



**Colgate Primary School  
Relationships for learning  
policy**

*Working together to be our best*

**Approved by:** Colgate Full Governing Board      **Date:** July 2023

**Last reviewed on:** July 2023

**Next review due by:** July 2024

## Aims

At Colgate Primary school, we aim for our children to build strong and trusting relationships with each other and with all adults. This then enables them to focus on their learning and to also gain essential life skills for adulthood. We invest time and specialised support into the children's relationship development through our PSHE lessons, day to day interactions and small group or one to one support as required. We have two Learning Mentors in school who deliver extended support for children with managing emotions and behaviour. All our staff lead on demonstrating our values of **Communication, Leadership, Inclusion** and **Caring** with members of the school community. We have high expectations of each other and the children; we teach the children how to be leaders of their own behaviour. Our approach is always proactive first and reactive if required. Sanctions are used as needed but are a second choice behind preventative and supportive work with the child. We communicate with parents and carers about their children's emotional and behavioural needs and will work with them to give their children the best experience of the school day that we can, therefore enabling them to access their learning.

## Stakeholders

### *Staff*

All staff will understand and deliver our policy and expectations through each of their roles and with all of the children.

When managing children's behaviour, staff are always calm and firm if required. Children are given space to regulate their feelings if needed. They are spoken to in a way which encourages them to reflect on their feelings and behaviour and are given strategies to support them going forwards. (Please see Appendix one for details of the approach we take when working with the children.) If necessary, other staff members are informed about situations for children so they can be supported by all staff if required. Staff recognise that there are always reasons behind behaviours and will communicate with the child and parents to establish these causes and support them in school in order to have a positive day and to access their learning. Staff have contributed to this policy through questionnaires and feedback.

### *Children*

All children are taught about our values through class and playground conversations and through assemblies. Children are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour choices and to be leaders of their own behaviour. They are taught that we are here to learn and to develop strong relationships. They are given further opportunities to develop their leadership through our Colgate Ambassador role. The oldest children are also partnered with our youngest children through our Buddy system. For the youngest children's first year, they always have an older role model and buddy they can go to on the playground. This also develops their relationships as they move through the school. In the summer term, the Year 5 children are trained to be Peer mediators. This is a role they carry out on rota during their time in Year 6. This training enables the children to develop their emotional literacy

skills and to support their peers with low-level disagreements. The children have developed this policy with senior leaders through assemblies and class questionnaires.

### *Parents and Carers*

Parents and carers will be able to contribute to the draft policy via our annual questionnaire. They will also have access to conversations about their child's needs via Parents' evenings, Seesaw or face to face by appointment as required.

We encourage parents and carers to act as role models for their children and to work in partnership with the school in demonstrating our four school values of Caring, Communication, Inclusion and Leadership. Conversations at home should follow up any incidents that have been communicated by the school. If there are any concerns regarding incidents reported by your child, we encourage parents and carers to speak to us first before approaching other parents as we can investigate and report the incident back to you.

### *Governors*

Governors will be aware of our policy and our values. They will monitor the implementation of these through their regular visits to school and their interactions with staff and children. They will support the leadership team to manage the policy and will be informed anonymously if there are any serious behaviour concerns occurring within school.

## **Processes**

### *Classroom*

Expectations of children's behaviour during learning are high. Adults support children to access the learning and to minimise low level disruption. Children are rewarded for positive behaviours and learning by visits to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, stickers or Dojo points which contribute to a half termly class reward.

Class teachers manage negative behaviours in class as required. They may direct the child to a space allocated in the classroom area for the child to self - regulate.

Occasionally this may need support from the Deputy or Headteacher, where the child will then be given space away from the classroom to regulate their behaviour and discuss the issue. Depending on the nature of the incident, parents may be informed if it is an ongoing situation that home and school are working on together. Low level incidents and one off events may not be reported to parents as they are part of day to day school management and development of children's behaviour for learning.

Please note, there may be circumstances where a child is following a programme of support to manage their behaviour. These situations are risk assessed regularly and managed in coordination with parents and carers.

Incidents that would not be allowed in class include: (list developed with the children)

- Name calling
- Swearing
- Disrespectful disruption
- Answering back rudely
- Not following instructions
- Throwing items
- Kicking
- Hurting with hands
- Shouting
- Running
- Leaving without permission
- Not telling the truth
- Rude faces
- Interrupting learning
- Distracting

### *Playtime*

We have a strong focus on learning through play in Apple and Maple class. This enables children to develop their play and their interactions with each other as they move through the school. Playtime outside with other children allows them to develop this further. Our outside space is limited so this can sometimes be a factor in managing good playtimes. We have a mix of whole school playtimes and separate playtimes to give the children a range of experiences. Our Colgate Ambassadors support playtimes on a rota basis so that they are also there as support for play. We have a quiet area with rainbow benches for the children to sit at if preferred and we are opening the library at lunchtime for children to share books quietly or to silently read. The field is in use for wider play opportunities in the drier months.

Adults are on duty to support play and to monitor interactions with the children. Children are rewarded for displaying the values with tokens for their class reward jar. If children are disrupting each other's play they will be spoken to by the adults and a solution suggested. If this continues, children will be asked to take a time out on the steps for 5 minutes. If a child deliberately hurts another, they will be sent to the office to be spoken to by the Deputy or Headteacher. The child will not return to the playground for that session and both sets of parents will be informed. If a child is becoming agitated then adults will intervene and suggest the child takes some time at the rainbow benches to regulate their feelings. Adults will monitor interactions proactively to ensure that children are supported to make the right choices about their activities and behaviour.

Before leaving the playground to return to class, children will be expected to line up quietly and to walk back to class in a settled line.

Incidents that would not be allowed on the playground include: (List developed with

the children)

- Unsafe play
- Name calling
- Swearing
- Answering back rudely
- Not following instructions
- Kicking to hurt
- Hitting
- Throwing objects over the fence
- Breaking equipment
- Pushing on trim trail
- Pushing to the floor
- Rude words
- Bullying
- Excluding other children
- Not listening to the Ambassadors
- Not sharing the equipment
- Rough play
- Play fighting

#### *Conduct around the school*

Children will be expected to walk in the school building at all times. This will also apply when moving between lessons, assemblies and playtimes. The Ambassadors will support children to remember their movement around school. When lining up for their lunch, they will be encouraged to wait sensibly and to be polite to all staff supporting their lunchtime.

When coming to the office, children should knock at the door and wait for an adult to speak to them before coming in.

#### *Assemblies*

Whether based in class or in the hall led by the Deputy or Headteacher, assemblies will be used to reinforce our values and our behaviour expectations. On a Friday, we have a Praise assembly where adults and Colgate Ambassadors can share positive learning or behaviour with the whole school for a small number of children in every class. The children are very proud of each other in these assemblies. The younger children hear how the older children are praised and this develops their behaviour and learning expectations. During this assembly, children can also share out of school achievements for the others to see.

#### **Recording**

In order to monitor situations for children, adults will record incidents in a factual way so that patterns can be reviewed and shared with key adults in school. This also supports communication with parents regarding events. Our Learning Mentors will also record any support given to children with emotions and/or behaviours.

## Appendix one

All our staff have received PACE training. This demonstrates how to communicate with children who may be upset or angry (dysregulated). It is based on the principles of 'Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy' developed by Dr Dan Hughes when working with children who have suffered trauma. However, it is widely seen as an approach that works well when communicating with all children.

### Playfulness

The purpose of playfulness is to enjoy being together in an unconditional way. This gives the message that the relationship is stronger than things that go wrong. Using a playful and light-hearted tone, as if you were telling a story, shows your interest and curiosity. Playfulness reduces the shame a child might feel when something has gone wrong; difficult messages or serious conversations can be easier to have if the tone is light. It does not mean you do not take the emotions or the incident seriously.

### Acceptance

Unconditional acceptance is fundamental to a child's sense of safety because it shows that you have connected with their feelings without judgement, and without seeking to reassure their feelings away. This can be hard to do as it means you and the child sitting with some strong emotions, together. This is painful and uncomfortable, but also very powerful. If a child expresses distressing emotions about themselves or others (e.g. "nobody loves me", "I'm stupid", "I'm bad", "you hate me") it is hard not to challenge them as being wrong, but it is really important to accept those feelings and acknowledge them using curiosity and empathy. Accepting the child or young person's feelings and emotions does not mean accepting unwanted behaviour and it does not mean agreeing with the child's viewpoint, but for true acceptance to take place, it is important that the child also knows you can see them beyond their behaviour.

### Curiosity

It's important to be curious about the child's thoughts, feelings, wishes and intentions: they may still be learning that other people can think about them in this way or that they can be held in mind by an adult without judgement and accusation at all. Curiosity is also important for discipline to be effective: connect with the emotion before you engage in discussion. Showing the child that you are interested in what is going on for them and willing to do something about it is a very powerful experience. Don't feel afraid to share your curiosity with the child by wondering, not telling them. Try to avoid asking "Why?" Instead you might ask: "Is it ok if I share my idea of what is going on for you? I might be wrong but these are my ideas;" or "What do you think was going on?"; "What do you think that was about?" or "I wonder what...?" Try to be curious in a quiet, accepting tone that conveys a simple desire to understand the child: this is not the same as agreeing with their perception of the event, but shows your interest in understanding it and accepting

the feelings that were involved.

### Empathy

When you show empathy you are showing the child that their feelings are important to you, and that you are alongside them in their difficulty. You are showing that you can cope with the hard times with them and you are trying hard to understand how it feels. Understanding and expressing your own feelings about the child's experience can often be more effective than reassurance. For example, if a child says "You don't care", you can respond by saying "That must be really hard for you. I feel sad that you experience me as not caring"

<https://helpchildrenlivebetter.co.uk/pace-a-therapeutic-approach/>

**HEAD TEACHER: R. Winn**

**CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: Mr T. Lintern**

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