

Vallis First School

Relationships for Learning Policy 2024



Approved by the Governing Body of Vallis First School

Date: October 2024

Proposed Review Date: October 2025

This policy will be reviewed two-yearly, and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedures.

Relationships for Learning Policy 2024

Vallis First School is committed to creating an environment where positive relationships and high expectations of behaviour are at the heart of great learning. **Every** child and adult is expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same. Our relationships for learning policy guides staff to actively teach social and emotional competences of self-discipline rather than compliance.

The Purpose of our Relationships for Learning Policy is to provide simple guidance and practical procedures for staff and learners that: -

- Outline how children and adults are expected to behave.
- Recognise and positively encourage good behaviour.
- Promote self-esteem and self-control.
- Teach appropriate behaviour through positive interventions.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities.

Our Principles

Good behaviour is promoted at Vallis First School through the development of caring relationships, high quality teaching and procedures which:

- are consistent, fair and set clear expectations.
- require children and adults to treat everyone and everything with care and respect,
- teach children and adults to take control of their own behaviour and be responsible for the consequences of it,
- ensure that all members of our community are listened to and encouraged to listen to each other,
- build a community which values kindness, good humour and empathy.
- promote positive relationships for all.
- ensure that excellent behaviour is a minimum expectation.

Our Golden Rules set our expectations of behaviour: -

- Be ready
- Be safe
- Care

Our consistencies in practice

- Consistent, simple **rules/agreements/expectations**
- Consistent **language** and consistent response: referring to our golden rules, with simple and clear expectations reflected in all conversations about behaviour
- Consistent **follow up**: ensuring 'certainty' of approach at support staff, teacher and SLT level. Never passing problems to others, seeking support but never delegating.
- Consistent **positive reinforcement**: routines for reinforcing and celebrating positive behaviour.
- Consistent **consequences**: Defined, agreed and applied at the classroom level as well as established structures for more serious behaviours.
- Consistent **respect from all adults**. Even in the face of disrespectful learners!

- Consistent **models of emotional control**: Emotional restraint that is modelled and not just taught, staff as role models for learning.
- Consistently reinforced **routines** for behaviour around our sites.
- Consistent **environment**: consistent visual messages displayed for all to see.

Consistency lies in the behaviour of adults and not simply in the application of this policy and procedure. A truly consistent approach comes in the determination of every member of staff to hold firm.

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board

The VFS Full Governing Board will review this Relationships for Learning Policy in conjunction with the Headteacher and monitor the policy's effectiveness, holding the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing this Relationships for Learning Policy in conjunction with the Full Governing Board. The Headteacher will also approve this policy.

The Headteacher will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour and will monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure rewards and sanctions are applied consistently.

All Staff

- Meet and greet each child every day
- Refer to 'Ready, Safe, Care'
- Model positive behaviours and build relationships
- Use a visible recognition mechanism
- Be calm and give 'take up time' when going through the steps. Prevent before sanctions.
- Follow up every time, retain ownership and engage in reflective dialogue with learners.
- Never ignore or walk past learners who are behaving badly.

Teachers are not expected to deal with behaviour referrals in isolation. Rather they are to stand alongside colleagues to support, guide, model and show a unified consistency to learners. **Teachers will:** -

- Meet and greet learners at the beginning of the day
- Be a visible presence to encourage appropriate behaviour
- Support staff in returning learners to learning by sitting in on reparation meetings and supporting staff in conversations
- Plan lessons that engage, challenge and meet the needs of all learners
- Encourage the use of the recognition board, positive notes, emails and phone calls
- Regularly share good practice
- Support staff in managing learners with more complex or entrenched negative behaviours

Senior Leaders are not expected to deal with behaviour referrals in isolation. Rather they are to stand alongside colleagues to support, guide, model and show a unified consistency to learners. SLT will

- Take time to meet and greet learners at the beginning of the day
- Be a daily visible presence to encourage appropriate behaviour
- Celebrate staff, leaders and learners whose effort goes over and beyond expectations
- Regularly share good practice

- Ensure staff training needs are identified and targeted.
- Support teachers in managing learners with more complex or entrenched negative behaviours
- Use behaviour data to assess Relationships for Learning Policy and practice
- Regularly review provision for learners who fall beyond the range of written policies

Parents/Carers will

- Support their child in adhering to the Golden Rules
- Foster positive relationships with the school and engage with their child's learning.
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the class teacher promptly

Recognition and reward for effort

We recognise and reward learners who go 'over and above' our standards. Although there are tiered awards, our staff understand that a quiet word of personal praise can be as effective as a larger more public reward. It is not what you give but the way that you give it that counts. The use of praise in developing a positive atmosphere in the classroom cannot be overestimated. It is the key to developing positive relationships, including those learners who are hard to reach: -

Whole School level:

- Headteacher stickers
- Stickers and certificates
- Friday celebration assembly
- 'Milk Street Marvels' -over and above awards
- Hall points on the class 100 squares building to Headteacher's class reward. Points awards for following the rules during lunch, P.E and assembly in hall.
- Playground staff able to award 'Positive Pint Points' for individuals or class

Classroom level:

- Praise for right choice
- Thumbs up or visual recognition
- Verbal recognition and stickers
- Recognition board (4 cyclical steps towards a point on the 100 square)
- 100 square building towards class reward
- Postcard/phone call home

Some children sometimes seem incapable of accepting praise as they have a very low opinion of themselves, because they lack trust or because they think you are just using a technique. Persistence and patience will eventually change this but don't expect a quick reversal. "*When you are stumped by the behaviour, when you don't know what to do next, when nothing works, kindness is always the best response*" Paul Dix *When Adults Change, Behaviour Change* 2018.

Steps for Managing Behaviour

Engagement with learning is our primary aim. For the vast majority of learners, a gentle reminder or nudge in the right direction is all that is needed. Steps should always be gone through with care and consideration, taking individual needs into account where necessary. Praise the behaviour you want to see. Do not pander to attention seekers. All learners must be given 'take-up time' in between steps. It is not possible to leap or accelerate steps for repeated low-level disruption.

Steps	Action
1) Redirection	Gentle encouragement, a 'nudge' in the right direction, small act of kindness. Positive reinforcement of other children.
2) Reminder	A reminder of the expectations Ready, Safe, Care delivered privately wherever possible. Repeat reminders if necessary. Deescalate and decelerate where reasonable and take the initiative to keep things at this stage. Acknowledge any positive choices.
3) Caution	A clear verbal caution delivered privately wherever possible, making the learner aware of their behaviour and clearly outlining consequences if they continue. Possible consequences: Brief thinking time near adult, move seat, sit out + miss activity for 5 mins, miss some break, time in another class.
4) Time out	Give the learner a chance to reflect away from others. Speak to the learner privately and give them a final opportunity to engage. Offer a positive choice to do so. Use scripted approaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I've noticed that... - Because of that you need to. - I need you to make a good choice
5) Internal referral	If the behaviour persists: At this point the learner will be referred internally to another room in school for the remainder of the lesson. All internal referrals must be recorded on a 'Serious Incident' sheet/CPOMS/Bromcom.
6) Reparation	A restorative meeting should take place before the next lesson. If the reconciliation is unsuccessful the teacher should call on support from SLT who will support the reparation process.
7) Formal meeting	A meeting with the teacher, learner, SLT member & parent with agreed targets that will be monitored over 2 weeks.

Supporting beyond the classroom

Supporting Behaviour at Lunchtime

As part of our nurturing ethos, all staff are expected to engage with children and be proactive in managing and dealing with behaviour. To foster good relationships MDSA staff will consistently 'catch children being good' and share this with them. Behaviour incidents should be managed at lunch time in line with the policy.

Individual Behaviour Plans

Where a child is not responding to the usual incentives and sanctions outlined above an Individual Behaviour Plan will need to be put in place. It is the responsibility of the SENCO to meet with the relevant staff to look for any underlying issues which may be causing the behaviour. A behaviour plan will be agreed which allows all the adults involved to have a common understanding and achieve a consistent approach towards the child.

- Triggers for behaviours will be examined and modifications to the routine of environment made where possible.
- Any signs that negative behaviour may be about to occur are noted and early intervention strategies that work for the child are put into the plan, for example planned ignoring, distraction or humour.
- The process to follow for when the child's behaviour has escalated are also included, this may need to include physical intervention.
- Once a plan has been agreed parents are met with to explain the plan and systems put in place and to discuss how they can support this at home.

Positive Handling and Reasonable Force

Once physical intervention is needed with a child, a plan must be put in place should this happen again. This information will take the form of a 'Pastoral Support Plan'. The Plan will include:

- The specific measures are in place to prevent the need for restrictive physical intervention. Restrictive intervention will be a planned last resort.
- The specific procedure to be used if physical intervention is necessary using Team Teach procedures.
- Parent/carer involvement to ensure that they are clear about what specific action the school may take, when and why.

Administration:

- A copy of the Pastoral Support Plan needs to be shared with all those concerned including lunchtime staff and TAs.
- An Incident Record to be completed after any incident involving Restrictive Physical Intervention and then logged on CPOMS
- Parents/carers to be informed when an incident has taken place; parents/carers will be asked sign the Incident Record to show they have been informed
- Pastoral Support Plans and Incident Record folder to be stored centrally for a minimum of seven years after the child has left the school
- Procedures are in place to debrief staff and pupils after each incident

The Law allows for teachers and other people authorised by the Head Teacher to use Restrictive Physical Intervention to prevent a pupil doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- Injuring themselves
- Injuring others
- Causing damage to property
- Committing a criminal offence
- and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom. This may include the use of reasonable force to:
 - remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
 - prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
 - prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
 - prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
 - restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Physical handling may also be necessary in situations of clear danger or extreme urgency. Certain pupils may become distressed, agitated, or out of control and need calming with Restrictive Physical Intervention. It can only be used when there are good grounds for believing that immediate action is needed and is in the child's best interests and only minimum force will be necessary using sanctioned Team Teach holds.

Head teachers and authorised school staff may also use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search without consent for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm.

Restrictive Physical Intervention is where bodily contact using force is used it is an act of care and control, not a punishment. It refers to any instance where "reasonable force" is used to control or restrain pupils. It is important to ensure that the degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent.

All teaching and learning support staff are authorised by the Head Teacher to have control of pupils, and must act in accordance with this policy. All staff will receive Team Teach training so that any physical intervention carried out is safe and every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff.

Procedure in the event of a child running away from an adult

If children run out of class or the building and do not respond to requests to return, parents will be called and asked to come to school. Staff will not chase children as this may cause them to run into further danger, but will observe from a distance and keep in contact with the school via mobile phones. If a child leaves the school site, the police will be contacted for the safety and wellbeing of the pupil.

Exclusions/Suspension

Exclusion is an extreme step and will only be taken in cases where the child has been placed on a Pastoral Support Plan and it has not been possible to manage their behaviour through the Proactive and Early interventions outlined on the plan or when an exceptionally serious incident takes place.

Government guidance states that:

Only the head teacher of a school can exclude a pupil and this must be on disciplinary grounds. A pupil may be excluded for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year), or permanently. A fixed period suspension does not have to be for a continuous period. In exceptional cases, usually where further evidence has come to light, a fixed period suspension may be extended or converted to a permanent exclusion.

Pupils whose behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive may be excluded from the school premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. In such cases the legal requirements in relation to exclusion, such as the head teacher's duty to notify parents, still apply. Lunchtime exclusions are counted as half a school day for statistical purposes and in determining whether a governing body meeting is triggered.

'Informal' or 'unofficial' exclusions, such as sending pupils home 'to cool off', are unlawful, regardless of whether they occur with the agreement of parents or carers. Any exclusion of a pupil, even for short periods of time, must be formally recorded.

Principles

The school may need to consider a suspension/exclusion when:

A serious breach or persistent breaches of the behaviour policy has taken place or where a pupil's behaviour is detrimental to the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

Examples include:

- Verbal or physical assault of a child or adult
- Persistent and / or repetitive disruption (ref negative behaviours)
- Extreme misbehaviour which is deemed outside the remit of the normal range of sanctions

A suspension from the school can only be authorised by the headteacher or a member of senior staff acting on their behalf. If none are available to authorise the suspension, a decision should be deferred until the opportunity for authorisation is available.

In the case of a permanent exclusion, this can only be authorised by the headteacher or anyone acting on her behalf. The school regularly monitors the number of suspensions/exclusions to ensure that no group of students are unfairly disadvantaged through their use and that any underlying needs of individual are being fully met.

The school uses its best endeavours to inform parents of a suspension/exclusion by telephone or through a face-to-face meeting and the exclusion is confirmed in writing. The pupil is informed of an exclusion in the most appropriate manner given the circumstance.

The governing body are informed of the number of suspensions/exclusions at termly meetings.

Permanent Exclusions

Vallis will usually only permanently exclude a pupil as a last resort, after trying to support the child to change their behaviour through other means. However, there are exceptional circumstances in which a headteacher may decide to permanently exclude a pupil because of ongoing issues or for a 'one-off' incident. If your child has been permanently excluded, be aware that:

- The school's governing body is required to review the headteacher's decision and you may meet with them to explain your views on the exclusion
- If the governing body confirms the exclusion, you can appeal to an independent appeal panel organised by the local authority
- The school will explain in a letter to you how to lodge an appeal
- The local authority must provide full-time education from the sixth day of a permanent exclusion.

Pupils Conduct Outside the School Gates

- a) Any criminal behaviour reported or witnessed outside the school site will be reported to the police.
- b) Any non-criminal bad behaviour or bullying which occurs off the school premises and which is witnessed by staff or reported to school will be dealt with when the child is on school premises. This includes any mis-behaviour when the pupil is:
 - taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity or
 - travelling to or from school or
 - wearing school uniform or
 - in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school.

or poor behaviour at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, that:

- could have repercussions for our school or
- poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public or
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school

Under these circumstances the matter should be reported to the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team and, if appropriate, a relevant sanction will be imposed and where appropriate reparations made to those affected.

Anti-Bullying in School

- a) We aim to create an atmosphere where everyone feels safe and secure in the knowledge that positive steps are taken to tackle problems. Bullying will not be tolerated in any form.
- b) Through assemblies, PSHE and circle time, pupils are actively encouraged to approach members of staff in the knowledge that they will be listened to and their worries or fears will be taken seriously. Parents are notified of our concerns and are actively encouraged to work with the school to prevent or stop bullying. Where a child is being bullied, extra support will be given.
- c) Careful provision is made for the supervision of the playground, dining hall, toilets and after-school activities. Adults are aware of 'blind spots' in and around the school where bullying could take place.
- d) Where bullying occurs, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be involved in clarifying what has happened and will work with the child, and other adults in resolving the situation. If necessary, parents will be required to discuss appropriate resolutions.
- e) Parent concerns about bullying are always followed up with children involved and any outcomes are related back to parents. This is all recorded by the class teacher on serious incident sheets/CPOMS.

Confiscation

School staff have legal provision to confiscate items from pupils and to search for prohibited items without consent.

Prohibited items are:

- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:
 - to commit an offence
 - to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)

Additionally, at Vallis First School the following items should also not be brought to school:

- mobile phones or wearable devices
- electronic music or gaming devices

Staff will retain any confiscated items and where appropriate return them within a reasonable period of time. However, staff are required to hand weapons and knives, drugs and extreme or child pornography over to the police. Any stolen items are also required to be passed to the police or returned to the owner. All other 'Prohibited' items will be disposed of appropriately; they will not be returned to the pupil.

Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

It is also based on the [special educational needs and disability \(SEND\) code of practice](#).

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils
- Sections 88-94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which require schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate pupils' property
- [DfE guidance](#) explaining that maintained schools should publish their behaviour policy

Appendix 1

At a glance Behaviour Policy

How will staff behave

- Be consistent with language, follow up, consequences and routines
- Recognise and reward 'over and above' positive behaviour
- Take emotion out of response to challenging behaviour and always respond privately
- Let children know you care by acts of 'deliberate botherness' every day

Our 3 Rules

- Be ready
- Be safe
- Care

All staff, every day

- Meet & greet all children with a smile
- Refer to 'Ready, Safe, Care', model emotional control and challenge those who step away from this immediately.
- Praise good behaviour

Senior Leaders

- Make time to welcome learners at the start of the day
- Celebrate staff & learners whose efforts goes above & beyond
- Support staff in managing learners with more complex behaviours
- Remind & refresh all adults on the agreement on visible constancies

3 Keys ways to recognise conduct that is 'over & above'

- Eye contact, smile & thumbs up
- Note, sticker or email home and moved up on recognition board
- Celebration Assembly and Milk Street Marvels awards/rewards"

Support Beyond the Classroom

- SLT help with restorative meetings
- Safe place for some children to go at playtime/lunchtime
- Behaviour plan
- EHA process
- PFSAs/FLP Behaviour & Vulnerability team

Appendix 2

Practical steps for managing and modifying behaviour

- 1) **The reminder:** A reminder of the expectations for learners: **Ready, Safe, Care** said privately to the learner. The member of staff makes the learner aware of his/her behaviour. The learner has a choice to do the right thing.
- 2) **The caution:** A clear verbal caution delivered privately to the learner making them aware of their behaviour and clearly outlining the consequences if they continue. The learner has a choice to do the right thing. Learners will be reminded of their previous good conduct to prove that they can make good choices.

Script for 30 second intervention: -

- a) Gentle approach, personal, non-threatening, side on, eye level or lower.*
- b) State the behaviour that was observed and which golden rule it breaks*
- c) Tell the learner the consequences of their action. Refer to previous good behaviour/learning as a model for the desired behaviour.*
- d) Walk away from the learner, allow him/her time to decide what to do next. If there are comments as you walk away write them down and follow up later*

N.B. We resist endless discussions around behaviour and spend our energy returning learners to their learning.

3) The time-out

- a. The learner is asked to speak to the staff member away from others
- b. Boundaries are reset
- c. Learner is asked to reflect on their next step. Again, they are reminded of their previous positive behaviour
- d. Learner is given a final opportunity to reengage with the learning/follow instructions

Learners should only stand outside classrooms if they need to cool down and/or to diffuse a situation. In general, 3 minutes should be enough. Sitting on a chair in a nearby area is preferable.

If the step above is unsuccessful, or if a learner refuses to take a time out then the learner will be asked to leave the room. If appropriate another member of staff will escort the learner to a workspace outside the classroom. (Change of face)

Staff will always deliver sanctions calmly and with care. It is in nobody's interest to confront poor behaviour with anger.

- 4) **Restore:** reparation meeting is held to repair damage to trust between staff and learners and both should be encouraged to answer the questions. Complete a serious incident sheet.
 - a. What's happened?
 - b. Who else has been affected?
 - c. What should we do to make things better?
 - d. How can we do things differently next time?
 - e. Reaffirm commitment to building a trusting relationship

Staff will take responsibility for leading reparation meetings. SLT will support when requested. The restorative meeting must not be a prelude to an apology. If it is there is a tension and expectation for the child to give certain answers to the questions. Everyone should be free to speak. A forced apology doesn't teach humility or forgiveness, it simply underlines obedience.

Learners may have their behaviour monitored by teachers to show progress towards agreed targets. At VFS we make sure that this is done discreetly. We do not advertise poor behaviour to other learners or give 'kudos' to those who choose not to meet our high standards of behaviour.

- 5) Partnership stage:** the partnership stage will be implemented where there is a cause for concern e.g. attendance, behaviour or progress. The learner will be allocated a mentor/key worker who will:
- a. Support the Reparation meeting between staff & learner**
 - b. Develop an appropriate action plan with the learner and parent**
 - c. Monitor & review and mentor using the action plan**
 - d. Discuss the consequences for the learner if not meeting the required action and the positive outcomes for everyone if conduct improves**
 - e. If a learner does not achieve**

A Serious Breach is an incident that may lead to a fixed term exclusion.

All learners must be given 'take up time' in between steps. It is not possible to leap steps or accelerate steps for repeated low-level disruption.

Appendix 3

Behaviour and Learning Management Flow Chart

All learners must be given “take-up time” in between steps. It is not possible to leap steps or accelerate steps for repeated low-level disruption

