

ST VINCENT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Behaviour and Relational Policy

Review Date: September 2028

Mission Statement

Caritas Christi Urget Nos

The love of Christ urges us to care for each other and strive for excellence in everything we do.

Policy Statement

The relationships between the school community is of paramount importance to all stakeholders, including but not limited to the Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher, teachers, support teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, children and governors.

At St Vincent's, we have high expectations for relationships and behaviour. We expect all children to understand and show the following Vincentian Values, which are underpinned by the teachings of the Gospel.

Our Vision and Values

- **We are compassionate, caring and loving.**
- **We are respectful of the dignity and wishes of the individual.**
- **We are stewards of our environment and of one another.**
- **We believe in practical hands-on-hard work and we learn from our mistakes.**
- **We do not judge others.**
- **We build relationships based on trust.**

The "School Expectations" are given to all Parents when a child is accepted into the school.

At St Vincent's, we view behaviour as a form of communication which is rooted in positive relationships. We believe that children express themselves through their actions, and understanding this communication is essential for providing meaningful support. By recognising behaviour as a way for children to convey their needs, emotions, or challenges, we strive to create an environment where open communication is encouraged and is trauma-informed.

Our aim is to empower children with the skills to express themselves effectively, not only verbally but also through their conduct. By promoting healthy relationships, we can better understand their individual needs, concerns, and aspirations. This approach enables us to offer the necessary support, guidance, and resources to help each child thrive academically, socially, and spiritually and

emotionally.

Emphasising the significance of behaviour as a form of communication aligns with our commitment to fostering a compassionate and inclusive community where every child is understood, valued, and supported in their unique journey of growth and development.

At St Vincent's Catholic Primary School, every individual will be provided with equitable and inclusive opportunities, respecting gender, ethnicity, disabilities, cultural and religious backgrounds. In our school, we recognise that everyone may make mistakes and this is a significant part of the learning process. We know that "the love of Christ urges us to care for each other and strive for excellence in everything we do", and our aim is to ensure that we can say sorry for our mistakes, show forgiveness towards others and grow in the love of God to live a full life.

In all aspects of school life, positive relationships and behaviour are encouraged. We expect an appropriate standard of behaviour in the classroom, playground, when moving around school and on school excursions. We also encourage good social communication. It is vital that specific times of the day are well supervised and that our clear expectations of behaviour are reinforced. These are times when children are often all together and can observe and develop positive relationships with one another.

Relational practice framework - our model

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...[and] Love your neighbour as yourself.' Matthew 22:36-40

At St Vincent's School, we believe in our Vincentian Values and the importance of 'building relationships based on trust'. This means adopting a whole school relational approach based on nurturing principles that consider how we interact and communicate with one another. Relational approaches are paramount to support all children's well-being, providing them with a safe space to 'work hard, learn from our mistakes' and be fully engaged in school. As a school, we recognise that children must feel a part of the school community in order to embrace their responsibility as stewards of one another and their environment. To show compassion and care without judgment of others. We understand that children look to the adults around them to model and support positive relationships. At St Vincent's School, we ensure that we are predictable, reliable and trustworthy through our actions and not just our words.

We know that children need high levels of nurture, empathy, containment and structure to support them to feel safe. We ensure the use of clear boundaries, predictable routines, expectations and regulated responses to behaviour. We want children to grow emotionally and cognitively and fulfil their potential. Consequences that follow behaviours are made explicit, although these will not cause shame or children to be or feel rejected by their peers, school community

and family. As a school, we believe in appropriate and consistent discipline (teaching), not punishment. When a behaviour is managed through teaching, the child will learn about consequences and taking responsibility for their own actions. The aim of this is to encourage the child to learn to manage both their feelings and behaviour and the importance of repairing harm in their relationships. The results over the long haul are bound to succeed.

Research by Skinns, Du Rose & Hough (2019) shows restorative/relational schools experience safer environments and fewer repeated incidents, because pupils feel heard rather than punished.

To continue to reinforce and encourage children showing the Vincentian Values, we award 'Dojo points' which recognise and celebrate these positive moments. Dojo points contribute to the children earning Golden time to further celebrate their behaviour. (See glossary)

Promoting a sense of belonging

At St Vincent's, we believe in the inherent worth of every child. We are committed to fostering an inclusive environment that embraces diversity and supports all children. Exclusion is not our approach; instead, we strive to understand, guide and nurture each child and their relationships to ensure their success and well-being. We aim to focus, understand and address any challenges to create a positive and nurturing environment for all students and staff.

Our practice of promoting belonging is informed by a growing body of evidence showing that the negative impacts associated with suspension and expulsion can have short and long-term effects on mental health, academic achievement, behaviour, and relationships (see reference list).

Staff members handling incidents have the authority to apply appropriate next steps at the time before implementing different response levels, such as 'tidy up the mess on your desk' or 'write a letter of apology'. The adult can also support the child to transcribe an account of incidents. Behaviour logs are shared with the safeguarding team and governors, and are logged on CPOMS or a specific document, such as a chronological report, which is used to identify themes for individual children.

Everyday Relational Interactions

Start of the school year

The importance of building strong relationships is highlighted at the start of each school year with dedicated time off the timetable for activities that develop and build relationships and respect for each other.

At the start of each year, every class collaborates to create a charter based on how the Vincentian Values, underpinned by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, will be lived out in their class.

The Class Charter, which reflects the aims of the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child), serves as a framework to establish expectations and duties for everyone in the classroom, promoting a sense of ownership and community. Students, teachers, and parents are encouraged to refer to the Class Charter regularly as a means of reinforcing these shared commitments. By doing so, we aim to create a respectful, nurturing, and rights-based learning environment where all members of our school community can thrive.

Emotion coaching - Connect before you correct

One of our relational support systems is emotion coaching. Emotion coaching is a relational, evidence-informed approach to behaviour that supports children and young people to understand, regulate, and appropriately express their emotions. It recognises that behaviour is a form of communication and that emotionally dysregulated behaviour often reflects unmet emotional or developmental needs.

There are six stages to emotional coaching, with possible script uses found in the appendix.

Step 1: Labelling

Step 2: Empathising

Step 3: Limit setting

Step 4: Exploring

Step 5: Identifying possible alternative solutions

Step 6: Agree on which solution is best.

Zones of Regulation

The “Zones of Regulation” is a framework that helps children understand and manage their emotions. It divides emotions into four colour-coded zones:

Blue Zone (Low Energy): Feeling sad, tired, or bored.

Green Zone (Just Right): Feeling calm, happy, and focused.

Yellow Zone (Heightened Emotions): Experiencing frustration, excitement, or anxiety.

Red Zone (Extreme Emotions): Feeling angry, scared, or overwhelmed.

We teach the children about these zones, which helps them recognise their emotions and provides tools to regulate them. It encourages self-awareness

and emotional control, fostering a healthier emotional environment for learning and social interactions. We encourage parents to also use them at home.

Challenging communication and the restorative approach

A study by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2019) found restorative approaches lead to improvements in both behaviour and relationships, particularly when implemented whole-school.

As stated, at St Vincent's, we view behaviour as a form of communication. When children are struggling to behave. A clear, responsive support system is in place to help them regulate. If children are struggling to regulate their emotions and display negative social behaviour, we follow the "Restorative approach", which is in line with our Vincentian and Gospel Values. Children are encouraged to identify the values they are not displaying through their behaviour, why they are finding this challenging and the impact this has had on others. They will focus on repairing harm, building relationships and fostering a positive and inclusive school community.

Restorative conferencing will occur at an appropriate time, which is a process that brings together individuals who have been involved in a conflict or harm to engage in open and honest communication. The goal is to repair relationships, understand the impact of actions, and work collaboratively towards long-term resolution. In this structured conversation, facilitated by an adult, participants express their feelings, share perspectives, and collectively determine how to move forward positively. It emphasises accountability, empathy, and mutual understanding, promoting a sense of community and restoring trust among those involved. When children feel understood and respected, their stress levels lower, and they can remain regulated enough to follow expectations.



Staff will use the questions above as a guideline when speaking with the child/ren involved. Restorative Practice supports the children's emotional and social development, equips them with problem-solving skills, and the ability to manage conflict when it occurs, and ultimately to help get them back on track so they are ready to learn and reach their full potential.

At times, if the adult dealing with the incidents deems it appropriate, they will

need to fill out a 'Restorative Justice form'. When there is more than one child involved, all views will be taken into consideration. This will be logged on our safeguarding system and restorative justice folder. Please click these links to see [KS1 RJ form](#) or [KS2 RJ form](#) (the codes at the top explain the type of incident to support safeguarding records). At times, children may need to fill out a [thinking sheet 1/ thinking sheet 2](#) to give them time to think and reflect on their actions/communication prior to the Restorative Justice form. 'Thinking time' is crucial for effective implementation of the restorative approach for several reasons:

Reflection and understanding:

Thinking time allows individuals to reflect on their actions, consider the impact on others, and gain a deeper understanding of the consequences of their behaviour.

Emotional Regulation:

Taking time to think enables emotional regulation. It allows individuals to process their emotions, reducing the likelihood of impulsive reactions during the restorative justice process.

Managing Reactivity:

Without sufficient thinking time, participants may respond defensively or impulsively during a restorative conference. Taking a pause promotes thoughtful and constructive communication.

Encouraging Accountability.

Providing individuals with the opportunity for thinking time encourages a more genuine acceptance of responsibility for their actions. It allows them to consider how their communication and behaviour align with the Vincentian Values.

Effective Communication:

Participants can better articulate their thoughts and feelings when given time to think, leading to more meaningful and productive discussions during the restorative justice process.

Empowering Process:

Thinking time empowers individuals to actively engage in the resolution process. It allows them to bring well-considered perspectives and potential solutions to the table that lead to short- and long-term changes in the individual.

Evidence-informed practice:

Studies in developmental psychology (e.g., Hoffman, 2000) show that restorative conversations help children understand the impact of their actions on others, which encourages empathy and responsible behaviour.

Neuroscience research (e.g., Bruce Perry, 2016) shows children learn self-regulation through co-regulation with calm, attuned adults.

A strong sense of belonging is one of the most protective factors for children's mental health (*Resnick et al., 1997*).

Research by The Children's Society and YoungMinds highlights that pupils who feel connected to adults at school are more likely to attend regularly and engage academically.

Staff report better connections with pupils and fewer adversarial interactions (Restorative Justice Council UK, 2019).

Use of reasonable force

If a child is intentionally causing harm to themselves, others or property, school staff will use reasonable force only if necessary to de-escalate the situation, protecting themselves, the pupil and others from damage or disruption. Reasonable force includes physical restraint such as standing between pupils, blocking a pupil's path or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

Please note that all members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force, but will avoid using it if possible. [Visit here for more details.](#) All adults have received 'Team Teach' training to use de-escalation behaviours before using reasonable force.

We will inform parents if this occurs.

Next steps here will be determined on an individual basis e.g. If a child shows repeated signs of unsafe behaviour that could result in temporary suspension from classroom access until contact has been made with parents and next steps are put in place to ensure the safety of the child, their peers and staff. A risk management plan or regulation plan will be put into place depending on the situation. Discussion will be had with the senior mental health lead to see if a referral is needed or other avenues that may need to be put in place.

If a child is deemed more 'at risk' while at school, a temporary suspension may be considered. This would be carried out in liaison with all relevant agencies.

Fixed-term or permanent exclusion will be implemented in very extreme cases, as decided by the Head teacher.

Retaliation

At St Vincent's, we acknowledge that children have disagreements and make mistakes from time to time; however, we do not accept retaliatory actions as an excuse for a child's behaviour.

"Revenge and retaliation always perpetuate the cycle of anger, fear and violence."

Coretta Scott King

Banned items, Confiscation and Searches

To ensure the safety of all pupils and adults at school, we are authorised to confiscate any items if it is lawful. Parents will be contacted, and safeguarding procedures will be followed depending on the severity of the situation.

Banned items - if we feel any items may jeopardise the safety of others or themselves, the items will be taken from the pupil without notice. A staff member is able to search your child with their permission. Another staff member would be present, and it would be authorised by the headteacher. For example, according to Section 93 of the Education Act 2011, we have the legal right to seize an electronic device to examine any data or files on the device if there is a good reason to do so. These data or files may be erased before returning the item to the owner if we believe there is a good reason to do this.

We will inform parents if this occurs.

Our relational support System

Staff at school will:

- Model the Vincentian values
- Model a trauma-informed approach
- Know their children and their names
- Model good communication
- Promote and teach social and emotional aspects of learning
- Investigate incidents carefully and listen to all sides using the restorative approach
- Respect the rights of the children
- Work with children and their families to help pupils build strong relationships and reach their academic potential.

Pupils at school will:

- Learn the Vincentian Values
- Adhere to the Class Charter

- Respect the rights and responsibilities of each other
- Report bullying or any negative incident
- Tell an adult if they are feeling unwell
- Be in the toilet cubicle alone
- Use language which is inclusive and celebrates diversity
- Not intentionally invade another person's space or intentionally cough or spit in the direction of another pupil

Parents at school will:

- Reinforce the Vincentian Values
- Ensure their child arrives at school on time and with the correct clothing and equipment to ensure they are at a good starting point for their day.
- Ensure children have the opportunity to eat breakfast
- Build relationships with school staff and other school families and treat them with respect
- Learn about their children's rights and support them.
- Let the school know if their child won't be attending school and the reason for their absence

How we support Staff and parents

Pupil Support Systems

All children make mistakes at times; we recognise this and deal with each situation separately and fairly. Should negative behaviours or purposeful rule-breaking persist despite the school's pastoral intervention, the class teacher will liaise with the Senior Mental Health Lead and Senior Leadership Team, who will contact the parents to work together on understanding why these behaviour traits are being seen.

Children may need extra support in school so they may take part in classroom discussions and 1:1 mentoring sessions to allow time and space to explore their emotions. If it is deemed necessary, a regulation Plan will be written in conjunction with the parents and the child to explore and identify strategies and timescales by which the child can begin to change his/her behaviour. The school may also refer children to outside agencies such as CAMHS, BICS, Young Carers, Social Services, etc. Parents may also be invited to take part in parenting workshops. Children also benefit from the guidance and support of their peers. These children act as role models and mentors to others as shining examples of living our Vincentian Values.

However, if a child is struggling to follow the new guidelines set in school to ensure their safety and the safety of others, an immediate conversation with the child's parents/carers will take place with the headteacher to see what the next steps are most suitable.

Children who have been negatively affected by an incident may require additional support. This may include regular check-ins with a trusted adult and possible longer term internal well-being support or external therapy which will

be discussed and agreed with parents.

Parental Consultations

Communication is the key to solving any behavioural challenges, and we recognise that times of stress in a child's life can affect the ways they communicate. These could be related to family separation, illness, bereavement, a new addition to the family, moving house or other traumatic experiences, for example. We ask parents to keep the school aware of any significant events in their child's life so that we can support the child effectively, including in our new starter information.

Parents will be informed by telephone/email/face-to-face if a child is displaying negative behaviour traits and is not modifying despite repeated opportunities, or for serious incidents, e.g. bullying or endangering others. However, day-to-day misdemeanours will not necessarily be reported as children should be allowed to make mistakes, apologise, make amends and move on in line with the Gospel values and Restorative approach.

Messaging or Online communication

Many online communication incidents amongst young people occur outside of school hours; therefore, parents are responsible for this communication.

We will only investigate any concerns that will affect the school culture or a child's well-being. We will listen to all of the children's accounts who are involved, and we will review and put next steps in place if your child's online communication is threatening, causes harm to themselves, another pupil or if it could affect the reputation of the school. We will also need to put a plan in place if their online communication impacts the school environment.

We collaborate closely with the student and their family regarding these issues and greatly value parental support, particularly if a next step needs to be extended to the home environment.

For more information, please read [here](#) or ask us for more information.

Inclusion and Equality

Our school is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We recognise that every child is unique and may require specific reasonable adjustments and variations in approach to address their individual needs.

For children with Special Educational Needs, different components will be put in place whilst working with our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator:

Individualised Support: We acknowledge that children with SEND may display a wide range of behaviours to communicate. Our approach focuses on understanding the unique needs of each child and tailoring our support

accordingly.

Collaborative Planning: We involve parents, teachers, SENDCOs (Special Educational Needs Coordinators), and other relevant professionals in developing and implementing and reviewing regulation plans where needed. This collaboration ensures a holistic understanding of the child's needs and a consistent approach across different settings.

By implementing and evaluating these strategies, we aim to create a positive, nurturing and inclusive learning environment that empowers children with SEND to reach their full potential while receiving the specialised support they require.

Monitoring and Evaluation of this policy

The Head teacher/Deputy Head teacher, monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy. It will be reviewed at least every 2 years to ensure it reflects current practice.

Members of staff with Lead Responsibility for this policy:	Head teacher and Mental Health Lead
Date for Review:	September 2028

Appendix 1

Responsive Support System

Step 1: Verbal reminder - A verbal reminder will be given to the child. The teacher will tell them why they have been given the reminder to support the child and prevent it from happening again. They will be reminded of our expectations in line with our Vincentian Values.

Step 2: 'Cool down time' - At this step, children have received a verbal reminder but are still not showing our Vincentian Values. At this point, we ask the children to choose a regulation activity that will support them in this challenging moment. The children have all given ideas on how to self-regulate, such as going for a walk, drinking water, speaking to a friend for support, going to the prayer garden, etc. This will hopefully help them start again and be ready to learn. Some children will need co-regulation with an attuned adult or child here, which helps the children manage their emotions with guidance from adults and/or peers.

They will use this time to think about how they can change the way they were communicating before going back into the classroom. This may take place in their free time, and children may be expected to make up for missed work in their free time.

Step 3: Phase leader - Your child will be sent to the phase leader (if they are not available, they will be sent to an alternative phase leader). During this time, they will be reminded of the restorative approach. They will have time to explain the incident themselves to the phase leader so their voice is heard, and the next steps will be put in place to address any challenging behaviour. Co-regulation will happen here to support your child. Parents will be notified as soon as the phase leader can contact them to help support the process at home.

Children will be expected to spend a significant amount of their free time reflecting through restorative conversations on their behaviours and will be supported to make long-term changes.

Level 4 Deputy Headteacher - After speaking with their phase leader, they will go back into class once they are regulated and ready to learn. If the teacher feels the child is still struggling with their communication, they will meet the Deputy Headteacher for support using the restorative approach. This may require further time out, away from their peers, to explore the difficulties they are having in communicating their emotions effectively. Further steps will be outlined within each case.

Level 5 Headteacher - If a child is still struggling, they will meet with the headteacher, parents will be informed and welcomed into school for a personalised plan to be devised. These meetings will often include the Mental

Health lead and/or the SENDCO. SMART (short, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) Targets will be identified to enable the child to return to a more regulated level over time.

Please note that in extreme circumstances, children will be sent to the head teacher (children would go to level 5 and not 3). At this point, a parent may be asked to collect their child from school to support their emotional regulation with reflection time. An immediate personal regulation plan may then be put in place with the child, the parents/guardian, the class teacher, and the head teacher. Other avenues, such as contacting external agencies, may also be explored to support the child, school and family with additional resources.

Important information:

If a child is sent to a phase leader more than once, a review will take place with relevant adults as to what else may be needed to support the child with their emotional regulation and repairing relationships.

Serious incidents or repeated patterns of challenging behaviour are discussed in safeguarding meetings and recorded in the minutes. The Senior Mental Health Lead and/or Deputy Head teacher will meet with the class teacher to discuss the need for a personalised regulation plan or the possibility of further support for the children and their families.

For very serious incidents:

e.g. intentionally coughing or spitting in the direction of another pupil; racism, bullying or deliberate acts of violence - the child is sent to the Head teacher. The incident is recorded, and parents will be informed, and the child may be required to be collected by the parent. The age and development of the child will always be considered.

When a child has been formally suspended, a reintegration meeting will be arranged with parents and where necessary a plan will be made to support a positive transition back to class.

Please see our Anti-bullying policy for further information regarding our approach to bullying.

Emotion Coaching

Step 1: Labelling

Look for physical and verbal signs of the emotion being felt. Take on the child's perspective; use words to reflect back the emotion and help the child to label that emotion.

" You seem angry to me" or sad, upset, fed up, etc.

" I can see you are angry."

" I can tell you are angry."

" I can see that something's not quite right – can you tell me about it?"

Step 2: Empathising

Affirm and empathise with the emotion, allowing time and space for calming down.

" I'm sorry that happened to you. You must have felt angry?"

" I can see that you get angry when that happens/ when I do this."

" I would feel angry if that happened to me."

Step 3: Limit setting

Separate emotion from the behaviour. Clarify what an acceptable expression of emotion is, and what is not. Allow time and space for calming down.

".... It's not ok to behave like that."

".... That behaviour is not acceptable."

".... The rules are that we don't do that."

Step 4: Exploring

Explore the feelings that gave rise to the behaviour, and be specific.

" How were you feeling when that happened?"

" What did it make you feel like?"

" Have you felt this way before?"

Step 5: Identifying possible alternative solutions

Identify alternative, more appropriate/ productive ways of expressing and/ or managing feelings, behaviours and actions. Empower the child to recognise their feelings and take ownership.

" Let's think of what we could have done instead."

" Can you think of a different way to deal with your feelings?"

" I can help you to think of a different way to cope."

Step 6: Agree on which solution is best.

Agreeing on possible solutions and 'scaffolding' suggestions where appropriate.

The approach aims to teach emotional regulation and self-control, rather than relying solely on 'sanctions', while maintaining clear behavioural expectations and boundaries.

" Try and do this next time you feel like this."

" Let's decide what you will do next time you feel like this."

" What do you think you can do better/ change next time?"

Useful Links and Resources

Trauma-informed approach:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/teacher-support/articles/ztbsg2p>

Emotion Coaching:

▶ Emotion Coaching- an introduction

Restorative approach:

▶ Introduction to Restorative Approaches

Zones of regulation:

▶ What are The Zones of Regulation? -Official Video-

Glossary of terms:

Attuned Adult:

Someone who can sense, understand, and respond appropriately to the emotional needs and internal states of others (or themselves), fostering deep connection and trust.

Emotion Coaching:

A parenting and teaching strategy, developed by Dr. John Gottman, that helps children understand and manage their emotions by turning moments of distress into opportunities for connection.

Emotional Regulation:

The skill of managing your responses to feelings, not suppressing them, to react appropriately to situations.

Golden Time:

Children are rewarded with up to 20 minutes of fun, choice-based activities for following school rules throughout the week.

Reasonable force:

Reasonable force is the minimum amount of force necessary and proportionate to prevent harm, defend oneself or others.

Relational approach:

A relational approach prioritises building trust, connection, and empathy in interactions, viewing behaviour as communication of needs, especially in education

Restorative practice:

Restorative practice is a relationship-focused approach that builds community, maintains trust, and repairs harm by involving all affected parties in finding solutions.

Trauma-informed:

A trauma-informed approach recognises the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths to recovery.

Zones of Regulation:

A framework that uses four color-coded zones—blue, green, yellow, and red—to help children identify and manage their emotions, energy levels, and self-control.

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