



# The Acorns

## Primary and Nursery School

Mutual respect

Equity

Inclusivity

Love

# Relationships Policy

January 2024

**Mission:** Be The Best You Can Be

**Vision:** Providing A World-Class Start To Life

At The Acorns Primary & Nursery School, we are a Rights Respecting School where everyone is welcome - we have No Outsiders. We equip our pupils with the skills and knowledge they need to become positive, global citizens. During their time here, children develop into intrinsically motivated, life-long learners: they understand the value of working hard and they aspire to achieve.

Our pupils leave us with a strong, moral compass, comfortable in their own skin, and knowing their own minds. They are brimming with self-belief and self-worth and are capable of being in respectful, trusting relationships with others in their community.

Throughout their time at The Acorns, we instil the characteristics of effective learning. These allow our pupils to develop into confident, resilient, and independent adults, prepared to succeed in the modern world.

We achieve this vision through our daily mission - Be The Best You Can Be - and by remaining true to our core values of Mutual respect, Equity, Inclusivity and Love.

**Values:**

Mutual respect



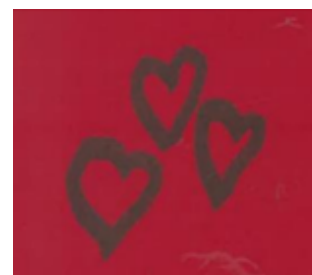
Equity



Inclusivity



Love





## **We are a Rights Respecting School with No Outsiders**

### **Rights Respecting School:**

As a Rights Respecting School we promote respect, dignity, and non-discrimination, to establish and build upon shared values, adults and pupils collaborate to produce a class charter by choosing three rights which they feel are most relevant. The charter is displayed in the classroom and is a reminder of the shared values and principles. It is a point of reference and signifies the shared enterprise and acts as the 'social glue' to bind everyone together. As a Rights Respecting School, our children are treated as equals by their fellow pupils and by the adults in the school.

Positive relationships are essential for all things positive to happen within an effective school. We place building strong, positive relationships at the forefront of everything we do at The Acorns and ensure that all our practice is trauma informed.

We are always aware that we, as staff who work closely with our pupils, share responsibility with the parents/carers for the children in our care and make every effort to provide the care which any responsible parent would be expected to make.

At The Acorns Primary and Nursery School, we expect and encourage respectful behaviour and self-regulation from all pupils to achieve an environment which enables emotional development, effective learning, and high standards. We achieve this through visible consistency which is tightened through three simplified core rules:

**Ready  
Respectful  
Safe**

These are referred to and used regularly by all pupils and staff.

### **Purpose:**

Our aim is to provide an inclusive, calm, quiet atmosphere in the school and to encourage children to move around in a respectful manner. However, our expectations of the children can only be realised through the co-operation and support between home and school. Should any difficulties be encountered, we invite parents to work with us to resolve them. Within school, positive relationships are the collective responsibility of every member of staff and this extends beyond the individual classroom, to cover every child and every area of the school and playground.

We acknowledge our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of Safeguarding, and in respect of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The recent SEND reform (2015) has removed behaviour as a special needs and now concentrates on the reasons for behaviour under the umbrella of 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs'.

## **Article 28: Discipline in schools must respect the child's dignity and rights**

### **Aims of the Policy:**

- To fully embed a trauma-informed approach at The Acorns
- All pupils will be treated with unconditional positive regard
- To develop a moral framework within which children can mature emotionally and in which relationships can flourish
- To enable children to develop a sense of self-worth, respect and tolerance for others
- To produce an environment in which children are ready, respectful and safe
- To develop practices which support pupils to regulate / self-regulate

### **Objectives:**

For children to show:

- Self-respect
- Self-confidence
- Self-control
- Self-regulation
- Respect, courtesy and tolerance towards teachers, other staff and towards each other
- Pride in their achievements
- Interest in their activities
- Empathy with others' feelings
- Respect for their environment and community
- Respect for all those with protected characteristics

### **Leadership and Management:**

It's the responsibility of the Headteacher, Deputy Head and Inclusion Manager to ensure the aims of the policy are clear and consistently approached across school. Support is given to all staff to ensure they fully understand the aims of the policy and how to enact it daily. Senior Management regularly seek the opinions of pupils, parents and staff to ensure this policy is understood and accepted.

### **School Systems**

Below are the systems we use in school to ensure relationships are strong and behaviour is positive.

### **Rights Respecting Parliament:**

The purpose of the Rights Respecting Parliament is to encourage mutual respect between members of the school community, to help develop strong values and attitudes and to enable all pupils to feel that their views and opinions are important within the context of the whole school.

Each year group, from Y1-Y6, elects two pupils to represent them as Rights Respecting Ambassadors. These representatives are presented with a badge to show that they are on the Rights Respecting Parliament. The communication from each year group, via their representatives, leads to discussions which reflect group feelings and opinions. Meetings are held and minutes are distributed to year groups for reflection and discussion.

The Rights Respecting Ambassadors are responsible for making decisions about all aspects of school life which affect all pupils. Having contributed to the decision-making process through their representatives, each pupil has some degree of possession of the outcome.

The discussions, feedback and decision making contribute to pupils' own awareness of the need for individual and group discipline. This, in turn, contributes to improving behaviour, helps to prevent bullying and encourages trust and teamwork.

## **Greeting Pupils and Parents:**

At the start of every day, children and parents are greeted by staff with a warm smile and a personalised hello. All staff will demonstrate unconditional positive regard welcoming all unconditionally. Each day at The Acorns is a fresh start.

## **Rewards:**

We believe that pupils respond well when they are rewarded. We also believe that rewards support a pupil's understanding of the value of showing respectful behaviour. This is evident from the systems of rewards that are in place and in the displays around school. Achievement is celebrated in every classroom and **all** efforts are valued.

## **Forms of Rewards:**

1. **Verbal comments of specific praise** are given regularly by all teachers, teaching assistants and other members of staff. We aim for them to be clear and sincere.
2. In the Caterpillar room (2-3 year-olds) verbal rewards are instant and accompanied by a clear sign.
3. In the Butterfly room (3-4 year-olds) children are rewarded with a 'spot' to add to a ladybird display. This contains a picture of their face and is a visual celebration for all to see.
4. All children at The Acorns collect **Dojos** from Reception onwards. These are points that can be earned for anything which is pleasing (good work, good behaviour, manners, etc...). Any adult in school can reward a child with 'Dojo', which are added electronically to the child's individual 'Dojo' avatar and can be seen visually on the classroom and iPad screens. Dojos are never removed from a child. Any Dojo that is earned by a child is also added to their House Points total.
5. Children collect their Dojos and can decide when to 'cash them in', before reverting to 0 Dojos again. They can cash in their Dojos for prizes of varying worth at 50 Dojos, 200 Dojos, 400 Dojos and 1,000 Dojos.
6. **Celebration Assemblies** are held weekly to celebrate achievement and effort in their work, reading and birthdays. Parents are encouraged to attend.
7. Each week staff choose two pupils from their class to receive a '**Pupil of the Week**' certificate in Celebration Assembly. These pupils will receive a certificate stating what they have done to achieve this award and the teacher will talk about/show some of the pupil's work. These certificates are awarded for work within the classroom, rather than personal/social endeavours. Staff will often associate a Characteristic of Effective Learning

with the reason a pupil receives a certificate. Copies of the certificates are then displayed in school for visitors, parents, staff and other pupils to admire for the week to follow.

8. Each week staff in Reception and KSI choose one pupil from their class to receive a **'Reader of the Week'** certificate in Celebration Assembly. These pupils will receive their certificate and be entered into a prize draw, one of them winning a book during the assembly.
9. In KS2, pupils receive their **Accelerated Reader** certificates and badges during Celebration Assembly.
10. **Other celebrations** – We strongly believe in the importance of developing the whole child. We therefore also celebrate all other achievements and accolades, such as sporting certificates/medals, awards from achievements outside of school and any other causes for celebration.
11. Each week teachers will choose a pupil from Caterpillars to Year 6 who has gone the extra mile and made them proud and reward them using **Squirrel Mail**. This involves a surprise postcard being sent home so that parents/carers receive information from the teacher and can celebrate their child's achievement.
12. Monday morning relationship-building opportunities - to allow our staff and pupils valuable time to re-establish and further develop positive relationships after a weekend, each class starts the week by playing board games together to facilitate relaxed discussions.
13. Each week children are celebrated for their work on Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS). There are three categories that are celebrated: most coins earned; fastest time and most improved. Pictures of these children are placed on a TTRS display.

## **Our restorative approach:**

All adults at The Acorns understand how trauma can impact upon an individual in a range of ways. Our aim is that all staff can help pupils to navigate their way through these difficult periods and support them to self-regulate. All staff understand that firm, well communicated boundaries are necessary, but staff are well-trained in developing relationships that are positive and encouraging to enable pupils to improve their conduct. We will never use fear, intimidation or shame when working with a pupil who is demonstrating unwanted behaviours. Staff are enabled to fully incorporate a restorative approach with the pupils they care for. We achieve this by allowing them time, a safe space and further support if needed. We vow to never display behaviours or language which indicates to a child that we have 'given up' on them.

We understand that there will be times where our pupils struggle with or are unable to self-regulate. Any negative behaviour is interpreted as an inability to communicate, a lack of understanding or a reaction to a challenge, whether extrinsic or intrinsic, and this may be displayed by a pupil not successfully managing the 3 school rules: ready, respectful, and safe.

After a child has demonstrated behaviours that do not meet our core values the class teacher will spend time with the child at the following break or lunch time to better understand the situation and to support the child in a restorative manner.

Some possible questions that could be used during this 'repair' time are:

1. What happened?

2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What do you think about what happened now?
4. How did this make people feel?
5. Who has been affected?
6. How have they been affected?
7. What should we do to put things right?
8. How can we do things differently in the future?

Within the Nursery classes (Butterflies & Caterpillars), when pupils are struggling to regulate their behaviour and adhere to our 3 school rules, adults will reinforce positive behaviours using language, signing and visual prompts, providing an example of what they should be doing. If a child does not respond positively to this, they may be provided with time with a key adult in a quiet space within the classroom. A member of staff / key person will co-regulate through any negative or unwanted behaviour, using a 6 step conflict resolution approach. When appropriate, a child is encouraged to restore using sign and/or other language.

School Family Liaison Officers, Mrs Savory and Mrs Ramsay and Inclusion Manager, Mrs Bentley will look to identify any pattern in a child's behaviour. They will monitor any possible triggers and offer support and guidance for the child, staff members involved and family.

### **Children who require further support:**

All pupils who attend The Acorns are valued. Staff are highly trained to support all pupils to achieve self-regulation and to encourage all pupils to demonstrate respectful behaviour.

We understand that there are many children whose behaviour communicates an unmet need. Where staff feel that children require additional support to regulate, discussion will be held with Inclusion Manager or SFLO to identify appropriate provision. An agreed individualised plan will then be formed in collaboration with the pupil and shared with all adults who come into contact with the pupil and their family.

### **Communication with home;**

Clear and consistent communication with parents, carers and families can only have a positive impact on our pupils' success in school. We understand that all families are different, and therefore communication may come in different forms. We may communicate with families often or only at certain points in the school year. We will remain flexible to the needs of the pupil and the needs of our parents/carers in achieving consistently positive communication. We fully understand the power of positive communication with parents and staff therefore strive to report to parents many of the wonderful achievements pupils make whilst in school.

### **De-escalation:**

Every effort will always be made to de-escalate a situation to ensure that learning can continue in a safe and positive environment. There are many ways to do this such as distraction, humour, change of task or person, and/or partial agreement. On occasions there may be times when it is necessary to escort a child to a safer environment where they can be supported throughout although never left isolated. The amount of time in a withdrawal space will be monitored.

In the event that it is necessary to hold a child in order to 'prevent a pupil from committing an offence, causing personal injury or damaging property'\*, parents of the child will be informed by phone call or in person. The incident will be recorded in a 'Bound and Numbered' book and recorded on CPOMs.

[\*Education and Inspections Act 2006, Section 93, paragraph 465]

## **Staff Induction, Development and Support:**

New members of staff are supported to understand and feel confident in following our Relationship Policy, within the Staff Handbook, when they first join The Acorns. This includes all Acorns policies. Furthermore, formal meetings with the Headteacher and Deputy Head help to support colleagues and on-going, informal support throughout the year.

Regular discussions are held as a whole staff to ensure the purpose, aims and practice of this policy are understood. Staff feel confident to bring any issues or concerns directly to the Senior Management Team. Senior Management regularly monitor relationships across school, providing feedback to staff on this.

## **Child-On-Child abuse:**

A clear, established ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness, high expectations of behaviour and clear consequences for unacceptable behaviour, as well as a system for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, reduce the likelihood of child-on-child abuse. The steps taken to reduce this are outlined further in The Acorns Primary and Nursery School's Safeguarding Policy.

## **Pupil Transition & Support:**

When pupils first join The Acorns, the school rules and expectations are clearly outlined, with parents present to aid positive transition. Pupils are introduced to our school systems at a rate which suits their needs. Peer support is available for new starters to further support this.

Senior Management, Senior Leaders, Class teachers, Teaching Assistants and Family Liaison Officers, offer daily support to pupils. Pupils are consistently encouraged to follow the 3 school rules, demonstrate the Characteristics of Effective Learning and work hard to 'be the best they can be' each and every day. If any pupil struggles to understand any system that exists in school to support positive relationships and behaviour, additional support is offered to both the pupil and parents/carers. This may mean additional supportive measures are put in place to help the child achieve their best.

On return after a suspension, the Headteacher (or Deputy Head in the Headteacher's absence) will re-introduce the behaviour system to ensure the school rules, expectations and systems are clearly understood by both the pupil and the parents/carers.

## **Banned Items:**

Pupils understand what they need to bring with them to school to have successful days. Other than learning materials (reading book, reading record, homework), a healthy snack and water bottle, which is clearly outlined in our Healthy Schools Policy, and the correct uniform, which is clearly outlined on our school website, pupils should not bring in any other items from home, unless this has been agreed by The Headteacher (or Deputy Head in the Headteacher's absence).



## **Suspensions & Permanent Exclusions:**

In very exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for a child to be suspended or permanently excluded from school. The Headteacher (or Deputy Head in the Headteacher's absence) will decide whether to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, taking into account all the circumstances, the evidence available and the need to balance the interests of the pupil against those of the whole school community. Please see our Suspension and Exclusion Policy for further information.

*This Policy should be read in conjunction with our Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy, our Preventing & Tackling Bullying Policy and our SEND/Inclusion Policy.*

*Government guidelines include: 'Behaviour in Schools' (September 2022);*

*'Suspension and permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement' (September 2023);*

*'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years' (January 2015).*

*Education Endowment Fund: Improving Behaviour in Schools*

If parents would like to find out more about a trauma informed approach' they can access the CWAC website: <https://westcheshirechildrenstrust.co.uk/our-way-of-working/our-model/>