

Heath Hayes Academy



Social & Emotional Wellbeing Policy A Relational Care School

September 2025

Audience: All stakeholders	
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Social & Emotional Wellbeing Policy

A Relational Care School

Policy

At Heath Hayes, we aim to provide a clear and consistent approach across the school and enable all of the school community to understand our approaches to the support and guidance of children who struggle with their emotions, relationships and communication.

We understand that the most important aspect in children feeling valued, safe and secure is the sense of connection with the school community.

We believe that all children, regardless of race, gender, religion, ability and disability have the right to learn in a caring, nurturing and supportive environment.

We have high regard for our children's spiritual, moral, emotional and psychological well-being. We endeavour to provide a caring and creative learning environment. We promote the right for children to speak out and seek help in all aspects of their well-being.

We foster an environment in which everyone feels safe, happy, secure and respected.

Family

We believe that parents and carers are key partners in helping us to support their children and their aspirations.

Good communication is vital, we aim to inform parents and carers of any significant or prolonged challenges, we will work together to guide and support their children to participate and engage positively in school life and learning. This will be conducive of; parental workshops, opportunities within school and the DSL to meet and greet parents daily as strict practice.

To enable us to build strong, trusting relationships with children and to facilitate their needs we expect that parents and carers will inform us of any significant home life changes or challenges.

This policy has been developed to ensure consistency for staff in promoting and focusing on emotional needs and development alongside academic learning. This will enhance teaching and learning, promote healthy outcomes, build resilience, and improve wellbeing for all children in school. School leaders visibly and consistently support all staff in managing pupil behaviour through following our policy.

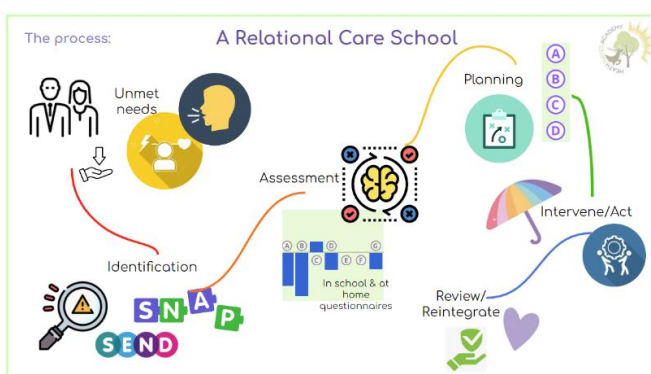
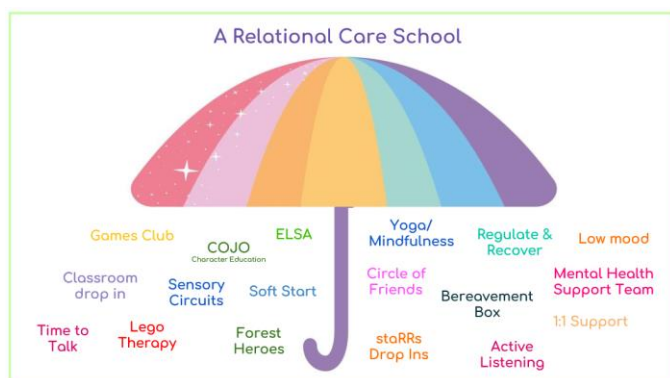
Relational Care Team- A Relational School

At Heath Hayes, we will endeavour to create an environment of mutual respect where children will instinctively respond in a thoughtful, polite and caring manner. We will ensure all children know that their effort, achievement and good choices are recognised and valued by means of positive, meaningful praise and encouragement. In turn this will nurture confidence, develop motivation, and promote growth mind-sets. We recognise that all behaviour is communication, when a child is struggling to manage their emotions or having difficulties expressing their needs this may present in many ways. For example; unkind actions, disruption to others, being unable to listen.

Heath Hayes is a Relational Care School, with a team trained in Relational Care. A relational school is one that prioritises the needs of all children and staff alike. At Heath Hayes, we hold one another in high regard and staff model behaviour that they wish to see in the children. Staff have the highest of standards for learning and behaviour and ask all pupils to share these standards and respect in the classroom and on the playground.

The Relational Care Team are present every day in school to support the unmet needs of children; to support families and staff. This support spans many different areas of the school, and staff get to know the children very well. We can offer: pastoral support, 1:1 sessions, classroom support, ELSA, Forest Heroes, mindfulness and numerous other restorative practices. Our extensive Relational Care offer and process can be seen below:

Parents can contact the Relational Care Team through the email: RCT@heathhayesacademy.co.uk if they have questions or concerns or simply wish to talk.



The 6 principles of nurture underpin this policy:

- **Children's learning is understood developmentally:**
We will consider stage not age
- **The classroom offers a safe base:**
We will make the classrooms a welcoming environment, we will clearly display the worry monster, emotion first aid kit, have a 'relax and recharge zone'. Teachers will individually greet children (ensure all children are 'welcomed') and show them that they care!
- **The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing:**
We will regularly talk about mental health, emotions, developing children's confidence and self-esteem.
- **Language is a vital means of communication:**
We will encourage children to express their feelings and to speak to each other in a respectful and kind way.
- **All behaviour is communication:** Behaviour communicates NEED, the child often doesn't know to ask for help or even understand their need, but the behaviour is driven by an unmet need that the child needs adults around to help them identify and meet.
- **The importance of transition in children's lives:**
We will pre-warn of changes and put plans in place according to individual needs.

Aims:

- ☐ To be a Relational School- where all staff and stakeholders recognise that connections are imperative and that children will thrive when they feel supported and safe.
- ☐ To focus on emotional needs and development alongside academic learning which will enhance teaching and learning, promote healthy outcomes, build resilience and improve wellbeing for all children.
- ☐ To ensure that all children feel happy, secure and that their basic needs are met.
- ☐ To build strong relationships between staff and pupils.
- ☐ To break down the barriers to learning through connection not correction. Correction can come, but connection is needed first so that the correction is collaborative NOT imposed, and from a place where the child feels safe, recognised and understood.
- ☐ To be fair and consistent with children (always taking into account individual needs).
- ☐ For children to know that staff see them as individuals, and that they are cared about and valued.
- ☐ For staff to recognise that for some pupils, adaptations will need to be made in order to meet any specific social, emotional, learning or other needs which require a personalised approach.
- ☐ To recognise that changes in routine can be difficult for some children and will be carefully managed with preparation and support.
- ☐ To ensure children feel safe, confident and understand that they have a voice and will be listened to.
- ☐ To create a reliable and consistent approach alongside an educational balance of emotional containment and cognitive learning.
- ☐ All staff will contribute towards providing an environment where good choices are consistently modelled, encouraged, and reinforced.
- ☐ When a child is communicating through behaviour staff will respond in a non-punitive way.

Expectations:

Heath Hayes Academy has high expectations for our children, whilst also recognising some children have specific needs and providing the necessary support. We ensure that the school's expectations, aims and strategies are widely known and understood by the school community. It is everyone's responsibility to remind children of our expectations and to comment

positively.

Expectations are reinforced through every interaction with children as positive role models. Children are taught explicitly what good behaviour looks like. Our interactions with one another are important, we recognise that children mirror what they see and how adults interact with one another.

Our expectations for every member of the Heath Hayes family covers all times of the school day, and when representing the school out of hours/off site:

School Charter:

- **Being Open**- minded. means I will respect my friends ideas, and try new experiences.
- **Being Kind** means supporting and helping others, and making positive choices.
- **Being Brave** means I can try something new, even if it feels a little scary.
- **Believing** means I can keep trying, with a goal in mind.
- In all of these and every day, I can Be **The Hero** in my own unique way.

Our approach to supporting children:

At Heath Hayes, we seek to meet the unmet needs of all the children. The Relational Care Team oversee the children who require more nurture and care. Part of this approach consists of a combination of restorative practice, alongside the simple sequence of the three R's.

The three R's:

The three R's assists children to learn, think and reflect using a simple sequence:

- Firstly help the child to **regulate** and calm their fight/flight/freeze response. be empathetic as opposed to sympathetic. This space to **regulate** means deferring any consequences, withholding judgement as in that heightened state those things will cause escalation and will shut down communication. At the **regulation** stage the child needs to feel safe, recognised, but will also just need space and quiet to calm, so minimum interaction. Unconditional positive regard is the state with which we have to hold children at this stage.
- Secondly we need to **relate** to the child: a sensitive, trusting relationship is key, as is positive reinforcement and a non punitive approach. Tell them that you understand, validate and name their feelings.
- Thirdly, **reason**, supporting the child in enabling them to reflect, learn, remember, articulate and become self-assured. (we will implement a reflection journey)

School transitions and adaptations:

All staff should ensure clear, consistent and mindfully planned daily routines within the classroom, on the school site and on educational trips.

Consistent, mindfully planned, specific routines should be in place for:

- ☐ Start and end of day procedures (Including individual, personal greetings at the beginning of the day and a clearly displayed daily visual timetable)
- ☐ Transition times (including pre-warnings of events)
- ☐ Lining up as a group (as short a time as possible and mindful of individual needs)
- ☐ Getting changed for PE
- ☐ Moving around the school
- ☐ Break and lunchtimes
- ☐ Quiet Lunches for our children who need quiet and calm
- ☐ Regulate and Recover (movement) breaks within the school day
- ☐ Full sensory circuits/ access to a sensory room

We promote and teach our school charter by:

- ☐ Consistently use a calm approach with a low tone of voice.
- ☐ Use the Three R's: Regulate, Relate and Reason (children who are dysregulated are unable to reach the thinking part of the brain).
- ☐ Ensure all children feel happy, secure and that their basic needs are met.
- ☐ Key Stage one helpers

- ☐ Place great focus on developing positive relationships with children.
- ☐ Ensure that consistent positive reinforcement is given.
- ☐ Discover and celebrate all child's strengths and abilities.
- ☐ Ensure that there are clear pathways for concerns and support.
- ☐ Effective monitoring and accurate record keeping of incidents, concerns and individual needs.
- ☐ All children will have access to assessment using the SNAP tool and will be monitored for relational care intervention
- ☐ ELSA 1:1 support
- ☐ Whole school assemblies, class assemblies, focus days/weeks to build on social, emotional and behavioural aspects of learning.
- ☐ The implementation of Circle of Friends programme, to promote positive social interactions with peers.
- ☐ Ensure children are provided with appropriate support and guidance according to their SEMH, SEND, safeguarding and ACE needs at all times, but specifically throughout unstructured times and changes of routine.
- ☐ Teaching of Social, Emotional and Mental Health awareness and articulation.
- ☐ Relational Care staff modelling safe play during free time
- ☐ The teaching of the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) curriculum through our Learning for Life curriculum.
- ☐ School Curriculum including RE and a thread through themes.
- ☐ We teach relationships education, an element of sex education, and health education (RHE).
- ☐ Understanding behaviour and developing self-regulation coaching is available to parents and children through our Mental Health Support Team
- ☐ The school charter will be clearly displayed within school
- ☐ The class charter will be clearly displayed in each classroom

Approaches:

Restorative practice:

Restorative approaches are more reliable and teach children valuable social skills. In a non-coercive setting, punishment is out of place. Children with social and emotional difficulties are less likely to react in a volatile way to intervention. Sanctions may make the wrongdoer feel like the victim instead of helping them to take responsibility, and is inappropriate when the issues arise because the child is trying to deal with emotional distress and well-being issues. Restorative responses can be therapeutic, helping to draw out hidden issues. Natural consequences are explored with the child whilst they are feeling safe and supported, We will remain non- judgemental and allow the child to feel able to recognise the natural consequences for themselves. This leads to **consequences related to actions**.

- Identify the harm done by the wrong-doing
- Ask the child to give an account of their conduct and seek to progress them through the restorative process (recognise and validate feelings - include individuals actions)
- If necessary, provide a change of opportunity to the child (how to put things right)
- Seek a change in outlook from the child which will underpin a secure change in conduct (this process is their reflection journey).

All staff are trained each academic year in attachment and trauma and have the full support from the Relational Care Team. Staff will always seek to empower the child to resolve the situation and to make the very best choices. Such examples might be to write a letter, to lead a conversation, to complete tasks to restore damage or to apologise genuinely through actions and not just words.

Natural consequences: (consequences related to actions)

In order to support the mental health of all our children **natural consequences** should follow an incident as soon after the child is able to calm and follow the restorative steps, the same day if possible. This allows the child to move on and to go home feeling positively about the situation. It also prevents unnecessary anxiety about coming into school to face consequences, which especially for autistic children and those with other SEMH needs such as trauma, can be too much to handle. The only reason for delay is if the child is not yet calm and able to reflect, which may take some time. In which case the child should be reassured that they are coming back into school to a positive, safe, reflective discussion about what happened, rather than imposed consequences. If a child is involved in an incident within the school day, an Arbor communication email will be sent to parents and carers. This ethos and practice are explored further through our Relational Care offer in school. The Relational Care Team can be called upon to help with disputes, incidences, and concerns. They will model best practice communication and will support children in their choices.

Praise:

We use consistent, meaningful praise as the key to creating a positive atmosphere and providing the opportunity for all children to succeed. Meaningful praise will be given for any recognition or communication to support the school and class charters. In addition to this, praise will be given for any individual/group achievement; academic, social, emotional, pastoral and to recognise good choices.

Rewards:

Our celebration assembly will highlight children who have shown a positive attitude within an element of our learning line, the class teacher will invite parents and the child will be presented with a certificate. Headteachers awards and stickers can be earned throughout the year.

- ✓ House points – Children will earn house points for conduct which meets the school charter. This will lead to both individual rewards through MME house point badges, and overall house point data collection.
- ✓ Winning house – Children in the winning house team with the most house points per half term, will receive 10 minutes additional free play.
- ✓ The Hero's Journey achievement badges sent through MME directly from staff in school to highlight achievements that show evidence of: 'be open, be kind, be brave, belief, and be the Hero'
- ✓ Celebration Assembly – Assembly recognition, once weekly 2 children will be celebrated within assembly for showing evidence of be Hero's Journey.
- ✓ Stickers – Children will receive sticker praise for any positive conduct/achievements/learning.
- ✓ Celebration Assembly Hero of the half term/term - Assembly recognition, half termly/termly assembly for showing evidence of be Hero's Journey over an extended period of time.
- ✓ Reading Trophy & book winners – Once weekly, classes will record weekly reading at home, the class with the highest reading percentage will win the trophy. Children will enter a random draw to win a book!
- ✓ Reading badge – If children are identified as consistently reading at home each night, or show an improvement in reading at home, they will gain a 'Super Reader!' badge on MME.
- ✓ Headteacher stickers/wristbands – Children will receive a sticker/wristband if selected by staff to share their learning achievements with the Headteacher.
- ✓ Children may receive individualised rewards and badges throughout the year for demonstrating our school charter and outstanding achievements.

Additional Needs:

Some of our children's actions may reflect social, emotional and mental health needs, the SEND, Safeguarding and Relational Care Team work closely together to support such additional needs, for more information please read the SEND policy. ELSA intervention may be implemented for children who would benefit from emotional support. Heath Hayes also have excellent links with Cannock Mental Health Support Team and make referrals for children and their families. These well trained and experienced professionals support children in school- offering 8-week programmes of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, emotional wellbeing, and counselling.

Levels of Behaviour:

Level	Example behaviour	Feedback
-1	Limited manners or consideration to others Low level disturbance in class Not following instructions - one off	Restorative Practice Natural consequence Behaviour logs will be monitored internally by school, with feedback to parents as/when necessary/requested
-2	Being unkind to a peer(s) Being disrespectful to a peer(s) Being disrespectful to an adult(s) Not following instructions on more than one occasion	
-3	Repeatedly not using manners or showing consideration to others Repeatedly not following instructions Repeated disturbance in class Repeatedly being unkind to a peer(s) Being unsafe Damage to property	Restorative Practice Natural consequence Auto-email to parents to notify of behaviour If concerns are persistent - communication with parents at the end of the school day/by email/by phone)
-4	Inappropriate language Repeatedly disrespectful towards others Physically hurting someone - one off unintentional Sexual comments/actions	Restorative Practice Natural consequence Auto-email to parents to notify of behaviour Communication with parents at the end of the school day/by email/by phone)
-5	Homophobic comments/actions Inappropriate language (swearing) Racist comments/actions Sexual comments/actions Child on child abuse Physically hurting someone - one off intentional Behaving unsafely - putting themselves and others at risk Repeatedly physically hurting others Damage to property (intentional/severe) Persistently disruptive	Restorative Practice Natural consequence Auto-email to parents to notify of behaviour Communication with parents ASAP Fixed Term Exclusion if necessary

Personalised Behaviour Systems:

Some behaviour may require more support than restorative practice. In this case, families will be invited into school for a meeting to discuss intervention and more structured or long- term support. These behaviours might be identified by the Relational Care Team, class teacher or other staff member. Such examples might include- behaviour and support plans that are mutually agreed by the child's family and school, to implement strategies to improve behaviours. The social, emotional wellbeing of the child will always be considered, and intervention agreed to enhance wellbeing and learning. As a Relational School, it is imperative to communicate success with carers and families and to maintain an open and transparent dialogue.

Serious or persistent incidents:

- ☐ We will provide a community intervention (family meeting) facilitated by the DSL (or their designate/Relational Care team). Following such incidences, parents will be consulted either through phone communication, email or face to face.
- ☐ A personalised support plan will be created which will include:
 - The conduct objectives that the child has not yet attained and the impact this has on learning and school life.
 - The support plan to help the child achieve these conduct goals.
 - The unmet SEMH needs the child may have and steps to address these.
 - The changes of opportunity needed to support a change of outlook and conduct on the part of the child.
 - Ways in which parents/carers can support the plan.
 - Ways in which school may be able to support family life.
 - In regard to the reporting and/or incidences of child-on-child abuse; at Heath Hayes, we strive for a culture where children feel safe to speak to staff about their experiences. We know that the initial response to a report from a child is vitally important. We do not want to miss that opportunity and so we reassure victims that their reports are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We never give

victims the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting serious bullying, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. We reassure victims that they should not feel ashamed for making a report. We have well promoted and easily understood systems in place so that our children feel confident to knowing their concerns will be treated seriously. These allegations will be recorded on our Safeguarding electronic system, dealt with in accordance with our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2024** and such robust and timely actions will take place to ensure safe outcomes for all. It is in line with this policy that; victims, perpetrators and any other children would be supported.

Behaviour monitoring

All staff are expected to regularly review behaviour records to identify emerging patterns, triggers, or concerns that may impact a student's wellbeing or learning. This proactive monitoring enables early intervention and supports a consistent approach across the school. Where behaviour flags are identified, these will be shared with parents/carers to ensure transparency and collaboration. Further monitoring and support systems will be put in place as needed to help the student regulate and improve their behaviour.

Potential systems and strategies may include:

- Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs)
- Daily or weekly check-ins with a key adult
- Reflection tracking charts or logs
- Positive reinforcement systems (e.g. reward charts, house points, etc)
- Time-out or safe space access protocols
- Restorative conversations and reflection sheets
- Referral to Relational Care interventions within school
- Engagement with external support services as appropriate
- Regular parent/carer meetings, emails, or phone calls

Suspension/Exclusion

At Heath Hayes, we endeavour to ensure that our support has a positive impact on emotional development and self-regulation. However, in the unlikely event of extreme cases of persistent, abusive, homophobic actions/comments, inappropriate language, racist comments/actions, sexual misconduct, child on child abuse or violent/unsafe actions where the safety and wellbeing of our children are put at risk and the efficient education of others is prevented a suspension will be issued. In each case, parents and carers will be invited in school at the earliest opportunity.

A fixed term suspension (following national guidelines) is for a specific period of time. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods. Pupils whose lunchtimes behaviour is disruptive may be suspended from the school premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. The legal requirements relating to suspension apply in all cases.

Permanent exclusion (this would occur following a serious breach of school rules, or persistent disruptive behaviour). Permanent exclusion can occur on the school site or if the child is educated during a school planned offsite activity, at another setting or whilst wearing school uniform out of school hours. We will always impose appropriate, fair and effective sanctions that are relevant to the misdemeanour. A permanent exclusion involves the child being removed from the school roll.

Searching, screening and confiscation

Headteachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item: knives and weapons; alcohol; illegal drugs; stolen items; tobacco and cigarette papers; fireworks, and pornographic images.

- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been or is likely to be used: to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil).
- Under common law, school staff have the power to search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. The member of staff should ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted so that their agreement is informed.
- A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for any prohibited items. (Not the ones in your behaviour policy)
- The member of staff conducting the search must be of the same sex as the pupil being searched.
- A member of staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks, or lockers.
- A member of staff can search lockers and desks or other personal spaces at the school for any item provided the pupil agrees. Schools can make it a condition of having the locker or space that the pupil agrees to have these searched.

- Records of searches should be kept and parents should always be informed of any search for a prohibited item

Linked policies

This policy and procedures should be read in conjunction with other related school policies, including:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
SEND Policy

Policy Review

The policy will be reviewed by the SLT.