

Whole School Behaviour Policy

		Version Control		
Version	Status	Date	Contributor(s)	Change
v0.1	New Policy	Mar 22	CR	
v0.2				

Signed

Chairman of Governors

30th March 2022

As a school who caters for young people with social and emotional mental health difficulties, a well thought out and balanced behaviour policy is essential. Our young people deal with issues which directly affect their ability to deal with social and emotional issues effectively and/or to positively balance their mental health and we are committed to helping them. We are committed to preparing the young people in our school for adulthood and life outside of school. We aim to do this by enabling them to learn how to deal with setbacks and challenges and successes more effectively and appropriately. This is despite the fact that many of our young people may have experienced significant trauma, deprivation and or neglect in their formative years. We want them to be successful as the result of a well-balanced, well thought out and implemented whole school curriculum (including behavioural aspects), not just because they 'got lucky'.

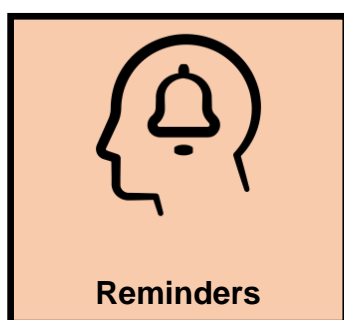
We want them to learn how to do this via our 6 core themes and, therefore, by developing the ability to;

- have a more balanced response to set backs and challenges
- communicate difficulties and concerns
- reflect on positive and negative events and learn from them
- think and act independently
- push beyond their borders (and change what might have been expected of them previously by themselves and others)
- develop resilience to a range of difficulties and situations

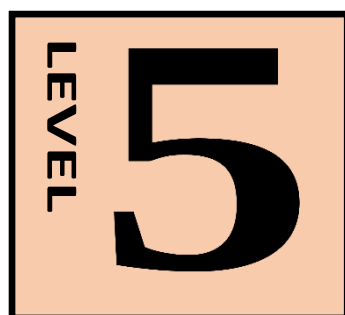
Our behaviour policy and approaches form a key part of our whole school curriculum (as all of our pupils have an Education and Health Care Plan with SEMH identified as a primary need). Learning how to make progress with their behaviour is a key pastoral assessment factor for our pupils.

At TGS we run two distinct behaviour management policies simultaneously: the '*hidden*' *relational approach* and a *structured system* that rewards and provides short term-consequences. For both, we try to do things **with** our students and not **to** them as we recognise how important control and relationships are to our students – more so than in any mainstream setting.

Our system is, at present, in a period of revision and revolution. The system we had 3 years ago is not what you'll see today and, without doubt, what you see today will be different in 3 years' time.



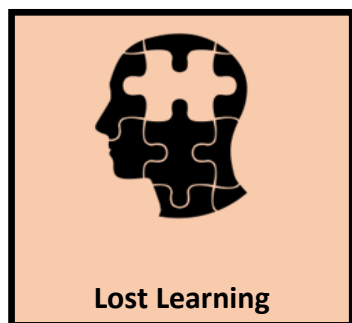
At present, we use the language of **Reminders** when helping pupils learn acceptable behaviour (TAB stands for Teaching Acceptable Behaviour, more on this below). These **Reminders** are verbs not nouns: we are *reminding* pupils what is acceptable and, in doing so, we are doing the work *with them* (reminders hold no consequence and work best in a sentence – "I'm reminding you that we keep our hands to ourselves... I'm reminding you that other pupils cannot hear me when you shout out...I'm reminding you that we follow instructions in class"). We are not 'giving them' a reminder like a consequence.



If a pupil goes through 5 reminders or exhibits behaviour that, in the staff's assessment, could get the pupil **sacked, attacked or arrested*** outside school, a **level 5** is given. This triggers 3 minutes reflection time at lunch (the consistency not the severity is the key here) and the Level 5 is recorded. If a pupil gets 5 (or more) Level 5's in a week a discussion takes place between the tutor and SLT. If a pupil gets 3 (or more) Level 5's in a day, their tutor will ring home. We are, at present, trialling a system that enables pupils and staff to talk through Level 5's. We call this our *24 hours to talk* system (242T). The 'de-brief' is a vital part of the learning process and helps *teach acceptable behaviour* (TAB). It also helps restore relationships and, again, is designed so we are doing things *with* not

to our pupils. 24 hours is an important time-frame since we need to 'strike while the iron is cold': pupils who are angry cannot think clearly, cannot reflect and, therefore cannot learn in that moment. If they cannot learn, we cannot teach acceptable behaviour and we cannot expect behaviour to improve.

****please note that pupil actions which involves behaviour such as violence , significant damage to school property , harmful sexual behaviour and/or peer on peer bullying may result in an exclusion (please refer to our exclusion policy).***



Based on the work of Steven Baker and Mick Simpson¹ we have been piloting a system of *Lost Learning*. This helps us change our focus in school (re-focusing on learning); reduces the number of level 5s (pupils do not get a Level 5 for walking out of class) and, again, helps us do things **with** the pupils and not **to** them. If a pupil refuses to engage in learning (walks out, refuses to work, refuses help), staff will continue to work **with them**. Only at the end of any lesson can a pupil be informed they have lost learning. During TAB (last half an hour of every day) they will complete the 'headline learning' with a member of staff. They can then join in their chosen TAB activity. In addition, a pupil may choose to

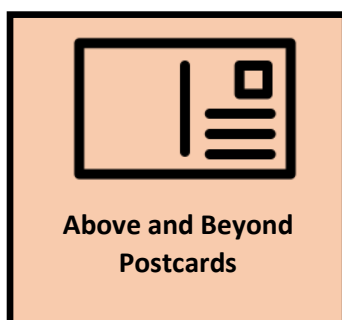
complete the work at break or lunch. This element of control is important to our pupils and staff support them in doing this (again, doing it **with them** not **to them**). Because the last half an hour of each day is TAB the daily structure of the school supports this approach. All responses to Lost Learning are recorded. Pupils who refuse to engage in it do not join their TAB Activity. Either way, learning is promoted as something important. Every day is a 'clean slate'. No Lost Learning is carried over to the next day. There are no exceptions to this. The reasons for this is many of our pupils do not react well to deferred consequences. These can undermine their sense of control and many of our pupils forget about a sanction until it is 'pounced on them'. There is also research that suggests pupils with attachment difficulties have problems remembering things² and walking out of class *may* be an out-of-date survival technique It's important we don't present this act as one that is immediately punished (like a Level 5). If pupils persistently refuse to work/engage with Lost Learning then parents/carers will be invited in for a curriculum meeting – again the emphasis is on learning not behaviour and the pupil's voice will be heard in said meeting so the meeting is **with** them not **to** them.



At the end of every day (last half an hour) we have TAB Time. TAB stands for Teaching Acceptable Behaviour. This half an hour is an important part of our day and is influenced by both our formal system and our more 'hidden' relational approach. During this time pupils will catch up with any lost learning and it is also an opportunity for staff and pupils to meet to restore relationships and discuss moving forward after a major incident. This time also strengthens relationships⁴ (both peer on peer and peer/staff) and, unlike much of the school day, teaches students acceptable behaviour whilst they are doing something they enjoy (i.e. if a student swears playing football they have to touch the fence for a minute). It also allows our school day to finish in a positive way – vital for many of our pupils.⁵



In order to recognise positive choices, a point system is employed. These points feed into an individual pupil's account and can be used daily to buy things (usually food but they can save up their points for something bigger⁶). It is important to note the flexibility of this approach since a formal points system on the lines of Assertive Discipline can produce feelings of shame in some pupils⁷.



This idea was taken from Paul Dix⁸ and is aimed at ensuring we only recognise achievements when they are indeed 'above and beyond'. It is too easy in an SEMH setting to reward/praise behaviours that would be expected in other settings (and, crucially, expected post-school). These postcards also help strengthen our links with pupils' home settings since schools like ours can easily fall into the trap of only contacting home to discuss negative behaviour etc. The postcards themselves are hand-written by the member of staff who witnessed the behaviour and describe this behaviour whilst attaching it to one of the school's 6 core themes⁹. This is about recognition not reward¹⁰ and the

story the postcard tells is read out in Monday assemblies to promote this behaviour¹¹ before being posted home.



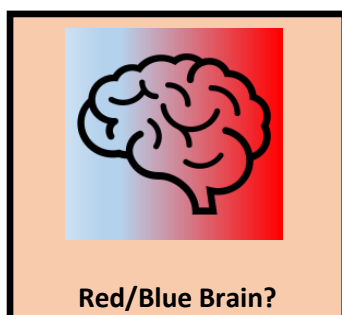
In order for a young person to regulate themselves, they need to have experienced a primary caregiver do it for them¹². This leads to co-regulation and then to self-regulation. For some of our pupils, this has not happened in their early years and, so, we have to do it for them in order for them to develop into an adult that *can* self-regulate. This is known as "second chance learning"¹³ and can often be formal (via an agreed plan) or less-formal and 'in the moment'. Either way we have to assess whether a young person is in *red brain* (or is escalating towards this state) and take appropriate action. This co-regulation can take a number of forms: change location, playing a game, walking together,

helping staff with something etc. The key to this is to try and bring the student into the 'here and now' via a safe/patterned activity that requires *no thinking*. Only when regulated do we talk about what may have happened ('strike while the iron is cold') since, only when regulated, can a student actually think and reflect (i.e. learn).



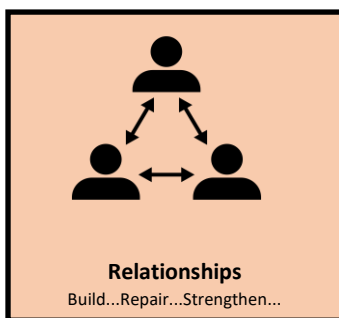
We have adopted Bruce Berry's sequential model when we regulate our pupils¹⁴. The order is simple: **Regulate, Relate, Reason**. This order is vital. Any attempt to reason with a pupil who is still in *red brain* is unhelpful since they *cannot* think at that time. Once regulated we try and relate: this builds connection between student and staff and is a non-judgemental part of the process – regardless of what has happened, we relate by listening and by ratifying the feelings ("that would make me angry..."). The 'reason' part of this process comes later (sometimes much later – 'strike while the iron is cold') so a pupil is able to use the part of their brain that allows thought/reflection – a part that shuts down when

angry¹⁵.



Every aspect of our system is suspended if a young person **seems** to be in what we call 'red brain'. We have simplified the brain so we can make quick decisions and keep people safe. We, of course, know terms like brain stem, limbic region and neo-cortex far more accurately describe what is going on inside a young person's brain when they become dysregulated; however simplicity is important during a time of escalating crisis. What this definition does is avoid using a system based on choices when a young person is unable to think (i.e. make choices). To do so would be unfair at best, cruel at worst.

When a pupil *seems* to be in red brain, we suspend all systems and work with them to regulate them (3 R's).



When working with SEMH, relationships really matter. Not only are most issues (within school at least) solvable when staff and students have a solid relationship, it is well documented how effective relationships are in helping young people who have experienced trauma develop and grow (see note 4). Every interaction we have with our pupils needs to be doing one of 3 things regarding relationships: building them, maintaining them, repairing them. As mentioned above, TAB Time is a structured way of encouraging relationships but staff look for opportunities throughout the day.



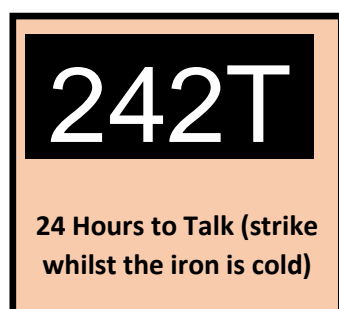
This is an area we are still very much working on as a school. Despite wide research and all-day training, we know it takes a lot more to be considered 'attachment aware'. Having said that we have come a long way in a short time: more students have choices as to where they eat, where they spend lunch and break (and with whom); we are aware of 'teams around the pupil' and regularly 'check in' with various pupils; we 'wonder aloud' where possible; we have a more nurturing start for some pupils (in the house); we use drama, forest school and cooking to help some pupils connect with us in their day; we use transition objects; we speak to the 'emotional age' where possible; we use weighted

blankets, bean bags and putty when needed; some pupils learn on the floor; we've even used puppets as transition objects¹⁶. Many of these approaches help our pupils feel safer (increase 'felt-safety cues') and tie in with our more nurturing approaches.



It's important that we remain curious about the behaviours we are faced with. This aspect of reflection is vital. No consistent system will do the job for us and, in its very nature, being curious about behaviour means we are curious about the young people we work with. This is an important message that ties in with us doing things *with them* rather than just *to them* and puts the pupil at the centre.

¹⁷



We've mentioned the importance of the 3R's and the importance of only reasoning (the final R) when the pupil is back in blue brain (i.e. able to use their 'thinking brain' / pre-frontal cortex). 242T is a formal approach to this and works in a simple fashion: when an incident occurs we commit to speaking through what happened with a regulated adult. We want, however, that regulated adult to be the child themselves. This is why 24 hours is so important ('strike while the iron is cold') and ensures there is a better chance of learning since a child in 'red brain' cannot reflect or learn since they are using a part of the brain that is simply designed for survival. If the young person won't speak about the incident after 24

hours then a phone call home may be the next best option. We have also developed a 5 part sequential model to aid the process of discussing incidents with a child. These were partly taken from solution focused research and partly from restorative.¹⁸



These connect to being curious about behaviour and allow us and (more importantly) the pupils to have a say in how we all manage incidents. These plans are designed to be reviewed, developed or changed regularly (things often don't work forever) and are recorded on pupils' provision maps. The important thing here is that students have a voice, some agency; have an element of control.¹⁹



We have spent a lot of time trying to be more 'nurture-aware'. Many of these approaches tie in with our 'attachment-aware' approaches and are outlined above. We recognise that not every student entering our school in year 7 is ready to sit in class, behind a desk with 8 other students. We recognise that their sense of 'felt-safety'²⁰ has to be at the forefront of our minds where possible.



Staff at The Gateway School are trained to look after the pupils in their care. Staff have a duty of care to intervene and when necessary use reasonable force in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, or to prevent the committing of a criminal offence. There may also be situations in which a student seriously disrupts learning in the school or by action put themselves in harm's way. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow this, the school's Positive Handling Policy. A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety. This works

alongside this behaviour policy and with consideration given to individual behaviour/learning.

Notes

1 – ‘A School without Sanctions’ – a new approach to behaviour management, Steven Baker and Mick Simpson.

2 – Louise Bomber ‘Inside I’m Hurting’ pp. 25, 152

3 – Heather Gebbs – ‘Attachment in the Classroom’ p.23

4 – Bruce Perry sees relationships as ‘natural therapy’ and argues that one hour a week of Therapy will not change the brain’s ‘memory template’. Consistent, patterned, repetitive experiences within a solid relationship can change the brain over time. For traumatised children it takes many repetitions of positive experiences for them to trust and change. We are providing that positive experience daily **at least** via TAB Time. Bruce Perry – ‘The Boy Who was raised as a Dog’.

5 – How some pupils start and end their day makes a big difference. Not only do we have ‘meet and greet’ in the morning, ‘warm-up’ two mornings a week but we, crucially, finish every day with TAB – a positive experience for pupils. Bomber, ‘Inside I’m Hurting’ p.116

6 – We are keen to avoid food being associated with reward/punishment (Maslow)

7 – Feelings of shame are common with pupils who have attachment difficulties and/or have experienced trauma. A rigid points system can easily support their own feelings of shame and of viewing themselves as either good or bad (this is known as ‘splitting’ – Louise Bomber, ‘Inside I’m Hurting’ pp. 174-176: “splitting can be very pronounced...within the systems in which both the child and the adults find themselves.”)

8 – Paul Dix – ‘When adults change, everything changes’

9 – Our 6 core themes: independence, communication, resilience, reflection, go beyond your borders, balance. Note how all 6 of these themes underpin our behavioural approach as well as our academic curriculum.

10 – see note 7 on ‘splitting’

11 – Daniel Willingham claims stories are “psychologically privileged” in that we remember them without much effort. With this in mind, we tell the ‘story’ of the above and beyond behaviour publically to help model it. D Willingham – ‘Why Don’t Students like School?’ pp. 66-69.

12 - Bruce Perry talks about how a responsive care-giver, by soothing a distressed infant (regulating them) ultimately builds a baby’s capacity to do it themselves (Perry, pp.97-98). This leads into young adults that can ‘self-regulate’. For many of our students, this has not happened and we have to go through the process of regulating them, co-regulating them so they can, eventually, self-regulate. Bomber calls this process ‘second-chance learning’ see note 13.

13 – Louise Bomber refers to “second chance learning” throughout her work. See ‘Inside I’m hurting’ pp. 47, 58, 197, 300. This allows students to “negotiate earlier incomplete developmental processes, and move forward.” (47).






14 – Bruce Perry’s Neurosequential Model is explored in various places. Bomber dedicates over 100 pages to it (*‘Know me to Teach Me’* pp. 143-248). It’s also worth noting how calming our students’ bodies 1st (regulate) ties in with Stephen Porges’ increasingly influential Polyvagal Theory and its associated ideas concerning Felt Safety. For more on this: Mona Delahooke, *‘Beyond Behaviours’*; Van Der Kolk, *‘The Body Keeps the Score’* pp. 77-78 and Louise Bomber, *‘Know Me to Teach me’* pp.102-116 (this is the most accessible explanation of Porges’ theory and is a very good place to start).

15 – Although it had been attacked in some circles, Paul McLean’s triune brain is the simplest way to see this in action. He divided the brain into 3 sections (controversial): the Reptilian Brain, the Limbic Region and the Neocortex. Although this is a massive simplification of the human brain (as it has to be) and has been attacked because of the suggestion that we evolved from reptiles it does provide a simple (and therefore useful) model: when angry (red brain) pupils are using the lower parts of the brain (reptilian and limbic) – parts of the brain used to ensure survival. It’s the newest part of the brain (evolutionary speaking) that we need a pupil to be using if they are able to reflect, think, reason and learn. This is the neocortex (sometimes referred to as the cortical brain or the pre-frontal cortex) and it’s what we simply call ‘blue brain’.

16 All these approaches come from the reading we have done: *Inside I’m Hurting – Practical Strategies for Supporting Children with Attachment Difficulties in Schools* – Lousie Michelle Bomber; *Know me to Teach Me* – Louise Michelle Bomber; *Attachment in the Classroom* – Heather Geddes; *You Think I’m Evil* – David Taransaud; *I, Monster* – David Taransaud; *The Boy who was Raised as a Dog* – Bruce Perry and Maia Szalavitz; *Lost at School* – Ross Greene

17 – Dr Dan Hughes’ PACE model can be useful here: Playful, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy.

18 – Our 242T 5 part sequential model:

1		Re-connect
2		Vague observation of behaviour (look from a distance)
3		Zoom in (problem)
4		Replay (when it went well)
5		Future Focus

19 – Control is important to most young people but for any pupils who’ve experienced any form of trauma / ACES it can be vital. See Perry pp. 53-54; Van Der Kolk, *‘The Body Keeps the Score’* pp. 95-98

20 – It's important to note that being safe and feeling safe are two very different things. Stephen Porges' 'Polyvagal Theory' talks about faulty neuroception / felt safety in detail. See note 14.

Our Behavioural Policy at a glance—how we Teach Acceptable Behaviour (TAB)



Above and Beyond
Postcards



Lost Learning

T A B

Teaching Acceptable Behaviour

LEVEL
5

Sacked?
Attacked?
Arrested?



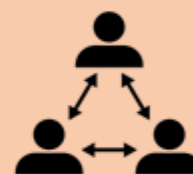
Reminders



Points



Red/Blue Brain?



Relationships
Build...Repair...Strengthen...

RRR

Regulate... Relate... Reason



Curious about behaviour



Restrictive Physical
Intervention

**Daily
TAB
Time**



Attachment Aware
Practices



Individual Behaviour
Plans



Co-Regulation leading
to Self-Regulation

242T

24 Hours to Talk (strike
whilst the iron is cold)



Nurture