



From mountain to sea

Barthol Chapel School

Promoting Positive Relationships

Policy



Overview

At Barthol Chapel School, the promotion of positive relationships is the responsibility of all school staff and the wider school community. Mutual support, consistency and communication are an essential component of this.

Barthol Chapel School is committed to maintaining a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for everyone in the school community. To achieve this, a restorative approach to relationships will be adopted. This focuses on building positive resilient relationships which underpin and guide the way we act in our dealings with others.

At Barthol Chapel School we will:

- Ensure the development of positive relationships at Barthol Chapel School.
- Adopt a shared responsibility and ownership in the process and outcomes.
- Promote a partnership approach involving staff, children, young people, parents/carers and other professionals.
- Ensure advice, training and professional development is provided in a multi-disciplinary context

Our Vision

Barthol Chapel School is a place where everyone works together as a team to create a respectful ethos where we all try our best, learn from mistakes and celebrate each other's success. We do this by being our...



Our Values



Our Approach

Good relationships is fundamental to the wellbeing of everyone in school. This is encouraged in every area of school and children are helped to recognise examples of this at all times through our school values. All staff and parents promote good relationships and praise children who relate to others politely and in a caring and sensible way. The use of praise in developing a positive atmosphere in the classroom cannot be underestimated. Praise can be given in a number of ways

- A quiet word or encouraging smile.
- A written comment on a child's work.
- A visit to another member of staff for commendation.
- A public word of praise (value nomination) in front of a group, a class, or the whole school.
- Communication with the child's parents.

Consistency is the key to building positive relationships at Barthol Chapel School. We want to create a culture of problem solvers, where we are not tied to any strict process of sanctions or punishment. All adults agree that the following is embedded into our practice:

- **Consistent Language; Consistent Response:** Referring to the agreement made between staff and learners, simple and clear expectations reflected in all conversations about behaviour.
- **Consistent Follow Up:** Ensuring 'certainty' at the classroom and senior management level. Never automatically passing problems up the line, adults taking responsibility for interventions first, seeking support when required.
- **Consistent Positive Reinforcement:** Routine procedures for reinforcing, encouraging and celebrating appropriate behaviour.
- **Consistent Expectations:** referencing promoting positive relationships, icons, symbols and visual cues, interesting and creative signage
- **Consistent Respect from Adults:** Even in the face of disrespectful learners!
- **Consistent Models of Emotional Control:** Emotional restraint that is modelled and not just taught, adults as role models for learning, adults learning alongside learners
- **Consistently Reinforced Routines:** in classrooms and around the school
- **Consistent Environment:** organised and adaptable to meet the needs of individuals, messages our shared values & positive images of learners.



System of Rewards

In addition to deserved praise there is a clearly understood system to recognise positive relationships in school.

- Values Time for children on Friday afternoon for approximately 30 minutes – activities negotiated with the children.
- Earning Value Badges through nominations from all in the school community which learners display on their individual 'Barthol Chapel Me'.
- Special tasks and responsibilities.
- Participation Passports presented in assembly for outstanding performance/effort/contribution
- Buddy responsibilities
- Showing visitors around school

It is important to acknowledge that achievements of individuals, groups and classes should be seen through wall displays, shared at assemblies, reports in newsletters and articles in the local press. During assembly, positive relationships and achievements are celebrated and reinforced. Assembly offers the opportunity as a school to reflect on the desired relationships in school and to discuss problems and explore feelings. Conflicts are resolved through supportive, open and frank discussions.

Working Together - Role of the Parents/Carers

- Contribute to, be aware of and support the school values and relationship policy.
- Respond to and work in partnership with the school to address and resolve any difficulties which may arise. It is important that pupils see us working together.
- Trust the school to investigate fairly and inform you when relationships break down.
- Recognise that we are all working towards the same goal – responsible pupils.
- Help teach your child to treat all individuals in a polite and respectful manner.
- Treat staff, pupils and other parent/carers with respect

When things go wrong

All behaviour is communication and sometimes things can go wrong. When this happens we **Reflect / Repair / Reconnect** using restorative approaches. It is our aim to establish the reasons for why things are going wrong so that we may then support the child/ren.



Reflect / Repair / Reconnect

The following list is the procedure agreed at Barthol Chapel School. Whilst it is organised in a list, there is no attempt to put them into precise value order.

- Immediate checking, including verbal and non-verbal indications. Reinforce school values and expectations in a positive way.
- Continuation – further reminder. Explain that continuation will lead to the completion of a Think Sheet to reflect / repair / reconnect
- Think Sheet to be completed. (Reflect / Repair / Reconnect).
- 4: Continuation - HT informed. Further Action as deemed appropriate using GIRFEC Process
- *Moving to designated 'Time Out' area if deemed appropriate at any time.*

It is important to stress that staff aim to be positive in these situations. Staff use many strategies of their own in addition to the above using their professional judgement of any situation. Any situation which gives cause for concern will be communicated with parents/carers.

Time Out

The learner is asked to speak to an adult away from others. This could be in a quiet space in class or in our DEN (Developing, Emotion and Nurture). This is an area where children can choose to go to or may be asked by an adult to go to. This area is not seen by all as a 'naughty' area. It is a quiet area. This area is for children who perhaps need a quiet time for thinking time or reflection. For children who just aren't feeling quiet themselves and need a little quiet time. This area is also for staff to send a child/children who require cooling down time to diffuse a situation or time to listen to child in a quiet place.

This is the time to engage in dialogue and reflect / repair / reconnect where expectations are reset:

- *The learner is asked to reflect on their actions. Again they are reminded of their previous conduct/attitude/learning.*
- *The learner is given a final opportunity to repair – to reconnect with the learning / positive attitude / others*

Learners may need time alone and should only do so if they need to cool down and/or to defuse a situation. In general, three minutes should be enough. Although there are occasions when it is necessary, every minute a learner is out of class is one where they are not learning. Steps should always be gone through with care and consideration, taking individual needs into account where necessary.



Restorative Approaches

The key principles of restorative approaches are:

- Being responsible for one's own actions and their impact on others
- Respecting other people, their views and feelings
- Empathising with the feelings of others
- Being committed to equitable processes
- Willingness to create opportunities for reflective change in pupils and staff.

The approach involves finding a solution to the problem. Instead of asking 'Who's to blame and how are we going to punish them?' Focus is put on reasons, causes, responsibilities and feelings. Those involved are asked questions such as 'Who has been affected and how?' and 'How can we put it right and learn from this experience?'

The Restorative Questions:

- What happened?
- What were you feeling / thinking at the time?
- What do you think / feel about it now?
- Who has been affected by what has happened? In what way?
- What impact has this incident had on you and on others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?
- What do we need to do make sure this doesn't happen again?

The questions are neutral and non-judgemental, they are about the wrong-doer's behaviour and its effect upon others, and they are open questions which require an answer. They take everyone from the past (what happened) to the future (repairing harm) and require people to reflect on who has been affected. They are likely to help the wrongdoer develop some empathy for those affected.

Violent Behaviour in School

In a minority of cases, staff may have to deal with violence . A coordinated, planned approach potentially provides staff with vital additional expertise, professional development and resources to meet the needs of the establishment's community.

Aberdeenshire policies and procedures used to support staff when dealing with very challenging situations at Barthol Chapel School are:

- Risk Assessment Procedures
- Violence at Work Policy
- Violent Incident Reporting System
- Physical Intervention Policy
- Exclusion Guidelines
- https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/3901/policy_disc_exclusion.pdf
- Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service – <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/eps/about-the-educational-psychology-service/>



Where a criminal offence has been committed the Head Teacher will contact authority Legal Services and/or Police Scotland.

Being a witness to, or subject of, violence and abuse may cause anxiety and stress. The Violence at Work Policy underlines the entitlement of staff to contact the police in such circumstances. Furthermore, Aberdeenshire Council offers employees the following support services:

- Employee Assistance Programme Tel: 0800 282 193 (Confidential)
- Occupational Health Service – Referral is available through Head Teacher.

Use of Physical Restraint

On rare occasions a learner may become distressed and every effort is made to de-escalate the situation. Exceptionally it is necessary to hold a pupil gently until their crisis has passed. If this intervention is necessary parents are informed immediately and written confirmation is provided.

A number of staff in Aberdeenshire receive training from CALM Training Ltd (Crisis and Aggression, Limitation and Management) to ensure that if such action is needed it is taken as safely and professionally as possible. These staff are reaccredited on an annual basis.

Bullying

- Bullying is **repeated** use of the power to hurt, frighten or cause distress.
- It can happen in the community, on the way to school, in the school building or in the playground.
- Bullying can include emotional bullying, verbal bullying, physical bullying and cyber bullying.
- Bullying at school can have a profound effect on children's lives and can have a lasting effect on individuals into adult hood.

It is important that any incident of bullying towards a pupil or group of pupils is investigated in a timely manner and dealt with appropriately by school staff.

Unfortunately, allegations of bullying are often very difficult to investigate as a number of incidents may have occurred over a period of time and events can often have no witnesses. It can sometimes be one child's word against another. This can result in a highly challenging, yet very sensitive, situation for all involved.

Therefore, it is important that any allegations of bullying within Barthol Chapel School are investigated as thoroughly as possible by school staff to ensure that information gathered is as complete and accurate as possible and is evidence based. We believe it is important to share the results of the investigations with those concerned with a focus on planning an appropriate response and positive way forward for all those involved.



Any allegation of bullying should be referred, in the first instance, to the Class Teacher.

- The Class Teacher will find out as much information as possible about the allegation by listening to the child/parent/carer who has made the allegation.
- The Class Teacher will liaise with the Head Teacher to discuss the allegations.

Depending on circumstances, this is likely to include school staff:

- Meeting with the child and parents/carers who have made the allegations to find out further details of the situation.
- Gathering information from other children, parents and school staff who may have information about the allegations.

From the information collected, school staff will:

- Develop an understanding of allegations based on information and evidence gathered.
- Recognise that in some circumstances, there may be insufficient evidence to back up the allegations but the information gathered still forms an important part of the investigation.

Once the investigation has been completed, school staff will:

- Plan a response. The response will be based on information and evidence gathered and will be very specific to the particular circumstances of the allegations. The school response will focus on planning on a positive way forward for all those involved and may include:
 - Meetings with the child and parents/carers to discuss the allegations, information gathered and evidence found.
 - Meetings with other children and parents/carers to discuss the allegations, information gathered and evidence found.
 - A review of support needs for one or more of the children involved.
 - It may also be necessary to plan a monitoring period and review date.

It is vital that all pupils feel confident to speak out and be able to speak to any members of staff. At Barthol Chapel School we will try to promote a caring ethos where every child feels valued and is treated as an individual. We will act to prevent bullying from happening, not just react to incidents of bullying when they occur. Further information can be found following the useful links:

<http://www.respectme.org.uk/>

<http://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/A-national-Approach-to-Anti-Bullying-for-Scotlands-Children-and-Young-People.pdf>

<http://www.childnet.com/resources/cyberbullying-safe-to-learn-embedding-anti-bullying-work-in-schools>

<http://www.bullying.co.uk/advice-for-parents/#>



Communicating with Parents/Carers

At Barthol Chapel School, we support the early intervention of situations, events and actions causing concern and work in partnership with parents to support individuals and families. A high level of cooperation and open communication is seen as an important factor in encouraging positive relationships in the school. Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to the school about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

Aberdeenshire Home/School Partnership (Early Intervention)

<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/parents-carers/support-for-families/homeschool-partnership-early-intervention/>

Involvement of External Support Services

Our school has close relationships with external support services such as Educational Psychology, Health, Social Work and Police so that background understanding of the needs of the child and the provision of the right support can be achieved. Parents should be aware of any involvement of an external advisor and must fully understand the reasons for seeking further support.

