Greenways Primary School

RELATIONAL POLICY

Introduction

At Greenways Primary School, we believe that creating a safe, effective learning environment and maintaining high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour, built on positive relationships, is integral to success in school. As such, our policy for behaviour is built on the foundations of Relational Practice. Relational schooling is much more than an approach to behaviour management. Rather it is a value based approach which describes how an understanding of our relationships with each other, both as a school and as individuals can enhance both academic and social learning, and as such is a cornerstone of our commitment to our school ethos, values and vision. At Greenways we believe that learning happens best when there are strong relationships; between our staff, between our pupils, within the classrooms and beyond, with parents and carers and with our wider community. To ensure this all staff seek to establish a calm and supportive environment where our children feel safe, valued and listened to, this in turn provides a Safe, Ready, Respectful environment where children are Ready to Thrive.

In applying this policy, our school will consider its duties under the Equality Act 2010. It will also consider the individual needs of pupils with SEND. The school will also have regard to its safeguarding and suspensions and exclusions policies where appropriate. Our relational policy can extend to activities outside the school day and off the school premises when a pupil is taking part in any school organised or school related activity, travelling to or from school, or when identifiable as a pupil at our school. It also includes any behaviour which could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school, pose a threat to another pupil, or member of the public or adversely affect the reputation of the school, including online behaviours. We have ensured that our policy is aligned with Keeping Children Safe in Education. Behaviour that suggests a pupil is at risk of harm will trigger a safeguarding response in line with our processes and systems in school. This policy outlines our approach to behaviour and relational practice in accordance with the following guidance:

- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement
- Restrictive Interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation
- Behaviour in Schools
- SEND Code of Practice
- Mental health and behaviour in schools
- Mobile phones in schools
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010

Our School Values

Our four values provide the foundation for our approach to relational practice at Greenways:

We have high expectations for our learning and behaviour at all times. We strive to be the best we can be.

We set goals, take responsibility and inspire others through our hard work, commitment and perseverance.

We understand how others are feeling and show empathy, compassion and kindness in our actions.

We treat others as we expect to be treated.

Our Beliefs

At Greenways the beliefs which underpin our school values and ethos are:

- **Being 'fair' is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity).** Children need personalised responses to supporting their personal development and well-being. Consistency does not always mean responding in the same way to each child or behaviour, it means responding in a way which is consistent to our values and beliefs. Whilst each individual child benefits from a consistent approach, being consistent and fair is not about everyone getting the same, but everyone getting what they need.
- **Behaviour is a form of communication and the expression of underlying needs.** It is not possible to support a child's behaviour without addressing these needs. We view behaviour as a communication of an emotional need (whether conscious or unconscious) and responding accordingly.
- **Taking a non-judgmental, curious and empathic attitude towards behaviour**. We encourage all adults in school to respond in a way that focuses on the feelings and emotions that might drive certain behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself and we all have a duty to explore this vulnerability and provide appropriate support.
- **Putting relationships first.** This requires a school ethos that promotes strong relationships between staff, children and their parents/carers. It also relies on creating a positive school culture and climate that fosters connection, inclusion, respect and value for all members of the school community.
- **Maintaining clear boundaries and expectations around behaviour.** In order to help our children feel safe, the learning environment needs to be high in both nurture and structure. Children need predictable routines, expectations and regulated responses to behaviour. These must be in place and modelled appropriately, within the context of a safe and caring school environment.
- **Natural rewards and consequences that can follow certain behaviours should be made explicit**, without the need to enforce 'sanctions' that can shame and ostracise children from their peers, school community and family, leading to potentially more negative behaviour. Responses to behaviour should ensure that all children feel safe and that all needs are met.
- **Behaviour must always be viewed systemically and within the context of important relationships.** Relational, regulatory and restorative approaches are more effective in supporting children's development of internal control and regulation. Not all behaviours are a matter of choice and therefore external control will not be effective in changing behaviour.
- **All children wish to belong, achieve and contribute to their school community.** Child centred approaches, where the children's voices are central and where learning utilises their strengths, resources and qualities are integral to their success.
- **Encouraging parental engagement and involvement is absolutely crucial when addressing and planning support for children's SEMH needs.** "The parent-child connection is the most powerful mental health intervention known to mankind." (Bessel van der Kolk)

Theory and Research

Our Relational practice and policy is firmly grounded in theory, research, and evidence based practice and through strong links with external agencies and support structures. Our theory and practice are based around the principle that behaviour is a form of communication. We are committed to ensuring that:

- Our whole school relational approach is based on nurturing principles, including effective teaching and learning which contributes to developing and maintaining strong relationships and positive behaviour which supports inclusion.
- Target relational approaches for some children provide additional focused support and intervention, such as the provision of safe spaces, trusted adults and nurture groups to prevent suspension and/or exclusion.
- Teaching approaches endeavor to understand behaviour in terms of the underlying needs that may lead to a child to act in a challenging and distressed way and which aim to regulate the child's stress.
- Restorative approaches which places relationships, respect and responsibility at the heart of effective practice which address issues of discipline and conflict.
- Solution focused approaches to support both staff and children to identify the skills, strengths and resources that they already possess, build individual capacity and effective problem solving skills.
- Child centered approaches which build links with partner agencies and supporting parental engagement in meeting the children's needs and enhancing well-being.

The Relational Approach

Relationships are vital for all children in our school. It is through relationships that children learn to feel safe, belong, understand themselves, others and the world. It is our way of being together that is most important. The relational approach is a universal approach to teaching and learning which influences whole school ethos, systems and policy as well as everyday practice. It is also a targeted approach to support those children who are most in need. Studying the features of secure relationships helps us to understand how we need to be in order to build relationships. In order to be effective it is necessary to be personally reflective about how we are in relationships: what we feel and think and how this affects our way of being and this is a key focus of our support for children within our school. For many children their needs will be best met through our relationships with them. There is a growing body of evidence indicating that relational approaches are vital in supporting children's well-being, enabling them to settle to learning and be fully included in school. As with all support we have carefully considered how our relationships in terms of, our universal whole school and whole class approaches as well as targeted provision enhances the needs of our individual children. Our relational provision focuses on:

- **Developing Relationships –** This involves building relationships, supporting inclusion and setting and maintaining boundaries with empathy.
- **Responding and Calming** – Using relational skills to keep things calm, using co-regulation skills in order to regulate strong emotions and developing skills and plans to manage crisis.
- **Repairing and Restoring –** Using restorative conversations as part of our daily interactions to support a harmonious environment, facilitating restorative encounters to resolve conflict and harm and to support change.

Developing Relationships

In order to be successful at school all children need to develop secure relationships which enable them to feel safe, secure and good about who they are. In order for this to happen, relationships are at the heart of our school life. For many children the development of these relationships will need to be explicit, meaningful and very clearly perceived. Children who are showing signs of insecure attachments and a lack of well-being need a significant adult or small team of adults in school who can provide them with a secure relationship within which they feel a sense of safety, trust, belonging and being listened to. Through these relationships the child will also develop their ability to regulate their feelings and behaviour, develop their understanding of social situations and develop healthy and positive feelings about themselves and their abilities. Building these relationships, supporting inclusion and establishing strong and caring boundaries are integral to making this happen at Greenways. Developing relationships is all about the building of security.

Protection

All children need to feel safe and secure. Our need for safety trumps everything and without a sense of safety and security children cannot explore, play, learn or interact effectively with others. Children who do not feel safe tend to be hyper vigilant and have difficulty regulating their emotions. This can lead to defensive behaviours which can be difficult to manage. People get their sense of safety primarily from others. All children need to experience relationships with adults in school who are able to make them feel safe. At Greenways we achieve this by:

- **Ensuring all adults provide an environment of safety.** We let the children know they are safe through our 'way of being' with the child and the way we manage our learning environments.
- **Being predictable, reliable and trustworthy.** We show the children we are by the things we do. If things change and we are not able to do what we have said we make sure that we explain why this has happened, acknowledging and validating the difficult emotions that this may have evoked and we put in place an alternative plan.
- **Providing safety cues**. We are aware that the cues we are giving are very important, particularly through our facial expressions and frequency and modulation of our voices. We interact using a warm, grounded and steady tone. We consider other safety cues such as movements which could make children feel safe and take care to ensure open and friendly body language.
- **Containing their emotions.** We let children know that we have 'got it'. We let them know that we can bear their emotions and hold on to them so that they do not escalate. We don't deflect into our own emotional responses. It can be useful to help children to organise their thinking and emotions by listening and then feeding their thoughts back to them in bite-size, manageable chunks.
- **Providing structure and boundaries.** These will match the child's needs and be communicated to them in a way that they understand and which is meaningful to them. Visuals and timers are helpful in establishing structure and boundaries and these are available in every classroom.
- **Anticipating things that may be picked up as threat or danger.** Unfamiliar sounds in the environment, unfamiliar people or situations, change in routine, unfamiliar physical contact or sudden movement can all trigger feelings of fear. Sometimes just a lack of safety cues can trigger a defensive response.
- **Managing transitions,** both large and small are particularly important, even transitions such as moving from activity to activity within the classroom and across the wider school community will be supported.

Connection

Children need to connect and to socially engage. Children who do not easily connect can become isolated. This can be because their interaction, speech and language skills are delayed or because they emotionally withdraw or react defensively to social approaches. Being and feeling connected is a right for all children. At Greenways we achieve this by:

- **Being physically and emotionally available.** We give children our time and opportunities for them to experience undivided attention.
- **Attuning to the child by mirroring their tone and mood**. Seeing themselves reflected in us as adults lets them know that we 'get it' and enables them to 'see' how they feel.
- **Being responsive, expressive and interactive.** Encouraging expressive interaction using facial expressions, voice modulation, movement and mutuality (doing things together, alongside, experiencing another person with them so they feel they are not alone) and reciprocity (responding to and influencing each other) provides children with the experience of being connected. Opportunities to do things in time and rhythm, to experience turn taking, activities with joint focus, enjoyment and anticipation is evident within our practice.
- **Being playful in our interactions.** Having fun, stimulating shared joy and joint laughter by playing games and singing songs, especially games which encourage shared anticipation and response are evident at playtimes and through our enrichment experiences for all children.
- **Showing children we like them and are interested in them.** We explore, make things and learn about things together at Greenways which supports wider connection. Children experience doing things together, sharing emotions, thoughts, knowledge, skills, anticipation and vision across the curriculum subjects. Whilst some children benefit from targeted interventions to support connection, activities which support connection are built into everyday life and routines at our school.
- **Provide opportunities for connection with peers and developing connection with the school community and place.** We support the development of skills needed for positive relationships such as valuing one another, acknowledgement, encouragement, listening, sharing ideas, acceptance, tolerance

and compassion. We provide opportunities for joint projects which involve shared thinking and responsiveness to others which is important in developing higher level reciprocity. Games in lessons, shared jokes, providing additional attention and regular check-ins all forge connections between adults and children in our school and can facilitate connection between peers.

Understanding

Understanding is a key part of a relationship. By understanding we mean being curious about the child and trying to understand what is happening for them and what their behaviour might be telling us about what they need. We also mean showing the child that we accept them, that we are trying to understand and helping them to understand themselves. We achieve this by:

- **Being curious about their feelings, thoughts and behaviour.** It is important that we understand the thoughts and feelings that are driving the behaviour so that we address these unmet needs. Managing behaviour alone is unlikely to bring about sustainable change.
- **Accepting their feelings and experience.** Accepting without action, judgement, contradiction or persuasion, resisting the urge to minimise their feelings, distract or cheer them up.
- **Thinking for them - trying to work it out.** Big behaviours are caused by big feelings but children are not always aware of the feelings they are experiencing. Thinking from their perspective helps to raise their self-awareness and will also support the understanding and empathy of others working with the child.
- **Expressing Empathy.** Wondering aloud, validating, and showing them we 'get it'. Responding empathically; imagining how it is for them, empathising and then expressing it by the use of consistent language, "I can see that this situation is very hard…" "That sounds as though you were really worried…"
- **Helping them to process their feelings.** Helping children to link their physical sensations to emotions. Children at an early stage of emotional development are not able to distinguish between basic physical sensations and emotions and will initially need our help to do this. We model and provide an emotional vocabulary for children to describe how they feel.
- **Being creative in our approach.** Allowing children to make up their own words, using metaphors, stories, pictures, models, real life examples etc. to enable the child to express, understand and process their feelings.
- **Making sure that all adults working with the child understand the child's needs and how to support them.** Our Team Around the Child and Family and pastoral approaches help in supporting an understanding approach agreed by all.

Responding and Calming

The art and skill of teaching lies in the use of everyday interactions which actively maintain relationships in the learning spaces and promote a calm, harmonious and supportive learning environment. It is normal for children of all ages to be playful, challenge authority and to test boundaries. Most children will at some point overstep a boundary and will need reminding about agreements and expectations. Skilled interactions can successfully resolve low level disruption without the need to escalate. Every child will face challenges and at times experience strong emotions which block their access to learning and good social interaction. Catching these emotions and regulating the child so that these emotions do not become overwhelming is integral to keeping the child and learning environment calm and safe. Behaviour which impacts on the child, another child's, or our staff safety will be managed as part of our personalised relational plans.

How we respond as an adult in a crisis will be clear, coordinated and communicated to ensure safety. At Greenways we implement the following strategies to ensure a calm environment for all children:

Keeping Calm

- When we notice that a child is overstepping a boundary we will first ensure that we continue to present with a warm, friendly and open manner. We understand that if we approach the child with cold or cross tones we run the risk of pushing them into higher levels of stress which will trigger their defense response. We will always think about how our faces, voices and body language continue to provide a sense of safety and warmth to the child. It is possible to be firm without being cross and such an approach is more likely to get the child back on track. Using a storytelling tone of voice, an attuning facial expression and coming alongside them, mirroring their body language will help to keep a sense of calm and safety.
- We will always be curious about what is beneath the behaviour rather than assuming motives. Most children will have a good reason for behaving as they do and we need to help them with this. We will always ask with genuine curiosity about what is happening and we will make the child feel listened to. This also helps us to work out what is going on and what is needed to get them back on track. It is important to accept what the child has said and to respond empathically. For example "I see it's hard and I know that

you've been trying". Sometimes it will not be possible to be curious straight away and that discussion may have to wait until a later moment, however we recognise the need to continue to show warmth and provide a sense of safety in the moment.

- We will always try to name the feelings as this helps to let the child know that we get it, we've thought about it and that we care. Often, a child knowing that someone has listened to and accepted what they feel and think can be enough. The child has no further need to express themselves through their behaviour because they have been heard.
- We will always take action to resolve the situation and we work with the child to come to a solution together. Following joint problem solving it is helpful to remind the child of the agreement (what they should be doing/what is expected) or in some cases it will be helpful to re-set agreements to ensure that what the child is being asked to do is realistic and achievable and therefore fair. We acknowledge that it is important to avoid the use of threatening tones of voice, facial expressions and body language which convey relationships of power and control. Children who have sensitive defence pathways or who have experienced trauma will be triggered to respond defensively, or experience re-traumatisation if they perceive threat, disapproval or rejection. We are mindful of always helping children to find a way out of the situation, rather than feeling that we as adults have won. It can be appropriate to be very 'low key' in our responses to some behaviour. Many children will respond well to a warm and curious look or a simple reminding/refocusing followed by a 'thank you' which shows that you expect compliance. At times it can be helpful to move away after reminding them of an agreement to show that we are leaving it up to them, rather than needing to wait

Regulating Emotions

Unhelpful, harmful or challenging behaviour is usually the result of strong emotions which have been triggered in the moment or which underpin adaptive behaviours. In order to maintain a calm learning environment and also to support children to process their feelings and emotions in order to regulate their behaviour, we support them to be able to regulate them in the moment and provide them with experiences which will support the development of regulation. When children experience strong emotions they need to be co-regulated to support them to calm. Children will need repeated experiences of being co-regulated in order to be able to regulate themselves. Children who have not experienced enough co-regulation are likely to have difficulties with self-regulation. Attuning and validating enables children to understand their feelings and emotions, to know they are accepted and valid and to connect them to an emotional vocabulary through which they can express and learn to think about those feelings and emotions. At Greenways we achieve this by recognising and supporting regulation through responsive co-regulation:

State of Regulation	Potential Displayed Behaviours	Responsive Co-regulation
Calm (Safe/socially engaged)	● Steady heart/breathing rate. ● Calm state of arousal. ● Open to social engagement. ● Expressive facial expression and voice prosody. ● Able to listen, process language and engage in thinking to learn.	● Maximise expressive social engagement. ● Fully engage and connect using the face, voice, movement. ● Encourage listening and expressive responses. ● Engage thinking skills to reflect and make connections. ● Introduce gentle challenge through play/activity.
Mild Stress (Alert, agitated, withdrawn)	● Slightly raised heart/breathing rate. ● Signs of agitation, frustration, anxiety. ● Raised hypervigilance. ● Lack of focus, easily distracted. ● Increased mobilisation. ● Early signs of needing to take control or helplessness.	● Connect through eye contact, movement and facial expression. ● Express calmness through storytelling prosody and open facial expression. ● Attune to the mood, intensity and energy of the child. ● Respond by being more animated to attune to agitation, increase intensity to attune to anger, be gentle and delicate to attune to sadness. ● Respond empathically and validate feelings. ● Use calming, soothing and regulatory activities
Dysregulated (Mobilised)	● High levels of arousal/ distress. ● Hyper vigilant. ● Difficulty listening and focusing. ● Mobilised – fidgeting, jumping, running, climbing etc.	● Reduce social demands whilst remaining present. ● Provide individual attention.

	● Raised voice with lack of prosody. ● Decreased expressivity. ● Threatening behaviour. ● Oppositional behaviour.	● Convey adult containment. Let them know we are able to 'hold' their dysregulation by remaining regulated. ● Convey our calm and regulated state by being confident and contained. ● Use quiet, calm sounds and tones which are expressive and confident. ● Reduce language, give short clear directions. Avoid questions and choices. ● Use a predictable routine. ● Reduce sensory input, lights, noise. Use sensory soothing.
Dysregulated (Immobilised)	● Lowered heart/breathing rate. ● Reduced energy. ● Shuts off from surroundings/ dissociates. ● Depressed state. ● Immobile/frozen. ● May feel faint.	● Gentle, soft and delicate manner of coming close, making them aware of your presence and support. ● Use comforting and predictable voice. ● Use invited touch to soothe. ● Singing, humming, music. ● Use sensory soothing. ● Calm and gentle reassurance.
Crisis	The child's behaviour means that they or other people are not safe.	An individualised relational support plan of action which outlines action to be taken in the event of unsafe behaviour. This may include advice from outside agencies. The plan should be shared with the child and include their views as to what helps and with all staff working with the child. Roles and responsibilities should be clear. If the plan includes physical intervention staff should have had the appropriate training. Adults need to provide high levels of containment through their way of being – having a plan can help.

Repairing and Restoring

At Greenways we acknowledge that sometimes things will go wrong. Even with strong relationships, clear boundaries and good co-regulation there will still be times when conflict emerges or harm is caused. This means that sometimes children will need support to repair and restore relationships and learn from the mistakes made. We believe that the repairing of relationships is vital. When supporting this learning process in the aftermath of a challenging event, children will need the security of our relationships in order to access the learning needed to repair harm and be supported to change. They will need our empathy, our understanding and our support in order to stay regulated whilst having such challenging conversations. A restorative approach is implemented within our school following conflict or when difficult incidents have taken place so that this promotes an understanding and learning. It supports children in developing an understanding of their feelings and the feelings of others and how feelings impact on behaviour as well as how behaviour impacts on other people. At Greenways we take a restorative approach when conflict or when incidents have taken place to promote understanding and learning. This approach supports children to develop greater understanding, empathy and responsibility. We use:

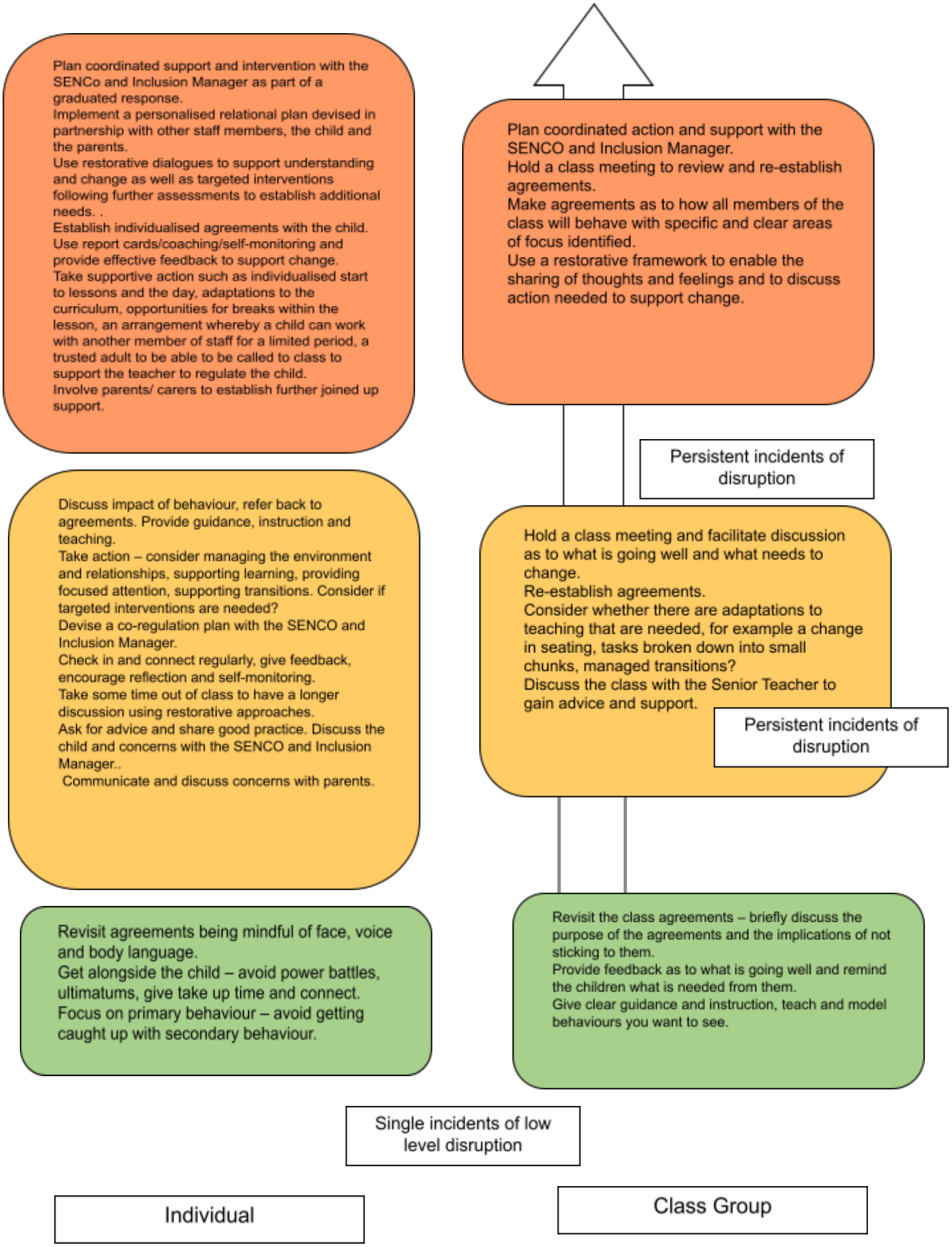
- **A Restorative Framework.** Using a restorative framework for maintaining boundaries and working with behaviours which are not acceptable involves working with the child to consider the following: What happened? What were you thinking? How were you feeling? Who else has been affected by this? What do you need, and what needs to happen now, so that the harm can be repaired?
- **Resolving Conflict through everyday restorative interactions.** This framework is embedded in everyday interactions and classroom practice, from making time to talk, PSHE curriculum and 'connection' time.
- **Repairing Harm: Restorative encounters.** Following incidents where harm has been caused, time needs to be spent sharing understanding and coming to an outcome which helps to repair relationships. This involves an encounter between those involved where a restorative exploration is used. There are a variety of structures for this type of restorative work including; restorative mediation, problem solving circles and restorative conferencing.
- **Supporting Change.** Following the use of a restorative exploration it can be helpful for the adults to reflect on; what was the behaviour communicating? How are the unmet needs being addressed? What

skills does the child need to develop? What additional learning opportunities are in place to enable this? What suggestions do the children have to support the repairing of the relationship?

- **Targeted.** When it is felt that an encounter between those harmed and those who have harmed is not deemed to be beneficial it can be helpful to use the restorative exploration with the child who has harmed individually. This needs careful support and judgement from the adult as they need to ensure the child feels safe and secure and does not experience shame. A helpful way forward will be to focus on supporting the child to repair the relationship, including restorative action.

Responding to Incidents

Sanctions or punishment used as a response to incidents often exclude and ostracise children and can lead to children feeling humiliated and shamed. Sanctions often remove the very thing that children need in order to develop – relationships. Therefore, at Greenways we do not advocate sanctions in response to all incidents. However, following some incidents there will need to be a response from adults in order to ensure that everyone is kept safe. For example, if a child is violent on the playground on a Monday, it is unlikely they will be back out on the playground on Tuesday. This is not as a punishment, but as an acknowledgement that we could well be setting them up to fail if they are back out tomorrow without any developmental input, and also that other children would not be safe. As a school we would advocate 'time in' rather than 'time out' and so this is not a suspension. The work that takes place with the child on Tuesday lunchtime seeks to support them to be able to go back onto the playground - not punish them. We recognise that different children have different needs and will be at different stages of their development. As with all good teaching, personalisation enables children to learn. This also applies to social and emotional development as much as academic understanding. In order to be fair we need to be responsive to need, this means not treating everyone as though they are the same. Equality does not mean everyone getting the same, it means everyone getting their needs met. Responses to incidents are therefore specific to the needs of the children involved. We recognise that the relational approach and response to managing disruption within the learning spaces can be supported through:


Plan coordinated support and intervention with the SENCo and Inclusion Manager as part of a graduated response.
Implement a personalised relational plan devised in partnership with other staff members, the child and the parents.
Use restorative dialogues to support understanding and change as well as targeted interventions following further assessments to establish additional needs. .
Establish individualised agreements with the child.
Use report cards/coaching/self-monitoring and provide effective feedback to support change.
Take supportive action such as individualised start to lessons and the day, adaptations to the curriculum, opportunities for breaks within the lesson, an arrangement whereby a child can work with another member of staff for a limited period, a trusted adult to be able to be called to class to support the teacher to regulate the child.
Involve parents/ carers to establish further joined up support.
Plan coordinated action and support with the SENCO and Inclusion Manager.
Hold a class meeting to review and re-establish agreements.
Make agreements as to how all members of the class will behave with specific and clear areas of focus identified.
Use a restorative framework to enable the sharing of thoughts and feelings and to discuss action needed to support change.
Persistent incidents of disruption
Discuss impact of behaviour, refer back to agreements. Provide guidance, instruction and teaching.
Take action – consider managing the environment and relationships, supporting learning, providing focused attention, supporting transitions. Consider if targeted interventions are needed?
Devise a co-regulation plan with the SENCO and Inclusion Manager.
Check in and connect regularly, give feedback, encourage reflection and self-monitoring.
Take some time out of class to have a longer discussion using restorative approaches.
Ask for advice and share good practice. Discuss the child and concerns with the SENCO and Inclusion Manager..
Communicate and discuss concerns with parents.
Hold a class meeting and facilitate discussion as to what is going well and what needs to change.
Re-establish agreements.
Consider whether there are adaptations to teaching that are needed, for example a change in seating, tasks broken down into small chunks, managed transitions?
Discuss the class with the Senior Teacher to gain advice and support.
Persistent incidents of disruption
Revisit agreements being mindful of face, voice and body language.
Get alongside the child – avoid power battles, ultimatums, give take up time and connect.
Focus on primary behaviour – avoid getting caught up with secondary behaviour.
Revisit the class agreements – briefly discuss the purpose of the agreements and the implications of not sticking to them.
Provide feedback as to what is going well and remind the children what is needed from them.
Give clear guidance and instruction, teach and model behaviours you want to see.
Single incidents of low level disruption
Individual
Class Group

Relational Approaches in the Classrooms

Strong teaching is vital in order to support children to manage their behaviour and working with children who have a high level of need is the responsibility of all adults in our school. A teacher who is skilled in using relational approaches and who is supported by wider systems in the school is likely to be able to manage the needs of the vast majority of children without the need to resort to further escalation. In particular, being able to manage low level disruption through relational approaches and good quality inclusive teaching will lead to a calm and supportive environment where all children are able to learn. A Relational Support Plan document will be implemented for supporting the most vulnerable children, in order to best meet the relational needs of the child and to implement a consistent approach across the team and whole school.

Managing Low Level Disruption

The following approaches are implemented at our school to support children to be able to feel safe, secure, and able to regulate their feelings in order to access learning:

- **Being a source of safety and security.** Being mindful of projecting a sense of safety through our voice, tone, facial expressions and body language. Being a source of security by providing regular, reliable and predictable attention for those most in need.
- **Knowing our children.** Making sure that we are aware of any additional learning and language needs, relational, social and emotional needs and any potential triggers for stress of the children we teach. Making an effort to get to know our children beyond how they are in the learning spaces. Finding out what they are interested in, what their qualities and strengths are and when they are at their best. Letting them know that we are interested in them by listening to them, giving them attention and letting them know that we hold them in mind. Providing opportunities for connection within the classroom.
- **Managing transitions.** For many children transitions are a source of stress. Greeting children at the door, using routine and structure to manage the start and end of lessons and any transitions within the lessons. Providing additional attention for those most in need at times of transition.
- **Managing change.** Change can be a stress trigger for many children. Pre-warn of change or novelty, such as a cover teacher taking the lesson or a special activity which involves a change in routine. Supporting children to be prepared and to be able to anticipate the change by the use of practical organisational strategies and for example visual timetables or social stories.
- **Making language accessible.** Not being able to understand what is expected is a major contributor to anxiety and stress in the learning spaces. Simplify and rephrase language, supplement with visuals and show children what to do as well as telling them. Be very clear when giving guidance and instruction and always check understanding.
- **Make learning accessible**. Provide adapted, alternative and personalised learning to meet specific needs so that all children can be involved in learning. In particular support children's literacy needs. Support access to reading materials which are beyond their literacy level and when writing is a challenge, support children to record their learning though alternative methods. Some children will require a high level of structure, learning broken down in short tasks, learning/sensory breaks and adult attention to refocus. Be mindful of the balance between support and challenge, challenge is helpful for learning, but not if it tips children into feeling overwhelmed.
- **Managing peer relationships and supporting social inclusion.** Consider how children are grouped in terms of where they sit and who they work with. Support children to develop peer relationships and to manage conflict through restorative conversations. Teach children how to learn together and provide opportunities for children to connect and learn how to work effectively with each other. Support children who may be vulnerable to social exclusion to connect with others. For those children who experience communication and interaction difficulties facilitate interaction and repair breakdowns in communication.
- **Managing the environment.** Sensory sensitivities can trigger physical dysregulation for many children. Where possible manage distractions, noise and crowding so as not to overwhelm the child. Provide a space with low sensory demand and opportunities and resources for sensory calming. Consider children's seating position to ensure they are in a position which means that they are able to focus their attention without distraction.
- **Make clear agreements.** Provide feedback which is effective and give clear guidance and instruction. Children need to have a clear understanding of agreements and expectations and these need to be communicated and regularly referred to and reviewed. Children also need to know what these mean in terms of what they need to do. This needs to be taught, modelled and supported. Children will benefit from feedback which is clear about what they are doing well and what they need to do next and from opportunities for self-monitoring.

- **Recognise when children are becoming dysregulated and regulate them.** When children become anxious or stressed, how the adults respond can make the difference between the dysregulation escalating further or calming down. Use regulating responses to deal with low level anxiety or disruption and have plans in place to recognise and respond to more increasing levels of dysregulation or disruption.
- **Repair and restore relationships.** Use restorative discussions, meetings and explorations in order to support understanding of needs, understanding of consequences and to ensure that following harm and conflict relationships are repaired. Ensure that learning takes place following conflict and make changes to support needed.
- **Involve parents.** Establish relationships with parents with clear lines of communication. Feedback positives and let them know when there are difficulties. Listen to parents, involve them in supporting their child and offer them support when needed.

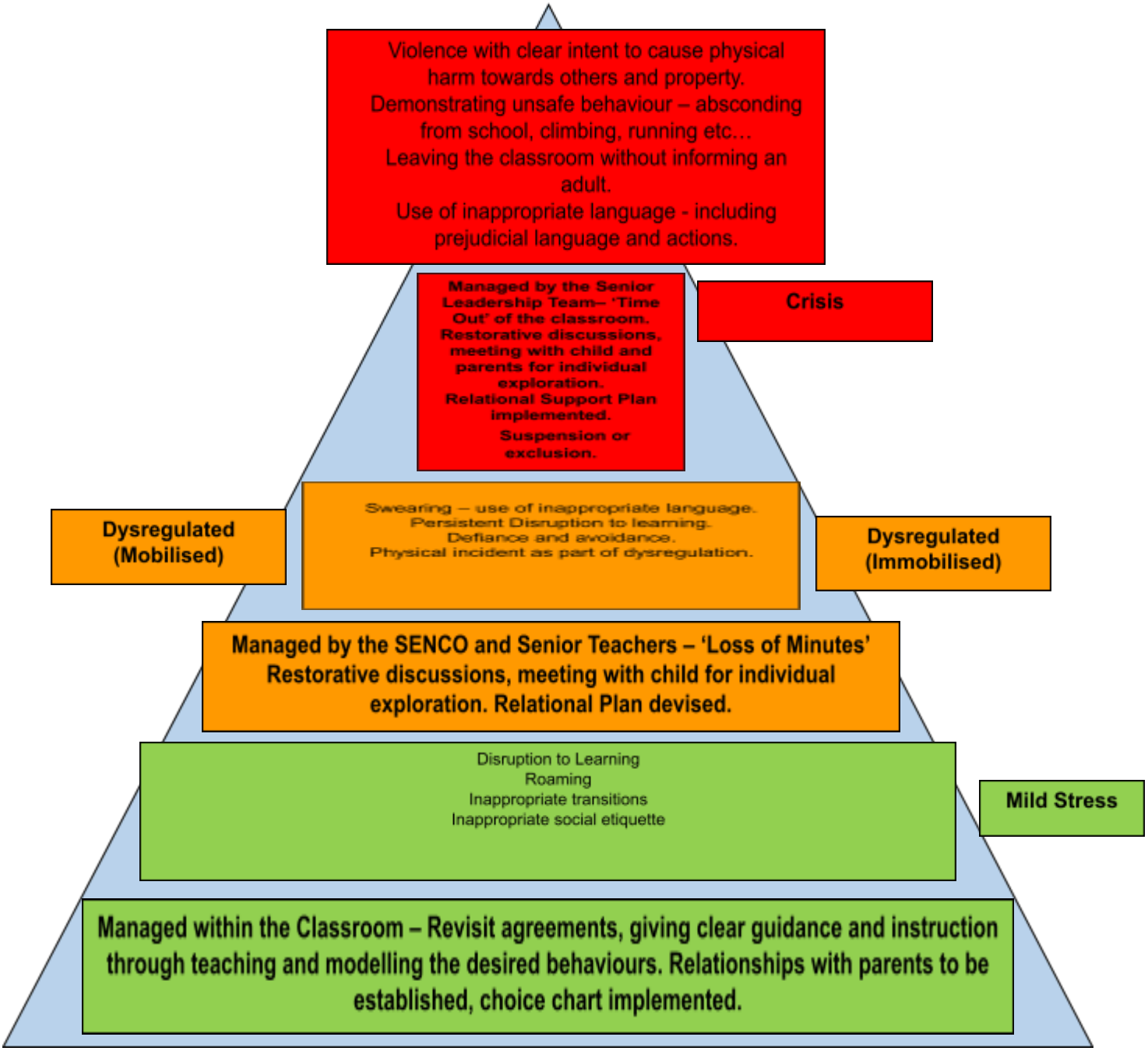
Relational Approach to Managing Regulating Emotions and Crisis Incidents

We recognise that the relational approach and response to regulating emotions and managing crisis incidents can be supported through a whole school consistent approach. With regards to crisis incidents and before applying any sanction, at Greenways we will always consider:

a. Whether the SEND needs of the pupil is contributing to the crisis.
b. Whether a sanction is appropriate and lawful in light of the child's disability.
c. Any reasonable adjustments which might be required to the sanction itself.

As a school we always try to adapt and personalise provision for our pupils in order to ensure that they are able to access education and to reduce the risk of suspension or exclusion.
Outlined below is our relational approach to managing regulating emotions and crisis incidents. There may be times when it is felt that a child is experiencing dysregulated or crisis emotions and they may not be able to access their usual lessons within the classroom. This is not removal from the classroom and staff may use this as a strategy to support co-regulation. In these cases there should be planned options for the child to exit the room and this should be detailed in the Relational Support Plan, which is supported by the Senior Leadership Team. At Greenways we believe that when children leave the classroom they should be withdrawn only for as long as is necessary and when they are not in the classroom they should be doing something which is developmental. There may also be some occasions when a group of children leave the classroom so that adults are able to support the regulation of a child in crisis, again children will only be withdrawn for as long as necessary to ensure their safety and the safety of others. When a child reaches a state of crisis a sanction may be implemented by the senior leadership team where the child is learning outside of their main classroom for a limited period of time. This is 'removal' which is a disciplinary measure. The use of removal will allow for continuation of the pupil's education in a supervised setting by a member of the senior leadership team. It will only be used when necessary and once other relational strategies in the classroom and within the Nurture Room have been attempted, unless the behaviour is so extreme as to warrant immediate removal from the classroom. Parents will be informed on the same day if their child has been removed from the classroom and asked to devise a Relational Support Plan to help support their child within school. Removal is different from the use of a restrictive intervention such as seclusion, which should only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. Seclusion is not a disciplinary response. Some children will benefit from having a safe place to go to, within our school this is 'Calming Corner' which provides an environment with low social and sensory demand and regulatory activities. Other children will benefit from having a trusted adult with whom they feel safe and when they are ready and able can engage in learning activities with – this is implemented within The Nurture Room. If it is felt that the usual curriculum is providing too much of a challenge and children require additional support and intervention, an alternative and flexible timetable within school may be appropriate. In these cases children will benefit from a reduction in mainstream lessons to enable them to access a programme which focuses on their social and emotional development and well-being. This may include for example, access to a nurture provision or outdoor education intervention, small group intervention to support emotional literacy and intervention to support stress regulation such as mindfulness, this will be coordinated by the Inclusion Manager and the SENCO.

At Greenways we support regulating emotions and crisis incidents through:



Sanctions
Suspensions and Exclusions

At Greenways, we always try to adapt and personalise provision for all of our pupils and work with parents/carers and external agencies to ensure that they are able to access education. This may include multi-agency support, statutory assessments, an off-site direction or a managed move. When a pupil has an EHCP we will inform the Local Authority if behaviour is becoming a concern, and we will consider requesting an early Annual Review.
In some circumstances it may be necessary to exclude a pupil for their behaviour, including for behaviour that takes place out of school, e.g. on school trips and residentials or online. Exclusions can be for a fixed period (known as a suspension) or permanent. A suspension should be a proportionate response where there is no alternative and it is important that the views of the child and those of their parent or carer are taken into account. Where a suspension is used it will be a short term measure with the aim of improving outcomes. It will enable further planning and assessment and provide an opportunity for reflection for both the child and staff involved and will be supported by external agencies working with the child and family.

Suspension may be used for a single incident or for ongoing, persistent behaviours. This may include (but is not limited to):

- Where the safety of the learner, other pupils or staff is compromised.
- Where the learning of other pupils is significantly disrupted.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour.
- Consistently ignoring instructions from adults and therefore making it impossible to return to class.
- Deliberate damage to property.
- Bullying (including online bullying).
- Incidents involving a knife or the deliberate use of weapons.

A permanent exclusion will only be used at Greenways as a last resort when all approaches towards relational and behavioural support and management have been exhausted and 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 such as staff or pupils in the school.'
Suspensions and exclusions will be reported to the Governing Body, Local Authority and, where appropriate, the allocated social worker or Head of the Virtual School for Looked After Pupils. In certain circumstances, a school can temporarily forbid a pupil from attending its premises, for example, due to an allegation of harm by one pupil against another (often known as child on child abuse) which might require physically separating a pupil from one or other pupils. This is not an exclusion on disciplinary grounds and is known as separating for safeguarding purposes. Further details around our policy on suspensions and permanent exclusions are in the LiHT 'School exclusions, suspensions, managed moves and off-site directions' Policy.

Use of Reasonable Force

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. To prevent or stop a pupil from:

1. Causing injury to themselves or others
2. Committing a criminal offence
3. Damaging property
4. Causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

At Greenways, we will follow DfE guidance as detailed in the LiHT Restrictive Interventions policy We will not grant any requests by parents or staff members not to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions under any circumstances. The adoption of a 'no contact' policy at a school can leave staff unable to intervene where reasonable, given the circumstances, to fully protect pupils.

Searching, Screening, and Confiscation

At Greenways we follow DfE guidance 'Screening Searching and Confiscation - advice for schools.'
Searches without consent: The following items are banned in school and pupils may be searched for them without their consent and without the consent of their parents:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco, cigarette papers and vapes
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used:
  i) To commit an offence,
  ii) To cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil).

We may also search for mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video), for vapes and for medication (prescribed or over the counter) unless specifically authorised e.g Epipen, asthma inhaler A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for legally prohibited items, but not to search for items banned under the school rules only. School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item, however found, which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline. The school will follow statutory guidance when deciding what to do with a seized prohibited item. When exercising their powers,

we will consider the age and needs of pupils being searched or screened. This includes the individual needs or learning difficulties of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN), and making reasonable adjustments that may be required where a pupil has a disability. Before a member of staff carries out a search without consent, the member of staff must reasonably suspect that the pupil has the prohibited item in his/her possession. Only staff members authorised by the Executive Headteacher may carry out searches without consent, these will members of the senior leadership team.
Where an item prohibited by this relational policy is seized as the result of a search and it is an electronic device such as a mobile phone, or other smart technology, the member of staff who seized the item may inspect the data on it, if they think that there is a good reason to do so. For this purpose, the senior leader has a good reason if they reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been or could be used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school agreements. The school also reserves the right to inspect data on any electronic device which is confiscated by a member of staff. The school is entitled to retain the device if it contains material which has been or could be used to cause harm to disrupt teaching or break the school agreements.
Searches with consent: The school may search pupils with their consent for any item. A pupil's possessions can only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff. The person conducting the search may not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing. 'Outer clothing' means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear but 'outer clothing' includes hats; shoes; boots; gloves and scarves. 'Possessions' means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control – this includes bags.

Confiscation of Articles

School staff have the power to confiscate property from pupils under their general right to discipline contained in s91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and will follow the DfE guidance 'Screening Searching and Confiscation - advice for schools.'

Drugs

As a school we operate a zero-tolerance policy on drugs for the health and safety of all staff, pupils and visitors. The school policy on drugs applies to all school and school related activities whether on or offsite. This includes the journey to and from school. The word 'drugs' used in this policy does not just mean illegal drugs. It extends to alcohol, tobacco products, volatile substances and legal highs as well as medication that is not being used as intended. We will monitor and deal with any drug issues promptly and be proactive in trying to prevent any future drug incidents. Pupils will receive drugs education as part of the RSHE programme. Any drugs found will be confiscated by staff who will dispose of them in accordance with guidance issued by the DfE. Similarly, any drugs related paraphernalia such as needles will be disposed of in a prudent manner. The school may carry out searches for drugs in accordance with this policy.

Mobile Phones and Smart Technology

The use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) is prohibited throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, at breaktimes, lunchtime and in school clubs. Any child who brings a mobile phone into school will hand this into the school office at the beginning of the day, ensuring this is switched off. The child will then collect this from the office at the end of the school day. When it is appropriate for a pupil to bring a device from home e.g. to support communication or to monitor glucose levels school staff will ensure that pupils are always supervised and that Trust guidance is followed.

Using Praise and Feedback Effectively

Feedback has an important role in learning and development and it is important to support children to reflect on their behaviour in a way which will best support learning. Encouragement, positive feedback and genuine personal praise are important features of feedback. The feedback we provide children within Greenways is:

- **Specific -"**You stayed really focused today even when it got tricky" rather than 'You were great today". This leads to greater understanding of exactly what they should be doing.
- **Activity involving rather than ego involving** – "It was kind and thoughtful of you to let others go first" rather than "You are kind". This leads to a belief that things are not fixed, everyone can behave well on some days and make mistakes on others.
- **Individual and does not allow comparisons between children** - A quiet word giving feedback or a recognition home rather than a public announcement. This leads to children being reflective about their own behaviour without being influenced by the response of other children or the need to protect their ego.

● **Identifies clear next steps** - “You need to wait to take your turn when talking in a group” rather than “You need to be better next time”. This supports children to understand expectations and focus on their actions.

At Greenways we use positive and effective feedback rather than just rewards. This is because not all children have yet developed internal control and therefore the external control systems of rewards are unlikely to impact positively on their behaviour. We believe children need to have thoughtful feedback about their behaviour. We need to use feedback that is congruent with our relationship. Feedback which is not genuine will be dismissed and if feedback is seen to be manipulative it can damage the relationship. In a genuinely warm and empathic relationship there should be plenty of opportunity for meaningful and positive feedback. Being curious about behaviour, asking for example “That went really well, how did you manage to do that?” will lead to more reflective and beneficial discussions about behaviour. We acknowledge that some children will benefit from a more targeted approach to feedback. Regular check-ins or review meetings are helpful. Some children like these approaches as they benefit from receiving consistent and reliable attention from an adult which is focused positively on them. Check ins and reviews should involve effective feedback and curious questions to encourage the child to reflect on their behaviour and agreements as to what the next steps need to be.

Enhancing Recognition

We emphasis positive relationships and our school values using a variety of strategies, including:

- **Praise and Feedback –** Verbal feedback, friendly words or gestures or a referral to another adult for recognition. We promote children to go “above and beyond” and recognise these behaviours on a daily basis. Children are encouraged to achieve values certificates which are given by the class teachers in assembly each week.
- **Special responsibility, privilege or trust –** Working with or sitting with a friend of their own choice, working in a special area or a special job or responsibility (e.g. giving out the registers, taking messages).
- **Rewards such as ‘Star in the Jar’ -** We use an objective and consistent star in the jar system for whole class recognition, these are announced in our celebration assembly each week.
- Staff, who are aware of exemplary relationships, give recognition through the Recognition postcards which are sent home to celebrate successes. Weekly golden values certificates are also shared with pupils each week, which are sent home for parents to also celebrate successes with their child.
- **Informing parents –** Communicating good news whenever possible, sending home messages, teacher messages that celebrate excellent learning or sometimes a phone call.
- Adults will always use calm discussion and aim to encourage positive behaviours and constructive conversations.

Developing Agreements

At Greenways we recognise that in order to develop and establish secure relationships we need to have a shared understanding of our rights, roles and responsibilities and how these manifest themselves as expectations around behaviour, agreements and rules. A shared understanding, ownership and personal responsibility is best achieved through working with children through a process to develop a clear picture of what is needed in order to establish a calm and harmonious environment where there are positive relationships and children feel safe, included and able to learn. At the beginning of each academic year agreements are established within each classroom so that all children can benefit from a clarity around boundaries and expectations. The agreements which are established are meaningful, clearly communicated and regularly discussed. We ensure that our agreements are regularly revisited with the children so that discussions can take place as to whether they are working or need amending. Within the first half term of each academic year, through our whole school assembly programme adults will also provide clear modelling guidance and instruction as to how to behave within our wider school community and as local and global citizens. Such strategies are important in establishing an ethos of co-operation, empathy and restoration and provide opportunities for children to see good skills modelled to develop their own skills. Working in this way supports all children to develop peer relationships and builds their capacity to form and maintain relationships in the future. We share with the children trusting relationships so that they understand that when agreements are broken there are processes in place to repair harm, ensure that those harmed feel safe and able to learn and to support those who have broken agreements to ensure that there are no ongoing difficulties. When we establish agreements at the beginning of the academic year we introduce them as a formal protection of one’s rights. Agreements are seen as being good and fair and serving a purpose. They are not seen as an imposition nor do they encourage compliance for compliance’s sake, nor are they intended to meet the adults’ need for control. Children are actively involved in this

process as the agreements work best when established by children with the support of adults. At Greenways our agreements are few in number and as simple as possible, they encompass our whole school values and ethos and are phrased in a positive way using inclusive language. The agreements are then continually referred to and utilised during teaching to ensure that they are useful and are present in the minds of both adults and children. When agreements are broken they can be referred to in order to re-establish calm, support thinking, discuss the impact on others and decide what needs to happen next.
Some examples of agreements which may be implemented within our school include:

- We agree that we will give ourselves the best chances to succeed.
- We agree that we will let everyone succeed and celebrate in our successes.
- We agree that everyone will be treated with respect and compassion.
- We agree that we will act with integrity and demonstrate honesty.
- We agree that to feel safe and comfortable we must take care that our actions and words do not upset others or make them feel unsafe, including how we use the digital world within and outside of school.
- We agree that to communicate and be listened to we must make contributions ourselves and value and respect others ideas and opinions.
- We agree that when we use, share and care for our school environment and equipment we demonstrate respect.

Individual Support: The Relational Support Plan

A Relational Support Plan is helpful in managing and planning for different aspects of support, ensuring that everyone is working consistently and predictably together and that the support given throughout the child's day at school is joined up and consistent. A Relational Support Plan should ensure that the child receives the consistency and intensity of support needed through well thought out and planned relational intervention. The plan will include details of any specific interaction needed as it is these repeated interactions that will make the difference. At Greenways if a child is behaving in a way which means that they or others are not safe then making the situation safe is the primary need. Children who experience such crises will have plans in place to keep them safe which will be agreed with all adults who care for the child as well as the child themselves. Having plans help to support the adults to provide containment in difficult situations and ensure that all adults in school are clear on how to respond to crisis situations. We recognise that some crisis situations arise unexpectedly and there may not be a specific plan in place, however we use our school consequence system to ensure that the situation is made safe in the moment and what needs to happen following the incident. This is important, as all adults need to know how to respond in crisis situations and children need to know and trust that they will be kept safe. Adults in school are supported by Senior Leaders on how to make plans and how to regulate children who experience high levels of stress and dysregulation. Physical intervention will be a last resort but should be used if to not do so would result in harm. Staff at Greenways have received training in the use of de-escalation and physical intervention if there is a foreseeable risk of behaviour which is harmful to the child or others.

Working Relationships

Ensuring a Child Centred Approach - Children are respected and valued within our school community and regarded as an equal part of it. They have ongoing opportunities for a purposeful dialogue with trusted adults, which influences all aspects of the school day. This is embedded within our whole school approach, involving all staff and pupils and not simply a one off activity. Time and care is taken in listening to children with curiosity and empathy. We recognise that from an emotional perspective, the opportunity to be supported to engage in meaningful self-expression can help children to process their emotions as well as supporting the early identification of needs. We listen to the views of the child at all stages. Feelings of empowerment, mastery and control have been found to be protective in stressful and challenging situations, increasing resilience. Children are enabled to describe what is difficult for them, what is going well, establish a realistic and achievable vision of the future, identify small steps forwards and be involved in planning for support. Some children will find it hard to express their views: they may not yet have conscious awareness of their underlying feelings, may be avoidant, withdrawn or defensive or they may have language or communication needs which may impact on their ability to give their perspective. In these cases we carefully elicit the child's views in a way which is accessible to them.

Working with parents and carers: Respecting and valuing parents and carer's knowledge, experience and perspective on the child – At Greenways we always aim to include the parent's perspective. Parents are able to give an insight into the child's development, their experiences and what may be happening at the current time. Parents are the expert on their child and their knowledge, views and concerns will lead to greater understanding of unmet needs as well as supporting future planning. Parents are always given time to tell theirs and the child's story and we always value and respect the knowledge,

experience and views of the parent, encouraging them to be part of their child's life at school – this enables trusting relationships. At Greenways there are clear open channels of communication between parents and carers and the school and we work with parents to ensure that they receive support and help if needed. We use the Early Help approach in giving children and parents support from a range of services and teams who work together with the whole family to help improve the situation for everyone.

Working with External Professionals and Agencies - When children have significant needs or if the child is struggling to make progress despite several school based interventions then external professionals will be consulted to support the process. In particular Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Specialist Teacher Teams and professionals from CAMHS will be able to help, working in partnership with the inclusion team within school.

Supporting Staff Well-Being and Professional Development

All adults in school are trained to enable them to have a good understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of the relational approach and what this approach means in practical terms. All staff understand how they need to be in their relationships with children and why. They need to be able to read children's behaviour in terms of their relational needs and understand the needs of children who have attachment needs or who have experienced trauma. There are regular opportunities for continued professional development as well as ongoing training opportunities at Greenways. The induction of new staff has been considered so that adults who are new to the school are adequately trained to understand and adopt the approach we use in school. If the adults in school are to be able to provide support for the well-being of children through providing secure relationships they need to be supported in their own wellbeing and relationships in school. Like the children we work with, the adults in school need to feel that they are listened to and that their views will make a difference. Respectful relationships within the work place where all adults are valued is the key to this and we have systems and processes which ensure that staff are heard and that they are able to affect change through our emotional well-being working group. All adults in school make a valuable contribution to provision and to have ownership of their work through opportunities to share and develop ideas and good practice.