



# Connor Downs Academy

Managing and supporting positive behaviour policy.

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September 2025

# Managing and supporting positive behaviour policy.

## Aims and Ethos

### Rationale

The Academy's Managing and Supporting Behaviour policy aims to promote an environment where everyone in our academy community feels happy, secure and safe to learn within an ethos of mutual respect. This policy is designed to promote and explicitly teach good behaviour, rather than merely deter anti-social behaviour.

At Connor Downs Academy, behaviour is understood neuro-scientifically as a communication of unmet need or as an adapted, defensive stress response. The understanding that children learn best within positive, trusting relationships informs our approach to managing and changing behaviour and we expect staff to work to identify the need and provide developmentally appropriate support to remove these barriers to successful engagement in school life.

Parents/carers, are an integral part of our academy community and play an important role in supporting, modelling and reinforcing our expectations. We will work in partnership to inform and consult with parents/carers in order to support acceptable behaviour both in school and at home.

The management of distressed behaviour and the support offered to the child is the responsibility of every member of our academy community. A consistent, whole academy approach offers predictability, containment and safety. All adults work in partnership to model, reinforce and support our expectations. Our relationships with each other as staff and how we interact with our children, model our expectations for behaviour across our community.

At Connor Downs Academy, we expect the highest standards of behaviour and we make a point of acknowledging, praising and rewarding behaviour that is good. We understand the importance of 'feeling safe' in promoting social engagement and learning. Our focus is to ensure that all pupils feel safe within the academy and develop positive, trusting relationships with all members of the academy community. The development of positive social, emotional and learning behaviours is at the heart of our approach.

'Social and emotional competencies have been found to be a more significant determinant of academic achievement than IQ.'

(Duckworth and Seligman, 2005)

### **Aims and Objectives**

We aim to ensure that discipline\* teaches, supports and reinforces the skills and behaviours a pupil needs to succeed in learning. Our differentiated response to behaviour recognises that our children are unique and individual and that some will require additional support in order to achieve the high expectations we have for behaviour for all children.

We aim to actively promote high self-esteem and high aspirations for all pupils, through an ethos that values every child. For children, being able to manage and understand their emotions, to apply thinking between feeling and action, and to increasingly show empathy and understanding to others is core to our work.

We believe that high expectations are an important factor in achieving excellent behaviour and fostering positive attitudes within our school. The adults in our academy are familiar with this policy and know that they have a responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both during interaction with the children and with each other. We acknowledge that our example has an important influence on the children.

Clear, timely and constructive feedback is essential for pupils to develop appropriate behaviours and our approach aims to deliver this calmly and consistently at a time when the child is most receptive to this.

'Any response to a child's behaviour should be informed by the principle, 'what is the child learning from my response and how does this support them to behave well in the future? (Trauma Informed Schools UK)

An understanding of trauma and childhood adversity underpins our approach to relationships within our academy community. We are committed to ensuring that our school sustains a Trauma and Mental Health Informed Approach to ensure that all our children develop positive mental health and resilience, enabling them to fully engage in life and learning. There is a growing body of research and understanding of the impact of Childhood Adversity on long term mental and physical health and the protective factors that mitigate the potential impact. It is our aim to maximise the protective factors of school by creating an environment of safety that has strong, positive and supportive relationships at its heart.

\*Discipline, derived from the Latin word, *disciplina*, which means instruction, and derives from the root 'discere' which means to learn.

### **Whole Academy Approach**

We have embraced a wider definition of trauma to encompass any event that is experienced as frightening, painful or out of control, characterised by there being no one available to support or mitigate the impact of traumatic toxic stress. As such, even the day-to-day exposure to events such as divorce, loss of a loved one, illness within the family, preparing for an exam, moving house can be experienced as traumatic. Children and adults can be affected by toxic stress. Providing an environment that has safety, connection and compassion at its heart ensures that our Academy environments never unwittingly re-traumatise any of our community members and act to maximise protective factors through the conscious use of our relationships.

### Key Relational Skills

We know there are some key ways to be in a relationship with a child that contribute positively to the development of a significant relationship and to the development of a healthy sense of self. These are known as key relational skills. They are drawn from the teachings and findings of some leading commentators on emotional, psychological and child development; (Sunderland<sup>1</sup> 2003/2006/2007; Kohut<sup>2</sup> 1984; Stern<sup>3</sup> 1998).

These skills, when provided within a significant relationship with an adult, will provide a relational basis for a child's emotional, social and neurological development.

- Affect Attunement: the ability to hear, see, sense, interpret and respond to someone, both verbally and non-verbally. This is how we communicate to the people we are close to so that we see them, feel with them and understand their experiences. In practice, attunement is meeting and riding the same emotional wave as the child.
- Empathy, Validation and Mental State Talk: the recognition and acceptance of another person's thoughts, feelings, sensations, and behaviours as understandable. It involves validating how the child is experiencing the event, imagining into what might be driving their behaviour – 'you are not my boss' – 'it must feel like everyone is always telling you what to do and you never get a say, no one listens to what you want' It is not – distracting, judging, discounting, minimising or placating
- Containment: Structure, order and predictability. Boundaries applied in a consistent, supportive, matter of fact, non-punitive way.
- Emotional containment of feelings too big for the child. Regulated and steady adult, in charge of their own feelings and emotions.
- Calming and Soothing: The adult will support the child to regulate themselves.

At a point when the pupil is fully regulated there will be some reflection and analysis of the behaviour.

1. Making the child aware of the physiological clues of what is happening within their body and in their actions. Say what you see, labelling the emotion that you see.
2. Shine the light on the behaviour that was inappropriate. E.g. 'It's okay to feel cross, but it's not okay to...'
3. Refocusing the behaviour. What can we do next time to support you to behave differently?

This is the point when there will be an agreement between the pupil and adult about what should happen as a consequence.

It is important that any consequences are developmentally appropriate and are designed to support children to learn about both their physiological response to challenge and difficulty and how better to manage this in the future. Consequences should not be punitive, shaming or detrimental to the child's view of themselves.

## Academy Rules

At Connor Downs Academy, all children are encouraged to show respect and consideration for themselves, for others and for property. We believe that good behaviour is the hallmark of a good academy. Our aim is to maximise teaching and learning time based on secure, positive behaviour and behaviour for learning.

All members of the academy community follow the academy rules.

**C**are for everyone and everything.

**D**emonstrate good manners.

**A**lways follow instructions.

The rationale for our school rules was influenced by Bennett's (2017) 'Creating the Culture.'

In relation to school rules, he says they need to be:

- explicit
- short and memorable
- compact
- promote good character development

Our agreements are expressed positively. This underlines our understanding that children learn best within positive, trusting relationships. Pupils spend time exploring in an age-appropriate way what the expectations mean through a

variety of ways e.g., stories, Circle Time, drama, photographs, dance, art, PSHE, TIS activities, including whole class TIS activities etc.

Adults recognise their changing role from assertive to supportive care, developing pupil's insight and language of sensations and emotions, building understanding of self within a community based on inclusion and acceptance.

### What we do

In order to achieve the above we will:

- Explicitly teach the academy rules and why they are important (communication)
- Provide opportunities for children to be active participants in their own learning and development (behaviour for learning)
- Clearly state the boundaries of acceptable behaviour (rules)
- Respond promptly, developmentally appropriately and consistently to children who test these boundaries (expectations)
- Promote good behaviour in a positive way (rewards)
- Understand and respect the experiences and feelings of our children, particularly where their individual needs make learning and personal development more challenging (inclusion)
- Work with parents/carers, where additional support is needed or to celebrate positive achievements and progress through our open and respectful partnerships (partnership)
- Keep records of rewards and sanctions to identify strengths and areas for development as the basis for effective action (self-evaluation and academy improvement)

Our positive approaches to behaviour involve us 'noticing' and rewarding good choices, being explicit in descriptive feedback and praise, providing reward as reinforcement.

TIS, SCARF Time and the programmes of study in PSHE, all provide examples of skills and vocabulary for adults to use to encourage learning in this way.

### Special celebrations, Roles and Responsibilities:

Social learning is encouraged by pupils having the opportunity to praise each other. Peer praise is very meaningful for pupils. Older children acting as role models, for example during lunch time, encourages positive interactions and aspirations.

Assemblies and all class-based lessons provide high quality opportunities for praise linked to deeper learning.

Assemblies involve an element of positive praise and celebration, with each teacher giving explicit praise, along with celebrations such as Shine Award, Reader of the week award, Writer of the week award, Mathematician of the week award, Performer of the week award and Character of the week award.

We recognise the importance of positive comments, respectful interactions and role modelling for the children. The academy expects all adults - staff, parents/carers and Hub Councilors - to employ this in our relationships with each other, as well as with our pupils.

Our positive approaches are based on understanding that pupils are learning how to manage themselves with the added complexity that they are doing so within a community of other learners who might not yet be skilled. This clearly suggests that triggers and challenge will arise, which will need to be managed. Children will be supported in self-regulation and this represents that good learning has taken place.

### Rewards

Every effort will be made by all staff to praise each and every child for their work, effort, attitudes, behaviour and achievements.

The pupils must be aware of the rewards system that is in place and the consequences; Good to be Green. This is used to help pupils to think about their behaviour and to develop a positive attitude towards learning in school. These should be clearly displayed in each classroom.

Our system is flexible to take account of individual circumstances. The emphasis of the academy behaviour policy is on REWARD and PRAISE, which should be given whenever possible for both work and behaviour.

We use:

### Praise.

- House points, any amount at any time.
- Green Time: up to 25 minutes weekly for the whole school.
- Character of the Week nominations and awards at Shine assembly.
- Positive notes or verbal feedback to parents/carers to inform them of success during the school day.

### House System

All of the children and staff from Reception to Year 6 will be organised into four House Teams and will be able to earn House Points as an additional reward for good effort, behaviour, achievement and also participation and success in school competitions and events throughout the year. During the weekly Shine assembly, the house cup is given to the team with the most house points for the week.

### Good Routines

Our expectations of good behaviour must be within the context of an orderly academy day. It is essential that we consider each aspect of the children's day. This includes:

- The learning environment – tidy, interactive, stimulating and celebratory
- Classroom organisation – so that the basic needs are met and children can find what they need
- Routines for the school day – planned, understood by children, minimum fuss and time wasted
- Movement around the academy – quiet and calm
- Time keeping – lessons, playtimes, beginning and end of the day,
- Assemblies- a time for communal celebration and quiet reflection - children and adults to enter and leave quietly

### Staff Responsibilities

#### All Staff

- a) Ensure that there are good routines (see above)
- b) Ensure that you are consistent, friendly and professional at all times
- c) Remain calm
- d) Aim to be positive at all times by seeking out and rewarding the good
- e) Regularly discuss the Academy Rules and why they are important
- f) Explain why certain behaviours are not acceptable using the TIS approach
- g) Be consistent about praise and rewards as well as when supporting positive behaviour
- h) Be aware of individual needs

#### Playtime and Lunchtime Staff

As above, plus we aim to have a team of well-trained and confident lunchtime staff who work proactively to improve and sustain good lunchtime behaviour in school.

Our aim is for each member of the lunchtime team to actively promote the **3 P's**.

- **Proactively** engaging with pupils, positively and confidently

- **Pre-emptively** managing behaviour issues (so they don't escalate unnecessarily)
- Being a **presence** on the playground

In addition, playtime and lunchtime staff should;

- Be aware of the main problem areas (places, times, individual children, etc).
- Staff should work on the perimeter of their designated area always facing in towards the children to maximise supervision
- Return the children to class in a calm and orderly manner so that they are ready to learn

#### Classroom Staff

As above, plus

- Operate the Good to be Green reward system
- Support Playtime and Lunchtime Staff

#### Senior Leadership Team

As above, plus

- Support staff in the implementation of the policy
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy through consultation with key stakeholders and rigorous self-evaluation
- Identify the main problem areas (places, times, individual children, etc)
- Take prompt and decisive action to deal with areas identified
- Liaise with parents/carers, outside agencies to support the child/staff member

#### Restorative approaches

When an incident between children occurs, we need to aim to:

- Give the child/ren time to calm down before speaking to them
- Listen to each child explaining what has happened including any witnesses if possible
- Ask anyone who has been at fault what should have happened and what they would do differently next time
- If developmentally appropriate, we should support the child to apologise. If this is not appropriate, adults will need to apologise on their behalf, modelling good practice.

#### Consequences

We want children to be aware that for poor behaviour, there are consequences. For children at thinking and above, this will be in the form of sanctions (depending on the severity of the behaviour):

1. Verbal reminder – dialogue and reminder of how to improve
2. Yellow card – dialogue and reminder of how to improve
3. Red card – communicated to parents/carers (severe incidents, such as fighting, swearing, bullying, vandalism, refusing to follow an adult's instructions, lying may result in step 3 being the first sanction)
4. Incidents to be recorded on whole class tracking sheet and on individual incident log using My Concern
5. Records are kept daily and are monitored for patterns of behaviour. If a child received an instant red card, he/she miss all Green time
6. Records are monitored by the SLT and overseen by the Head of School.
7. If behaviour does not improve parents/carers and child to meet with Head of School to discuss an individual behaviour plan

This system is followed by all staff at all points in the school day, including lunch and breaktimes.

### [Individual Behaviour Plan](#)

When parents/carers are invited into the academy to discuss a child's behaviour, it may be appropriate to agree an Individual Behaviour Plan. This will identify the additional support which will be given to the child, exactly what the child is expected to do and what will take place if the inappropriate behaviour still continues.

Connor Downs Academy does not tolerate bullying of any kind. If we discover that an act of bullying or intimidation has taken place, the incident is recorded and we act immediately to stop any further occurrences of such behaviour.

We do everything in our power to ensure that all pupils attend academy free from fear (See Anti-Bullying Policy for further information).

We take positive action to protect our children from any negative behaviour outlined in the Equality Act (2010). These 'protected characteristics' are as follows:

- Disability
- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (formally called Gender)
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

If we are informed or suspect that any of the above have occurred, we will investigate and if found to be proven this will be reported to the LA Equality and Diversity Team.

#### **Parental involvement**

The development of positive behaviour patterns and self-discipline is seen to be a gradual process which begins at home. Connor Downs Academy welcomes the interest and close involvement of parents/carers and by choosing to send their child to our school we expect that parents/carers will support the agreed behaviour policy. If a child's behaviour gives particular cause for concern, parents/carers will be involved as soon as possible. Parents/carers are invited to work with the Academy in order to support the child to develop appropriate behaviour.

Children who persistently have difficulties with their behaviour will have an Individual Behaviour Plan, shared with the parents/carers, staff and the child. If a behaviour problem is severe or recurring, suspension procedures may be implemented, following correct procedures.

On rare occasions, this may take the form of a permanent exclusion.

#### **Dealing with serious incidents**

We have the right to take measures to keep pupils and staff safe.

These measures include:

- The legal right to confiscate inappropriate items from pupils such as sharp implements
- Statutory powers to discipline pupils who behave badly on the way to and from the Academy bringing it into disrepute.
- The Head of School has the power to search pupils if they suspect one of them is carrying a knife or other offensive weapon.
- A legal duty to make provision to tackle all forms of bullying.
- Team Teach, as a positive handling technique will only be used when it is **reasonable** to do so, the level of restraint needs to be **proportionate** to the situation and should not be used unless **absolutely necessary**. The focus is purely **safeguarding** and should not be about control
- There will be zero tolerance of any form of serious assault on pupils or staff.

The Head of School and the Hub Council of the Academy have a duty of care to all pupils and staff, and this Behaviour Policy takes appropriate account of the health and safety of all children and adults in the academy.

#### **Fixed-term suspensions and permanent exclusions**

Only the Head of School in liaison with the Strategic Partner and the Trusts Inclusion Team, has the power to suspend or exclude a child from the academy. They may suspend a pupil for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in any one academic year. They may also exclude a pupil permanently. Before taking such a step the Head of School will have taken advice from the Hub Council, Aspire Board, the Education Welfare Service, County Psychological Service or the school medical officer as appropriate to each situation.

If a child is suspended, parents/carers are informed immediately, giving reasons for the suspension. At the same time, the Head of School makes it clear to the parents/carers that they can appeal against the decision to the governance of the academy. The academy informs the parents/carers how to make any such appeal.

The Head of School in conjunction with the lead Hub Councillor informs the Local Authority (LA) and the Aspire MAT about any permanent exclusion, and about any fixed-term suspension beyond five days in any one term. The Hub Council itself cannot either suspend a child or extend the suspension period made by the Head of School.

Your child may be suspended from the academy for a number of reasons, and for anything from a half day to permanently.

Connor Downs Academy will adhere to the Head Teacher legislation guidance 'Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England Sept 2012 which relates to:

- The Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011.
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012.
- Section 89 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006; and
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007.

### **Fixed Term Suspensions**

If a child's behaviour shows no improvement after all available options to the Academy have been used and all the above procedures followed, then a child will be suspended for a fixed term. This can for be one day or up to five days.

Other reasons for a fixed term suspension:

- Physical or threatened assault on another child or member of staff.
- Constant disruption to the education of other children.
- Regular breaches of the academy behaviour policy which result in the teacher being distracted from the task of teaching the class in order to attend to the needs of an individual child.
- Persistent bullying

- Verbal abuse related to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act (2010)
- Deliberate and wilful damage to school property

It is likely that a combination of the above will contribute to suspension. Parents/carers will be contacted immediately at the point of suspension and invited to the academy to discuss the seriousness of their child's actions.

#### [Permanent Exclusion](#)

Permanent exclusion will only be used as a last resort, in response to

- a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's behaviour policy; and
- where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

Serious breaches that may lead to permanent exclusion include:

Persistent long term defiant behaviour,

Threatened or actual physical assaults,

Sexual abuse,

Supplying illegal drugs or carrying an offensive weapon.

Exclusions will not be imposed immediately, unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school. Before deciding to exclude we will ensure that:

- a thorough investigation has been carried out
- the child being considered for exclusion has been encouraged to give their version of events
- consideration is given to whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying or by racial harassment
- a written record of actions taken and interviews with the child are kept - including any witness statements which should be signed and dated wherever possible.
- an exclusion is only made where the evidence shows that the child was responsible for the incident.

#### [Inclusion](#)

It is our aim to be a fully inclusive academy. Permanent exclusion or a managed move (following statutory guidelines) would be the ultimate sanction, used only when all other avenues of behaviour management and support have failed to have an effect. If a child's needs cannot be met at Connor Downs Academy, we would expect to look for a suitable setting for that child rather than excluding them.

#### [Review](#)

This policy is to be reviewed every two years by staff, hub councillors, parents/carers and pupils.

### [Conclusion](#)

Our core aim is to recognise and encourage good behaviour and effort in order to promote a safe, positive and happy learning environment. We wish to develop a sense of community where everyone feels valued and motivated in an orderly, relaxed and successful learning environment.