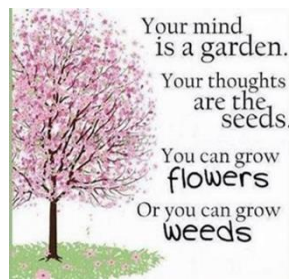


Our Relationships Policy: Promoting Positive Behaviour

The St Margaret's Way (August 2021 UPDATE May 23)



Our school community values

Following consultation with parents, all school staff and children (November 2019), the values that underpin the expected quality of interactions and communication, as a community, were agreed to be:

1. **Be safe**
2. **Be respectful**
3. **Be the best you**

This is known as '**The St. Margaret's Way**' - in other words **this is how we behave and interact with others**. We expect all staff, children and families to engage in mutually respectful communication and interactions with one another. As adults it is our responsibility to model for all children how to live these values. It is vital that these values are revisited regularly, so that the **children fully understand what they mean to live them**.

We understand that sometimes managing relationships can be challenging. As a staff we are committed to and believe strongly in being a **restorative school**; where children, staff and families are supported in repairing harm and resolving conflict. For this to be successful it must be approached when all parties are calm, have had time and space to reflect and are ready to repair harm.

At St Margaret's we recognise and value children as individuals. There may be times where we take a **differentiated approach** to support a child to regulate their feelings and manage their behaviour, just as we would do with their learning.

As a gold award winning **Rights, Respecting School, Restorative** and **PIVOTAL** school we are duty bound to embed Article 28 of UNCRC which states that '**Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity**'. As adults in the school we are careful about what we say to children and each other, how we say it, including thinking about our body language and tone. We strive daily to be respectful, firm but fair and restorative.

As an **inclusive, nurturing** school it is important that children are supported in understanding the implications of the choices they make. As adults we must take the time to understand what a **child's behaviour is communicating**. We celebrate neurodiversity with the children who are developing their understanding of how the human brain works, what challenges some children face and also what superpowers they have.

In August 2020 we began using a Health and Wellbeing Programme throughout the whole school called '**Emotion Works**'. The aim of this programme is to help children understand their emotions, what may trigger an emotional response, how this feels physically and what strategies can be applied to help them manage their emotions and behaviours.

How do we do this in general?

Through the language we use, for example:

- *Be safe, be respectful, be the best you – ‘When you did that, were you being safe? When you spoke to me there, were you being respectful?’*
- ***RIP and PIP – Reprimand in Private and Praise in Public***
- *Meet and greet in the morning – a hug, a handshake, a high 5 etc*
- *Adults being in control of emotions, calm, firm and fair; using affirmative statements, ‘I am feeling very upset just now because ‘this’ happened? When I am calm, I will talk with you or I will listen to you when you are calm. I need time to think about what has just happened.’*
- *‘Right tone, right time, right place, thank you.’*
- *Regularly talking with children about their own health and wellbeing (HWB) and that of others through our daily/weekly HWB Curriculum.*
- *Building into our learning the reasons why we speak to children the way we do.*
- *Talking about and demonstrating how to be mindful, relaxed with a positive mind-set*
- *Listening to children about how they feel and seeking out their thoughts and views*
- *Saying ‘please’ and ‘thank you’*
- *‘I can see that you are feeling...do you need... or I have noticed...’*
- *‘I am asking you to...so expect to see...thank you.’*
- *‘Wonderful walking’, as children move confidently, proudly and safely round the school.*
- *‘You made a really good choice there, well done!’*
- *‘What would have been a better choice to make?’*
- *‘We have a problem that I need your help to fix...’*
- *Restorative questions – ‘Tell me what happened? How were you feeling?/What were you thinking at the time? How do you think the other person was feeling? How could we fix this?’*

Being a Rights, Respecting School

We create classroom, playground, football, library and lunch hall charters which outline the expectations that children have of each other and the staff supporting them.

We share the UNCRC articles with the children through class discussions, article of the month and our school assemblies. Each class is expected to take on board a Sustainable Development Goal to focus on developing their understanding of a global rights perspective.

We strive to ensure that the children understand their rights and recognise everyone’s right to **dignity**.

We are a **GOLD award** winning Rights, Respecting School.

Rewards and consequences

One size does not fit all.

All children are individuals and come to school with a range of different life experiences, understandings of emotions and ability to self-regulate. Some children have additional support needs which impacts on their ability to manage their behaviour at times. Some children are impacted by adverse childhood experiences and need to be shown kindness and understanding as they are supported in learning new ways of managing their emotions.

It is vital that children are taught to understand that actions have consequences, both negative and positive. As a school, how we go about this is dependent on an individual child's needs, developmental stage and understanding of the world.

The key to supporting children and rewarding their good choices is through the **relationships** they have with their peers and the adults around them in order for us to enable the children to become **responsible citizens, successful learners, effective contributors and confident individuals.**

Scottish Government and COSLA Learning Together National Action Plan highlights the importance of positive relationships with parents/carers noting that, ***'It is only through positive relationships based on trust, mutual respect and partnership that aims will be achieved'***

Collectively: parents, school staff, partner agencies, we have to create the right environment for all pupils to thrive as individuals.

- ❖ All experiences present the opportunity for learning. When considering a consequence, you must also consider what supports will be put in place to create the opportunity for learning to happen.
- ❖ Rewards have to be real and meaningful for the children.

In St Margaret's the children have ownership of aspects of this through the development of charters, pupil wellbeing questionnaires, Class Council discussions and our Pupil Parliament **ensuring their voices are heard.**

In the Classroom and other school areas

In the classroom, teachers have the freedom to develop, with the children, their own incentive systems. The focus is not on negative behaviours, as this singles children out and is more likely to compound unwanted behaviours. Unfortunately, as a society, we are currently fixed on punitive approaches to behaviour management which research has proven does not change the behaviour, it merely reinforces a child's poor image of self.

At St Margaret's we focus on the behaviours we wish to grow.

Examples of these systems might be:

- Creation of classroom charters and other areas of the school where we are all clear about expected standards of work, learning and behaviours
- Use of positive feedback (two positive statements before approaching the unwanted behaviour) – *'You are usually so good at listening so therefore have lots of interesting things to say, it's a pity today this doesn't seem to be happening, could we try again? I am looking forward to hearing what you think'...*
- Use of time out to think about choices – *'At the moment you are close to making the wrong choice, how could you turn it around? I'll let you think.'*
- Feelings charts, which focus on emotions, in place of red, amber and green traffic lights. These can be selected with the children. This will link to our new emotional and mental health programme 'Emotion Works' in session 2020/21 and is on-going, alongside Bounce Back.
- Use of raffle tickets which lead to a collective target and chosen reward.
- **Noticing!** Noticing and commenting on the desired behaviours, paying less attention to unwanted behaviours. Noticing the **effort** children make is extremely important.
- Delegating responsibilities in the classroom.
- Proud Friday – spending time sharing with others one thing children are proud of that week or their teacher/family member they know is proud of them for.

- Fun day Monday – where the class selects something fun to do at the beginning of the week; something to look forward to over the weekend! (Outdoor learning, playing board games etc).

Examples of rewards:

- Certificates, stickers, a note/phone call home, noting a great piece of learning, a fantastic good choice, a moment of going above and beyond.
- Recognition Board for 'above and beyond' and achievements.
- Noticing effort and giving meaningful praise.
- Raffle tickets, collecting marbles which lead to a communal reward.
- Exceptional achievements both in and out of school posted on twitter or Seesaw.
- Extra outdoor learning experience or game.

There are times that our behaviour has a consequence. Children have to know that as that is how society functions well. However, at St Margaret's we focus on **discipline or consequence with support** and not punishment. Punishment creates further anger & resentment and breaks down relationships between adults, children and peers. Consequence with support teaches fairness, responsibility and life skills.

Examples of a consequence:

- A phone call home to discuss behaviours or arrange a face to face meeting
- Reflection time or time out from an area where a poor choice has been made, followed by a supportive discussion
- Restorative conversations to repair the harm
- Time spent with or referral to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Missing out on a communal reward
- A letter home
- **Exclusion** from school for a short period of time. This is at the discretion of the Head teacher and can be delegated to the Senior Leadership Team.

Where a child has an additional need either developmental, behavioural and/or emotional, a support plan will be put in place. This is discussed and implemented with the family and the team around the child.

School staff will only ever discuss a consequence or a child's plan with a child's family or guardians. This information is confidential.

There may be an occasion where you may not be in agreement with a decision we have made about a consequence or an approach that we have taken. However, all consequences are put in place after an investigation, with prior knowledge of a situation, the children involved and based on our observations of children in the school environment. Children can be very different at home compared to when they are in school for a number of reasons; one of them being the sheer volume of people they are surrounded by with differing personalities which can lead to different triggers. Our goal is to help all children learn from their behaviour and any mistakes they may make. Like all learning, for some, this can need revisited regularly. Whatever decision we make is in the best interests of all of the children involved.

In the playground and lunch hall

Through our Pupil Parliament and in consultation with our playground supervisors and kitchen staff we are developing a lunch hall charter, playground charter (& football charter) that will be shared with all classes. These outline the expectations of behaviour in these areas and is driven by our school values – **Be safe, Be respectful and Be the best you.**

The role of our playground staff is to support the children as they play but also provide, if required, first aid, or need assistance with restoration or resolving conflict.

They may issue 'Walk and Talk' or Reflection Cards to give children the time they need to calm down before discussing an incident. These cards are then shared with class teachers so that they are aware of any issues. The class teacher may deal with any conflict that has arisen in the playground through:

- Time out
- Restorative discussions when the time is right
- Removal of a privilege
- A call or note home to parents/carers (this tends to be for repeated unwanted behaviours or more serious incidents)
- Arranging a meeting with parents/carers to discuss supports
- Referral to SLT, if the behaviour is repetitive and not improving

There are times, however, that there is no need for the class teacher to intervene, as the issue has already been resolved in the playground with supervising staff or peer mediators.

Anti-bullying

We follow **Falkirk Councils Anti-bullying Policy: Promoting Positive Relationships in Falkirk's Educational Establishments**.

We recognise the impact that bullying behaviour has on children, their wellbeing and their learning. We are committed to supporting children who experience or show bullying behaviours. We do this by listening to all, creating a safe and supportive environment, supporting all children to become resilient young people.

There are many times that the school alone cannot resolve issues of bullying and need the support of families and other agencies to address the problems. Online bullying is becoming an increasing problem in schools and one which is, in fact, a parental responsibility. As a school, we educate the children on the dangers and impact of online bullying and importance of internet safety, however, it is vital that we work with families, in partnership, to protect children whilst online.

When tackling any issue of conflict, it requires **positive relationships and respectful communication** from all involved, but particularly the adults who should be modelling the appropriate behaviour.

As a school staff, we understand that when your child has been hurt (physically or emotionally), feels excluded and isolated or is unhappy at school that this can be highly upsetting for a parent or carer.

We are here to help and assist but this has to be approached in a climate of mutual respect, where relationships are key. School staff have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and are supported by the **Falkirk Council, Dignity at Work Policy**.

References and links for our relationships policy

Curriculum for Excellence

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5/what-is-curriculum-for-excellence/>

St Margaret's Vision, Values and Aims statement references the Four Capacities as our aims. This is how we approach learning and teaching and our curriculum rationale. This can be found on the school website.

Falkirk Council Exclusion Policy

<https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/school-life/exclusion-of-school-pupils.aspx>

Falkirk Council Positive Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy

<https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/policies-strategies/docs/anti-bullying-policy/Promoting%20Positive%20Relationships%20in%20Falkirk%27s%20Educational%20Establishments.pdf?v=201812181410>

Falkirk Council Dignity at Work and Health and wellbeing policies

<https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/employees/policies/dignity-at-work.aspx>

<https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/employees/policies/mental-health.aspx>

<https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/employees/policies/docs/hr/how-to/How%20to%20prevent%2c%20minimise%20and%20manage%20stress%20at%20work.pdf?v=201912181444>

<https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/employees/policies/docs/health-safety-care/Management%20of%20Violence%20and%20Unacceptable%20Actions.pdf?v=201901241542>

Getting it Right for Every Child

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/publication/2016/03/getting-right-child-understanding-wellbeing-leaflet/documents/getting-right-child-understanding-wellbeing-considering-quality-children-young-peoples-lives/getting-right-child-understanding-wellbeing-considering-quality-children-young-peoples-lives/govscot%3Adocument/getting-right-child-understanding-wellbeing-considering-quality-children-young-peoples-lives.pdf>

How Good is OUR school? (Scottish Government)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/HGIOURS-Part1.pdf>

The Compass of Shame

<https://www.iirp.edu/defining-restorative/compass-of-shame>

The Principles of Nurture

<https://www.nurtureuk.org/nurture/six-principles-nurture>

At St Margaret's we also have our own statement regarding our intent in being a nurturing school. This can be found on our school website.

The Principles of Pivotal Education

<https://pivotaleducation.com/hidden-trainer-area/training-online-resources/pivotal-principles-of-intervention-3/>

The Principles of Restorative Practice in Schools

<https://restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools>

UNCRC Rights of the Child Scotland

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/publication/2016/10/un-convention-rights-child-guide-children-young-people/documents/un-convention-rights-child-guide->

[children-young-people/un-convention-rights-child-guide-children-young-people/govscot%3Adocument/un-convention-rights-child-guide-children-young-people.pdf](#)