



MAKING POSITIVE CHOICES POLICY

Why the Change in Policy

The school over the years has developed a range of interventions and approaches to promoting and supporting pupils to make positive choices in their behaviour that we now feel we need to combine in one policy. These include promoting positivity and high aspirations, 'bucket filling' language, nurture and inclusion strategies, visual behaviour systems and personalised behaviour support systems.

Pupils need to be supported and challenged in managing their emotions and feelings, understanding the impact of their actions on the wider school community as well as having high aspirations for their learning and achievement. Therefore a big part of the change in our positive behaviour policy system in school is to place greater emphasis on children being aware of how through their consistent positive behaviour choices they can influence outcomes/rewards for others as well as themselves in school, having a more 'corporate' approach.

Our School Vision forms an integral part of our school philosophy and reinforces our Making Positive Choices Policy. The policy will underpin every aspect of school life and be proactively promoted by all members of the school community.

Key Aims

At Robert Mellors our key aim is to provide a safe, secure and caring environment where expectations and achievements are high and pupils realise their full potential in all areas of their development; academic, physical, emotional, spiritual, moral, social and independence. Therefore our aspiration is for every pupil to make positive choices for themselves and others in order for them to become confident successful independent individuals able to achieve highly in all they do.

In order to do this, pupils need to:

- Have a clear understanding of school expectations
- Feel valued, included, proud and safe (VIPs)
- Feel listened to and cared for
- To feel happy
- Show respect to all members of the school community whatever their role
- Have strategies to manage their emotions and feelings
- Take responsibility for their actions
- Understand the impact of their actions upon the school community (corporate responsibility)
- Have high aspirations for themselves in everything they do and desire to make a difference
- Have determination, resilience and ambition to improve in whatever they do,

Key Beliefs

At Robert Mellors Primary Academy we believe that:

- **Pupils want to behave well.** We believe that our pupils are happy when they behave well and make positive choices, and when that behaviour is recognised by adults and their peers.

- **Pupils can learn to improve their behaviour.** Our pupils can be supported/taught to make the right choices to manage their emotions and feelings.
- **Behaviour is a form of communication.** We believe that behaviour is an act of communication at a level that is meaningful to the child and linked to their individual needs. At all times we will ensure that we observe and consider the potential underlying causes of the behaviour a pupil is exhibiting so that we can best understand it before intervening.
- **All adults influence the mood of the school through the choices of their words, body language, actions, organisation as well as things they do not do.** It is therefore crucial that staff consider their own behaviour and what this is communicating at all times, as this is where behaviour management begins.
- **All adults can learn strategies to support pupils to make the right choices to improve their behaviour.** Developing an understanding of why children behave as they do, having a positive attitude to the child and his/her behaviour and effective strategies for managing/supporting them to make positive choices is essential. At times it may require a great deal of patience and resilience as well as support from the wider school team.

We can support pupils by:

The quality of our relationships with each other and with them through being positive role models at all times and having high aspirations.

To foster successful, enabling relationships we need to:

- Provide a happy, safe and nurturing environment
- Make every child feel welcome such as meeting and greeting at the classroom door
- Actively build trust and rapport
- Demonstrate belief in the pupil that they can succeed through using positive language
- Promote positive characteristics such as resilience, positivity, determination
- Provide a stimulating, challenging and personalised curriculum
- Provide a well ordered calm classroom environment
- Acknowledge when pupils are doing well through positive responses/rewards
- Treat the pupil with dignity and respect at all times
- Maintain consistent boundaries for pupils which are clear, firm but fair
- Listen respectfully to and understanding other people's views and perspectives
- Hear the message behind the word/behaviour; ask ourselves why the pupil is behaving in this way
- Keep our word and do whatever we say we will do, rewards as well as consequences
- Identify the positive aspects in every pupil. Identify it with the child and build on it and acknowledge when it is evident they are genuinely trying to effect a change in their behaviour,

Parents and Carers

The school recognises that parents/carers play a vital role in the promotion of acceptable behaviour in school and the importance of positive home/school liaison, encouraging opportunities to discuss pupils' individual needs with carers.

The school expects parents and carers to:

- Inform the school of behavioural problems they may be experiencing at home.
- Inform the school of any health issues or medication that may affect a student's behaviour. This includes any changes in or withdrawal of medication.

- Inform the school of any change of routine which may affect a student's performance or behaviour.
- Inform the school if they seek external advice or support for behavioural difficulties.

Other Responsibilities

We also need to understand that behaviours displayed sometimes may be a result of factors linked to **additional pupil needs**, whether diagnosed or not, communication difficulties such as EAL, or issues linked to home life, health, diet, sleep, emotional warmth, lack of boundaries, family crisis or other external issues. Therefore we need to:

- Provide pastoral/nurturing personalised support to meet individual needs of child
- Ensure we have good lines of communication/relationships with parents/carers
- Work in partnership with parents/carers
- Refer or seek advice from inclusion support services
- Ensure staff have a good understanding of/strategies to support pupils with additional needs and information is shared across school
- Follow other appropriate policies and procedures where there are concerns
- Engage support of external agencies where appropriate
- Implement behaviour support plans where necessary
- Provide EAL support.

The school also takes seriously its responsibility to **promote equality** through challenging any form of bullying or discrimination (hate crime) linked to protected characteristics such as; age, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, race including colour, nationality or ethnicity and gender.

Rights

All our pupils have a right to:

- To be in an atmosphere conducive to learning
- Learn and achieve highly
- Feel physically and emotionally safe at all times
- Be treated with respect and dignity at all times
- To be treated fairly
- Express their feelings in an appropriate way
- To feel included and valued.

All our staff in school have a right to:

- Teach/work without undue disruption
- Feel physically and emotionally safe at all times
- Be treated with dignity and respect at all times
- Express their feelings in an appropriate way.

Rules support positive behaviour.

They should be:

- Few in number
- Agreed with pupils
- Written in a language the pupils can understand (including visual cues)
- Be stated in the positive
- Regularly referred to/reviewed by all staff with pupils
- Prominently displayed in appropriate areas
- Appropriate to the activity/age range.

The following are whole school rules to help promote a positive orderly school environment.

<p>Our Listening Code</p> <p><i>When I am asked for my attention I:</i></p> <p>Stop what I am doing Empty hands/show me five Look at the teacher Keep quiet and still Listen to instructions</p>	<p>Our Line up Code</p> <p><i>When I am asked to line up I:</i></p> <p>Walk to the end of the line Leave a person space Keep my hands and my feet to myself Keep quiet and still Listen to instructions</p>
<p>Movement in and around School</p> <p><i>When I move around school I:</i></p> <p>Keep to the left, including up and down steps Single person in line Walk quietly Keep a body space between the next person Hands by my side Hold open doors for others</p>	<p>Our Code of Conduct</p> <p><i>I show this by:</i></p> <p>Being polite and showing respect to others Being kind Listening to and respecting other opinions Using appropriate language Thinking before I act Respecting the rights and property of others Taking care of our school</p>

The language of choice

We actively encourage pupils to choose the right thing to do, by explaining the consequences of their choices, both positive and negative. We link consequences to the choices they make to help them to make the best choice.

This language:

- Is positive
- Increases pupils' sense of responsibility
- Removes the struggle for power and control
- Overtly links responsibility, choice and consequence
- Helps them to take responsibility
- Helps them to develop skills to manage their own behaviour
- Increases their independence
- Defuses potential conflict.

The school also **promotes positive desired behaviours** though using **'bucket filling' language** such as;

- I like the way you walked into class, helped someone, listened to.... – it made me feel you really value the people around you

- Thank you for
- That was kind of you when
- It's always lovely when
- You have such a nice smile
- It made me feel good when you
- You showed good respect when you
- I can tell you care about your friends/teachers/work/community because ...

Helping children have high aspirations of displaying positive behaviours are promoted through:

- nurturing a 'can do' aspirational approach
- developing children's resilience
- developing children's 'bounce back ability', ability to overcome obstacles
- developing determination to succeed
- supporting children in not getting upset at getting things wrong and then putting them right
- being proud when they succeed or 'do their best'
- praising children who consistently try to do their best
- modelling how to handle unpredictable situations calmly /with good humour.

Other language/factors to be mindful of:

Staff will promote gender neutral language/behaviours that do not inadvertently reinforce stereotyping or show that we react to or treat boys in a different way to girls. For instance comments such 'boys will be boys', that could give subtle messages to boys that there is an expectation they behave differently to girls and they 'play' up to those expectations. Ensure children are encouraged to express their emotions without gender bias =EG – it's OK for boys to cry.

Other Practical Strategies for Promoting Positive Behaviour

We use a variety of responses to re-enforce good behaviour and these include:

- Supporting the pupil to develop effective mechanisms to communicate their needs, feelings etc. and in ensuing we respond effectively to their communicative attempts
- Verbal praise, supported by signs/symbols when appropriate
- Stickers, token rewards
- Messages to parents/carers and other members of staff
- Special responsibilities, privileges, helping a member of staff etc
- Individual class rewards
- De-escalation strategies such as use of humour, distraction techniques.

Other practical arrangements which are considered;

- The presence of simple routines and structures that give pupils the confidence of knowing what is expected of them and what is going to happen next, including use of visual timetable
- Careful use of timetabling to manage 'difficult' times, including all staff being fully aware of the potential 'triggers' for inappropriate behaviour

- Use of grouping arrangements to ensure appropriate activities for all pupils, particularly at unstructured times – break times/lunch times, but also within the class
- Use of highly **visual** positive behaviour systems on a whole class level that makes explicitly clear to a child if they are not making the right choices and gives them an opportunity to put it right.

Behaviour Guidelines

We believe that children should be talked to calmly and with respect at all times whether in the classroom or elsewhere in the school environment. Very occasionally it may be necessary to use an assertive/raised voice in order to engage attention, be heard on the playground or to reinforce a message.

Rewards and Consequences

Praise has a reinforcing and motivational role and helps a child believe he/she is valued. Praise can be given in formal and informal ways, in public or in private; it can be awarded to individuals or to groups; it can be earned for high achievement or making good progress in any aspect of school life.

Rewards

- Are part of the positive 'language' we use in school
- Are linked to positive choices and achievements
- Are focused on the specific behaviours we wish to improve
- Are made clear to a child as to why they have been given.

Reward System

All children are allocated to a house named after a bird: Robins, Wrens, Swallows, Kingfishers or Chaffinches. The houses are made up of children from all year groups. Children are rewarded tokens for positive achievements which will be collected in class and these are then tallied each half term for each house and a reward given to the children in the house with the most tokens. Gold special tokens can be awarded for significant achievement and will count as 10 tokens.

In exceptional circumstances, if a child has consistently not been making positive choices, the Head Teacher has the discretion to decide that they should not participate in a house treat. In these circumstances there will be other support and reward systems in place.

At the end of the school year there will be an extra special treat for the house accruing the most tokens plus 'always' children and those children with 100% attendance.

On Fridays there will be a **VIP assembly** during which a child from each class will be awarded a certificate for making the best progress in a subject/aspect of school life and another to a child who has attained the highest in a particular aspect of the curriculum.

At the end of each term there will be an '**ALWAYS assembly**' to recognise achievements of children who consistently show high expectations and aspirations.

Consequences

- Pupils should be clear of the consequences for making poor behaviour choices
- It is important for our pupils to clearly link a specific behaviour with its consequence
- Opportunities will be made for pupils to correct their own behaviour, make sensible choices and prevent further consequences being applied

- There is an agreed whole school tier hierarchy of consequences document for staff to refer to
- Consequences need to be applied consistently and be appropriate to behaviour displayed.

Involvement of Parents/Carers

- Regular/repeated poor behaviour choices should be discussed with parents/carers
- Ask parents/carers about their experiences at home
- Discuss agreed follow up action/support
- Share support strategies
- Where appropriate involve SENDCo and support agencies.

Repeated Challenging Behaviour

The school acknowledges that a small minority of children may for whatever reason lack the maturity or self-discipline to make positive choices when controlling their emotions and feelings. These children commonly have attachment or higher levels of special education needs. For these children neither the normal rewards or sanctions procedures may be appropriate and in these circumstances parents and other agencies will be involved in providing/agreeing personalised nurture support. These pupils typically will need long term more specialist support to help them develop skills in self-regulating their behaviour and may need to spend time in the school nurture facility 'Stepping Stones'. In these exceptional circumstances the school will make every effort to avoid exclusion.

Our 'Positive Handling Policy' clearly defines what is and is not acceptable practice should physical intervention be required. There are clear procedures for reporting and logging and staff are trained in the 'MAPA' approach for safe handling and de-escalation.

Allegations Against Staff

Information regarding the procedures relating to allegations against school staff can be found in The DfE document 'Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff'.

Any pupil making malicious or false allegations against a member of staff will be dealt with by the Head Teacher and may be referred to the LADO for further investigation.

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Next review: October 2021

Other policies that support include:

- Safeguarding Child Protection Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy