

# Whitburn Academy–Relationships Position Paper

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## Compassion

## Integrity

## Respect

Our Relationships are built on our school values. Our position paper is in line with Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour, and with the West Lothian Promoting Positive Relationships Policy.

In order to establish, build and maintain positive relationships all pupils will experience the same 'keystone routines'

### Keystone Routines

1. All staff stand in the corridor at class changeover, regardless of whether they are teaching
2. All staff greet pupils at the door to welcome to the class in a positive way – smiling, etc
3. All staff to praise pupils immediately to recognise positive behaviour e.g. well done for taking jackets off, well done for having jotters out.
4. All staff refer to our school values regularly and make use of recognition boards to highlight pupils who demonstrate the values.
5. All staff ask pupils to leave calmly at the end of the lesson (no bell) with a parting greeting at the door at changeover e.g. "thanks very much for your input today it has been a pleasure, have a good day/see you next time etc"

In order to establish, build and maintain positive relationships all pupils will experience the same, consistent 'shared expectations':

### Shared Expectations

We will always show

COMPASSION - RESPECT - INTEGRITY

In order to establish, build and maintain positive relationships we aim always to 'catch pupils being good':

### Catching Pupils being Good

1. Provide regular, positive feedback on learning
2. Have classroom incentives through the merit system (regular reminders to pupils)
3. Deliberately give positive feedback to pupils who may benefit from this in order to modify their behaviour as a result

In order to establish, build and maintain positive relationships we aim always to build and repair relationships at the root:

## **Building and Repairing Relationships**

All staff should use the strategies below prior to consideration of 'involving colleagues' (see appendix).

- 30 second intervention
- Restorative conversation this could take place at break/lunchtime if required
- Agreement of specific targets elicited from the pupil which address the specific behaviours which interrupt learning
- Planned consideration of 'neighbouring' in the classroom seating plan
- Positive follow-up conversation when a pupil gets it right
- Take-up time
- Use of 'language of choice'
- Pupils experience a 'fresh start' in the next period
- Rerouting power plays (partial agreement)

In order to establish, build and maintain positive relationships we aim always to involve the right person to help repair the relationship when this cannot be done in the classroom:

## **Involving Colleagues**

Where a relationship has broken down and one or both parties are not in a position to repair this straight away, or an incident has taken place which requires immediate action the options below can be used:

- Corridor time out for a fixed duration "I need to you wait outside for x minutes. When I come and speak to you I need us to be able to agree a target for you to come and learn as part of the class again"
- Selkirk Time-out: "I need you to take your work to the Selkirk Room and continue with your learning there, we can talk about this at another time". This should be used when other techniques are exhausted or where time-out is required to de-escalate a situation. The pupils name should be entered onto the online Selkirk Room Record, along with the other required info. Staff there will judge whether a pupil is ready to re-join classes at the end of the period. The pupil will return to class the next period with a clean slate. Where Selkirk Time Out is required and the member of staff feels the relationship cannot be repaired, a referral should be sent to the Head of Faculty requesting their assistance with repairing the relationship.
- If the matter can be resolved then no further action is required. If you feel the support of a colleague is required to resolve the matter, a referral should be made in the first instance to the line manager to investigate and deal with as appropriate. The referral should be updated and returned to the person with whom it originated.
- Lunchtime Reflection: where a member of staff and Faculty Head/Head of House have been working with a young person to restore relationships, but they refuse to engage with this, they may choose to issue a Lunchtime Reflection. The focus is on repairing the relationship, not on Lunchtime Reflection as a punitive measure. This takes place centrally at lunchtime

and pupils complete a reflection template and discuss with the staff member before being released.

- **Emergency Call:** an emergency call can be made when a critical incident takes place. That is, when safety is compromised, or a young person has lost control and is unable to respond to any other strategies.

In order to establish, build and maintain positive relationships we aim to communicate effectively when support from another person is required:

### **Communication about Relationships**

1. All referrals should start with the wellbeing indicator concerned
2. All referrals should go to the Faculty Head with a description of the classroom strategies which have already been employed to build and/or repair the relationship
3. A member of staff may choose to send a referral for information only where they feel the information could be useful, or where they know that a young person is being supported by another member of staff.

## Appendix of Classroom Strategies

### The 30 Second Intervention

Using a positive tone, remind the pupil of their previous good behaviour, then withdraw from the situation allowing them the time to make a choice.

"I noticed you are...(having trouble getting started/struggling to get going/wandering around the classroom dabbling)..."

"It was the rule about/school value of compassion/integrity/respect that you broke..."

"you have chosen to...(move to the back/catch up with your work)"...

"Do you remember last week when you (arrived on time/achieved x?)"...

"That is who I need to see today...."

"Thankyou for listening" (withdrawn and give the young person some 'take up time'.

### The Restorative 5 (choose 5 from the options)

1. What happened? (listen carefully and dispassionately to the account without interrupting of disagreeing, give your own account without judgement, steer clear of sarcasm/ judgement/anything patronising, step carefully 0 if you have already decided the outcome then the questioning is redundant)
2. What were you thinking at the time? (their thinking may have been irrational at the time, it might still be irrational, it may not be obvious to the pupil what send them down the wrong path, do not offer this- simply segue to the next question)
3. What have you thought since? (all thoughts are valid even if you don't agree, listen, you might need to tease this out with "what do you think about [specific part of their previous account?])
4. How did this make people feel? (they may be unaware of others' reactions, they might need to speculate if there were not aware of how others reacted)
5. Who has been affected? (they may focus only on themselves, you may need to tease this out with "What about me/your classmates?" "What would you Mum say?")
6. How have they been affected? (they may focus on themselves, you may need to tease this out with "how do you think the teacher/your neighbour/classmates have been affected?")
7. What should we do to put things right? (an apology may not be offered and should not be demanded, if the pupil is ready to apologise then they will, a forced apology will not lead to a change in behaviour, if an apology is offered accept it with enthusiasm and reciprocation)
8. How can we do things differently in the future? (this doesn't mean that they will be able to immediately change their behaviour, you could agree that you will give them a reminder of these targets or a caution if they aren't keeping to them – if this is pre-agreed they won't be surprised by this)

## Agreement of Targets

This strategy is about agreeing what behaviours we want to see, not what we don't want. Then agreeing how reminders will be given if targets are not being met so that there is no reasonable opportunity for a pupil to be aggrieved about how they are being treated.

1. Start big "what do you want to get from this class/what do you want to do when you leave school/what is it you hope to learn?"
2. Focus in on desired behaviours "how will things have to be in the classroom for this to happen/what sort of attitude will we all have to have for this to happen/what will have to be different for us to achieve this?"
3. Ask for a specific target "can you set a target that you think would help with this/can we agree what that would look like?"
4. Agree what will happen if the target is met or not met "if everything goes well how would you like me to let you know?" (you might need to offer ideas, a well done on the way out/merits/a positive referral) then; agree what will happen if the target is not met "how do you want to tell you if you are not managing to meet the target?" (you might need to offer ideas: a reminder card/a quiet reminder)

## Neighbouring

This strategy is about using neighbouring in a planned way, which is not seen as a punitive measure.

1. Start with a seating plan, based on what you know of pupils needs (ASN folder).
2. If the seating plan needs to be adapted to employ positive neighbouring this should be used as a support, not a punishment
  - a. Speak quietly to the pupil and use the restorative 5, offering at the appropriate point that you would be willing to find another seat for the pupil if they have said that interactions with others are part of the problem
  - b. Use the 30 second intervention to introduce the choice "this is the person I need to see today, if you think you can't manage that because of where you are sitting or who you are sitting with then you have the option of sitting [here], I need you to think about whether making that choice will help you. Thankyou for listening".
3. It may be necessary to let a pupil know that a change of seat will happen. Where possible this should be indicated at the end of the previous period so that the pupil has time to process this.
4. If a pupil challenges a change of seat then use the language of choice "I am not going to stop the lesson to discuss this...I need you to sit [here]...it's your choice whether you do what I am asking or not...we will talk about this later/at the end of the period/again whatever your decision". Disengage and allow take up time.

## Positive Follow-up Conversation

Often we only follow-up when a pupil makes a choice we don't like. It is important that we minimise the air-time given to poor choices and focus on 'catching them being good'.

1. I notice you chose to [whatever]. I'm proud/pleased/happy you made that choice. That's the person I want to see more of"

## Take up Time

Many conflicts arise when a pupil does not do what is asked within the timescale expected. A pupil may have to make complex decisions about their choices which involve emotive baggage. For that reason, it is important that we allow take up time, ignoring secondary behaviours.

1. Make a request positively “I notice you haven’t managed to start working yet, I need you to...” ALWAYS end with “thankyou for listening/I appreciate that you have listened to me”
2. Walk away: focus on other pupils who are modelling the behaviour you are looking for, address the learning, use your body language to indicate dis-engagement with the poor behaviour without judgement
3. If the request is not followed; repeat the above placing a time limit “...I am going to give you until [time]/I am going to give you [x] minutes to make your choice regardless of your decision”
4. If the request is followed “I notice you have [instruction], I’m pleased/proud/happy you have made this choice. I need to see more of that person in future.” If the request is not followed; repeat the above with time limit adding a next step “....If you have not [repeat request] I will have to ask you to move seat/catch up with me at the end of the period to discuss)

## Language of Choice

The language of choice is a key strategy which when used in all interactions, prevents conflict where a pupil might seek to engage an adult.

- When a young person is not meeting expectations and various other strategies have failed, language of choice –coupled with take up time – allows a pupil to think through choice and consequence without confrontation.
- “I have listened to what you have said, I still need you to [instruction], if you choose to do this then you will be able to [continue with learning/do well this period/show me how well you can do/show me you can make the right choice/get a merit ....] if you choose not to [instruction] then we will have to [discuss this further/talk about it later/think about how we can make this work]” This statement must be presented as an open ended choice and not a threat, avoid threatening to remove or get another adult as the unspoken implication is that you aren’t overly invested in the pupil and therefore happy to pass them to someone else.
- Language of choice works when coupled with take up time and/or a specific timeframe.
- You could include in the dialogue a ‘disengagement statement’ “I am not going to discuss this just now/I am going to focus on the class/I am going to spend time with you on your learning/I am not going to argue about this because your learning is the most important thing to me”

## The Fresh Start

The fresh start assumes that whatever happened previously has been closed. We communicate positively to pupils with the: meet and greet, reminder of expected behaviours (carefully handled not to be interpreted as a further chastisement about the past), focus on learning, ensuring that the lesson does not begin with a reminder of the behaviours that we do not want. If there is still some discussion to be had about a previous incident this should be handled with a positive, time-framed statement “I know we still haven’t had the chance to talk about last period, but today is a fresh start

and although we will talk about that [state the timeframe], today I want us to focus on your learning/[reminder of a time when they showed the desired behaviours].

## **6 Ways to Reroute a Power Play (partial agreement)**

This technique is effective for the times when a pupil wants to engage a teacher in a confrontation or wants to be sent out and will therefore try to escalate the situation by answering back or increasing the level of confrontation. The trick here is to let the pupil know that you are listening, care and understand by using the stock responses below which lead them back to what you do want from them, rather than what you don't. This is known as partial agreement.

1. "I understand... (that you are angry/upset/livid)"
2. "I need you to... [request]"
3. "Maybe you are right ...(maybe I need to speak to them too)"
4. "Be that as it may... (I still need you to join in/I still need you to learn)"
5. "I've often thought the same... (but we need to focus on)"
6. I hear you... (it's not easy but I know you have do it brilliantly)"