

learn,aspire,achieve

Shirehampton Primary School



Learn, Aspire, Achieve

Shirehampton Primary School

Behaviour Policy

Last updated: July 2014

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1. The purpose of this document

The purpose of this policy document is to clearly outline the practices and procedures undertaken at Shirehampton Primary School to support the development of positive behaviour and community cohesion.

All practices and procedures described below are inspired by, and in line with, the principles of Restorative Approaches (RA). Restorative Approaches in Schools (RAiS) have grown out of a set of practices under the heading of Restorative Justice (RJ). RJ represents a core aspect of services provided by Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) across the United Kingdom.

Both RJ and RAiS have a substantial evidence-base in terms of reducing harmful behaviour, reducing repeat harmful behaviour and rates of recidivism, high levels of satisfaction on the part of those who are part of restorative practices and increased feelings of safety and emotional wellbeing on the part of community members. This evidence-base provides the very strong rationale for the school's adoption of RAiS.

2. The importance of values

There exists a considerable evidence-base to show that motivation levels increase when people are supported and empowered to engage in activities that are in the service of their values. Further, there is an emerging evidence-base within the Occupational Health literature indicating that people's emotional wellbeing improves when their work-based activities are consistent with their values. Put simply, people are more likely to be happy and to fully commit to what they are doing if the aim of what they are doing is something they really care about.

At Shirehampton Primary, the voices of all stakeholders (children, young people, staff and parents) are heard within our Values and Aims document. We believe that all practices and procedures that foster the development of positive behaviour and community cohesion should be driven by the collective values of our school community members.

2.1. Our values

As with all of Shirehampton Primary's policy documents, all information detailed within this document are wholly consistent with, and informed by, the school's Values and Aims

document. As such, woven into the practices and procedures described below, the reader should be able to identify the central importance given to:

- **Learning** within a safe environment that allows all children to achieve their full potential
- The facilitation of **positive attitudes** towards one another and towards oneself
- **Perseverance** and self-belief
- **Respect** for, and due consideration towards, all other members of the school community – children, young people and adults alike.
- **Happiness** in the sense of feeling valued and emotionally secure
- The development and maintenance of positive **relationships** between all school community members

2.2. The principles of Restorative Approaches

RAiS was chosen as the framework through which positive behaviours should be encouraged at Shirehampton Primary because the principles and values of RAiS are wholly consistent and compatible with the school's own values, detailed above.

One of the core principles of RAiS is that becoming able to relate positively, and to act respectfully, towards others is a learning process. Few educators would disagree that learning basic literacy and numeracy skills is a learning process, nor that this is a process that needs to be sensitively supported. At Shirehampton, we feel the same way about developing positive behaviour, social competence and emotional wellbeing and, as such, enabling this learning process is a core part of our school's provisions.

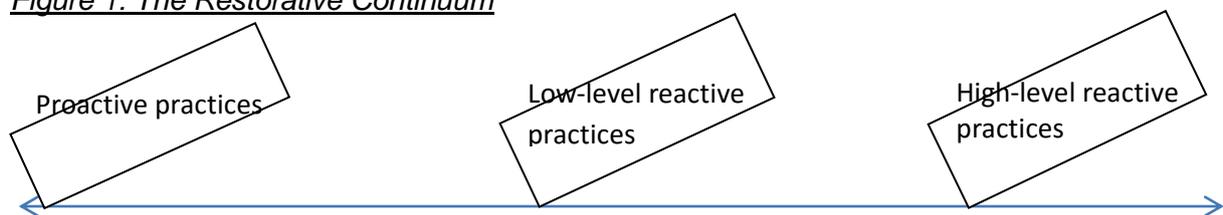
Another core principle of RAiS is the notion of Empowerment. This concept has been described by one leading professor on the subject as the single common factor running through all restorative practices. Empowering community members – children, young people and adults – does not mean allowing people to do whatever they want, of course. We embrace the notion of Directed Empowerment. This means ensuring that relevant community members have a voice that is listened to with regard to decisions that affect them wherever possible and realistic and within the confines of an appropriate framework. Several examples of this, both within and outside of the classroom, are given below.

A further principle of RAiS is the central importance of taking responsibility for one's own actions. Restorative approaches are not an *easy way out*. When used as a response to a harmful incident, there will usually be a consequence that is experienced negatively by the

person whose action(s) has resulted in harm or disruption. This may just be the experience of having a supportive, yet challenging, conversation. In addition, it may also be a consequence that is decided through a restorative conversation. However, the guiding principles are that a) those involved are supported to decide upon the consequences themselves and b) the response process provides an opportunity to learn by reflecting on how to approach similar situations in the future.

Whilst RJ was developed as an alternative judicial response to criminal behaviour, RAiS can be much more than this. At Shirehampton Primary, we engage in practices that exist along a continuum from proactive/preventative to reactive. Figure one, below, illustrates this.

Figure 1: The Restorative Continuum



3. Supporting positive behaviour in the classroom

3.1. Proactive practices in class

Community time

Time is set aside for Community Time in every classroom. For every class, this happens daily first thing in the morning. In part to facilitate this, classrooms open at the earlier-than-normal time of 8.40am to support children's transition into the learning environment. During these sessions, class teachers facilitate activities that function to foster positive relationships, community cohesion (both at a whole-class level and at a small-group level) and effective group-work skills. A Thrive-based approach is employed across the school during these times to develop and enrich children's emotional literacy skill, thus reducing barriers to participation in the learning process.

Collaborative rule setting

All children participate in the design and implementation of rules in their classroom. Some classes have chosen to call these Social Bonds, rather than rules, to emphasise the

collaborative nature of these agreements. These rule or social bonds are developed at the beginning of the school year and are re-visited termly, in sessions facilitated by the class teacher. The purpose of this process, and the regular revisits, is to help children reflect on the kinds of social contracts that lead to positive social outcomes (as well as less positive outcomes) and to facilitate children's social and moral development. All children not only contribute towards but also sign the Class Contract to maximise their sense of ownership of the rule/social bonds.

Personal, Social and Health Education

PSHE sessions take place at least once weekly for 45 minutes in Key-stage One and for 60 minutes in Key-stage Two. Materials and activities from Jenny Mosley's Circle Time, Thrive and SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspect of Learning) are examples of resources commonly drawn upon by in-class staff in these sessions.

3.2. Reactive practices in class

Restorative conversations

All staff at Shirehampton Primary have been trained in the use of restorative approaches. This training included a focus on how to have quick and relatively informal restorative conversations with children, or with staff, when behaviour is in some sense disrupting the learning environment. An approximate script (see Appendix 1, below) provides a useful guide for this and is visible in all classrooms. Staff understand that this is a guide only and should not be used in too rigid a manner. The function of these conversations is, in an emotionally supportive manner, to raise children's awareness of the impact of their behaviour upon others.

Revisiting classroom rules and the lesson time behaviour flow chart

When the behaviour of a child or children has reached a level whereby brief restorative conversations are not proving effective, another strategy that is used is to stop the lesson and spend a short amount of time revisiting the classroom rules/social bonds. The function of these conversations is not to simply tell children what they agreed to and to insist that they adhere to the terms agreed to. Rather, these are conversations that facilitate a learning process (especially regarding moral and social development and behaviour), encourage responsibility-taking and explore how to avoid similar incidents happening again in the

future. The five-step behaviour procedure described in Appendix 3 provide step-by-step guidelines for staff.

4. Supporting positive behaviour outside of the classroom

4.1. Proactive practices outside of the classroom

Thrive-Me Fact Files

As of September 2014, children who have additional social, mental and emotional needs for whom it is deemed appropriate will have a Thrive-Me Fact File. These are files containing individual information about a child's additional support needs and useful strategies for supporting those needs

Lunch time clubs

These clubs are in place for children who are socially vulnerable and/or have social skills difficulties. They function daily and provide structured social skills activities based on specific individual needs. This includes sports based activities facilitated by qualified sports coaches.

Rota for the cage

The cage has a rota for children of different year groups. The rota is designed in a fair way, shared out across all children in the school.

Duration of lunchtime play

Lunchtimes are shorter for Key-stage two pupils in order to a) maximise learning opportunities and b) maintain safe playgrounds and unstructured times. This has been actioned because it has previously been observed that playtimes of greater duration tend to result in higher incidents of unsafe behaviour.

4.2. Reactive practices outside of the classroom

Corridor conferences

Corridor conferences are very brief restorative conversations, in response to minor incidents of unsafe behaviour, which may or may not (contrary to the name) take place in a school corridor. These always take place outside of the classroom and are responses to incidents of what we often think of as *a quick reminder* about what constitutes safe behaviour in school. Leaving coats and bags on the floor, running in the corridor or playfully bumping into

one another in the dinner cue are examples of contexts in which corridor conferences are appropriate.

Peer mediators

Shirehampton Primary has been training Year-Six children as peer mediators for over three years now. This process is led by our Learning Mentor and children are awarded the role once they have fulfilled the training requirements.

The Restorative Corner

The school playground has a Restorative Corner, sheltered from poor weather in case it is raining, which children can come to in order to resolve their own disputes, or to seek support from an SMSA or teaching staff member on playground duty in doing so. This is used as a space for repairing harm and restoring a sense of safety and emotional wellbeing, not as a space for punishment or retribution to take place.

Face-to-face mediation

If it is possible, and if they feel able to, it is preferable for those involved in a harmful incident to engage in face-to-face mediation. This is because doing so provides a first-hand opportunity for an involved party to understand their contribution to the presenting difficulty. Whilst these can often be difficult conversations, they can also be very positive because they can highlight in clear terms a) which acts foster positive relationships, b) which acts do not foster positive relationships and c) the likely consequences of choosing to act in one or other of these two ways. Face-to-face mediation (which could be adult → child, adult → adult or child → child) always involved two or more stakeholders and one trained restorative mediator. Often, before getting two stakeholders to meet face-to-face, it may be important for the mediator to have brief one-to-one conversations with each of them to a) find out what happened from their point of view and b) get their consent to organise a face-to-face meeting with the other party.

Shuttle mediation

Whilst face-to-face mediation is usually preferable, initial conversations with those involved might make it clear that they are not ready to meet face-to-face. Under these circumstances, the staff member facilitating the process will undertake shuttle mediation. This means talking to individuals separately, using the restorative questions described in Appendix 1, and “shuttling” information from one stakeholder to another in order to find a way of repairing the harm caused.

The role of SMSAs

SMSAs have a key role to play in promoting social skills, positive behaviour and emotional wellbeing during lunchtime and are supported by a teacher with Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) for most of this time.

In order to carry out their role effectively, SMSAs will meet at least termly with the Learning Mentor in order to discuss issues and be kept up to date with current policy, practices and procedures. These meetings will include support and reflection on how to use restorative approaches including using positive language and listening to all sides in a dispute.

All lunchtime behaviour incidents should be dealt with by SMSAs where possible. Any information that requires passing on to class teachers will be provided on the communication slip at the end of lunchtime.

5. Additional school practices and procedures that function both within and outside of the classroom

5.1 Praise for positive contributions to the school community

We praise and reward children for good behaviour in a variety of ways:

- Staff congratulate children on their successes wherever possible
- Staff give children team points
- Each week we nominate a child from each year group to be 'worker of the week'
- Each 'worker of the week' receives a certificate in the school assembly
- We distribute commendations to children, either for consistent good work or behaviour, or to acknowledge outstanding effort or acts of kindness in school
- This is in line with our Commendation Charter
- All classes have an opportunity to lead an achievement assembly where they are able to show examples of their best work

5.2: Awareness of and practice within current relevant legal frameworks

All members of staff have been made aware of the regulations regarding the use of force by teachers, as set out in DfE Circular 10/98, relating to section 550A of the Education Act 1996: *The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils*. Teachers in our school do not hit, push or slap children. Staff only intervene physically to safely hold children or to prevent

injury to a child, or if a child is in danger of hurting him/herself. The actions that we take are in line with government guidelines on the restraint of children.

5.3 Support for children with additional Social, Mental and Emotional needs

Shirehampton Primary have a range of resources and provisions to support pupils children with additional social, mental and emotional needs. The large pastoral team offer a range of support including a learning mentor, behaviour specialist teacher, play and art therapist a family link worker and a counsellor. All staff are thrived trained and a specialist teaching assistant has received training to work with those pupils who have diagnosis of ASD.

5.4 The role of the Head Teacher

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, to implement the school behaviour policy consistently throughout the school, and to report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy. It is also the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children in the school.

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

The Head Teacher keeps records of all reported serious incidents of misbehaviour.

The Head Teacher has the responsibility for giving fixed-term Exclusions to individual children for serious acts of misbehaviour. For repeated or very serious acts of harmful behaviour, the Head Teacher may permanently exclude a child. These actions are taken only after the school governors have been notified.

5.5. The role of parents

The school collaborates actively with parents, so that children receive consistent messages about how to behave at home and at school.

We explain the school rules in the school prospectus, and we invite and encourage parents to read them and support them.

Changes to the behaviour and discipline policy are drawn to parents' attention and procedures linked to this are highlighted through various communications. Our Parent Council will play an active role in evaluating the effectiveness of the behaviour and discipline policy and procedures and advising the school accordingly.

We expect and encourage parents to support their child's learning, and to cooperate 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 immediately if we have concerns about their child's welfare or behaviour.

5.6. The role of School Governors

The governing body has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on standards of discipline and behaviour, and of reviewing their effectiveness. The governors support the Head Teacher in adhering to these guidelines.

The Head Teacher has the day-to-day authority to implement the school's behaviour policy, but governors may give advice to the Head Teacher about particular related issues. The Head Teacher must take this into account when making decisions about matters relating to behaviour in school.

8. Exclusions and the reintegration process

At Shirehampton Primary, we aspire never to exclude a child from the school site. However, in line with our Values and Aims document, the safety of all community members is of paramount importance. As such, on the very rare occasion that we feel it is not possible to return a situation to an appropriate level of safety, it may be deemed necessary to enact an exclusion for a period of time, until the situation can be safely risk-assessed.

On the rare occasion that this happens, the school endeavours to follow restorative principles as part of the reintegration process. In most cases, this would mean convening a restorative conference, run by the school's Head Teacher or Assistant Head Teacher, to which all primary stakeholders would be invited. Primary stakeholders typically include:

- The child/ren or adult(s) whose actions have resulted in harm to others
- The child/ren or adult(s) who has been directly negatively affected by the incident(s)
- The parent(s) of the child/ren who were directly involved in the incident(s)

The school has adopted the standard national list of reasons for exclusion, and the standard guidance, *Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from School and Pupil Referral Units*. We refer to this guidance in any decision to exclude a child from school. The relevant Internet address is:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/workingwithothers/safeschools/exclusions

Only the Head Teacher (or the acting Head Teacher) has the power to exclude a child from school. The Head Teacher may exclude a child for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in any one school year. In extreme and exceptional circumstances the Head Teacher may exclude a child permanently. It is also possible for the Head Teacher to convert a fixed-term exclusion into a permanent exclusion, if the circumstances warrant this.

If the Head Teacher excludes a child, s/he informs the parents immediately, giving reasons for the exclusion. At the same time, the Head Teacher makes it clear to the parents that they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision to the school's governing body. The school informs the parents how to make any such appeal.

The Head Teacher informs the LEA and the governing body about any permanent exclusion, and about any fixed-term exclusions beyond five days in any one term.

The governing body itself cannot either exclude a child or extend the exclusion period made by the Head Teacher.

The governing body has a discipline committee which is made up of between three and five members. This committee considers any exclusion appeals on behalf of the governors.

When an appeals panel meets to consider an exclusion, they consider the circumstances in which the child was excluded as well as any representation by parents and the LEA, and consider whether the child should be reinstated.

If the governors' appeals panel decides that a child should be reinstated, the Head Teacher must comply with this ruling.

9. Appendices

9.1. Appendix 1: Restorative Questions:

1. *What happened/what is happening?*
2. *How has been/is being affected and how?*
3. *What do we need to do to put things right?*
4. *How do we ensure that things don't go wrong again?* (adapted from Hopkins, 2004)

9.2: Appendix 2: The impact of RAiS since its implementation at Shirehampton

Data collected regarding the impact of RAiS at Shirehampton Primary indicates the following:

- The number of referrals by class teachers to the senior leadership team reduced by more than five times (from 50 per term to just 9) over the first four-terms of implementation
- In a random sample questionnaire, 86% of children reported feeling safer at school
- In the same questionnaire, 80% of children reported feeling more able to effectively resolve their own conflicts without adult intervention

There is also considerable evidence of diffusion benefits into the local community, beyond the school grounds. The local police beat area within which the school is contained saw a 20.3% drop in police-reported anti-social behaviour (ASB) over the 12 months of implementation, as compared to the previous 12 months. This was compared with an overall rise in reported ASB of 0.5% across the city. Whilst it is important to note that a direct causal link cannot be inferred here, it is noteworthy that local police beat officers were consulted with and were unable to identify any other viable reason for this statistic

9.3. Appendix 3: Lesson time Behaviour flow-chart

