



TAMESIDE PUPIL
REFERRAL SERVICE

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Working together to inspire, nurture and motivate everyone to fulfil their potential.

Relational Policy

Policy updated on: May 2024
Policy review: May 2025

Aims/Purpose of TPRS Relational Behaviour Policy

Our Relational Behaviour Policy has been put in place as a move away from traditional, behaviour management approaches, which place an emphasis on rewards and sanctions linked to behaviour. We aim to focus on a more relational and universal approach, which is inclusive for all, and can benefit the whole school community. TPRS Relational Behaviour Policy translates into whole school practice. It acknowledges the responsibility held by the Executive head teacher for looking after the well-being of all members of the school community.

Our Approach

We have a non-judgmental, curious, and empathic attitude towards behaviour. We encourage all adults in the TPRS to respond in a way that focuses on the feelings and emotions that might drive certain behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself.

- We Maintain clear boundaries and expectations around behaviour. Changing how we respond to behaviour does not mean having no expectations, routines, or structure, instead we create an educational environment that helps our pupils feel safe. Pupils need predictable routines, expectations, and responses to behaviour. These must be in place and modelled appropriately, within the context of a safe and caring school environment.

Behaviour management

The TPRS approach is that of supporting our pupils to self-regulate and/or co-regulate, but if their behaviour is causing or likely to cause injury or damage in serious instances, a pupil may be given a fixed term exclusion following the DfE advice on suspension and permanent exclusion.

Flexible Learning: Reach programme

We attempt to regulate and assess behavioural issues using our flexible learning programme 'Reach' which operates on both sites. Its purpose is to offer a bespoke programme for students unable to access the curriculum full time or as part of new student induction. The



Reach programme includes 'In-Reach' where lessons are taught by specialist staff and include a wide range of subjects, a community tutor programme and our mobile classroom.

Types of Unwanted Behaviour

There are times when pupils find it difficult to regulate their behaviour, this will be different for each pupil, however dysregulation by pupils can disrupt learning. Whilst not a complete list, the range of behaviours presented by pupils can include:

- There will be a zero-tolerance approach to harmful sexual language, sexual harassment, and sexual violence.
- The school will ensure that all incidents of sexual harassment and/or violence are met with a suitable response, and never ignored.
- Pupils are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they feel it might be.
- Physical and verbal aggression, directed at pupils or staff.
- Self-injury
- Physical assault, this can include sexual assault.
- Compromising their own safety and that of others.
- Any form of bullying/Child on Child abuse
- Damaging property
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory behaviour
- Possession of any prohibited items. These are:
 - Knives or weapon
 - Alcohol
 - Illegal drugs
 - Stolen items
 - Tobacco and cigarette papers/Vapes
 - Fireworks
 - Pornographic images

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

Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period
- Difficult to defend against

Bullying can be;

- Emotional Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting.
- Physical Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence.
- Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including:
 - Racial
 - Faith-based
 - Gendered (sexist)



- Homophobic/bi-phobic
- Transphobic
- Disability-based Taunts, gestures, graffiti, or physical abuse focused on a particular individual or group.

- Characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality)
- Harmful Sexually Explicit remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching.
- Direct or indirect verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, cyber-bullying: bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites.
- Child-on-child abuse

Following any report of child-on-child sexual violence or sexual harassment offline or online, TPRS will follow the general safeguarding principles set out in Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) - especially Part 5. The designated safeguarding lead is the most appropriate person to advise on the school's initial response. Each incident will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The school's response will be:

- Proportionate
- Considered
- Supportive
- Decided on a case-by-case basis

The school has procedures in place to respond to any allegations or concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing. These include clear processes for responding to a report and carrying out risk assessments, where appropriate, to help determine whether to:

- Manage the incident internally.
- Refer to Early Help.
- Refer to children's social care.
- Report to the police.

(Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information)

Roles and responsibilities:

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the Relational behaviour policy
- Modelling positive behaviour
- Providing a personalised approach for pupils based on the principles of the Relational Behaviour policy.
- Recording behaviour incidents through CPOMS.
- The senior leadership team will support staff as required.

Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Support their child.
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child.
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with their child's tutor team, pastoral lead, or Head of Centre.



WHAT WE BELIEVE:

- At TPRS we integrate Therapeutic Practice including Attachment Aware and Trauma Responsive interventions into our everyday practice.
- From research we are aware that any disruption within the early years from pregnancy onwards can impact minds and bodies in three key areas: **affect regulation, attachment and executive function**.
- From research we understand that the toxic stress involved in ACEs impacts the nervous system of human beings.
- From research we know that over-compensatory, rich, relational interventions can bring about recovery so that children and young people can function well at home, school and out in their communities.
- We view ourselves as an important part of any student's recovery journey. We believe in recovery in community.
- We will not discriminate how we relate to the students in our care as we believe each student is worthy of our time, energy, and patience. However, we will differentiate, according to need.
- We will approach all students and their needs with compassion and an unconditional and positive regard.
- We will provide a predictable and secure environment which promotes security through consistent routines and clear boundaries.
- We understand that positive regard at TPRS is removing judgment, giving second chances, I sharing high expectations matched with high levels of support.

WHO WE ARE:

We see it as our responsibility to be **stress and shame regulators** for the students in our care.

We see it as our responsibility to learn all about our assigned student: what they have lived through to date, their resilience factors, their stressors, and their calmers [Student Profile].



- We do all we can to ensure that our assigned students do not lose their thinking capacity.
- We will be wise with our words, ensuring we do not label any of the students in our care.
- We will be gentle with our strength and strong with our gentleness, remembering that some students in our care have a very fragile sense of self.
- We see it as more important to always prioritise maintaining connection with our assigned students than aiming to prove a point or to get our point of view across.
- We utilise all and any opportunity to communicate delight to the students in our care, rather than relying on conditional acceptance (a compliance behaviour model).
- We see it as our responsibility to remain regulated throughout the school day and be aware of our Window of Tolerance (Personal Plan).
- We see it as our responsibility outside of school to attend to our own regulation and relationship needs, to keep healthy and well in both our bodies and minds.
- We remember that everyone is doing the best they can, with what they have lived through to date.
- We try really hard to remember not to take personal insults and rejection personally, or get triggered, as we know that some students have experienced intimacy betrayal and do not trust adults in the moment.
- We will engage in relentless care.
- We will let others know if we are struggling, so that we can engage in safe, quality practice.
- We will do all we can to ensure we stay connected to our family, friends and colleagues so that we can experience the relational buffering we need to do our work well.
- We will be aware of the boundaries of our skills set and refer on to therapists and counsellors, as and when appropriate, for specialist advice and support.

Attendance

The aim of Tameside Pupil Referral Service's attendance Policy is to provide consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all students.

Tameside Student Referral Service (TPRS) believes that it is the joint responsibility of parents, carers, students, and all staff members to ensure that students are attending school, an alternative placement or receiving a bespoke education package every school day. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.

The law requires parents to make sure students attend full-time education. As a last resort, schools, and the Local Education Authority (LEA) have legal powers to deal with poor attendance and we work closely with the authority in our support of their systems.

Attending school regularly is important for every student's future. A student who misses school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams:



- Good attendance shows potential employers that a student is reliable.
- Research suggests that students who attend school regularly could also be at less risk of becoming involved in antisocial behaviour or crime.

All schools are required to record details of students' attendance and absence at school. At TPRS the registers remain open to enable us to adapt to the needs of our students and make reasonable adjustments for their specific needs. In all cases, parents and carers must inform the school about any reason for any absence as soon as is possible.

(Please refer to our attendance policy, For more information)

Pupil Uniform

We expect all pupils to wear uniform at TPRS at all times, this will consist of:

- A black polo shirt and a black sweatshirt that will be provided upon induction to TPRS.
- Parents will be required to provide plain black school trousers/unbranded leggings that must be worn daily.
- Black shoes/Trainers

Further guidance:

Where pupils' clothing does not meet the guidelines issued by school, the pupil will:

- be provided with clean clothing by TPRS to change in to.
- If a pupil refuses to accept uniform provided by the Service, then a phone call home will be made, and the parent/carer will be requested to either bring suitable uniform to school or ensure that the correct items of school dress code is worn the following day.
- In cases of hardship, we will support parents/carers on a case-by-case basis.
- Where we have students with sensory or additional needs, we will work closely with parents/carers and students to be as accommodating and flexible as possible with regards to following the dress code.
- If there are any issues with a child adhering to the TPRS dress code, parents will be encouraged to contact the school for further assistance.
- In cases of non-compliance, our first response will be to educate and encourage pupils to comply. Where pupils are persistently non-compliant, parents will be asked to attend a meeting with tutor/leadership team to discuss the reasons why wearing correct uniform is not being adhered to.



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HOW WE WILL WORK WITH OUR STUDENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED RELATIONAL TRAUMA AND LOSS

- The child is at the heart of everything that we do.
- We will know their story (Student Profile).
- We will trace back to what a child or young person has lived through, from pregnancy onwards, taking special note of any relational disruptions, ACEs and toxic stress.
- We will try and find out whether there were any others around the child at the time of difficulties, who were physically and emotionally present, attentive, attuned and responsive, for example an auntie, or a neighbour or a youth leader.
- We will provide relational buffering
- We will allocate an Emotionally Available Adult to all those who have experienced disruption in their early relationships, and a formalised team of 4 or 5 significant adults will be created around them in school.
- We will prioritise spending quality time with our assigned students, being physically and emotionally present, attentive, attuned and responsive.
- We will always prioritise maintaining positive relationships with our students whatever other demands are going on, engaging in quality moments.
- We will intentionally use warm and open faces and body language, a varied tone of voice, humour and playfulness, in order to support felt safety.
- We will not problem-solve or reassure our assigned students before first really communicating that we have heard what they are trying to tell us about their internal feelings and thoughts.
- We will use the 4 Rs and ensure we are mindful of the order needed: Regulate, Relate, Reason, Repair, as well as acknowledging the need to circle back through the stages if our student's stress levels and state indicate they are not yet or are no longer ready for a particular stage.

HOW WE WILL SUPPORT OUR STAFF

United and Supported Teams

Staff resilience and wellbeing is essential to support them to remain emotionally available, attuned and responsive to their students, and for them to be able to help their students to manage their own emotions (provide co-regulation). It is therefore highly important to support staff in order to develop the most therapeutic environment for our children. Staff support and opportunities for reflection are prioritised, and these are held outside of the school day so that staff are more easily able to attend. We promote **psychological safety and understanding** within the system, so that staff can feel more able to say if they are struggling or need additional support.

We provide **supervision** for staff, to enable them to **reflect** upon how they support young people and the potential impact upon themselves. In addition, we have a 'Feel Good Friday' **staff wellbeing events, daily 'Check In**, and can help staff to access outside **additional support** where appropriate. All staff in each school are offered the opportunity to undertake **Window of Tolerance** and **Personal Understanding Plans**



Resilience and Regulation

The ability to better understand, describe and regulate emotions, reflect upon your own experiences, and understand the thoughts, emotions and behaviours of others, are key factors of resilience in young people. We recognise that resilience is not an individual trait, but incorporates **systemic factors**, so we aim to provide an environment which is safe, stable, supportive, has positive relationships, provides opportunities for growth and development, and has opportunities for individual skill development in terms of emotional or social learning.

TRANSITIONS

- If an adult needs to change their regular commitments with their assigned student, we will take all necessary efforts to communicate this change to the student directly and with compassion. The adult will also give the student something to support them to manage the separation or change of plan; for example, a note or a card, or will swap something like a pen or a pencil case.
- If an adult needs to leave the school for whatever reason, we will make all efforts to ensure the assigned student has a carefully thought through and staggered goodbye.
- If the student needs to leave suddenly, for whatever reason, genuine care will be communicated and a sense of them 'not being forgotten'.

PROVIDE RELATIONAL REPAIR

- We will never leave a student on their own after a difficulty or a relationship rupture. This is the time they need us the most.
- If there is a difficulty between ourselves and our assigned student or another member of staff, we will do all we can to resolve it so that we can be at peace with one another.
- If an interaction with a student becomes difficult for the adult, the adult will take time out to get themselves regulated before re-engaging at a later stage: another familiar adult will swap in, to be with the student.
- As adults we will always apologise directly to the student if we mis-attune to them, and their state becomes aggravated.
- When a student is aggravated we will match the intensity of the student's affect so that the student feels heard and validated.
- If something needs to be repaired we will join in too, even if we don't consider the difficulty to be our own personal responsibility.
- If we notice a student becoming stressed by any of our interventions we will switch what we are doing, recognising that relationships can be stress-inducing for students who have experienced relational trauma or loss.
- If there is a tension build-up in a classroom we will ensure we check in with our assigned student with a smile, and a 'It's going to be OK.'
- If something goes wrong, we will seek understanding from the student themselves, rather than making our own assumptions. We will communicate curiosity: 'Help me to understand ...' or 'I wonder what was happening for you.'
- We will use restorative practices to resolve and repair all situations as they occur.



HOW THE BEHAVIOUR REGULATION MODEL IS APPLIED

We understand that positive behaviour can be taught and needs to be modelled. We understand that negative behaviour can signal a need for support which we will provide without diluting our expectation. We aim:

- To maintain a caring, orderly community in which effective learning can take place and where there is a mutual respect between members.
- To help children develop a sense of worth, identity and achievement
- To support children to develop their emotional regulation skills, which in turn will impact upon their ability to regulate their behaviour.
- To support all children to learn effective, safe, ways of communicating their needs.
- To help all children become self-disciplined, able to accept responsibility for their own actions and make positive choices.
- To develop in all children the ability to listen to others; cooperate and appreciate other ways of thinking and behaving.



The 5 Steps of a Relational Approach

1) Protect

Ensure that the environment is safe, recognise the emotion, empathise and soothe to calm.

The first step to de-escalating the stress is to remove the child from the situation to a space that is calm. This is not a punitive measure, it is done in a non-shaming way, protecting their dignity while they are in the super-heightened state of anxiety, stress and anger. Very often, at the moment, the child is completely unaware of their actions.

The child or young person is always taken 'somewhere with someone' - to a quiet place with an Emotionally Available Adult (EAA) or a present, focused caregiver, who can help them self-regulate and lessen stress levels.

2) Relate

Validate the feelings and name what you see (e.g. the emotion is likely to be underlying the child's behaviour). For example, "Bradley, you look really angry today."

The EAA is non-judgmental, empathic and curious about what happened, and accepts and validates the child's emotions beneath the behaviour – 'I can hear that it is very annoying when that happens. Yes, I can see why that might make you very angry.' They create a connection with the child or young person before any attempt to address the issue - connection before correction.

3) Regulate

Support the child to use their regulation strategies (e.g. kicking a football, having a cold drink, eating something crunchy, time in a calm room). The give praise for use of regulation skills.

The child must feel safe to move from the highly stressed fight, flight or freeze response to social engagement when they can be supported to co-regulate. The EAA co-regulates with the child or young person, helping them to relax and be calm. Often, play-based, or art-based activities are used to help decrease the high levels of stress hormone the child or young person is experiencing. This does not reward poor behaviour, it is a necessary developmental experience to enable the capacity to reflect.



4) Reflect

Problem-solve with the child. When the child is ready to reflect, be curious about the possible reasons behind their emotion e.g. “I wonder if these angry feelings are because you’re feeling left out.” Show empathy and acceptance of the feelings e.g. “I get it. I would feel angry if I was feeling left out too.”

Often, children and young adults who have experienced ACEs or other trauma, suffer from alexithymia and are unable to identify, explain or describe their emotional state. They have no previous experience vocalising or talking about what is happening to them, or what has happened in the past. They literally don't have the words to explain it. The EAA helps them to mentalize - interpret and understand their behaviour psychologically, in terms of underlying thoughts, feelings, wishes, and intentions.

Once the child is regulated, with the support of the EAA, they begin to reflect and 'unpick what happened, running through the series of events and their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour.

Set limits on the behaviour. Use correction or problem solving where appropriate e.g. “But it is not okay to kick the door like that. Let’s think about what you could do next time that you are feeling angry.” This will enable the child to learn from their experience.

5) Repair

Where there has been a rupture in the relationship between a child and a member of staff, the staff member should lead the act of repair of this relationship, so that the child knows that the ‘relationship is bigger than the act.’

It is important to repair the relationship. The EAA models how to take responsibility for their part in what happened - “I'm so sorry I had to remove you from the classroom. I imagine that was difficult for you, but I could really see you weren't managing.’

Where appropriate, together with the EAA, they can reflect on how to put right what went wrong. This is instigated by the child at an appropriate time and allows for reconnection and recovery, re-joining the class and reconnecting with their teacher. It is not about forcing a child to apologise - this can be detrimental and further shames the child.

Every child has a Student Profile which will include every aspect of the child, from academic profile to their emotional context. This document lists the emotional regulation strategies, triggers, warning signs and what others can do at each stage.



OUR AIMS INCLUDE SUPPORTING ALL STUDENTS TO:

- Function well at home, school and in their communities.
- Experience safety, security, and stability with us.
- Reduce their blocked trust.
- Increase their tolerance of intimacy.
- Increase their comfort zone.
- Increase their stress tolerance.
- Increase their self-awareness.
- Strengthen their sense of self.
- Increase their internal controls.
- Strengthen their resilience.
- Feel confident and secure enough to explore, experiment, be curious and open to learning (enable their exploratory system to come fully online).
- Develop a personalised tool kit that will support them to move from alarm to social engagement.
- Integrate their body and mind.
- Integrate their past experiences into a coherent narrative.
- Move towards interdependency with others

WE WILL MEASURE EFFECTIVENESS BY:

- Checking our attendance data.
- Asking the children and young people themselves to complete My Profile.
- Completing Staff/Student profile panels. (see over).
- Seeking the student's own views about their mental health and wellbeing.
- Measuring their learning progress, in comparison with themselves, not their peers.
- Logging any transitions made between classes or schools mid-year



The 5 Principles of Relational Inclusion

1) We believe that if a child could do better they would

Many children and young people don't know why they behave the way they do. As a result of early negative experiences, their autonomic* nervous system is convinced that adults cannot be trusted and all environments contain hidden threats. We understand that we all play a role in supporting a child to do better.

*involuntary or unconscious

2) Relationships, Relationships, Relationships

By relationships we mean:

- RELATIONSHIP from the student's perspective
- RELATIONSHIP from the teacher's perspective
- The priority given to RELATIONSHIP formation and maintenance from school leadership' (Riley 2011)
- The RELATIONSHIP we have with ourselves and our own well-being.

We understand that positive teacher–student relationships have been shown to contribute to students' attendance, academic grades, psychological engagement and reduced disruptive behaviours. We know that supportive teacher–student relationships can also help in overcoming family education disadvantage.

We know we must recognise *blocked care** and our risk of slipping from our social engagement system.

*When it becomes difficult to remain open and engaged

3) We accept all emotions but not all behaviours

We see all behaviours as an opportunity to learn. We believe in the unconditional acceptance of the emotional experience that lies behind behaviour, while communicating that the behaviour is indeed unacceptable for the child's life as it gets in the way of healthy relationship development or learning.

We believe that discipline is based on the needs of the young person not our adult wants.

We develop strategies aimed to work with a student's biology instead of against it.

We understand that co-regulation must occur before self-regulation can be learnt.

We know that a child must 'feel safe' and not be told they are safe.

4) We identify and address the cause not the symptoms

Beneath every behaviour there is a feeling. And beneath each feeling is a need. And when we meet that need rather than focus on the behaviour, we begin to deal with the cause not the symptoms. We understand that complicated behaviour deserves a more complex response which involves a 'state dependent' intervention rather than a one size fits all.

5) We foster a culture of compassion and repair

Compassion to accept the individual experience: why people are suffering and what has happened to them.
Compassion of understanding: every function is an adaptation and everyone is doing the best they can with the resources they have inside them and around them.

Compassion of possibility in the here and now: every interaction is an opportunity for repair, reattunement and growth for a positive vision of the future and self.

Compassion for the importance of voice, choice and empowerment: we give voice and offer choice within our relationships with children, families, staff and are inclusive in the process of transformation.



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