EMBARK FEDERATION

Love Learning, Love Life.

Ambitious · Supported · THRIVE · Healthy · Safe · Happy

Fairfield Infant and Nursery School

'Learning for Life'

Our school is part of the Embark Federation.

The shared vision for our trust is to "create schools that 'stand out' at the heart of their communities." Our trust has four core beliefs; Family, Integrity, Teamwork and Success that are integral to everything we do. The purpose is to enable everyone to be able to 'Love Learning, Love Life.'

Our policies are underpinned by our vision, beliefs and purpose.

Behaviour and Relationships Policy

Fairfield Infant and Nursery school

Date of Issue	**01/09/2026**
Date of Review	**01/09/2027**
Version	**V1**
Approval Level	**Reece Waring - SENCO**

The policy will be reviewed annually as a minimum, unless lessons learnt or new legislation, national or local guidance suggests the need for an earlier date of review.

Fairfield Infant and Nursery School
Behaviour and Relationships Policy

Introduction

Connection before Correction

We believe that strong respectful **relationships** are central to how we manage behaviour at our school. Pupils learn best when they feel happy, safe and cared for and the wellbeing of all our school community is important. We recognise that we are all imperfect human beings, and will not get things right every time, but will strive to do our very best for our pupils.

Thinking of a child as behaving badly disposes adults to think of punishment. Thinking of a child as struggling to handle something difficult encourages us to help them through their distress. Behaviour is not BAD; it is SAD. We recognise that those children that need the relationship the most, may be the ones that are the hardest to connect and build a relationship with.

Our Policy is based on the belief that:

- Behaviour is communication.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs are an **additional need**, and will be supported accordingly.
- Staff are role models who should behave in a professional and calm manner at all times.
- All pupils are valued and respected equally.
- It is our **collective responsibility** to support children with their behaviour.

Aims

- For all pupils to be ready to learn.
- For all staff to be good role models, cooperating and supporting one another, and treating colleagues and pupils with courtesy, consideration and respect.
- For pupils to have an emotional vocabulary that supports them in identifying and managing their emotions.
- For pupils and staff to be supported to manage their emotions in order to achieve their potential.
- To provide a happy working atmosphere in school by promoting wellbeing of all stakeholders.
- To consistently and fairly support children when they find behaviour a challenge, using an individualised approach that recognises their needs.

- To encourage school/parent partnership in supporting our pupils in their learning and behaviour.
- For all adults to take a curious and empathetic approach to interpreting pupil's behaviour.

Code of conduct

This is based on one word: **RESPECT.**

We define respect as meaning;

"a way of treating, or thinking, about something, or someone, with care."

This means we;

- respect each other (we listen, we are kind and gentle, we look after each other, we share, we tell the truth).
- respect property (we look after school materials, the premises, and other people's property)
- respect ourselves (we try our best, we value our learning, we make healthy choices
- respect the wider world (we look after the environment, we recognise British values and other cultures and beliefs)

This respect should be evident between all members of our school community.

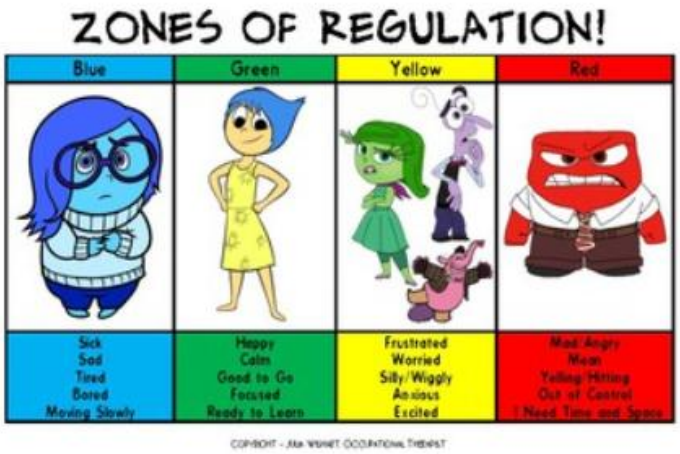
Zones Of Regulation

We have adopted this approach to help teach our children about how they are feeling, model language in order for them to express their feelings and emotions and strategies to help them regulate.

The **Zones of Regulation** is an evidence-based framework designed to help individuals manage their emotions and behaviors. It categorises feelings and energy levels into four colour-coded zones:

- **Blue Zone**: Low states of alertness (sad, tired).
- **Green Zone**: Optimal state of alertness (calm, happy).
- **Yellow Zone**: Heightened state of alertness (frustrated, anxious).
- **Red Zone**: Extremely heightened state of alertness (angry, out of control).

This framework provides a common language for discussing emotions and offers prac tical strategies for self-regulation. It is widely used in educational settings to support students in developing emotional regulation skills.



Pro-active Approach

Wherever possible, we put provision in place that supports children in maintaining a regulated state during the school day. We make adjustments that may include;

- Lunch Club (children able to eat lunch in a quieter area adjacent to the dining hall
- Quiet Assembly (small group in classroom)
- Bespoke provision
- Access to sensory 'break-out' areas
- Brain breaks e.g. bike ride outside, activity in hall
- Fiddle boxes, Now/Next approach, visual timetables, workstations etc

SMILERS

The Derbyshire SMILERS initiative is a program aimed at promoting emotional health and well being among children and adults. It provides a whole school approach to discuss wellbeing and offers resources based on the five ways to well being for primary. Friday afternoon is SMILER time and children from Nursery – Year 2 do activities based on these.

The role of all staff

"Kids are like a mirror, what they see and hear they do. Be a good reflection for them"

K. Heath

Working with children with social, emotional and mental health needs can be challenging. We recognise that staff need support from each other. During an interaction with a pupil, if the adult begins to feel overwhelmed, they should seek support from an alternative adult to take over. This will enable all children to be supported by in a calm and professional manner. Often a change of face helps to regulate a child as the new adult is not associated with the trigger.

It is everyone's responsibility to communicate any changes around individual pupil's needs and provision. Children who are on a Behaviour Plan or are considered vulnerable will have information relevant to them recorded on CPOMs, and their Behaviour Plans are stored in our shared OneDrive. Teachers will update these files, and all adults working with pupils in the file are responsible for checking for updates. The class teacher will hand over any information relevant to the midday supervisor, and this can then be disseminated to other midday staff by them.

We expect all staff to behave in a way that minimises the likelihood of behaviour that presents a challenge. In the classroom teachers should plan their days carefully to cater for the emotional, as well as educational, needs of their pupils. Similarly, staff at break times should engage pupils in purposeful activities wherever possible. These might include;

- acting out a play together
- having a cartwheel competition
- building a den

- playing hide and seek
- reading a book
- setting up an obstacle course

We want all adults to build social capital by;

- Welcoming (Using people's names/greeting individuals/finding out about each other)
- Acknowledging (Expressing gratitude/noticing others)
- Listening
- Being kind (A kind word/deed/supporting each other)
- Inviting (Making space/asking for opinions)
- Being enthusiastic (Supporting self-efficacy)
- Smiling and/or being silent (Even if it's not reciprocated!)

The Class Teacher's Role

It is the class teacher's responsibility to ensure behaviour does not inhibit learning or impede potential, both of the individual exhibiting unwanted behaviour, and the class as a whole. We recognise that it is important for the curriculum to be differentiated and creative (Link to Curriculum Policy) in order to optimise pupil engagement. The school day should be structured in order to provide sensory/active/rhythmic breaks and mindful pauses to support pupil's wellbeing, may also include an emotion check in to start the day. Each classroom should have a calm area/den and calm box for pupils to access, personalised to the needs of the class.

Embedded in the curriculum, the vocabulary of our policy should constantly be reinforced, and pupils should be taught the names for their emotions, an understanding of what is happening when they struggle to self-regulate, and strategies for managing their feelings (see Appendix 1). They should be taught what is happening to their brain when they lose control (see Appendix 2).

We also know that on occasion further support may be required (see Appendix 3). Where this is the case support should be sought from the Behaviour Lead and/or Senior Leaders. It may also be necessary to seek advice from external services such as Behaviour Support and/or an Educational Psychologist.

The Behaviour Lead's Role

It is the Behaviour Lead's role to support all staff in supporting children's behaviour. This may involve facilitating restorative conversations, working with teachers to develop Behaviour Plans or conducting Risk Assessments.

The Behaviour Lead will ensure new staff are provided with all information necessarily in order to carry out their role successfully. This may include sharing policies, individual Behaviour Plans and observing existing staff.

The Head-teacher's Role

It is the Head teacher's role to support staff when appropriate, including during break times when teachers are unavailable. Staff should try to avoid using the Headteacher as a 'threat' to children struggling to regulate. Staff may also require additional support from the Head teacher where relationships with parents are difficult.

Rewarding Positive Behaviour

We have high expectations of all pupils, but recognise that achievements are individual. We differentiate our approach to managing different children's behaviour. In some circumstances the general guidance in this policy may not be appropriate to an individual. In this case, that child may have a Behaviour Plan in place (see Appendix 4). Where children have managed to adhere to our school Code of Conduct, or demonstrated a Learning Behaviour, or where they have achieved something specific to their individual development, they may be praised and rewarded by collecting a Dojo point. All Class Dojo 'classrooms' should have points directly related to our Learning Behaviours, Code of Conduct and may also have rewards chosen by individual teachers for their class. Children visiting the Golden Box provides the Headteacher with the opportunity to positively reinforce desired behaviour, and develop relationships with all pupils.

In Friday Celebration Assembly children are rewarded for;

-HT Award (nomination)

-Star Writer

-Star Of The Week

Some teachers may choose to use additional approaches such as a marble jar or sticker charts, depending on the needs of the class. The adult awarding any rewards should make it clear to the children why they are receiving the reward, and make an explicit link to the Code of Conduct or Learning Behaviours.

How we manage unwanted behaviour

Behaviour should be interpreted as communication. When managing all forms of inappropriate behaviour, staff should ensure they remain mindful of any triggers and underlying causes of these behaviours (e.g. Is the child hungry? Is there a safeguarding concern? Is there a SEND need? Do they need attention/connection

from an adult?). We aspire to equity, rather than equality, in ensuring we provide the appropriate support for all individuals.

Low level behaviour

Minor, disruptive behaviours such as shouting out, talking over someone else, refusal to do a task etc. should be managed by the class teacher by the following:

- A proactive approach
- An engaging and stimulating curriculum
- Staying calm
- Sensory and other breaks
- Referral to our value of **respect**

Where these strategies do not improve the behaviour, children will be talked to in a **positive** way. Some examples are shown below:

"*I think you might be feeling a bit fidgety. How about you go and bounce on the trampoline for 20 bounces?"*

"It looks like you might be finding this tricky. Maybe we could do it together?"

Physical touch, such as a hand on the child's shoulder, may be used to provide assurance or a sense of connection. Other strategies such as thumbs up, or a smile can be used to show acceptance. This links with our Positive Behaviour Support including Physical Intervention Policy.

Children will be reminded of their calm down strategies (displayed in all classrooms and on adult lanyards) and supported in selecting an appropriate way to manage their emotions.

A child removing him/herself from the classroom is seen as a de-escalation strategy, and this should be respected as long as the child is safe. If a child is within the school building, visible and calm they do not necessarily require direct adult supervision. Any adults that encounter a child outside the classroom should calmly ask "Are you OK? Can I help?". No adult should reprimand the child or intervene at this stage unless directed to do so by the adult already directly involved, or if there is an imminent risk of harm. For those children with individual Behaviour Plans, a different approach may be required, and these are shared with all staff.

Class teachers and support staff will use a dynamic risk assessment approach to ascertain whether the child is in an appropriate state of mind to go for a quick run/bounce on the trampoline/take a message etc as a strategy to support de-escalation.

If a child uses a swear word, it is not automatically assumed that there is a negative intent behind this behaviour. The adult should explain that this is not appropriate

language to use at school and move on. However, if this was part of a child shouting aggressively towards another pupil or adult it would be considered a high-level behaviour as it is part of a larger issue. If a child presents with persistent swearing, a targeted approach will be used that is relevant to the individual. For example, it may be appropriate for a child diagnosed with ASD to have their bad language ignored. This would not be an appropriate response for a neurotypical child.

If low level challenging behaviour is persistent, and other strategies have failed, a discussion should be held between the class teacher and Behaviour lead to decide if a Behaviour Plan is necessary. At this point a meeting would be scheduled to discuss provision with the child's parents/carers.

High level behaviour

We deem high level behaviour to be;

- Causing physical injury to others
- Causing physical harm to self
- Verbal abuse (shouting, swearing)
- Damage to property
- An attempt to leave the premises

When these behaviours occur, the adult should take the following steps:

- **Wait 3 seconds before intervening** (unless there is immediate risk of physical harm)
- Use an Emotion Coaching style (see Appendix 6)
- Any consequences or restorative conversations will take place later, when the child is calm

It may be necessary to say "STOP" in a clear, firm voice, but this should not be shouted as it is likely to escalate the problem further.

If an adult is on their own with a group of children and is not able to manage the situation alone, they will send a message to the Office. The Office will then act quickly to find another adult to support the situation (Family Support Worker/SLT). If this situation occurs during lunchtime, teachers should only be requested to support when other strategies have been unsuccessful. The Head teacher can be requested to become involved, but it is anticipated that the midday/playtime staff will support each other to resolve the issue independently wherever possible. The supporting adults will then work together to promote de-escalation and reintegration. The member of staff involved may need support following the incident, in the form of a debrief or quiet break in the staffroom.

If a child is in 'crisis' and is within the school premises, supervision can be carried out from a watchful distance. Reassurance should be given to the child verbally and

through body language. The consequences of the behaviour would not be mentioned during a crisis, but rather when he/she is calm. This would then be recorded on CPOMs, and any new insight into the individual may be used to adapt a future approach.

If necessary to ensure everyone's safety, an opportunity for de-escalation will be provided by the child spending time with a key adult in a quiet area of the school.

Following a High level incident, a discussion should be held between the class teacher and SLT to decide if a Behaviour Plan and Risk Assessment are necessary. At this point a meeting would be scheduled to discuss provision with the child's parents/carers.

Consequences

We want all our pupils to feel confident about managing conflict and tension, and be able to reflect on, and take responsibility for, their own behaviour. Therefore, consequences for unacceptable behaviour are **restorative** and **meaningful**. This means;

- If property is damaged it is repaired/replaced wherever possible.
- Any mess is tidied up with the child alongside a supportive adult (when they are calm).
- The child is given the opportunity to "make things better". This may be a spoken "Sorry" or an apology letter sent to anyone that has been physically hurt, signed by the child.

This restorative approach will be supported by a dialogue between the child and adult after the incident when the child is calm. It should **not** be used as a threat before an incident, or during a crisis. Where possible, changes in behaviour or actions that are becoming persistent, will be dealt proactively, particularly where a child with additional needs is involved.

Consequences may not look the same for all pupils. Consideration of individual needs and circumstances will be taken in to consideration, and there may be a professional conversation between involved staff before a decision is made.

If required, we will arrange a restorative meeting facilitated by the child's class teacher and either our Behaviour Lead or a member of SLT. Everyone will be given the opportunity to say what has happened, how they feel and what needs to happen for everyone to move on. Questions will be asked, which may include;

"What happened?"

"How did you feel?"

"How can we make it better? /Is everyone OK?"

Exclusion

Exclusion is only used as a last resort, when all other strategies have failed, and can only be administered by the Headteacher.

The decision to exclude a student will only be taken in the following circumstances:

- In response to a serious breach of the School's Behaviour Policy and the Code of Conduct.
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.
- If a pupil has committed a violent or aggressive act that is considered extremely serious

This policy has been reviewed in accordance with the Education Act 2011 (section 51a) and the Equality Act 2011.

General Guidelines

A 'no shouting' policy is in place and shouting must not be used as a classroom management technique. However, there may be occasions when it is necessary to use a raised voice i.e. in order to prevent imminent harm/to be heard in the playground. Use of the word "STOP" in a loud voice may be necessary where a soft voice has not been listened to.

No child should be sent to the Head teacher as a punitive consequence, though the Headteacher is available, whenever possible, to support staff dealing with challenging behaviour.

Physical intervention

For full details see Positive Behaviour Support including Physical Intervention Policy.

- Physical intervention is never used to gain compliance.
- Use of a physical prompt such as a light elbow touch, is acceptable.
- If a child is distressed it is assumed that an adult would provide physical comfort in the form of a hand on their shoulder or around the child's back, or the offer of a hug. If a child seeks appropriate physical comfort, then it should be given (See Safeguarding Policy).
- Guiding/Shepherding a child is acceptable by holding his/her hand or placing a hand on his/her back, where the child is able to move away from the touch.
- Physical intervention may be used where there is the risk of imminent physical harm.

- Restrictive physical intervention would only be used in the most extreme cases, where a child is persistently hurting themselves/others and all other strategies have failed.
- Where a restrictive intervention has occurred, this must be recorded on CPOMs.
- If possible, a statement of intent would be given from one adult to another, before a restrictive intervention occurs e.g. "*I am going to hold * now because he/she is finding it difficult to stop hurting others*".

Behaviour Plan

Where other strategies have been unsuccessful, the Behaviour Lead and class teacher, along with the pupil and parent will produce an individual Behaviour and SEMH Plan. This will include:

- Strategies to support the child deescalate
- Interventions to build the child's self-esteem (Scrapbook of strength/Positive Play/Lego Therapy)
- Language that works well with that child
- Adaptations required to make the day easier to manage for the child (e.g. sensory breaks/calm box/visual timetable)
- Triggers to try and avoid
- Specific, small, targets to work towards, that are achievable for the child.

The Behaviour Plans will be saved on SharePoint for key adults to access. It will be reviewed, initially after a week, and then at increasing intervals, and adapted accordingly.

Electronic copies of all Behaviour Plans and Risk Assessments will be stored on the school SharePoint.

APPENDIX

1. Strategies for de-escalation
2. School visuals
3. Flow chart to show when further support may be required
4. Behaviour & Risk Assessment proforma
5. Zones Of Regulation
6. Emotion Coaching Language

Appendix 1

Strategies for de-escalation

- breathe deeply
- step outside for some air
- take a message/go for a walk
- have a drink
- use a stress ball
- put on some hand cream
- splash your face with water
- trace your fingers
- blow bubbles
- pound some clay
- ripping paper provided
- Count forwards/backwards
- Use a resistance band
- Do some yoga
- Bounce on a ball
- Draw with chalk
- Go to a quiet place
- Wear headphones
- Snuggle in a blanket
- Do a puzzle
- Bounce on the spot
- Rock on a Bilbo
- Play hopscotch
- Watch a timer
- Pop bubble wrap
- Play with slime/putty
- Blow a pinwheel
- Listen to nature sounds
- Blow a feather
- Spin a top
- Skip
- Spin
- Colour
- Push against a wall
- Stretch
- Have a hug
- Feel your own pulse
- Yell into a pillow
- Do a handstand/invert on a chair

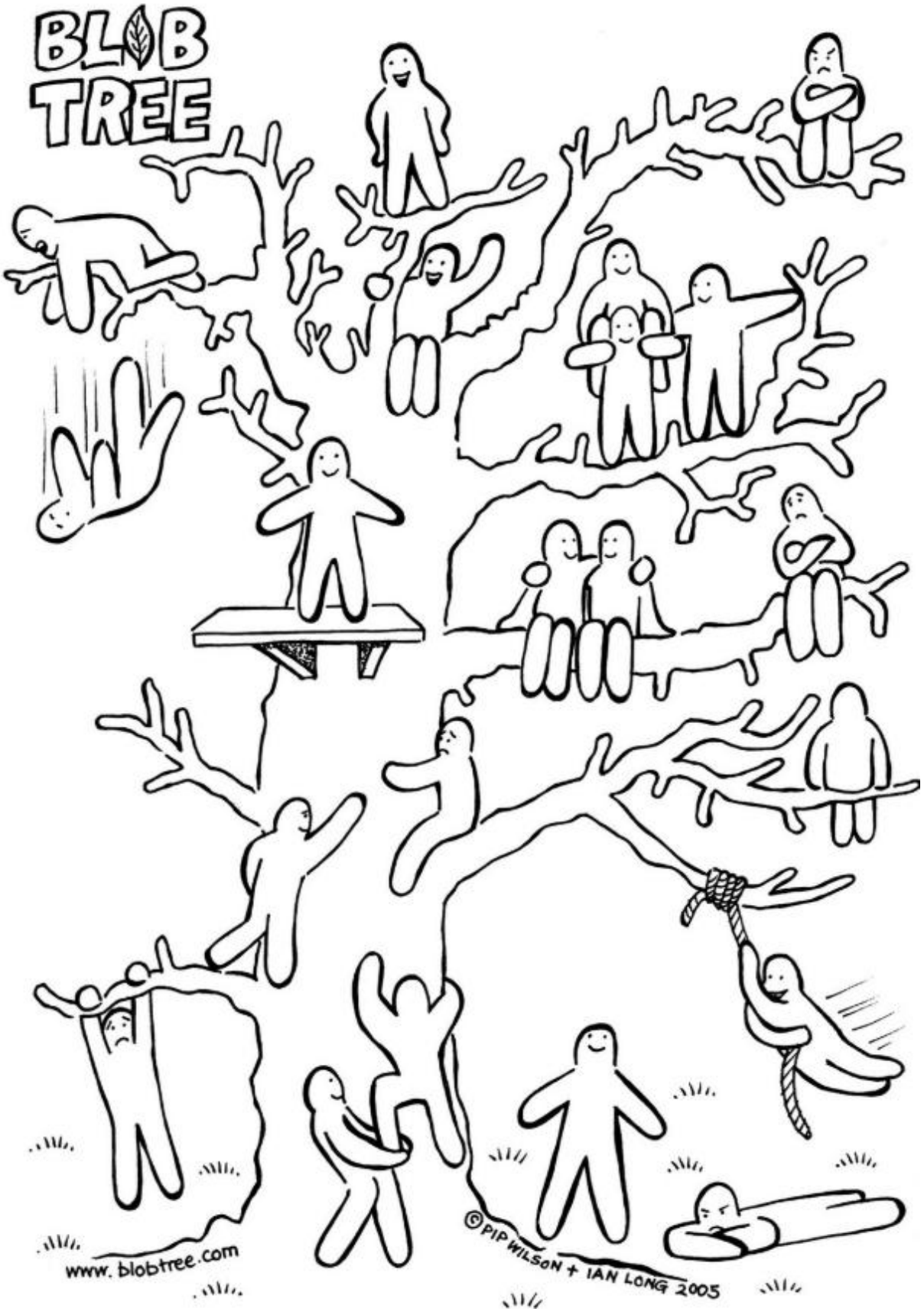
- Play with water
- Listen to music
- Visualise a happy place
- Push your palms together, hold and release
- Turn off the lights
- Climb
- Recite the alphabet

Appendix 2

Breathe	Go somewhere else....a quiet place, or safe space
Take your pulse	Count
Use a stress toy or putty	Do some stretches
Yell into a pillow	Tell someone
Run, bounce, walk	Have a drink
Push against a wall	Rip some paper

STOP	Wait 3 seconds
Recognise the emotion	Validate the emotion
Suggest what may have gone wrong	Work on a plan for next time

Twinkl/mood monsters


BLOB TREE
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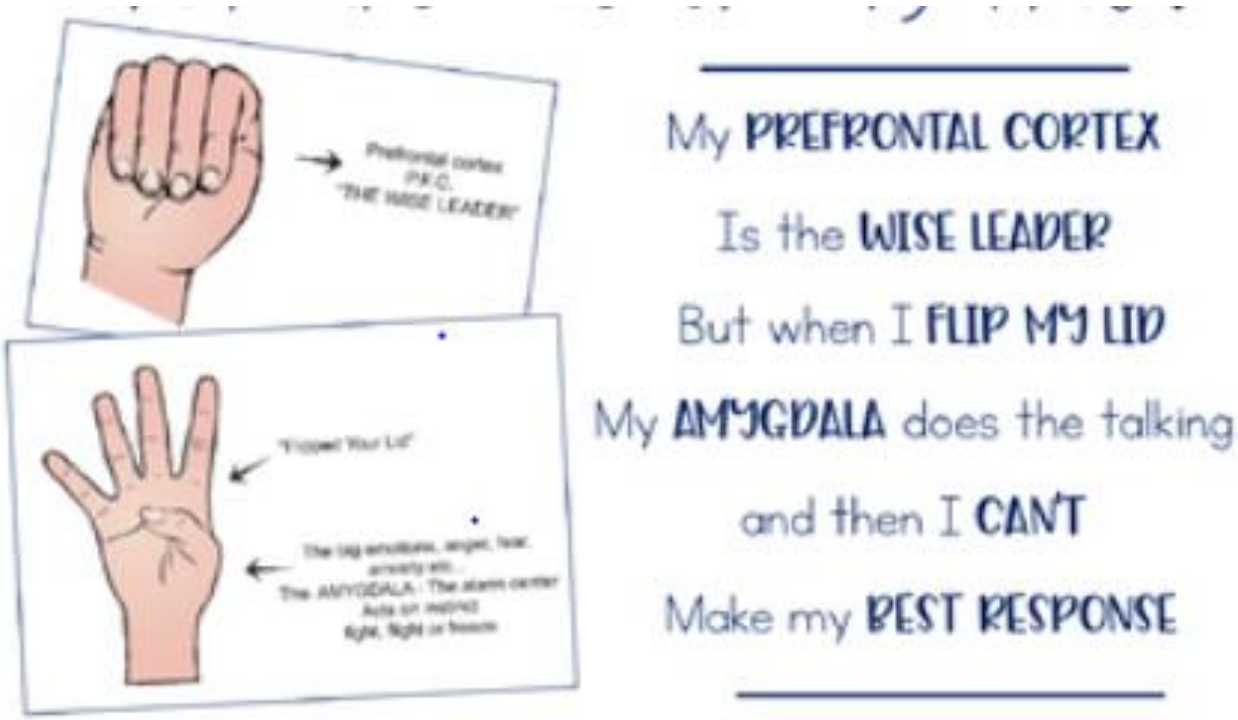
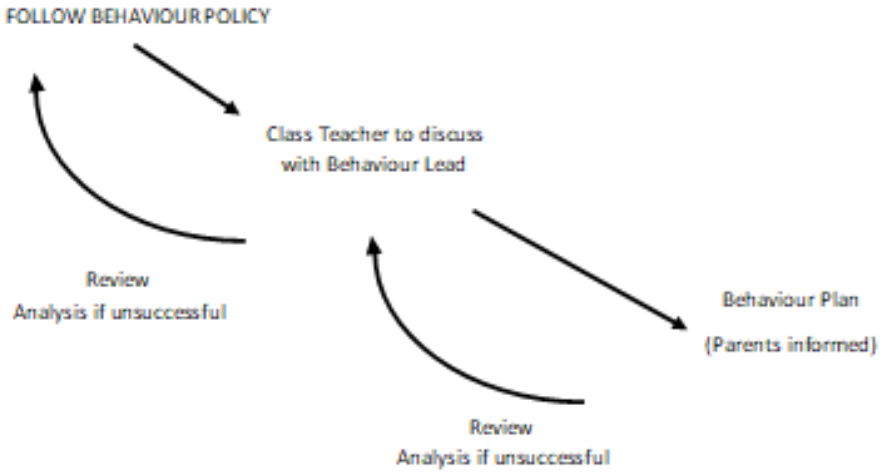


Tell children that their brains are like a house, with an upstairs and a downstairs. The upstairs characters are thinkers, problem solvers, planners, emotion regulators, creatives, flexible and empathic types. The downstairs folk are the feelers. They are very focused on keeping us safe and making sure our needs are met. Our instinct for survival originates here. These characters look out for danger, sound the alarm and make sure we are ready to fight, run or hide when we are faced with a threat. Our brains work best when the upstairs and the downstairs work together. Imagine that the stairs connecting upstairs and downstairs are very busy with characters carrying messages up and down to each other. This is what helps us make good choices, make friends and get along with other people, come up with exciting games to play, calm ourselves down and get ourselves out of sticky situations. Sometimes the downstairs brain takes over, and decides to sort out the problem on its own. This means that the stairs that normally allow the upstairs and downstairs to work together are no longer connected.

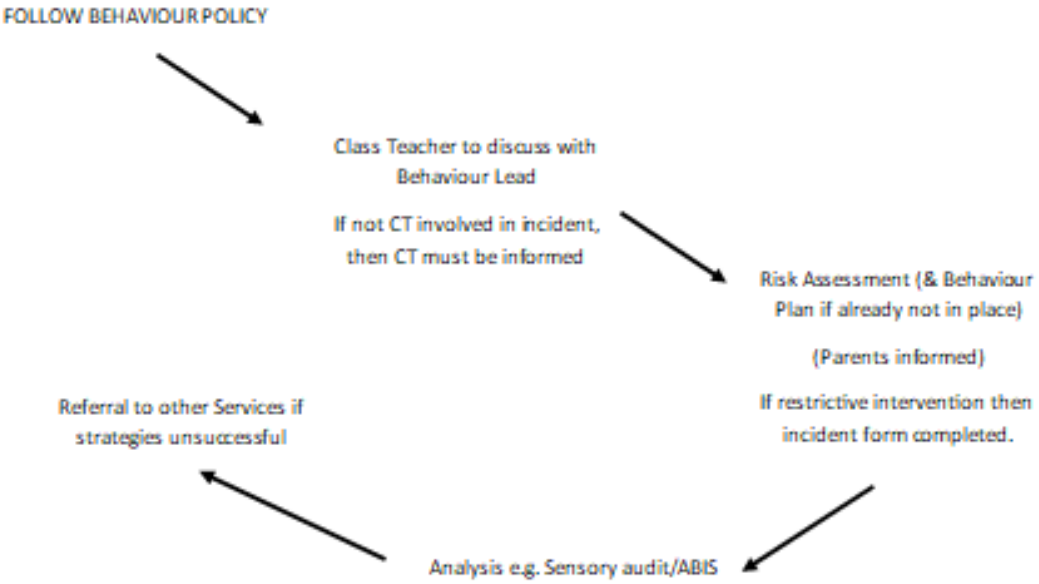
See below for more info:https://www.heysigmund.com/how-to-teach-kids-about-the-brain-laying-strong-foundations-for-emotional-intelligence-by-dr-hazel-harrison/

Appendix 3

LOW LEVEL



HIGH LEVEL



At every stage, progress will be reviewed to inform next steps.

Appendix 4

Positive Behaviour Support Plan	
Pupil	
School	
DOB	
BSS	

Parenting Issues / Barriers to Learning	
Key Information - Behaviour	
Strengths / Interests / Exceptions	**Preferred Activities:** **Reward:**
What has been going well?	
What is still causing concern? **Triggers:** **Signs:**	
What does … think about school?	
'I messages':	**Functions:**
Actions / Strategies	
When you see signs of things going wrong: **What will you do when things have gone wrong?** **When calm:**	

How are we going to achieve this?

Written by –

Copies -

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK REGULATIONS
CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENT

DERBYSHIRE County Council

GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT FOR:	Extremely Challenging Behaviour of (insert pupil name) Date of Birth

PART 1 : ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Section/Establishment Name:			
Date of Assessment		Date of Issue	
Assessment carried out by		Signature	

Reviews (Annually or where there is a significant change or where risk is not found to be controlled adequately)		
Review Date	Reviewed by	Please state what changes, if none please put none.

The purpose of this form is to encourage working practices that enhance employees' and pupils' safety as well as others who may use the facilities.

This Risk Assessment is for recording specific significant risks arising out of challenging behaviour likely to cause injury or a safeguarding risk. It is not designed to record behaviours that although challenging do not cause significant harm. It should be completed in accordance with the accompanying notes and used in conjunction with the young person's positive behaviour/multi-element plan/care plan which will contain other vital information about the young person such as functions of behaviour and proactive and active measures for managing the behaviours. This risk assessment is to be used for high risk situations where proactive and active measures have failed and the young person is in crisis.

This front sheet needs to be signed by the Headteacher/Manager who will need to ensure it is implemented

Facilitated by:	
Signed and accepted by Headteacher/Manager:	

Notes for Completion of Assessment

This assessment is designed for behaviours likely to cause significant injury to a young person or member of staff or which present a significant safeguarding risk. It should not be used to record those challenging behaviours that do not present these risks, as they should be recorded in behaviour plans/safe care plans

Column 1: This column should be used to record the actual behaviours. It should be factual and not contain opinions or potential behaviours that may occur in the future. Do not use adverbs or adjectives to describe the risks Examples may include such things as Climbs, punches, throws chairs, runs etc.

Column 2: This column should only include those who are actually at risk. It should be as specific as possible and could include named individuals if targeted or groups by name. It is highly unlikely that challenging behaviour could affect "all pupils" or "all staff" at the same time, so "those pupils/staff in the vicinity of the event" is likely to be far more accurate.

Column 3: This column should list all situations when the behaviour occurs and triggers/warning signs.

Column 4: This column should be used to list all the measures used to manage the behaviour once it escalates to crisis. It can also include more generic control measures such as training for staff.

Column 5: Should clearly identify who is responsible for the day to day implementation of the control measures.

Risk Assessment Facilitator
The risk assessment facilitator will be a professional with an understanding of managing challenging behaviour. Their role is to facilitate discussion so that the risk assessment remains factual and deals with the significant risks. It is also to aid in the devising of practicable control measures so staff working with the young person are clear as to what they should be doing and when. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher, Governors and those using it to ensure it is appropriate, detailed correctly and remains up to date If at any point it is deemed inadequate/inappropriate it should be reviewed and updated.

All staff who support the young people for whom the risk assessment has been produced must sign this risk assessment (page 4) to show they have read and understood it.

RISK ASSESSMENT

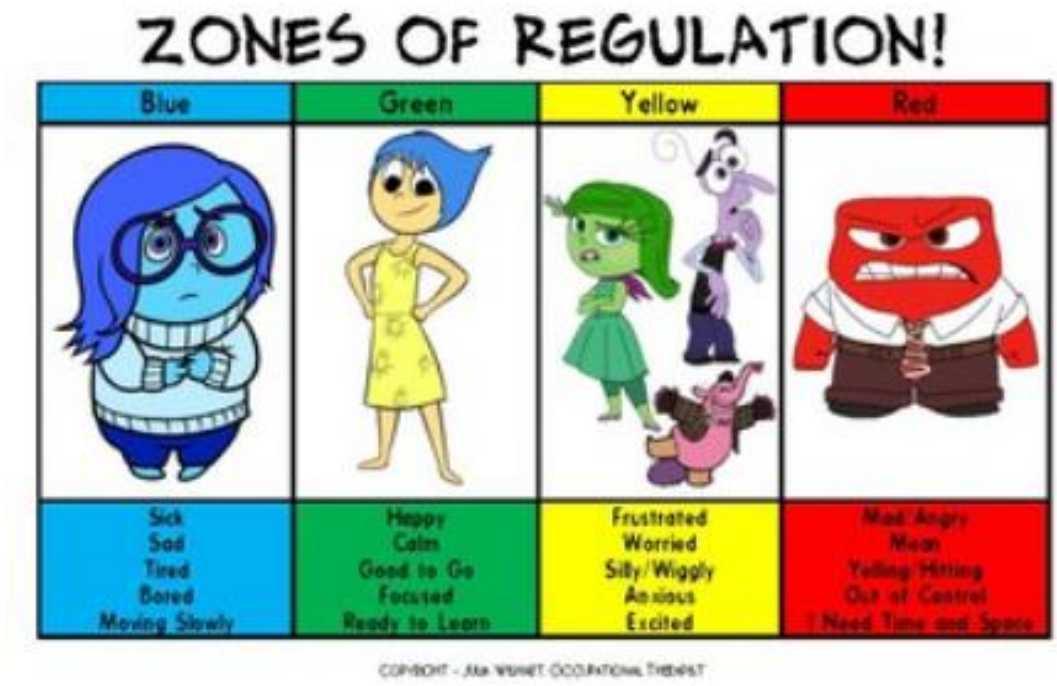
The following sections should be completed by all staff who need to be made aware of and abide by the findings of the Risk Assessment. NB: If, as a result of a review, changes are made to the Risk Assessment the relevant box on the attached page should be completed as appropriate by the staff concerned.

I confirm that I am aware of and understand the findings of the Risk Assessment and agree to ensure that I will work to the stated Control Measures and bring to the attention of Management any deficiencies in the findings of the Assessment.

Print Name	Signature	Date	Print Name	Signature	Date

Specific Behaviours that present significant risks.	Who is at risk and How?	When does Behaviour Occur?	Risk Control Measures to be Implemented	Who is responsible for implementing the Risk Control Measures?

Appendix 5



Appendix 6

The emotion coaching style regards times when the child is experiencing strong emotions as opportunities to connect with feelings and so promote emotional development. Adults need to be resilient enough to manage working with angry, fearful or unhappy children without being overwhelmed and upset. The adult using an emotion coaching style can:

- Recognise the power and purpose of emotions
- Empathise with the feelings of children
- Practise active listening techniques in order to build rapport
- Be calm not anxious about the child's emotions, and see a way to problem solve
- Role model positive emotional states

The messages that emotion coaching gives to children are life affirming.

- We all have feelings and need to recognise them in ourselves and others
- We are not alone and we are accepted, supported, cared about, understood, trustworthy and respected – this is then returned

- We are empowered and it is safe to engage in problem solving accepting that we are part of the solution
- All feelings are normal and need to be regulated and expressed constructively
- Problems and conflicts can be resolved peacefully

In the grip of strong emotion, the child loses control (dysregulates). The adult, able to self-regulate, gets alongside the child in order to make some empathic connection. Implementing the three steps of emotion coaching the adult and child co-regulate and co-learn until the child is able to start to self-regulate.

Emotion coaching requires that the adults are willing and able to build a trusting, respectful relationship with children.

Trusting others is often something which vulnerable and traumatised people find difficult, making it particularly hard for them to initiate and maintain positive relationships. They will erect protective barriers and it is up to adults to demonstrate that they are trustworthy and treat the child respectfully. This emotional engagement can feel risky for adults but is necessary if the child is going to be able to co-regulate.

Step 1: Empathise, validate and label

What will the adult be doing?

- Recognising all emotions as being natural and normal and not a matter of choice
- Becoming aware of the child's emotional state and recognising the opportunity for co- learning
- Accepting the emotion and finding words to name the feelings
- Recognising behaviour as communication – relational versus behavioural model
- Looking out for physical and verbal signs of the emotion being felt
- Taking on the child's perspective (attunement, mentalising, mindfulness)
- Using words to reflect back the child or young person's emotions and helping them to label the emotion
- Affirming and empathising, allowing the child to calm down through co-regulation. Co-regulation allows the child to mirror the respect given to them by the adult – emotional mirroring is more powerful even than the fear of emotional engagement felt by vulnerable children
- Providing a narrative for the emotional experience creating cognitive links through co-learning with the child and then teaching.

It can be appropriate to suggest moving the conversation to a different space if that is possible. A soothing environment where the child feels safe can help with co-

regulation. Knowing when the child is able to accept this suggestion is a matter of your knowledge of and relationship with the child.

What might the adult say?

'I can see that you get angry when that happens. I would feel angry if that happened to me. It's normal to feel like that'

'I can see you're frowning and you're kicking the wall and expressing a lot of energy. I would be feeling like that too if I didn't want to do something'

'I noticed you looking around at the others who are working on their projects. I think you might be feeling nervous about whether your work will be OK. Have I got that right?'

Step 2: Rapport before Reasoning-setting limits

Establishing that there are clear limits about what behaviour can be allowed to continue is a critical second step in the emotion coaching process.

What will the adult be doing?

First – co-regulation, establishing rapport by:

- Building on attunement with the child or young person
- Creating engagement with the social and emotional brain; mirror neurons
- Acting empathically to set the emotional tone
    - it is important that the adult is not reflecting back the angry or distressed face of the child, so that the child is able to reflect back the calm and empathic face of the adult

Then – co-learning, discovering what the child needs in order to move forward:

- Co-learning informs teaching
- Separating the emotion which is acceptable from the behaviour which may well be unacceptable
- Stating the boundary limits for what is acceptable behaviour
- Making it clear that some behaviours cannot be accepted
- What might the adult say?
- *'These are the rules we have to follow in the swimming pool. Doing that is not OK.'*
- *'We can't behave like that even though you are feeling annoyed, because it is not safe.'*

- *'You didn't do the task as we agreed. You're probably angry that you can't join in with the practical session with the others now because you have to complete the written assignment first.'*

Step 3: Problem solve WITH the child

When the child is calm and in a relaxed and rational state

What will the adult be doing?

Exploring the feelings that gave rise to the behaviour, problem, or incident

- Remember that all feelings are acceptable
- We manage our feelings by making choices about how we respond

Encouraging alternative ideas and actions that could build on the positives and lead to more appropriate and productive outcomes. Remember that the adult will need to adapt the level of problem solving according to the developmental level of the child, enabling them to build on experience.

Empowering the child or young person to believe they can overcome difficulties and manage their own feelings and behaviour

What might the adult say?

'This is not a safe place to be angry. Let's go to a safe place and then we can talk.'

'Next time you're feeling like this, what could you do? How do you think you will react next time or if this happens again?'

'You need to work in a group with Ruth or work with me – which do you want to do?'

<u>Language</u>

We want all adults to use an Emotion Coaching style of dialogue with the pupils. This would have the following structure:

- Recognition of how the child is feeling (Empathy) *"You're showing me…."*
- Acknowledgement that sometimes the adult might feel like that to (Labelling and Validation) *"I think I might feel angry if that had happened to me."*
- A suggestion for how things have gone wrong/what might help next time (Limit setting) "*I think you found it difficult when you felt that way*."

- An agreed plan of next steps (Support with problem-solving) *"Let's practise…… so next time you could try it yourself/Let's get better at…"*

Where a child might need a clear statement that their behaviour is not appropriate, it is important for the adult to make it clear that it is the behaviour that is the problem, **not** the child.

*"I am cross that you hit *. Hitting is not OK and * needs to feel safe here, just like you do. Next time you feel …… I wonder if you could…. instead."*

We can use the following strategies:

- Modelling thinking/wondering out loud *"I wonder if…or maybe/perhaps…."*
- Using neutral commentaries "*You are making a cross face and you have your arms folded. Now you have shouted NO and are stamping your feet"*
- Noticing out loud *"I've spotted you….. Sometimes it can feel……"*

In order to reassure children that we still value them, and are connected we take time to maintain or re-connect with them. We do this by;

Providing affirmation:

- *I'm not going anywhere*
- *It feels like you're trying to push me away but I'm still here.*
- *You matter.*

Welcoming:

- *We missed you*
- *This is your space*

Showing belief:

- *Show me….*
- *Tell me….*
- *It sounds as if…..*
- *You're letting me know…*

Acknowledging:

- *Thanks for letting me know*
- *I can see you have been finding this hard*
- *How you feel is important*

Body language and tone of voice of should be non-threatening, calm and relaxed as much as possible.

We **don't** say:

"You're a naughty/bad boy/girl" (it is the behaviour that we dislike NOT the child). Instead say "It is not OK to ……."

"You need to make the right choice" (this indicates that the child is in control of their behaviour, which may not be the case). Instead say "You can choose to do * or *. ……. I'm glad you chose to do *"