



St Luke's CE Primary School

**Relationship Policy
(for all school staff)**

Rationale

Our school is invested in supporting the very best possible relational health between:

Parent and child

Child and child

Child and school staff

Parent and school staff

School staff

School staff and senior leaders

School staff and external agencies

To this end we are committed to educational practices, which Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect.

Protect

- Increased safety cue's in all aspects of the school day. Introduction of Meet and Greet Protocol and Relationship policy.
- School staff have completed training in PACE modes of interaction. Being Warm, emphatic, playful and curious (proven to shift children out of fight / flight/ freeze positions).
- School staff are to ensure that interactions with children are socially engaging not socially defensive, in order to decrease chances of children responding and relating defensively.
- A whole school commitment to cease using harsh voices, shouting, put downs, criticisms, and shaming (proven to be damaging physiologically and neurologically).
- School staff will "interactively repair" the occasions when they themselves move into defensiveness.
- The implementation of interventions that help staff to get to know children better on an individual basis. This is key to enable children to feel safe enough to want to talk, if they so wish about painful life experiences or worries, which are interfering with their ability to learn and quality of life.
- All vulnerable children to have easy access on a daily basis to at least one emotionally available named adult. School have named adults who work on the Pastoral team. If a child does not wish to connect with a member of the pastoral team, an alternative person must be found.
- School staff adjusting expectations around vulnerable children to correspond with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress. This will include removing vulnerable and traumatized children in a kind and non-judgmental way from situations that they are not managing well. (e.g. children who keep "triggering" into alarm state in the classroom given access to a separate calmer room to regulate.
- Provision for children of a clear, confidential and non-shaming system of self-referral for help / talk time using members of the pastoral team who are either Mental health first aiders or

Trauma informed practitioners.

- The nurturing of school staff in such a way that they feel valued and emotionally regulated enough to be able to interact throughout the day with social engagement rather than defense.

Relate

- All school staff trained in emotional coaching in the four key relational needs for secure attachment, affect attunement, empathy, soothing and containment.
- A whole school commitment enabling children to see themselves, their relationships and the world more positively, rather than through a lens of threat, danger or self-blame.
- Relational opportunities for vulnerable children with emotionally available adults at school to enable them to make the shift from “blocked trust” to “trust” and from “self-help” to “help seeking”.
- The implementation of interventions designed to bring down stress hormone levels in vulnerable children, enabling them to feel calm, soothed and safe. This is to support learning, quality of life and protect against stress- induced physical and mental illness, now and in later life.
- Evidence based nurturing and regulatory interventions that aim to repair damage caused by traumatic life experiences, through emotionally regulating and playful enriched adult – child interactions.
- The emotional wellbeing and regulation of staff is treated as high priority in order to prevent burn out, stress related absence or leaving the profession through stress related illness, feeling undervalued, blamed or shamed.

Reflect

- Staff educated in the art of good listening, dialogue, empathy and understanding. (instead of asking lots of questions / giving lectures)
- The provision of skills and resources to support parents and staff to have meaningful emphatic conversations with vulnerable children who want to talk about their lives in order to empower children to better manage their home situations and life in general.
- Within the context of the school and trusted relationships with a member of staff, children are to be provided with means to symbolise painful life experiences through images rather than solely every day words should they wish to do so, as part of working through memory and re-consolidation. There will be provision of different modes expression for children to use, e.g. sand play / art / drama / music / games / emotion worksheets
- PSHE Curriculum content to enable children to make informed choices about how they relate to others, how they chose to treat their bodies and minds now and in the future.
- Trained staff to help children move from “behaving” their trauma / painful life experiences to reflecting on those experiences helping them to develop a coherent narrative about their lives.
- A behavior policy that is child friendly and easy to understand, not solely based on punishment, sanctions and isolation. But one that models enquiry, resolution and interactive repair.

Updated September 2023

Review September 2024