school senior leaders. Such incidents could include:

- **Fighting and physical violent towards staff or pupils**
- **All forms of bullying**
- **Racist, sexist or homophobic comments**
- **Inappropriate name calling**
- **Using abusive/offensive language**
- **Persistent breaches of the behaviour policy.**

When dealing with an episode of extreme behaviour, physical intervention may be needed if they or another person is unsafe. This will only be used as last resort. The school will record all serious behaviour incidents on My Concern

Fixed term suspensions and permanent exclusions may occur following extreme incidents at the discretion of the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

### **Beyond the School Gate**

Whilst this behaviour policy refers mainly to the behaviours of pupils within school premises, the school reserve the right to address behaviour beyond the school gate, including online. Our policy covers any inappropriate behaviour when children are:

- taking part in any school organised or school related activity
- travelling to or from school
- wearing school uniform
- in some way identifiable as a pupil from our school
- poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school In the incidences above, the headteacher may notify the police of any actions taken against a pupil. If the behaviour is criminal or causes threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the anti-bullying policy and exclusion policy.**