



Rothbury First School

Ready to Learn Policy

June 2025

Review Date June 2026

Rothbury First School's wish for children is to ***'be the best you can be by doing the best you can do'***. We want our children to have high expectations, independence, confidence, self-esteem and a sense of responsibility for others as well as themselves. We aim to create a caring and positive environment where children feel happy and secure, and to support each child to fulfil their potential in all subjects of the curriculum and in all aspects of school life.

The Ready to Learn Policy supports these aims by setting out clear expectations for behaviour. We believe that everyone in school has the right to be respected as an individual. We believe that teaching our children the skills of self-discipline, co-operation, respect and tolerance towards others are a crucial part of the curriculum and, more importantly, are essential skills needed in today's society. Without these skills, our academic objectives cannot be achieved and so, by working closely in partnership with parents, our goals can be achieved.

Rationale & Theory

Rothbury First School is an inclusive school that meets the needs of a range of children including those with complex family backgrounds as well as those with a range of special needs. At Rothbury First School, we want our children to feel safe and be confident and happy learners. Some children need more support to manage, understand and articulate their emotions. Effective teaching and learning is dependent upon positive relationships between staff and pupils as well as peer on peer relationships. It is essential that staff are consistent when enforcing our expectations and will challenge unacceptable behaviour using a relational approach.

What is a relational approach?

The relational approach values the essential nature of relationships in enabling individuals to develop, learn, adapt and thrive. It shapes all levels of a school setting, including ethos, policy, procedures and everyday interactions. As a school, we adapt to the emotional and developmental needs of all young people, including those who are most in need. We increasingly understand the long-term importance of connectedness and positive, safe relationships in supporting emotional, social, and academic outcomes for young people.

Relationships and interactions are a vehicle through which we can:

- Develop openness to trust
- Build a sense of security, belonging and connection
- Teach and embed skills to manage and regulate difficult emotions
- Develop awareness of ourselves and the emotional needs and perspective of others
- Resolve conflict
- Repair and restoring relationships following conflict

In general, the relational approach places emphasis on relationships, respect, responsibility and restoration, which have been shown to be more effective in addressing issues of discipline and conflict than traditional behavioural approaches, where systems rely on the use of rewards and sanctions to encourage compliance.

Aims

Our school aims to;

- Provide a safe environment where learning is enjoyable.
- Offer an engaging and challenging curriculum where children can achieve their full potential.
- Provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which is adapted to meet the needs of all learners.
- Use the curriculum to help children to understand how their actions affect others and to develop a sense of right and wrong.
- Promote healthy, positive relationships with others in school and in the community.
- Help each individual to discover and develop new skills.
- Provide challenge and support to achieve high standards.
- Encourage and support children to become well rounded, self-disciplined, respectful, moral and caring.
- Develop the mental wellbeing of pupils.

We believe that all pupils need to be able to achieve their potential in a secure environment that is not disrupted or interrupted by the unacceptable behaviour of individual pupils. Most children self regulate their behaviour and behave well every day and never need reminding about how to behave safely. We want to encourage and help the children who may find it difficult to behave safely at all times, to understand and manage their behaviour more safely.

Code of Conduct

Children and staff have worked together to identify a set of Rothbury Rules. This is a code of conduct in child-friendly terms. Children recognised that underlying all our rules is the wish to respect others and to be respected by others too; i.e. treat other people the way that you want to be treated yourself.

The Rothbury Rules are;



Be kind

Be caring



Be proud



Be polite



Be your best

Managing Behaviour (Step One) – Classroom Techniques

Staff should employ a variety of strategies to manage low-level disruption in class. These could include:

- Seating plans
- Praising the behaviour we want to see
- Pre-emptive ‘thanks’ (Thank you for...)
- Highlight the Rothbury rules
- ‘Reflection time’ in a quiet place to allow a child to reflect and change their behaviour.
- Distraction – allowing time to reflect by removing a child from the situation by asking them to complete a task (for example, collect something from office)
- Tactical ignorance
- Eye contact and non-verbal signals
- A positive seating move (can you sit here so that you can see better/help me/talk to)

Our Restorative Approach

At the centre of our Restorative Approach is the intention to resolve conflict between people through a calm and fair process in which all involved are able to have a voice, be listened to and are respected.

We believe all children should understand that it is the responsibility of staff and pupils to uphold and maintain the school’s values and rules. On occasions when these values and rules are not being respected or followed, we use restorative

approaches to help pupils understand the impact of their actions and how to resolve it.

We believe that by using this Restorative Approach we are giving pupils the skills to independently take responsibility for their behaviour and make more informed choices in the future.

Restorative approaches encourage pupils to think about how their behaviour affects others, both pupils and staff. It helps children to develop the values of kindness, empathy, respect, honesty and responsibility.

If a pupil in our school has been negatively affected by someone's behaviour, adults will ensure that each child's right to be heard is respected and the situation is resolved fairly.

If a pupil has done something wrong, they will be encouraged to understand the impact their behaviour has had on others and consider a solution to resolve the situation and prevent reoccurrence in the future.

Dealing with inappropriate behaviour.

Incidences of negative behaviour are dealt with in a fair, respectful and appropriate way, with the focus being on the individual taking responsibility for their behaviour, repairing any harm done, rebuilding and restoring relationships. The key principle when dealing with issues is to give all involved a chance to have their voice heard and become actively involved in the process. All members of staff and children know that issues will be dealt with fairly with a non judgemental approach.

When there have been incidents between children, key questions will be asked to find out what has happened and support the individuals involved to make things right again or repair the harm caused. Our aim is not necessarily to ask 'Why?' something has happened but to determine what has led up to an issue and resolve it positively. Everyone involved in an incident supported in coming to understand the harm that has been caused to all involved through a restorative dialogue.

Managing Behaviour (Step Two) – Behaviour Intervention

A brief behaviour intervention should be used to reinforce expectations in the classroom when a child's behaviour does not reflect the school's standards and rules. This intervention should be applied after general classroom behaviour management strategies (see above) have been used in order to challenge and change displayed behaviours. Where possible, this intervention should be carried out discreetly and calmly.

The purpose of this intervention is to act as a reminder to the child about behaviour expectations and as an opportunity to change the behaviour. Adults should follow

the script in order to provide a quick, consistent and non-judgemental discussion with the child to encourage positive behaviour choices. The script should be delivered in a calm manner to avoid any escalation and it should not be a discussion with the child. The script should be delivered sitting side to side with the child, ideally away from other children.

Behaviour Intervention Script

1. 'I notice you are/have been...' (not following instructions, distracting others etc)
2. 'You are not following...' (which school rule is being broken)
3. 'From now on you need to...' (work quietly, listen carefully, follow instructions etc)
4. 'Do you remember yesterday/last week when you...' (remind the child of previous good behaviour)
5. (If appropriate) 'You need to spend some time reflecting about this before returning to work (Reflection Time in class or another place)

Once the script ends, the adult will move away without any further discussion.

If the behaviour continues following this, a further intervention should be conducted.

1. 'I notice you are/have still been...' (not following instructions, distracting others etc)
2. 'You are still not following...' (which school rule is being broken)
3. 'From now on you need to...' (work quietly, listen carefully, follow instructions etc)
4. 'Do you remember yesterday/last week when you...' (remind the child of previous good behaviour)
5. 'We need to talk about this at breaktime/lunchtime/end of the day.'

Restorative Conversation (Step Three)

The restorative conversation is designed to help the child realise how their behaviour has impacted others, teach what appropriate behaviour looks like and equip the child with tools they can use to avoid similar behaviour in the future. Restorative conversations happen outside of lesson time (play time, lunch time, end of the day) and follow a series of simple questions, adapted to suit the age and understanding of the individual.

Incidences of Restorative Conversations will be recorded on CPOMs in order to monitor behaviour patterns. An overview of behaviour/rules broken, should be included in the report.

Restorative Conversation Script

1. What happened? Establishing each person's story, taking turns to speak starting with the person who has caused the harm allowing each person to have their point of view listened to.
2. What were you thinking at the time? Will you help me understand?
3. How did this make people feel? (All involved should share what they were thinking and feeling at the time, prior to the incident and since it happened)
4. Who has been affected?
5. How have they been affected? Who has been harmed/affected and how?
6. What should we do to put things right?
7. How can you do things differently in the future?

Character Education

Alongside using a relational approach when dealing with behaviour in school, we want our children to have a deep understanding of character values.

Character Education refers to explicit and implicit efforts to encourage virtues and ethical values. The underlying principle in character education is to develop character traits and behaviours that instil motivation and guide conduct so that pupils reflect wisely, learn eagerly and behave with integrity and work well with others; the qualities that they need to flourish in our society.

Character education is more than just a subject, it embodies everything we do. It is about helping our children to become independent and reflective members of society through teaching them how to deal with situations in an ethical way. Our pupils are encouraged to learn to make the right choices in order that they become the kind of person they wish to be. Our ultimate aim is to enable our pupils to make logical and rational choices and develop good judgement and acumen/common sense.

It is fundamental in ensuring the children strive to achieve their full potential academically and is at the centre of all that we do. Effective character education extends beyond our school day and has an impact upon our learner, benefiting others as well as themselves in our wider community and broader society.

At Rothbury First School character development is both taught and noticed through lessons and the constant modelling of our 16 chosen characters and virtues.

- **Kindness** - Being friendly, generous and considerate.
- **Empathy** - To understand and share the feelings of somebody else.
- **Self regulation** - Being able to manage how you feel in a range of situations.
- **Tolerance** - To know that other people may do or say things that you do not like, and that is okay.

- **Courage** - Being brave and having a go.
- **Confidence** - Having belief in yourself and others.
- **Respect** - How you treat and think about others.
- **Honesty** - To always tell the truth.
- **Resilience** - The ability to bounce back and try again.
- **Determination** - Never giving up.
- **Ambition** - A strong will to achieve a goal
- **Curiosity** - Having a desire to know things.
- **Critical Thinking** - Being able to find a solution and solve a problem.
- **Collaboration** - Working with someone to produce something
- **Independence** - Being able to do things by myself
- **Community** - Understanding and having a sense of belonging to a community.

These are taught explicitly each week through a whole school assembly, modelled everyday by staff in school and noticed and acknowledged through the children's actions.

Recognition systems to promote safe behaviour

- Clear and concise expectations of behaviour will be described and modelled through class assemblies, playtimes, lunchtimes and in class time to ensure all children understand what is acceptable and safe.
- Verbal praise from adults in school for good learning, effort or behaviour.
- Recognition of our character values with individual stickers.
- Individual stars / stickers / smiley faces /marbles in a jar.
- Children share their achievements with the class or another member of staff in school.
- Children share their achievement with the Headteacher to receive a Rothbury First School star sticker and praise.
- Staff will contact parents to share information about their child's behaviour.
- Children receive a Headteacher's award golden sticker and time in the yurt with a tasty treat on Friday afternoon - each class from Reception to Year 4 will award a Star of the Week certificate to a child who has shown character values or followed the Rothbury Rules exceptionally well during the week or who has made a significant improvement towards achieving these. A lunchtime star of the week will be awarded for amazing manners and fabulous behaviour in the dining hall, chosen by the lunchtime supervisors.

Unacceptable Behaviour Choices

- We recognise that sometimes children will make unsafe behaviour choices. Together we have agreed that the following behaviour is unacceptable in our school, classroom or online and will be dealt with swiftly and seriously
- Derogatory comments to other pupils (including homophobic comments, inappropriate sexualised remarks and racist remarks)
- Refusing to follow the teacher's instructions and not starting work
- Calling out, answering staff back- these behaviour choices disrupt learning as teaching is interrupted

- Constantly fiddling with equipment, being inattentive, constantly talking when teaching is taking place and distracting other pupils from listening
- Pupils who are choosing to be 'off task' and disrupt pupils who want to work
- Unco-operative behaviour (e.g. arguing, dominating others, rudeness) which prevents pupils from working together.
- Verbal aggression
- Physical aggression to pupils or staff. In these circumstances it may be necessary to separate the child from the class for their own and others safety.

It is the school's aim to reward appropriate behaviour. However, in some cases there is a need for a consequence to be put in place to curb inappropriate behaviour and to deal with difficult situations which may escalate. These may include;

- Verbal disapproval, expressing disappointment.
- Repeating activities sensibly
- Time out from an activity
- Catching up on work (not completed due to behaviour) at a playtime/lunchtime
- Missing the next playtime or part-playtime (relevant to incident and age appropriate)
- Missing some or all of golden time.

Repeated unacceptable behaviour at playtimes and dinner times may result in time away from the playground with cooling off time with a senior leader if necessary. Where children's choice of behaviour is such that the sanction of missing a playtime is invoked, we will aim to inform the parents/carers at the end of that day.

Additional consequences include:

- Parent/child meeting with class teacher
- Miss all playtimes the following day, including social isolation at snack-time and lunchtime
- Parent/child meeting with class teacher and Headteacher
- Internal exclusion
- Home/school behaviour book
- Loss of privilege is an option, e.g. time out/ banned from school clubs or attending school events. In serious cases, pupils may not be allowed on school trips or educational visits if it is felt that they may be a danger to themselves or others.
- In extreme circumstances, exclusion of children will be considered in accordance with the Education Act 1996, the 2012 statutory guidance on exclusion and with guidance from the Local Authority.

Self Regulation

All members of staff are aware that self regulation is a key feature of early education and something that is a learning process for children as they grow and mature. Some children may not reach the self regulation goal by the end of their time in Reception class and may go on to have long term difficulties recognising and controlling their feelings.

If a small number of children require extra support with their self-regulation and behaviour / actions. There are a number of strategies that may be employed to encourage the children to reflect and make choices and take responsibility. Strategies may include:

- Access to a Self-reflection zone within and outside of the classroom
- Personalised behavioural plan
- Planned physical breaks
- Sensory breaks
- Meditation/ mindfulness techniques
- Zones of Regulation, social skills or resilience intervention
- Time out in another classroom or nurture room
- Home school communication book
- 1:1 adult

If a pupil requires any of the above support consistently, then we will need to consider whether the child requires an assessment for social, emotional and mental health needs and will need to involve outside professionals such as the Behaviour Support Services.

Staff Conduct

It is essential that all members of staff act as role models and encourage good behaviour throughout the school. All staff are expected to set a good example in terms of presentation, punctuality and commitment. Staff should aim to be positive, give praise that is genuine and treat individuals fairly and consistently. Staff should also aim to communicate effectively and listen.

Volunteer Conduct

Volunteers working in school are requested to act as role models for the Rothbury Rules and to encourage good behaviour throughout school. They are further requested to set a good example in terms of presentation, punctuality and commitment. Volunteers are also expected to respect the school's confidentiality policy.

Monitoring

Behaviour concerns should be logged on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System).

The Ready to Learn Policy should be read in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Policy. The School Council, parents, staff and governors have been consulted in the writing of this policy. This policy is in line with and supports our school aims.

The policy will be reviewed annually by staff and governors.