



St Anthony's Relationship Policy

At St Anthony's we recognise that relationships are crucial to building and maintaining a happy and inclusive environment for all. In our mission statement it says '*Let our words teach and our actions speak,*' and this enables a community of trust and respect for every member of our school community. Our school is invested in supporting the very best possible relational health between:

- Parent and child
- Child and child
- Child and school
- Parent and school staff
- School staff and Senior Leads
- School staff and external agencies

To this end our school is committed to educational practices, which Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect.

Protect

- We aim to keep every child safe, we do this through daily positive interactions throughout the school day e.g. during meet and greet at the school gates, when entering the classroom and when moving around the school.
- We aim to ensure that we are using the *PACE* models of interaction (Hughes 2015) e.g: being warm, empathetic, playful and curious (this has been proven to allow children to transition out of fight/flight/freeze positions).
- Whole school commitment to refrain from using harsh voices, shouting, put downs, criticisms and shaming (these have been proven to be damaging psychologically and neurologically).
- We strive to have self-awareness and to 'interactively repair' in situations where school staff have moved into defensiveness.
- We implement interventions such as 'I wish my teacher knew...' to enable children to feel safe sharing and talking about what and who matters to them, their hopes and dreams and painful life experiences.
- We aim to provide emotionally available adults to support all vulnerable children. They will be accessible on a daily basis and if ever unavailable an alternative person will be found.
- Staff adjust expectations around all children following trauma informed practice to ensure all children are treated in a kind and non-judgemental way this may be through offering alternatives to situations they are not managing well and allowed access to a separate calmer space.
- We provide children with the skills to advocate for themselves and opportunities to self-refer for help/talk time.
- We recognise the importance of nurturing school staff to ensure that they feel valued and supported in the school

Relate

- All staff receive regular training in areas such as: ACES, emotional coaching, attachment training, de-escalation training, zones of regulation and have an awareness of the four key relational needs for secure attachment, affect attunement, empathy, soothing and containment.
- We foster a whole school commitment to enable children to see themselves, their relationships and the world more positively rather than through a lens of threat, danger or self-blame.
- Relationships with emotionally available adults at school allow children to shift from blocked trust to trust and from self-help to help seeking.

Regulate

- Interventions for vulnerable children will be carried out with the aim to repair psychological damage caused by traumatic life experiences through emotionally regulating and playful, enriched adult-child interactions.
- The emotional well-being and regulating of staff is treated as high priority to prevent burn-out, secondary trauma and/or feeling undervalued, blamed or shamed.
- We aim to provide staff-only spaces which are specifically designed to support the release of natural anti-stress and pro-social neurochemicals.

Reflect

- Staff are educated in the art of good listening, dialogue, empathy and understanding through training and coaching.
- Parents and staff are supported to have meaningful empathetic conversations with children, in order to empower children to better manage their home situations and their general wellbeing.
- Children are provided the opportunity to work with a key member of staff to reflect on their feelings through a range of media such as art, play, drama, music and sand play
- Our PSHE curriculum is informed by current research on mental health, mental ill health, relationship health: family, parenting, intimate relationships and tools on how to do life well. Children are taught the tools to make informed choices about how they relate to others and how they choose to treat their brains, bodies and minds now and in the future.
- We prioritise the importance of empathic conversations and reflection to address children negative self-referencing and help them to develop coherent narratives about their lives.
- A behaviour policy, which is based not on punishment, sanctions and isolation, but one that models enquiry resolution and interactive repair. (e.g. restorative conversations).