



Kings Meadow School

Believe and Achieve



Relationships and Behaviour Policy 2023 -

24

Using Emotional Regulation, Differentiated Discipline and Attachment Aware and Trauma Responsive Principles as a Framework for Behaviour Management

Kings Meadow School is a primary special school academy for pupils aged 5 – 11 years. It is part of the Creating Tomorrow Multi-Academy Trust. All pupils have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan that identifies severe and complex social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties according to the SEN Code of Practice 2014. It is recognised that the majority of the pupils are also likely to have other associated complex needs and that they frequently experience high levels of stress that impacts adversely on their daily functioning.

This policy is deliberately flexible and is centred around building positive connections and relationships with children. We take a non-punitive and therapeutic approach although our staff are not clinicians or therapists. However, we do take seriously the trauma informed concept that every interaction and experience with another person has the potential to be either healing or damaging and we actively choose the former.

This policy is organised into four sections:

1. **Why** – this details the rationale and research that is the foundation of our non-punitive and therapeutic approach. [See pages 2 - 7](#)
2. **What** – this describes the systems and routines we have in place to be able to implement our approach which is comprised of structure, routine AND flexibility. [See pages 8 - 11](#)
3. **How** – this provides practical guidance about how we work with children to achieve this. [See pages 12 - 16](#)
4. **Appendices:**
 - a. Appendix One Rewards System – [see pages 17 – 18](#)

Part One – Why we work in the way that we do

As a specialist setting, we do not operate in the same way that a mainstream school may do in the way that we manage behaviour. Many of our children have attended other schools unsuccessfully and have histories full of rejection and exclusion so to simply try to replicate the same approaches but in smaller classes would not be appropriate. Our staff have a range of specialist knowledge and skills that equip them to do the best job they can to meet the individual needs of our children and families.

Traditional models of behaviour management are fear-based, rely on external control and often administer punishment in response to non-compliance. There is a firm focus on the behaviour, not what drives it. Our children are very familiar with being ‘told off’ and this rarely leads to behavioural change in the longer term. As we are working with children who already often feel unsafe and fearful, reliance on fear-based discipline can trigger physical stress responses that hamper a child’s ability to self-regulate and be ready to engage in learning.

We believe that a fear-based model cannot create or model the qualities that we want in our pupils. We believe that you cannot teach a child to behave better by making them feel worse or fearful of adults that they are asked to trust. What we advocate and practice is an ‘us with them’ approach – **a relational approach**. This is essential for our pupils as their developmental vulnerabilities and complex SEN (special educational needs) make it harder for them to feel safe and secure at school and to form trusting relationships with adults and peers.

When children feel better, they behave better. Punishment may be able to get children back into the boundaries and change their behaviour temporarily, but there will be no lasting or fundamental change and, crucially, the relationship is likely to suffer as a result. Traditional models of behaviour management deprive a child of relationship, at the very time they need it most. Instead, whenever possible, we ensure that we facilitate relational proximity (being with, being alongside) rather than relational withdrawal (separating physically and/or emotionally) to ensure that no child feels like an outsider. It is important to us to create and maintain for each child **a sense of belonging** to our school.

All behaviour is a way of communicating. If we are to facilitate lasting, positive change in the way that a child is able to function, both now and in the future, our professional focus needs to be on what lies behind the outward behaviour displayed by our pupils. Our children’s behaviours can be very challenging but they are also not fixed. Given the right kind of support within a nurturing, positive and predictable environment, our children can and do make significant and lasting progress both emotionally and academically. It is our mission as a school to help our children to become effective communicators and to rely much less on their behaviours to express their fears, needs and wants.

The profile of each of our children is different. Some have one or more medical diagnoses, whilst others have no diagnosis at all. All have complex needs and behaviours that fit under

the over-arching SEMH (social, emotional and mental health) umbrella. Many also have significant sensory, communication and learning difficulties. What is common for all children who attend Kings Meadow is that they have severe difficulties managing their emotions and subsequent behavioural responses safely. They **operate at a continual high level of stress**, living in fear, reactivity and often with a profound sense of failure. Some live every moment of every day in survival mode, and this is how they enter our classrooms, distressed and unable to access academic learning or play alongside other children.

The presence of significant stress makes the absorption of new academic material more challenging and puts our children in a difficult place to handle rules and authority. At these times, the children are overwhelmed, unable to focus and are emotionally on edge. They respond to the world as a place of constant danger. At Kings Meadow, we use the terms *regulated* and *dysregulated* with each other as professionals and with children and families to describe their experience of stress and subsequent presenting behaviour.

Being regulated: being calm, focused, or relaxed. Maintaining stress within your window of tolerance.

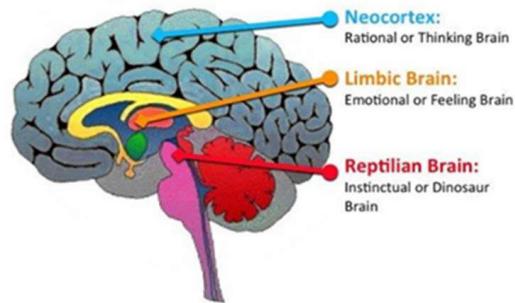
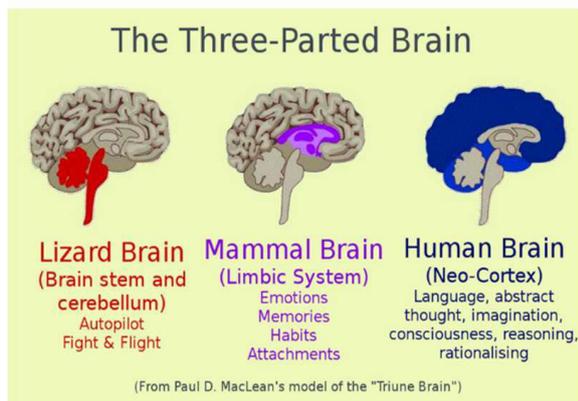
Being dysregulated: being stressed out or in a state of distress. Maintaining stress outside of your window of tolerance.

The **'window of tolerance'** is a term used to describe the **zone of arousal in which a person is able to function most effectively**. When people are within this zone, they are typically able to readily receive, process, and integrate information and otherwise respond to the demands of everyday life without much difficulty. When people are not within this zone, when they are outside of it, the reverse is true.

We use these words and phrases intentionally so that we get away completely from the negative judgement associated with the traditional descriptors: 'good' and 'bad' behaviour, enabling us to view the children with compassion and enabling children to view themselves positively. We do not use the terms **'good', 'bad' or 'naughty'** with a child or when referring to a child because we want to raise their self-esteem and give hope rather than reinforce their negative self-belief and their sense of hopelessness. Alternatively, we view and describe negative behaviours as **'regulatory issues'** and not as behavioural issues, based on our knowledge of neuroscience.

Stress and the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord)

We know from neuroscience that the brain drives behaviour. It can be viewed as three parts, each of which has different functions. See next page (page 4) for more detail.



The Neo-Cortex (Cortical or Rational brain)	
The outer layer and largest area of the brain	Involved in higher-order thinking
Involved in spatial reasoning	Involved in language
Involved in conscious thought	Involved in executive control
Involved in self-awareness	Involved in abstract thought
Involved in imagination	Involved in delayed gratification
Involved in logic, reasoning and planning	Involved in morals and ethics
Involved in decision making between right and wrong	

The Limbic brain (Emotional brain)	
Regulates memory and attention	Records memories of behaviours and experiences that produce agreeable and disagreeable experiences
Regulates mood	Concerned with self-preservation
Regulates hormone control	Concerned with fear
The emotional centre of the brain	Concerned with protective responses related to defence such as fight or flight
The pleasure-seeking centre of the brain	Concerned with emotions relating to attachment and relationship
	Handles the next 15 seconds of life and gives us moment to moment survival

The Reptilian Brain/Brain stem (Instinctual brain)	
The oldest and most primitive part of the brain	The root of mental health issues such as obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, panic disorder
Controls vital functions like heart rate, digestion, body temperature, balance, circulation, breathing, stress responses, social dominance, reproduction	Ready to respond at all times of the day, even in deep sleep
Life happens in the next 15 seconds, much like the limbic brain but more intensely	

When a child is **regulated**, the neo-cortex is in charge, keeping the limbic and reptilian brains in check. It exerts a **top-down** control over the survival impulses of the lower two parts of the brain.

When a child is **dysregulated**, the limbic and reptilian brains become more powerful in guiding behaviour than the neo-cortex and a **bottom-up control** is exerted. When this happens, right and wrong have no bearing on behaviour and consequences do not register. This is very important to understand because it explains why traditional behavioural techniques such as points' charts and detentions do not work for children experiencing high and sustained levels of stress.

At Kings Meadow, we continually learn and improve our understanding of the latest neuroscience and psychology so that we understand:

- how our children socialise, communicate, and relate
- how their emotional states impact on their learning

This informs what we do so that we are able to develop effective strategies to help the children settle to learn without punishing them for the things that they find difficult, the reason they come to our school in the first place. Our research on attachment theory, trauma, and Adverse Childhood Experiences (traumatic events that occur during childhood) are also key to this.

Attachment Theory



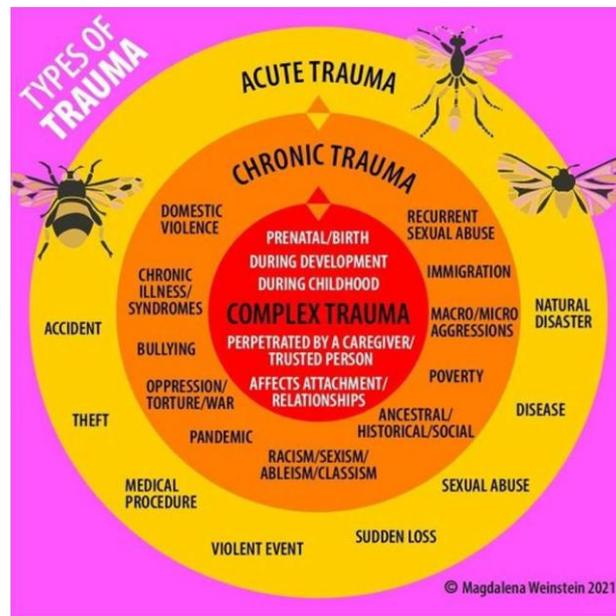
Attachment is the lasting psychological connectedness between human beings, the strong emotional bond. When a child experiences consistent nurture and responsiveness from an attachment figure they develop a sense of security that provides them with a safe base to then explore the world. Attachment theory describes how our early relationships create our expectation of how love should be, and we develop self-protective and adaptive attachment strategies according to these relational experiences.

Our attachment strategies are most often categorised as either secure or insecure. Secure attachment suggests that a child will feel secure, understood and be calm enough to experience optimal development of their nervous system. They will present as resilient,

confident, and independent with a high self-esteem. The child will feel safe and as a result be eager to learn, have a healthy self-awareness, be able to trust and show empathy. Conversely, insecure attachment results in a child feeling less secure, less understanding and calm, which can lead to their mental, emotional, and physical development being inhibited, so that difficulties in learning and forming relationships are experienced.

We learn how to be in relationships through the experiences we have in them, whether these experiences are healthy or unhealthy, functional, or dysfunctional, secure, or insecure. Not all our children know how to have a healthy secure relationship because not all of them have had this experience. Because of this, some of our children are described as having 'attachment issues'. At Kings Meadow, we believe that attachment is not the problem. Danger or threat (or perceived danger or threat) is the problem and attachment is the solution. An integral part of our curriculum is therefore to address the danger and threat through safe, healthy, and secure relationships and environment. Only then can we expect children to surrender their survival behaviours that have proved so problematic to the child and professionals in the past.

Trauma



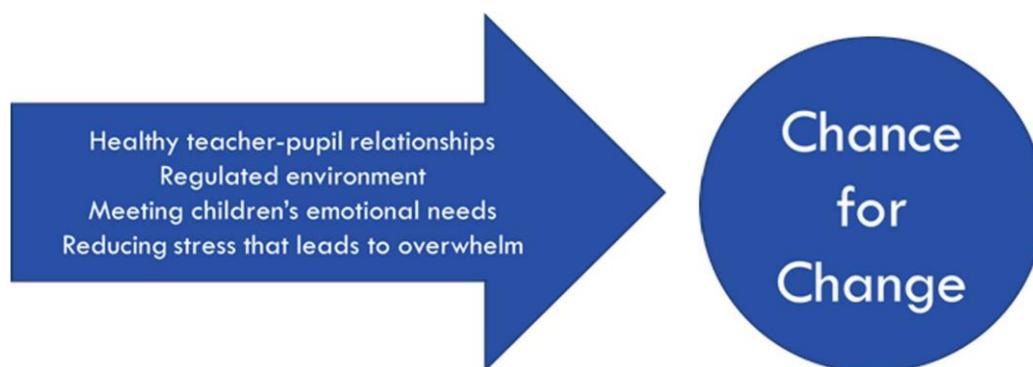
Trauma is prevalent in everyday life. A knowledge of our children's histories is vital for building strong relationships with them because only once we understand their histories are we able to view their behaviours within the correct context. Not all trauma can be avoided and there is not a child who emerges from childhood unscathed to some extent. However, whether the trauma is going to have a lasting effect on the child depends on the how well the fundamental needs of physical safety, emotional connection, and predictability are met

for the child. When children are given environments of support, love, and attention and when needs are met, the impact of traumatic experiences is minimised, and in many cases, avoided. An event is not traumatic for a child based on the event itself. It is traumatic based on the response to the event from the caregiver. At Kings Meadow we aim to be well-regulated alternative caregivers who help to minimise the impact and promote healing.

Our vision, values and culture, the essence of what we do, are informed by this research and knowledge. Relationships are at the heart of our culture and our vision is to ensure that our practice is embedded in attachment aware and trauma responsive principles. We have a clear set of values – **Respect, Team-work, Courage, Kindness, Determination** – that support us with our vision and culture and form a key part of our approach to rewards and consequences. This is explained further in Part Two - what we do, the systems and processes in place.

We know from Attachment Theory that healthy relationships are an essential ingredient in the normal development of the brain. In other words, relationships drive brain development. If relationships drive the brain and the brain drives behaviour it therefore follows logically that calm, caring and confident adults can provide trusting relationships that are the key supportive and protective factor in ensuring that children can overcome their regulatory challenges and achieve academically.

We are a place where, as much importance is placed on relationship as it is on the curriculum – this is ironically what it takes to excel academically, especially for children with social, emotional, and mental health difficulties. We believe that the most effective way to change negative behavioural patterns comes through safe, nurturing, attuned, and strong human connection. For the children in the classroom, it comes through the teacher-pupil/adult-pupil relationship. **The reality is, for children to learn and achieve academically, they must also be engaged at the relational level.**



We believe that true control comes through the power of influence, not through fear. We build strong, safe, respectful, and accepting connections with children and within this context we take time to listen actively, to validate stress levels and to seek the causes of behaviour. As a result, children show more appropriate behaviours consistent with more settled nervous systems and are more motivated, due to the influence the adult has over the child, not the control that we traditionally have thought is needed to make it happen.

Part Two: Whole school systems and structures in place to support our non-punitive therapeutic approach

School structure and organisation

Kings Meadow School is organised into five class families, each led by a teacher with a small team of teaching assistants. The number of teaching assistants assigned to each class family is dependent on the needs of the children in the group.

In order to increase our children's sense of security and stability so that they are able to settle to learn, we work hard to build trusting relationships between each child and their class team of adults. Team members co-regulate with the children and support them over time to become more able to self-regulate effectively.

In addition to the class-based team, each child needs to know that their parents/carers are actively working in partnership with the class and wider school team.

Safety

At Kings Meadow, safety is **non-negotiable** and we want all our class families to be safe havens and secure bases for all our children.

To achieve this, we have one **Absolute Safety Rule**:

- **Do no harm**

This Absolute Safety Rule is introduced at the beginning of the year and reviewed frequently throughout the year in each class. It is displayed in each class room and in other prominent positions around the school building. The word 'harm' is used so that the rule is all-encompassing, short, and memorable. This allows class teams to collaborate with the

children to identify the specific negative and harmful behaviours that are not allowed. Each classroom has a dynamic display addressing the challenges each class has at any given time. Many of our children have a limited emotional vocabulary and find it hard to express their feelings in an appropriate and safe way. Therefore, the children learn the **Absolute Safety Rule** and are taught explicitly what they might say or do instead of using the negative words and behaviours that are not allowed. This may be done individually, in small groups or as a class if appropriate.

Each class family also has a **visual representation of the window of stress tolerance** in their classroom. According to the needs, the age and stage of development of the children in each class family, children may have individual charts or one for the group. Staff can use this to support the teaching of self-regulation strategies by helping the children to recognise their own emotional state.



Environment

We aim to make the class family and whole school internal and external environments as comfortable and happy as they can be, helping the children to remain in a calm and alert state so they can be ready to learn. This will also lead to a pleasant work environment and a safe place for staff and our wider community. When well-being is prioritised, environments can become intrinsically emotionally safe and calming. We therefore aim to establish an environment that offers a sense of order alongside warmth and positive energy that can be adapted to suit the needs of the individuals within that class. This helps us to provide a predictable and welcoming class family and work environment which will go some way to supporting the children to self-regulate and staff to do their best professional work.

This might include, for example:

- Calm colours
- Soft lighting (lava lamp, fairy lights) in some areas
- Flexible seating
- Soft furnishings (beanbags, pillows, rugs)
- Background sights such as scenes of nature and the elements
- Background sounds such as natural sounds, calming, appropriately paced music
- Natural features/textures (plants etc)
- A calm corner/zen den (with sensory features)

Alongside these features that are generally determined by the needs of each class family, we work hard to ensure that all areas of the school are:

- Organised, neat and tidy, with allocated spaces for all resources and belongings;
- Clutter-free, safe and ready for immediate use;
- Promoting learning and a sense of pride in our school achievements;
- Consistently displaying the Absolute Safety Rule information determined by each class, Window of Tolerance Charts, class and individual goals;
- Personalised with class-family or room-purpose specific display eg job charts, individual schedules;
- Clean and well maintained;
- Resourced well, according to need, for learning and self-regulation;
- Friendly and inclusive, where all members of the community are welcomed into by name;
- Promote a sense of belonging.

Routine, Structure and Flexibility

Each class has a daily timetable to provide the routine and structure that helps to make school feel safe and secure for our children. This is displayed visually in each classroom and in any other room that the children access for learning as needed.

We also provide flexibility, as part of our **relationships-based culture**, in order to be very responsive to an individual child's needs and adapt the daily timetable if needed. Adults work hard to help each child to develop the resilience to cope with such change as this is a fundamental life skill.

Play

Play is a language for children; it is how they process information and experiences. Play is sometimes seen as unimportant, trivial and lacking in any serious purpose. However, play provides the building blocks for human development. Children can practice and rehearse different life situations through play. We recognise that many of our children have underdeveloped play skills and we provide frequent daily opportunities for them to learn through play. The value of play is increasingly recognised within bodies of research because of its relationship with intellectual achievement and emotional well-being.

The Staff Team

We ask a lot of our staff because we know that the time we spend with children today has the potential to have a profound effect on them for a life-time.

To be able to think, act and respond appropriately within a relationship-based culture takes conscious and sustained effort and dedication and so it is essential that all our staff, regardless of their role, are provided with frequent and on-going training and support for their own well-being.

It is essential that the children see us working together as a team. We continually model positive social communication respect and care for each other smiling, laughing and sharing together. The children watch us and notice everything. They watch how we interact and

notice how we relate to one another. Together our consistency of approach will increase their sense of feeling safe.

We make sure that we communicate with each other frequently, raising awareness of changing needs and agreed strategies.

Many children use **splitting** as an emotional defence to give them a sense of control. This involves categorising people as good people who are unrealistically idealised and bad people who are unrealistically demonised. To discourage this, adults need to demonstrate that they will not allow themselves to be split in this way.

We aim to create an environment that feels psychologically safe for all where people feel free to ask questions and to engage in professional, solution-focused and reflective discussions and debate. As a staff team, we are all learners all of the time and we aim to demonstrate an openness to being supported and helped to continuously improve our practice.

Family and the Wider Community

We know that we cannot help our children to reach their true potential on our own. This means that we prioritise building cordial and collaborative relationships with our families as much as we do with our children. It is important that our families understand what we do and why we do it and so, to help this to happen and to build essential trust and understanding, we offer opportunities to work in partnership with us, in the best interests of the children. We know that we will not always agree, but we make an absolute commitment to listen and respond with respect and integrity because research tells us that the single greatest predictor of academic success that exists is the emotional stability of the home.

We know that some of our children need more than we can offer in school. On these occasions we seek to find solutions and support, involving multi-professionals when we identify the need.

We currently have the support of an occupational therapist and a psychotherapist who each spend a day a week with us, alongside some time from the Local Authority Educational Psychologists. We are always open to creating partnerships with any relevant professionals who can help us support our pupils to learn and achieve.

Section 3: Strategies and Approaches used to Increase Emotional Self-Regulation

At Kings Meadow, we use a combination of strategies to support and encourage behaviour that develops relationships and ensure that all children feel successful. This means that we:

- provide relational, sensory, and curricular support that is designed to reduce stress and prevent frequent dysregulation
- respond compassionately to each child as a person and focus on asking and responding to interpret their behaviour
- promote self and co-regulation by teaching and modelling skills
- differentiate discipline (teaching of behaviour) for children, matching interventions to the children's developmental stage rather than their chronological age.

Preventative Strategies

We reduce the risk and incidence of dysregulation by being proactive in the use of preventative strategies. We are accepting of each pupil as an individual and respond to their own particular needs and interests. We offer an accepting environment which is adaptable but also hold strong boundaries and high expectations of our children. We focus on building positive and trusting relationships and act as additional attachment figures. All of our work is rooted in this relational approach and is one of our key preventative strategies.

We proactively teach our children the social and emotional skills and knowledge they need through our planned curriculum, as well as through the more responsive 'teachable moments' (see Differentiated Discipline' below). PSHE provides a wide range of learning opportunities including, for example, a focus on building self-esteem, relationships, goal setting and emotional literacy. Circle Time is built into the daily timetable in each class and allows the children to explore themes and ideas through games, role-play and other activities.

Movement breaks, sensory diets and 'brain breaks' (sometimes known by the children as 'choose time') are all included in the structure of each day to reduce the frequency with which children may be pushed out of their 'Window of Tolerance' by stress. For many of our children, learning can be a very stressful experience and we work hard to support them with achieving small steps of success which also reduces this stress and encourages a positive view of themselves as learners.

Please see Appendix Two for a wide range of practical strategies that support our preventative approach.

We offer three Curriculum Pathways – Connect, Engage and Develop – which allow us to be even more responsive to the child’s current developmental stage and regulatory state. Those on the Connect pathway may have a bespoke and sometimes part-time timetable to support them in overcoming barriers to safe, full-time attendance and to start to build positive adult connections.

Please see our Curriculum Policy for more details of the Curriculum Pathways, alongside our Attendance Policy for more information on bespoke, part-time timetables.

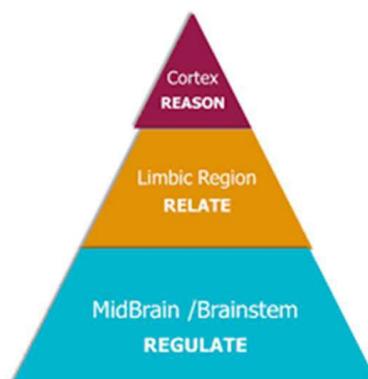
Dysregulation

We cannot eliminate all stress and some stress has positive uses in life. However, staff at Kings Meadow intentionally become ‘stress regulators’ for our children through building positive and trusting relationships. Over time, we work towards minimising and reducing the frequency and intensity of the stresses we have control over.

Staff respond to the child as a person rather than react to their behaviour, moving from a traditional position of reacting and telling to a more compassionate position of asking and responding. Staff try to interpret communications that the child might make through their behaviour and learn to ‘read’ their distress. By doing this and identifying triggers and calmers, we are more able to prevent it from happening in the future.

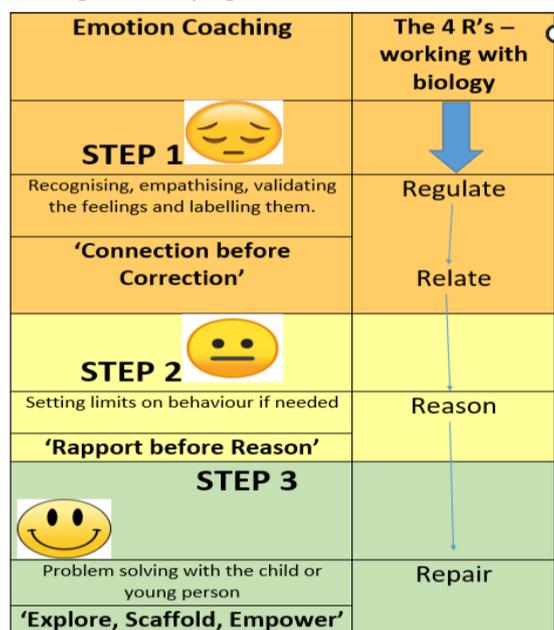
Each child has a **Support and Intervention Plan** which contains information about their individual triggers, calmers and how the present when they are dysregulated. This plan also includes strategies for addressing these. This plan is a working document and is updated when staff learn new information about each child.

When a child is dysregulated, we follow a four-stage process that allows us to de-escalate the situation, support the child to regulate and identify the teachable moment. This process is based on the 3 R’s – **Regulate, Relate, Reason** - from the work of Dr Bruce Perry. His research explains how the brain works from the ‘bottom up’ in order to move from a distressed state to a calm and thinking one.



We have added a further stage, from the work of Louise Bomber, which is **Repair**. This cannot happen until the child has moved through the other three stages, back to their

‘thinking brain’. We use an approach known as Emotion Coaching to support the children through these stages – see diagram on page 14.



Differentiated Discipline

The word ‘discipline’ comes from the Latin word ‘disciplina’ which means to receive instruction from someone or to learn. At Kings Meadow, discipline is, therefore, about **teaching and training** rather than punishment. As a school for children whose primary identified needs include severe difficulties with self-regulation, it is our job and core purpose to teach children how to manage their stress and cope more appropriately, not to punish them because they aren’t able to do this without help. It would not make sense for a specialist SEMH school to use a traditional model of discipline that more often than not is based on adult wants rather than children’s social and emotional needs and is very often one size fits all. Most of our children have experienced this already and it often did not go well, sometimes ending in suspensions from other settings or even permanent exclusion.

At Kings Meadow, we identify the **‘teachable moments’** that happen after a child has experienced dysregulation. These are the important opportunities for us to teach the child how to reflect on their actions and the impact of these, developing a sense of responsibility, and to explicitly teach them safer, more socially acceptable strategies for managing a similar situation in the future. These moments take place when the child is feeling regulated and safe again and this can often be some time after the incident, when the ‘thinking part’ of the brain has begun to work again.

We **differentiate the discipline** during these teachable moments, in the same way that we differentiate the teaching of academic knowledge and skills. This means that the emotional and social tasks and expectations that we have for each child are informed by their developmental stage, their particular needs and their regulatory state.

It is important to note however, that at Kings Meadow, safety always comes first. We address everything that needs addressing, including injury, because we do not believe in a society where human beings go around hurting each other. This is not a civilised society.

Wherever possible, and when safe to do so, we avoid external exclusion so that we can continue to proactively help each child to learn to regulate and take responsibility for their actions, under the close supervision of staff who care about them. Our ethos is to create inclusion and belonging, not exclusion and rejection. We want our children to enjoy and benefit from life in school. However, there are times when exclusion may be appropriate, in the interests of the safety of the wider school community. Please see our Exclusion Policy for further details about when we may consider this an appropriate consequence.

Consequences

To function in the future as positive members of society, it is important that our children learn over time about how to take responsibility for their actions and how to make amends when things go wrong. This is an essential feature of a safe and civil society. We teach proactively through our curriculum and this is an important part of our Develop Pathway in particular. We also use all the ‘teachable moments’ that occur throughout each day at school (see Differentiated Discipline on page 14 for more information).

Our ethos is to use what are often known as ‘**natural consequences**’ when we are teaching our children to be accountable for their actions. For example, if they damage a display, then they should help to repair it. Some other examples of consequences may include:

- Helping adults to tidy up if they have made a mess;
- Doing something kind for another person if they have hurt their feelings;
- Undertaking missed learning at another time. Adults will choose this alternative time with care and avoid using other important regulatory times such as eating lunch or other important curriculum opportunities such as PE;
- Not being able to use certain equipment or resources because they have broken something;
- Using banked ‘Values Points’ towards the repair of something (see School Values Reward System – Appendix One) instead of towards an experience or tangible reward.

Rewards: acknowledgments and recognitions for effort and achievement

We attempt to be endlessly positive with our children to help boost their self-esteem and change how they view themselves. We notice behaviours that might seem ordinary but that are significant to our children. We acknowledge our children’s successes with warm words and gestures (specific to what we have seen, rather than generic) and also with:

- Positive phone calls and emails home
- Stickers and certificates
- Moving up the Rainbow Wall to the Treasure Chest for showing the School Values
- Visits to senior leaders to celebrate a wide range of learning achievements in the Gold Book
- Positive postcards sent home
- Keep Safe Certificates awarded for maintaining safe behaviours which lead to Gold Bag prizes

We also operate a **School Values Reward System** which allows the children to earn points when they show our school values. These points can be exchanged for experiences and

tangible rewards, as well as used towards reparations after an incident. They provide an opportunity for the children to exercise some control over the rewards system and also teach them about managing both immediate and delayed rewards.

This system provides a predictable structure and routine in school but is also flexible. Each teacher will adapt it to be responsive to the developmental stages and needs of the children in their class. (see Appendix One for more information).

Appendix One – School Values Rewards Points System



Our School Values are a very important part of our school and they are embedded in everything we do.

Children are taught about our values from day one of joining Kings Meadow. They can earn rewards points for showing these values in their behaviours and attitudes. This is the process:

- Someone notices a child demonstrating one of the school values and awards them a 'Values Sticker/Point'. This could be any adult in school and may also include other children noticing this in their peers.
- The child adds the 'Values Sticker' to their chart/log book.
- Each child has a **developmentally appropriate** target number of stickers to earn within a personalised timeframe, set by their class teacher. When they reach that target, they are awarded a certificate and are then able to access a first layer of rewards.
- As the children become developmentally ready to accept more delayed rewards, they may choose to 'bank' that certificate and work towards their next target. When they achieve their second certificate, they may use both certificates together to access a second layer of rewards.
- This continues until a fifth and final layer of rewards.

At the start of the year, the children in each class are involved in agreeing what the rewards will be in individual layers. They will be made up of both experiences and more tangible rewards. See table below for examples although this is subject to change, based on pupil voice, interests and staff decisions regarding appropriateness and effectiveness.

First Layer	Second Layer	Third Layer	Fourth Layer	Fifth Layer
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Choose from a selection of small items in class box eg pencils/bubbles/fiddles toys	Choose from a selection of larger items in class box eg puzzles/fidget spinners/squishy toys	Choose from a selection of items in the Deputy Heads Treasure Chest. Choose an Argos reward worth up to £5	Choose from a selection of items in the Head Teachers Gold Bag. Choose an Argos reward worth up to £8	Trip out Choose an Argos reward worth up to £10
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The Values Points have an assigned monetary worth. They will be able to 'bank' these points to 'save up' for higher-level rewards, to support them with learning about delayed gratification.

However, when children are developmentally ready to accept more responsibility for the consequences of their actions, they will also be expected to contribute an appropriate portion of their points towards the cost of repairs if they damage or break something. This means that the school will be using money from their rewards budget towards the repair instead which is what happens in life when money has to be found to address such issues.

Appendix Two: Examples of practical strategies to support emotional regulation

Examples of practical relational strategies

- We demonstrate unconditional positive regard ensuring that children always feel wanted and supported despite their behaviour. We offer non-retaliatory and

boundaried relationships that feel safe, secure and stable. We offer connection without expecting anything in return. We focus on prevention rather than reaction.

- We teach the children that all feelings are okay to have but only some reactions are okay.
- We strive to treat every lesson and every day as a fresh start and to always be as positive and optimistic as humanly possible.
- We build strong relationships within each Class Family and each child is accepted and supported unconditionally. They feel like they belong, (a fundamental need for every child), and are empowered and encouraged to stand up for one another.
- We become positive and caring attachment figures for the children, while being sensitive to and supportive of the relationships between parents/carers and their children. We adapt our response to the attachment styles of the child.
- We become attuned to each child and practice relationship vigilance. We can tune into, read and respond to the children's state and needs at any given time. We notice everything the children do and say, verbally or non-verbally, and are particularly watchful of behavioural indicators that might suggest that they are becoming stressed.
- We provide over-compensatory nurture, behaving in such a way that each child believes that they are the only one in our care. We become the expert in what each child needs. This means that we engage the child's interest, noticing what already captures their interest and build on that by matching tasks and activities to that interest.
- At the beginning of each new year, the hierarchy within each Class Family is established and taught explicitly. This is reinforced visually through a class hierarchy diagram with photographs or other visual representations of the people who are members the Family. In a healthy family there is a strong sense of hierarchy among family members. The adults take care of the children and make the decisions and, in turn the children understand the hierarchy.
- At the beginning of each new year, Teams Around each Child are established and made explicit to each child and family. This is reinforced visually with photographs or other visual representations and each child is provided with a copy of the depiction so they can be reminded of who is on their team.
- We talk to the children about their experience of stress, using consistent language, and help them to develop an awareness of how they are managing their emotions by using our visual representations of the window of stress tolerance. This helps the children to become increasingly accountable for managing their emotions and to learn to identify their stressors and calmers.
- We are exemplary role models for all children. We are always aware of our emotional reactions to the children and how we respond to them. We model the use of all other classroom systems and the behaviours we would like to see. We differentiate the language we use by being explicit and modelling. It is not enough to say be kind – touch the others gently, they feel uncomfortable when you push them
- We are aware that our children need a much higher ratio of positive to corrective interactions than their mainstream counterparts. This means that we deliberately manufacture opportunities to respond positively and seek out, through close observation, all those occasions when they get it right, providing us with opportunities to communicate or comment explicitly and interact positively.
- We are aware of our own body language, prosody, and words. We are aware of how our words and actions can be perceived and we are careful, considerate, and intentional in

the way that we communicate. We ensure that our words and body language are congruent and that the interest and concern we show for the children is genuine. We speak quietly and never shout. We ensure we provide personal space when its needed.

- We use diversion and distraction to remove pressure.
- We provide support that does not collude with over-dependence.
- ☑ We are positive and predictable. We look for opportunities to always give recognition to small steps of progress and tiny achievements and recognise and develop strengths and talents. We model enthusiasm, showing children our pleasure on the completion of tasks.
- We use clear, strengths-based language when talking to each other and to the children.
- We greet them every morning with a smile and 'red carpet treatment'. We let them know that they are the reason we come to work and let them see our eyes lighting up.
- We help the children practice things like asking for help, relaxing, resolving conflict, showing affection, having fun.
- We know when to swap in, understanding that our emotional states are contagious and when we are tense, others around tend to become tense.
- We ensure we are ready to teach and are highly planned. This means that we structure free play, lessons and encounters with others, structure and provide choice for recording of learning, use transitional objects, warn of changes, provide limited choices of content and activity, use timers, and have materials close to hand. We are creative in finding ways 'in' with children, for example, using role play, or concrete mechanical and rhythmic activities to engage left brain function such as counting, colouring, sorting, sequencing and building as a start point.
- We keep a constant eye on children's progress, considering the here and no and the future - how to help children prepare for life after school. We provide experiences beyond those that the children might naturally experience.
- We pre-teach, teaching certain skills that are needed for a lesson/session before the start so that the children know what to do.
- We actively facilitate supportive scaffolding across the curriculum by simplifying tasks, breaking them down into bite-size chunks, anticipating the support needed to avoid failure and having expectations that are challenging and attainable, enabling the children to build up resilience to meeting them.
- We are proactive in providing opportunities for the children to demonstrate maturity. This means that we take every opportunity to provide children with increasing responsibility as they progress through the school.
- We identify ALL transitions and prepare for them.

We aim, wherever possible, as a preventative measure to increase children's sensory comfort. Our children need multi-sensory teaching techniques to process and store information efficiently and effectively. All interventions are based on vigilance and are state dependent, responsive to the state of the child.

Examples of multi-sensory strategies

The use of focused movement activities. This may include:

Just Right State program activities:

- Just Right State program: Movement for comfort: rocking, bouncing, jumping, swinging - trampoline, swing, standing at wall and leaning back onto exercise ball
- Just Right State program: Movement to increase alertness and attention: fast, unsteady, shake out arms and legs, jump up and down on the ground, sit on exercise ball and move in different directions
- Just Right State program: Movement to alleviate anger: hanging, pulling, lifting, digging, climbing
- Just Right State program: Movement to alleviate irritation and agitation: climb, climbing bars, therapy ball
- Just Right State program: Movement for strength and confidence: fast movement when you find it difficult to say what you feel
- Just Right State program: Movement for calming: cycling downhill, spinning on a swing, swing in different directions climbing, crawling through a tunnel, rolling on flat surface
- Mindfulness
- Yoga
- Walking and running (rhythmic, repetitive, and soothing for the lower brain)
- Trampolining
- Space hoppers
- Climbing
- Cycling – on static or push-bikes
- Use of the outdoor gym
- Wall and chair press-ups
- Pulling on exercise bands
- Weight-bearing activities and resources – blankets, lap-pad or vest
- Chewy tubes
- Zoom ball
- Tyre swing
- Floating on the boat
- Moving through the maze or figure of eight
- Dancing

Focused movement activities that aid self-esteem building:

- Sweeping
- hoovering
- cleaning windows and tables
- Hammering nails
- Banging clay
- emptying bins
- collecting the post
- delivering fruit/collecting lunches
- litter picking
- doing errands
- setting up the dinner table

Examples of rhythmic and repetitive activities such as:

- playing percussion
- listening to music
- singing
- sorting
- masking tape round cardboard tubes
- colouring
- cutting and sticking
- hammering
- rocking on a chair
- hole punching
- sharpening pencils

Examples of fidget/sensory rich manipulatives such as:

- Sensory bracelets
- Wood fidget puzzles
- Stress balls
- Fidget bracelets and rings
- Pipe cleaners
- Putty/play dough
- Stretch toys
- Tangle fidgets
- Rice/sand trays

Examples of soft/tactile items:

- Stuffed toys
- Weighted toys
- Sensory cushions
- Soft blankets
- Neck warmers
- Fluffy gloves
- Soft pillows

Other regulatory objects:

- Bean bag chairs
- Rocking chairs
- Floor mat with pillows
- Swings
- Colouring books
- Books
- Sensory bottles
- Bubbles to practise breathing

- Lotion with calming scents
- Fish tank/other low maintenance pets
- Sit and spin
- Den like spaces
- Foot spa

Regulating body temperature for comfort

- Cold: Blankets, duvet, hot water bottles, wheat bags,
- Hot: Ice packs, ice to suck on, ice pops, wet flannels, frozen bag of dry rice

Examples of sensory snacks

Calming: toffees, hot chocolate, tea, cuppa soup, chewy health bar, foods you have to bite and crunch - crisps, biscuits, cereal, nuts, fruit, raw vegetables chewy foods. Toast, crusty bread, meat (chicken strips), cheese, hot spice, curry, chilli, crisps

Alerting: crunching on ice, frozen peas, an orange, an apple, celery, citrus drinks, drinking through a straw. Oranges, lemons, mint (sweets), cold drinks, ice (cubes).

Comforting food: Things that are sweet, salty, warm spices, warm drinks, chocolate, iced buns, chips, pasta, pizza, bread and jam, sucking a drink through a straw, milk shakes and smoothies.

Examples of calming touch: stroking an animal, ball massage, snuggling on sofa, sitting with head on floor down and feet up against wall, hug a therapy ball, deep pressure through head

Examples of alerting touch: brisk, light tickle, briskly rub skin (loofah) light tickle (feather on skin), play with 'heavy' ball.

Examples of comforting sound: listening to music, singing, soft voice

Examples of calming visual activities: read, watch - tv, read stories

Examples of Curriculum Preventative Strategies:

Engaging with Nature

- Forest School
- Gardening

Outdoor and adventurous activity

- Water sports – paddle boarding, kayaking
- Climbing
- Scootering

- Trampolining

Bespoke Therapeutic Input:

- Talking therapy
- Play therapy
- Drawing and Talking
- Lego Therapy
- Equine Therapy
- Safe and Sound Protocol
- Motional program