# Meethill Nursery and Primary School
# Promoting Positive Relationships Policy

**October 2019**

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# Part 1: Background and Context

*'Developing good relationships and positive behaviour in the classroom, playground and wider community is essential for creating the right environment for effective learning and teaching. Where children and young people feel included, respected, safe and secure and when their achievements and contributions are valued and celebrated, they are more likely to develop self-confidence, resilience and positive views about themselves. This applies equally to all staff in the learning community. '*

Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour 2013

At Meethill we acknowledge that a nurturing ethos and positive behaviour management are key to providing an effective learning and teaching environment. Our policy has been founded within the aims and principles of 'A Curriculum for Excellence' and 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC). It will help us to deliver our school Vision, Values and Aims **(see Appendix 1).**

All staff are expected to be proactive in promoting positive relationships and behaviour in the classroom, playground and the wider school community. There are specific experiences and outcomes in Health and Wellbeing which are the responsibility of all practitioners, who have a role in,

- establishing open, positive, supporting relationships across the community, where children and young people will feel that they are listened to, and where they feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives
- promoting a climate in which children and young people feel safe and secure
- modelling behaviour which promotes health and wellbeing and encouraging it in others
- using learning and teaching methodologies which promote effective learning
- being sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each child and young person.

## What is behaviour?

Behaviour is a response of an individual or group to an action, environment, person or stimulus. At Meethill we recognise that the Curriculum for Excellence cannot be delivered without good relationships and positive behaviour.

*"The starting point for learning is a positive ethos and climate of mutual respect and trust based upon shared values across whole school communities where everyone can learn and work in a safe and peaceful environment."*

Building the Curriculum for Excellence through positive relationships and behaviour, 2009.

## Aims

- To create a positive, caring, calm and purposeful atmosphere where all pupils will learn, are motivated and challenged.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and other agencies to maintain and build good relationships, prevent bullying and promote the well-being of all children.
- To be consistent and fair in our approach to managing behaviour.
- To encourage pupils to recognise that they have the responsibility to make a choice in their behaviour within the established rules, rewards and consequences.

## Rights

*"Children have the right to a good quality education. This education should help them use and develop their talents and abilities. It should also help them to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people."*

<div align="right">UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.</div>

Pupils
- To be able to enjoy their learning.
- To be treated with respect.
- To be listened to.
- To feel safe.

Staff
- To enjoy the teaching and learning environment in which they work.
- To be treated with respect.
- To be listened to.
- To feel safe.

Parents/Carers
- To know that their children are safe and happy.
- To participate in positive communication with the school.
- To be treated with respect.
- To be listened to.

## Responsibilities

It should be recognised that all parties have responsibilities for a child's education to ensure all their needs are being met.

It is the responsibility of

Pupils
- to behave in a manner which allows themselves and others to reach their full potential
- to treat others with respect
- to display tolerance and understanding
- to listen to and acknowledge the needs and opinions of others
- to allow others to feel safe
- to conduct themselves in line with the School's Vision, Values and Aims.

Staff
- to be aware of current and relevant documentation, including policies and the range of strategies and sources of advice
- to acknowledge the many factors which influence behaviour and which are outwith their control
- to treat pupils fairly and with respect
- to establish open, positive, supporting relationships across the community, where pupils feel that they are listened to, and where they feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives
- to promote a climate in which pupils feel safe, secure and stimulated
- to model behaviour which promotes health and wellbeing and encourages it in

others
- to use learning and teaching methodologies which ensure that all children's needs are being met
- to be sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each child and young person and to be realistic about the rate of change in pupils' behaviour
- to be aware that pupil behaviours can change around the time of transitions
  - when moving from one teacher to another within a day
  - in the lead up to or after a weekend
  - in the lead up to or a holiday period
  - at the beginning / end of a year (internal)
  - at the beginning / end of a year (external)
- to have high expectations for children's learning and achievement
- to work collaboratively with colleagues in terms of ideas, strategies and support
- to keep parents/carers informed of their child's educational, personal and social development, including issues relating to behaviour. This includes at inter-agency meetings, scheduled parents' meetings and reports and on occasions when the class teacher or head teacher has a concern
- to apply this policy fairly and consistently.

Parents/Carers
- to take an active role in their children's education
- to intervene in an appropriate manner if outwith school issues are impacting adversely on in-school pupil behaviour / situations
- to support the school in encouraging positive behaviour
- to treat all staff and pupils in the school with respect and pay regard to confidentiality
- to inform the school if they have any concerns / queries relating to behaviour in the school


# Part 2: Encouraging Positive Behaviour and Relationships

The ethos and culture of Meethill is the foundation on which we build a supportive, inclusive and nurturing learning environment. This positive ethos can be further developed through our whole school behaviour approach.

## Encouraging Positive Behaviour

At Meethill we use a variety of ways to recognise, support and promote positive behaviour and achievement, including;

- **An inclusive ethos**
- **Clear structures and expectations for all**
- **Motivating and challenging activities**
- **Health and Wellbeing Curriculum**
- **Use of Restorative Approaches** (detailed later in this policy).
- **House Point System** – There are 4 houses at Meethill. Children are allocated a house when they join the school. All members of staff can award house points for excellent work, positive behaviour or extra-curricular achievements. These points are totalled up weekly and shared at assembly. The house with the highest amount of points at the end of the session win the house trophy and a special treat.

- **Positive Praise** – Praise is used as positive reinforcement for specific behaviours.
  - o **Crystals** - these will be given out by the PSA staff, office staff, DHT/HT and Janitor for any positive behaviour they see.
    (1 Crystal = 5 House Points)
  - o **Marvellous Me –** Positive comments are shared regularly with 'home'
  - o **Golden Tickets** are awarded to pupils whose conduct best exemplifies the School's values (1 Golden Ticket = 20 House Points). These will be issued at monthly Golden Ticket Assemblies.
- **Treasure Time** – pupils can 'earn' additional Treasure Time, beyond a core allocation of 15 minutes, by conducting themselves in an appropriate manner. Time may be deducted if pupils have behaved inappropriately. Arrangements for this will be determined at class level. 'Lost' Treasure Time will be spent reflecting on why the pupil's conduct was deemed inappropriate.
- **Recognition of Achievement at Assemblies, 'Open' sessions and in school newsletters**– e.g. showing of work, demonstration of skills, presentation of certificates etc.
- **Displays of work/achievements on notice boards** – as part of wall displays in either their classroom or another area of the school.
- **Primary 7 trophies** – At the end of the year a trophy is awarded to the Primary 7 pupil who has made the most noteworthy contribution to the promotion of positive values during their P7 year.
- **Access to the Nurture support**
- **Buddying** – Buddies are older pupils who help the Primary 1s at the start of the year and mentor/support new pupils to the school.
- **Individual Educational Plan** – These are used to focus on targets, for a particular pupil, and how these can be achieved.
- **Social Stories** –These are stories which are used to model a specific behaviour, often for an individual child.
- **Visual Timetables/targets** – Visual timetables/targets are used for whole class or specific individuals.
- **Widget Symbols –** These are symbols that provide a visual representation of words to support information and communication.

## Restorative and Solution Orientated Practices

*"Research has found that restorative practices can offer a powerful and effective approach to promoting harmonious relationships in schools and to the successful resolution of conflict and harm."*

Improving relationships and positive behaviour in Scotland's schools, 2008.

Pupils and staff work together to achieve a common knowledge and understanding of emotions and feelings in order to have the emotional literacy necessary for restorative conversations where situations are resolved, and solutions agreed upon.

Restorative practices;

- Build and repair relationships
- Develop and maintain mutual respect
- Preserve a sense of belonging and strengthen community ties
- Ensure everyone is given a voice and feels heard
- Empower those with conflict to resolve it for themselves
- Ensure accountability
- Develop empathy and conscience.

Restorative approaches ensure that the person who is showing undesirable behaviour acknowledges responsibility for this and takes steps to repair harm. Through using restorative language this then helps the child to understand, manage and reflect on their own behaviour.

# Part 3: Inappropriate Behaviour

## Consequences

Despite the best efforts of all, incidents of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour are still likely to occur. These behaviours may vary from consistent low-level disruption to actions which may merit exclusion from school. Pupils or parents/carers should report incidences which they feel staff should be aware of, to a member of staff as soon as possible to ensure it is dealt with efficiently and appropriately.

*"There is a wide range of factors which affect a young person's behaviour, and there is no one way of dealing with the complex problems which can be faced by children, young people and their families.  Children's experiences and behaviour in school cannot be disassociated from all other aspects of their lives, including within their families and communities."*

Better Behaviour, Better Learning, the Discipline Task Group, 2001.

Inappropriate behaviour can be challenging for staff, parents and pupils.  At Meethill, we understand that challenging behaviour is much less common where staff and learners enjoy positive relationships based on mutual respect and consideration. These strengths are supported and reinforced by a shared understanding and acceptance of the School's Vision, Values and Aims (see **Appendix 1**). Staff know learners as individuals and respond to their differing personalities, circumstances and learning needs. This leads to a positive

learning climate in individual classrooms and in the school in general.
Whilst our overall approach to managing behaviour is restorative, a variety of strategies are used to encourage children to reflect upon the consequences of their actions and think how they may behave differently if faced with similar circumstances in the future.

Strategies may include:
- restorative discussion with a member of staff.
- mediated dialogue to support the rebuilding of relationships
- verbal reprimands + reminder of consequences of continued inappropriate behaviour
- 'ignoring' the challenging behaviour and praising the positive behaviour of others.
- separation from a group
- change of seating arrangements in the classroom
- separation from other pupils at break or lunchtime to encourage time for reflection.
- letter of apology or drawing (for younger children)
- short period of time out
- Individualised programmes/strategies
- home/school behaviour chart or weekly updates
- withdrawal of privileges i.e. Treasure Time or some of their break, in order to repair relationships/damage or give time for reflection (This can be actioned by PSAs for inappropriate conduct during breaks. Class teachers should be notified)
- discussion with Head / Deputy Head Teacher or another relevant adult.
- phone call home to parents or meeting to discuss inappropriate behaviour and how best support the pupil's future conduct. Staff should notify Head/DHT to that effect.
- referral to partner agency -Educational Psychologist, School Nurse, Social Work
- creation and implementation of an Individualised Education Plan
- referral to Enhanced Provision
- courting exclusion (warning of exclusion)
- exclusion procedures of varying lengths, including removal from register (see Aberdeenshire Education and Children's Service 'Guidelines for Parents, Guardians, Carers on Exclusion of Pupils from School'.

The action taken will depend on the nature and context of the behaviour, including the intent. It is also important to consider the individual involved and what is likely to be effective. At Meethill, we try to ensure that any consequences in response to inappropriate behaviour should not undermine the child's self-esteem. Parental involvement can be considered at any stage.


## Bullying

*Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves…… Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online.*
*This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions or the fear of these.*

*This behaviour can include:*
* *being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face/online*
* *being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked*
* *having belongings taken or damaged*
* *being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face-to-face and/or online)*
* *sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone*
* *behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (face-to-face and/or online)*
* *being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online).*

Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People, Scottish Government, 2017.


Bullying is a breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Parents/carers, pupils and teachers have a responsibility to work in partnership to maintain a high standard of behaviour and an environment free from bullying behaviour. Meethill School believes that everyone should be treated equally and with respect.

As with all aspects of behaviour, Meethill School works to raise awareness, to educate and support pupils, staff and parents/carers. We aim primarily to prevent bullying behaviour. Most incidents of inappropriate behaviour in schools are remedied through behaviour management strategies before they evolve into bullying.
Everyone is however aware of what to do when bullying behaviour is displayed, and how to support those involved. Information is also available for pupils, parents/carers and teachers about support available beyond school (e.g. Childline, Samaritans, Police Scotland, Parentline).
Communication with all parties involved, including parents/carers, is at the heart of prevention strategies and in how we respond to incidents of bullying behaviour. We use restorative approaches, (detailed previously), to build or repair relationships.
The language 'victim' and 'bully' should be avoided as this can label those involved in bullying incidents and this can be unhelpful. Acting to resolve a bullying situation must be given high priority and all incidents of suspected bullying will be reported to the Head Teacher to be dealt with appropriately and recorded and monitored.

## Challenging and/or Violent Behaviour
In some cases, staff may have to deal with extremely challenging behaviour. Advice is given to all staff on how to deal with any child displaying very challenging behaviour. There is an 'immediate assistance requested' card in every teaching area in the school. In Nursery where appropriate, staff are Calm trained.  Abusive and violent behaviour should be recorded and reported following Aberdeenshire Guidelines.

### Risk Assessment
Risk Assessments are carried out if a pupil is believed to be a potential risk to themselves and, or others. Strategies and procedures are then implemented to ensure that potential risks are at an acceptable level and that pupils can learn and play in a positive environment.

## Recording and Monitoring

Recording and monitoring of any significant or consistent inappropriate behaviour will be recorded in a pupil's file and via Pastoral Notes. Incidents which will be documented will include ones of a serious or ongoing nature, as well as incidents where a member of staff, pupil or parent/carer feels that they would like it documented. Incidents in nursery will be documented in the incident book and shared with relevant parents/ carers.

By recording such incidences, staff will be able to:
- ensure that there has been an appropriate and effective response.
- identify recurring patterns including; involvement of children, staff or other adults, where and when bullying takes place, aspects of prejudice or discrimination underlying bullying, consideration of personal or additional support needs.
- identify if a problem is ongoing and whether further professional development may be beneficial to staff.

Aggressive or violent behaviour, by pupil or adult, will be reported on the Aberdeenshire Violent Incident Report Form. Racially based incidents will be recorded on Aberdeenshire Council's Racial Incident Monitoring Form.

## Part 4: Staged Intervention

## Partnership Working

"*Genuine partnership between pupils, staff, parents and carers, the wider community and other agencies in the public and voluntary sectors is essential to encourage, support and develop initiatives that promote health and wellbeing, GIRFEC values and principles underpin work not just in education but in those other agencies as well, providing a common approach and language which helps develop effective partnership working.* "

Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour 2013.

The behaviour and conduct of some pupils may require additional support from agencies from outwith the school. GIRFEC referral procedures are in place to support access to
- Educational Psychologists
- Social Workers (including Family and Pupil Support workers)
- School Nurse
- School Doctor
- Child and Family Mental Health Team
- Health Visitor
- Speech and Language Therapist

This may be specific to supporting an individual pupil, group or situation or it may be training in effective strategies which can be used more generally.

## Multi Agency Action Plan (MAAP)

Children and young people need to be **S**afe, **H**ealthy, **A**chieving, **N**urtured, **R**esponsible, **R**espected and **I**ncluded (also known as **SHANARRI** or the Wellbeing Indicators) **(Appendix 2)** in order to achieve their potential.

A MAAP is used where more than one agency is likely to be involved with a pupil, to ensure we are meeting a child's needs, and that there is appropriate communication between all those involved.
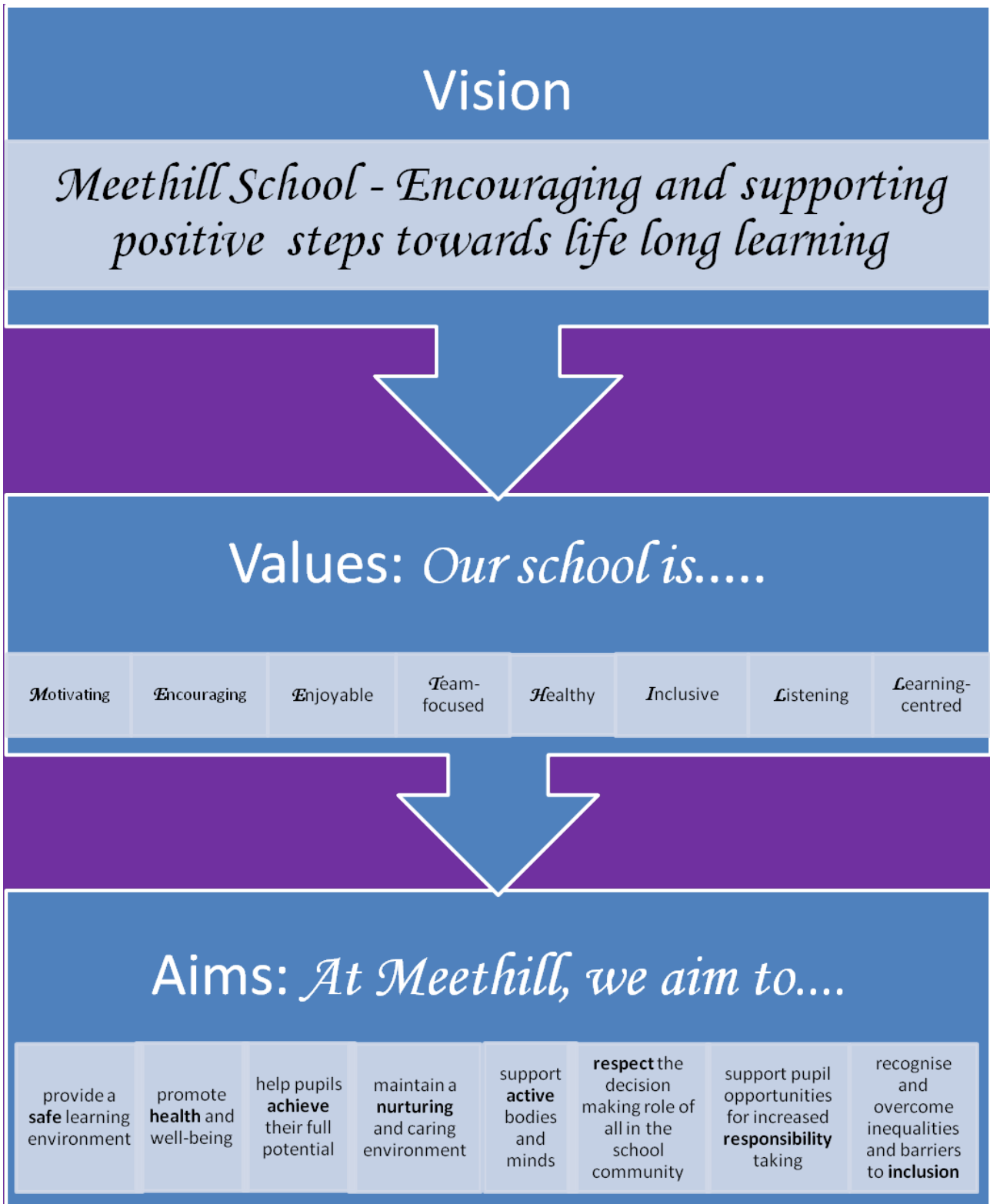
Parents/pupils will be informed of this process and consent given before information is shared (unless there is a child protection concern).

MAAP is a central component of the **_Getting it right for every child_** agenda.
At a practical level, MAAP introduces:

- A structured process for assessment and planning for use across all Children's Services which ensures that children, young people and their families are kept at the centre of the processes.
- Standardised models of assessment, planning and recording.

This maximises the potential for appropriate services and agencies to combine into an integrated team which will be the most effective in meeting the needs of individual children. It also ensures a consistent approach to information sharing between agencies and services.

**Appendix 1**          **Vision, Values and Aims**

## Vision

*Meethill School - Encouraging and supporting positive steps towards life long learning*

## Values: *Our school is.....*

| *M*otivating | *E*ncouraging | *E*njoyable | *T*eam-focused | *H*ealthy | *I*nclusive | *L*istening | *L*earning-centred |

## Aims: *At Meethill, we aim to....*

| provide a **safe** learning environment | promote **health** and well-being | help pupils **achieve** their full potential | maintain a **nurturing** and caring environment | support **active** bodies and minds | **respect** the decision making role of all in the school community | support pupil opportunities for increased **responsibility** taking | recognise and overcome inequalities and barriers to **inclusion** |

# Appendix 2                    Wellbeing
## (GIRFEC and the Health and Wellbeing Indicators: SHANNARI)

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 is about improving the wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland. The Act is wide ranging and includes key parts of the *Getting it right for every child approach*, commonly known as GIRFEC.

Wellbeing sits at the heart of the GIRFEC approach and reflects the need to tailor the support and help that children, young people and their parents are offered to support their wellbeing.

A child or young person's wellbeing is influenced by everything around them and the different experiences and needs they have at different times in their lives.

Wellbeing is broader than child protection and how we tend to think about welfare. To help make sure everyone – children, young people, parents, and the services that support them – has a common understanding of what wellbeing means, we describe it in terms of eight indicators. The eight wellbeing indicators are commonly referred to by their initial letters - SHANARRI.