Marland School

Relational Behaviour & Exclusion Policy

Version Date: November 2023

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Marland's Ethos

The ethos of the school is centered around continually striving to meet the holistic needs of each individual student, the overall aim being to provide each one with the highest quality of personalised teaching, learning and care. There is a relational approach and a major focus on student wellbeing, safeguarding and holistic social, emotional & educational progress and achievement.

Staff are:

• Proud of our students and the positive improvements they make, despite the many challenges they have experienced or continue to face.

• Passionate and committed to ensuring that each child or young person has their individual needs met as fully as possible on a personalised basis, that they are happy at Marland and encouraged to achieve their maximum potential.

• Forward thinking, innovative and committed to ensuring that all students are happy, enthusiastic, and purposeful learners.

Marland's Vision

"Our students are an untapped resource of positive potential. Our aim, in partnership with parents / Carers and support professionals, is to fully meet the individual social, emotional, mental health and learning needs of each and every young person. To personalise our predominately positive based approaches to enable each and every one to flourish and develop into happy, independent, emotionally literate, well educated, socially confident and productive members of society"

Policy Objectives

- To provide guidance to staff, parents and carers, governors and all other stakeholders on how to support our students to self-regulate, manage their behaviour and feel safe and ready to learn.
- To provide a framework for our collective beliefs, understanding and insight into human behaviour as it relates to students with complex needs across all Marland school sites.
- To provide a holistic, whole person, inclusive model for our understanding of self-regulation and behavioural needs.

Policy Aims

- At Marland we recognise that this policy should relate to the behaviour of and relationship between **all** members of the school community. We feel that positive relationships are the root of positive behaviour and attitudes to learning and we all have a part to play in building that positive foundation.
- We are committed to delivering an exciting and challenging curriculum, one that considers social, emotional and academic needs.
- Students will be encouraged to develop positive behaviour for learning in recognition of its importance as a lifelong skill.
- To provide a safe, happy and friendly environment which encourages each individual to achieve their own potential through a desire for excellence, using challenging, active and creative personalised learning.
- To enable staff to support children with their behaviour through providing students with strategies to manage their own behaviour.
- To maintain a calm and purposeful working atmosphere.
- To ensure that all children and adults have a sense of belonging, feeling safe, secure, and valued.
- To provide a clear, fair, and consistent approach to behaviour.
- To foster, nurture and value strong and healthy relationships.
- To ensure that our children are intrinsically motivated to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.

Key Beliefs - Principles

At Marland School we want Relational Behaviour policy to reflect our insight, knowledge and understanding of the complex needs of our students and how these impact on their ability to self-regulate, build resilience to manage their behaviour in a positive manner so they are ready to engage in learning. It is essential that all staff understand the need to offer the students the security and relationships needed to meet the individual wellbeing and mental health needs and walk beside them on their journey in becoming independent, resilient, life-long learners.

We incorporate a holistic, personalised, whole-person approach to ensure we are reflecting and planning for the needs of our students, some with complex and multi-layered needs. We are a Social, Emotional Mental Health School implementing an Attachment, Trauma and Thrive approach for all. We understand that behaviours that challenge always happen for a reason, and all are a form of communication. Students who display, or at risk of displaying challenging behaviour may well need support which involves both positive support, intervention and some form of restrictive practice. Any restrictive intervention must be legally and ethically justified, and necessary to prevent serious harm. Any Restrictive intervention should follow the principles of our chosen methodology PIPS and should always only be used in the best interest of the child. (See Marland RPI Policy)

ALWAYS:

- o **De-escalate...... De-escalate....... De-escalate**. ALWAYS exhaust all de-escalation options (where practically / safely possible) before considering an RPI.

- o consider options *'[appropriate] humour.'.... 'release rather than restrain'.... etc.*

- o use PIPs approved methodology proportionately.

- o only ever use the minimum level of RPI for the shortest amount of time.

- o swap staff to depersonalise / calm quicker, don't be too stubborn / proud to walk away yourself if you are the target.

SUSPENSION AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION

Marland School is committed to abiding by the latest DfE Guidance and this policy has been constructed considering the following:

> **'DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and student referral units in England, including student movement Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and student referral units in England - September 2022'**

Further information is available in this detailed national guidance.

Suspension

In some extreme behavioural circumstances, a fixed term suspension may be necessary to offer a period of reflection and repair for the student. A fixed term suspension should only be used as a last resort and be a proportionate response to the behaviour displayed. Suspension should enable further planning and assessment and provide opportunity for reflection for both the student and staff. Relational approaches such as solution focused, and restorative, will be used to reintegrate a student back into the school community on a fresh start, positive basis.

Permanent Exclusion

Marland School does not advocate the use of permanent exclusion unless all other viable alternatives have been exhausted. However, as an absolute last resort, we recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances where a student is no longer able to have their needs met at Marland School. The decision to exclude a student permanently will only be taken:

> • in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy;
> *and*
> • where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others such as staff or students in the school.

At Marland School, we recognise that most of our students self-regulate their behaviour and actively engage in their learning in our specialised setting, for the majority of the time. We also acknowledge that at times our students will need additional support to help them regulate their behaviour to engage in their learning.

We believe that:
- Our students want to behave well.
- Behaviour is a form of communication - we must ensure that students are supported to communicate their needs safely and appropriately using their preferred communication systems.
- Positive relationships are imperative to our practice between all members of our school community.
- Students are happy when their needs are understood and met enabling them to self-regulate and behave well, this should be recognised and acknowledged by staff in the school.
- Students and staff in the school have a sense of belonging, feeling safe, secure and valued.
- Students learn to cope with all aspects of their lives with support from others.
- Students need a personalised approach to support them to manage their behaviour and consideration must be given to sensory and emotional needs. We must also consider learning styles of the students.
- We must have realistic expectations about the rate of progress students will make when learning to adapt or develop new positive behaviours - for some it's a short journey, for others a long one.
- Respect for other people, their views and feelings and circumstances are an essential lifelong skill that our students need to be supported to develop. The development of empathy with the feelings of others affected by one's actions, promotes positive future life chances.
- Mistakes are part of the learning process, and we recognise that all our students are at different stages of the development process. All staff will support and guide our students to help them to get it right.
- All staff at Marland can learn strategies to support students to improve their behaviour. Staff will utilise a range of resources such as thrive data, student records, care plans, communication passports, etc. to gain an insight into why our students can become dysregulated and reflect on how these impact on their behaviour.
- We need to work collectively with our students, their parents/caregivers and other professionals to develop strategies as part of a positive behaviour approach to support students to self-regulate and manage their behaviour in a positive manner.
- We need to foster a culture where there is a willingness to create opportunities for reflective change in students and staff.

Marland Staff can support students by:
- Being mindful and reflecting on the quality of our relationships with each other and the students.
- Reflecting with parents and carers and other professionals so we are well-informed and have an insight into and understanding of an individual student's needs.
- By observing gathering and analysing data on emotional development and behaviour and utilising thrive approaches with all students. This will ensure our interventions are personalised, well informed and planned according to the personalised needs of each student within the context of their class, or with in a particular situation or activity.
- To work in partnership with our students, their parents and carers, and other link professionals, e.g. social care, therapy services, CAMHS, etc.
- To invest time and allow safe spaces and opportunities for students to practice these skills and make mistakes from which they can learn, develop and grow.

We have in place a variety of positive systems to promote good behaviour:

- Clear and concise expectations of behaviour will be described, modelled and encouraged through class in education and social time to ensure that all children understand what is appropriate.

- Unconditional positive regard is always reinforced with students and stakeholders

- The school has five golden principles that students and staff follow:

  1. *In the* **RIGHT PLACE**   *At the* **RIGHT TIME**   *Doing the* **RIGHT THING**

  2. *To work hard & let your classmates work hard too; to try your best at all things.*

  3. *Show respect for yourself, each other, the adults helping you and property.*

  4. *If it is illegal on the streets, then it is illegal in school.*

  5. *We live together, treat others as you would like to be treated yourself.*

- The above five principles cover any situation that may emerge in school and are in effect the school rules. Students will be supported to understand these rules and reflect on why they are beneficial for everyone in our school communities.

- Students who have made a real effort, or achieved targets, or undertaken some good learning, and/or made a concerted effort to improve in some way, will be rewarded and the information will be shared with the school community to praise and celebrate.

- Reward trips are utilised on all sites to positively acknowledge good work and behaviour, incentivising and reinforcing positive progress.

We achieve our aims when:

- We create and maintain a positive and safe school climate where effective learning can take place and all students can grow socially, emotionally, and academically, with mutual respect between all members of the school community, for each other, belongings, and the school environment.

- Provide a nurturing environment, along the lines of Dan Hughes' PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy (see appendix 1) approach to foster safe and appropriate behaviour.

- Staff use thrive, PACE and restorative approaches in their interactions with students.
- Communication, interactions and interventions are personalised to a student's needs, their learning is personalised to them and takes into account a range of data such as learning styles, sensory needs, assessments, etc.

- Staff have high expectations and maintain consistent and safe boundaries at all times.
- A school atmosphere is created which is consistent safe and caring. Marland school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment (see Safeguarding Policy).

- Students, parents/carers, staff and other professionals understand that all behaviour choices have natural consequences which are applied consistently and fairly within the school in a calm and considerate manner.

The stage of emotional development and additional needs of a student will determine their ability to self-regulate and their readiness for learning. Interruptions that occur within our emotional development can effect a healthy development in a student's wellbeing and mental health, regular thrive assessments and action planning help staff understand where a student is in their emotional development. If we are able to meet each student at his point of need and learning, it is more likely that unhelpful behaviour or behaviour that is challenging will decrease or stop.

Graduated Approach

In line with the SEND Code of Practice, we work alongside parents, students and outside agencies to adopt a 'Graduated Approach' with four stages of action: **Access, Plan, Do** and **Review**.

ACCESS:

We complete initial assessments regularly to ensure that the support we offer still matches each individual student's need. When there is little or no improvements in the child's progress, we will seek more specialist support such as Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Educational Psychologist opinion. This is all done in agreement with parents and students.

PLAN:

The Headteacher, class teachers and where beneficial, parents/carers meet to discuss outcomes for the student, this is usually through an Annual Review. We then develop and put in place interventions and support to help the student make progress. Plans always take in to account students' views and are monitored throughout the year.

DO:

Teaching staff oversee the implantation of the interventions and support the students' needs with help from 'Senior education staff'

REVIEW:

Annual Reviews are reviews are scheduled to be once a year unless an additional 'Interim' one is required due to a significant change in circumstances. The impact and quality of support is evaluated by the 'Curriculum Leadership Team' alongside class teachers. The findings are then discussed with both parents and students to consider / ratify any changes to the outcomes and to ensure the student's needs are continuing to be met.

Assessment

To guide students' progress in their emotional development journey and develop a readiness for learning we use 'thrive online assessment'. Thrive online is a systemic approach to the identification of emotional development which offers strategies to be part of a child individual action plan. Within a month of starting at our school, students will be assessed and then reassessed each term. All staff have access to the Individual Action Plans and each site has staff thrive leads.

To help lessen anxiety, build resilience and develop positive relationships students have access to:

- Identified key member of staff.

- Safe spaces to work outside of the classroom.

- Supported learning hubs where students who are dysregulated and/or disturbing the learning of others can go to calm, regulate and positively reflect with the support of sympathetic staff. This offers students the opportunity to regulate with or without staff support in readiness for learning.

- Thrive/therapy rooms.

- Break out spaces.

- Chill spaces that can facilitate physical activity.

- Interventions specific to individual student need.

- One-page profiles.

- Stress toys (including bite toys on some sites).

- Forest School within our own offsite school woodlands, staffed by a specialist Marland Forest School trained Instructor.

- Other learning activities with partner organisations.

- Extended learning opportunities (KS 3-4).

The importance of our positive, appropriate relationships with our students.

These relationships are crucial. Each adult at Marland is a significant adult for our students, and as a staff we need to foster and develop genuine caring relationships with them. To enable this, all staff need to:

- Treat students with dignity and respect at all times, communicating with them in a way that is accessible to them and their current level of need.

- Actively build trust and rapport, vital traits which must be earned and not given just because staff are adults.

- Always have high expectations for each student. If we demonstrate belief in them, it supports them to succeed.

- Invest in your relationships with the students and have fun together, walk alongside the students in times of fun but also in times of challenge.

- Always consider what is behind the behaviour and why the student is behaving this way. There is always a reason for behaviour, it's a symptom of something we need to identify and understand.

- Always keep our word and never make a promise that can't be kept, if we are unable to honour a commitment to a student, always explain clearly and honestly about why this has happened.

- Apologise if you make a mistake – we are human, mistakes happen! By apologising we are modelling this for the student, and this will help build trust and respect.

- Quietly but firmly hold consistent and appropriate boundaries for the students, they need to know they are safe.

- Always be respectful to students, do not talk about them over their heads or in front of other students.

- Be non-judgmental about student's life experiences, but use our knowledge and our emotional and behavioural data to inform our personalised planning for them.

- Appropriate physical touch is an essential element of the Attachment and Trauma approach and physical contact is not only inevitable but beneficial. Appropriate touch not only promotes a student's positive social and emotional development but is also a highly effective and powerful method of non-verbal communication and is key to the development of healthy relationships. Touch must always be appropriate and fully safeguarding compliant.

- In times of crisis it may be necessary to hold a child for theirs or others safety. All such interventions are recorded and both staff and students will have time to reflect on the intervention and suggest ways as to how we can prevent this from happening again.

Relational approaches in the classroom

- Staff will apply all the principles highlighted above in their relational approaches in the classroom. Care must be given to ensure all students are learning and they are not impacting negatively on others learning.

- As skilled SEMH practitioners', low level disruptive behaviour will be managed within the classroom using a range of relational approaches.

- Staff will manage low level disruption through relational approaches. Good quality inclusive teaching will lead to a calm and supportive environment where all students are able to learn.

- Staff should be a source of safety and security. Be mindful of projecting a sense of safety through your voice, tone, facial expressions and body language (including proxemics, chronemics and cultural norms). Be a source of security by providing regular, reliable and predictable attention for those most in need.

- Try to get to know the students beyond how they are in the classroom. Find out what they are interested in, what their qualities and strengths are. Listen to them, give them

attention, and let them know that you hold them in mind. Provide opportunities for connection within the classroom.

- Manage transitions, for many students these are a source of stress. Greet children at the door, use routine and structure to manage the start and end of lessons. Provide additional attention for those most in need at times of transition.

- Manage change, prepare students for any change to routine. Support children to be prepared for and able to anticipate any change using practical organisational strategies such as time cues, visual timetables or social stories.

- Make learning accessible by providing differentiated alternative and personalised learning to meet individual needs. Be aware of language and make it accessible, simplify and rephrase language, supplement with visuals, be very clear when giving guidance and instruction and always check understanding.

- Manage peer relationships and support social inclusion. 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 and how to work effectively with each other.

- Recognise when children are becoming stressed and regulate them. 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.

- Time in may be required whereby the student causing disruption are identified by class teachers as needing extra emotional support. Learning support staff will be called to help regulate the child and help prepare readiness for learning.

- Students who need extra support will have clear plans. These plans will be written and reviewed by the child's class teacher. They will be reviewed at the end of each term but can be adapted any time.

- Use praise and feedback effectively, in a relational approach it is more helpful to think of positive and effective feedback rather than rewards. Although rewards are still an important part of Marland's structure, these should be personalised to meet the needs of each individual student.

- Students should know that they are not defined by an event. They are allowed to make mistakes and can learn from them. Once a situation is dealt it is finished and this needs to be clear to the child.

Child on child abuse

Staff will use their professional judgement to determine whether an incident between students is abusive (Physically, Emotionally or Sexually), or would be more suitably categorised as bullying or sexual experimentation. If there is evidence to suggest that there was an intention to cause severe harm to a child, this should be regarded as abuse whether or not harm was actually caused.

This guidance should be used in conjunction with the Marland School Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy / Procedure where applicable.

Any concern must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) Annette Lee or Gareth MacIver (both based at the Residential School), or Assistant DSLs: Andy McAuley or Lianne Thomas (Secondary School – Roundswell), Jamie Sanders or Rebecca Klingenstein (Secondary School – Bideford), Allan Lawrence or Susie Nightingale-Jones (Primary School - Bideford) if:
- There is a large difference in "power", i.e. age, size, or development, between the children.

- The alleged perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm another child or other children.
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

The Executive Principal Keith Bennett has also undertaken the DSL Safeguarding Level 3 training to support the operational DSL Team.

The Chair of Governors Faith Butler, Vice Chair Kathy Martin and Link Residential Care / HR & Finance Governor Phil Spencer are also Level 3 Safeguarding trained.

This policy, in conjunction with the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy / Procedure guides what staff should do if an allegation of abuse is made against a child. Steps include:

- Reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing in telling you.
- Let him/her know you will need to tell someone else.
- Inform a senior member of staff as soon as possible.

Where appropriate, staff will use the school's anti-bullying procedures to deal with identified bullying issues.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex. The Senior Leadership and DSL Teams will work with other relevant external agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

Restorative Approach

Our relationship policy is not primarily concerned with rule enforcement. It is a tool used to promote good relationships, so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone learn. To this end we do not believe in sanctions or punishments, however we do acknowledge that some actions and negative behaviour will require a consequence. Students may require additional time to catch up on work, or intervention to reflect on reaction/behaviour displayed. When discussing incidents with students this should be done in a non-judgmental way, using restorative questions. Staff should make reference to the health and safety and the impact the situation may have had on all involved or those in the vicinity. Example

Behaviour	Consequence
Student disrupts activity or behaves in a way that makes other students feel unsafe.	Student has a break away. Student is guided to their 'safe place' to help with self – regulation Student is supported by an adult to reflect. Student apologises to the group for his/her specific actions and carries on with the activity.

Restorative approaches are based on four key features:

RESPECT - for everyone by listening to other opinions and learning to value them.

RESPONSIBILTY - taking responsibility for your own actions.

REPAIR - developing the skills within our school community so that its individual members have the necessary expertise to identify solutions that repair harm and ensure behaviours are not repeated. In essence this is repairing the relationship that was damaged.

RE-INTEGRATION - working through a structured, supportive process that aims to solve the problem and allows young people to slot back into their education at Marland.

This school use restorative approaches to encourage everyone to take responsibility for their behaviours. Staff are aware of, and some have been trained in restorative approaches and will apply them to

resolving situations in the school. This approach starts with a restorative enquiry if conflict arrives over low level issues, i.e. friendship breakups, disputes over games, running in the corridor and not responding to reasonable adult requests.

The table below shows the approach we take as opposed to more traditional behavioural approaches taken in schools.

TRADITIONAL		**RESTORATIVE**
What's happened?		What's happened?
Who's to blame?	*becomes*	Who's been harmed and in what way?
How should we punish them?	*becomes*	What needs to happen to put things right and ensure that this never happens again?

When using restorative questioning the following questions will always be asked in a quiet and appropriate area of the learning space. Questions will be first asked to the person who has been harmed and then to the harmer.

- *Tell me what happened?*
- *What were you thinking? And now?*
- *How did you feel? How do you feel now?*
- *Who else has been affected?*
- *What do you need to do to fix this / move on? How can we support you to do this?*

To make these conversations successful these ground rules need to be followed:

- Only one person talks at a time.
- No interrupting.
- Be respectful to each other.
- Listen carefully to each other.
- Confidentiality - explain that this is between the people involved (plus parents if required).
- Be aware of any matters i.e., Child Protection. If something is disclosed, appropriate measures need to be taken to follow the school's child protection policy.
- If young people do not meet expectations or are still angry / become angry, stop mediation!

If incidents are sustained or reoccur a restorative conference / meeting may need to take place with all the appropriate affected people.

Consequences will be appropriate and will be chosen and agreed between all participants involved. The aim of any consequence will be to aid learning, keep students and others safe and restore any damaged relationships.

Feedback to parents should be given when a child has been harmed. Any member of staff should use their professional judgement as whether the parent of the harmer is informed of the incident. It should always be made clear to the parent that the situation was dealt with in a restorative manner and that the situation is finished now as all parties involved left feeling the situation had been resolved.

ALWAYS TREAT OTHERS HOW YOU WANT TO BE TREATED

i.e., with genuine / explicit:

RESPECT

COMPASSION

CONCERN

CARE

Appendix 1: Dan Hughes' PACE Approach

PACE refers to **Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity** and **Empathy:**

- **Playfulness** involves spontaneity, openness, and exploration; have fun and share enjoyment with the student. Using playfulness can defuse tense situations and is useful to manage minor behaviours, as the student is less likely to respond with anger or defensiveness.

- **Acceptance** involves unconditional positive regard for the student. Accept the student's inner experience without judgement and make sense of why the student is behaving in a certain way. Acceptance does not mean accepting negative behaviours but accepting the reasons behind behaviour. When necessary criticise the behaviour, but not the student.

- **Curiosity** involves wondering about the reasons behind the behaviours, rather than being angry. This shows the student that you care and helps them make sense of their behaviour, feelings and experiences. Use phrases like *"I wonder if you are feeling like this because…"* to open up discussions with the student.

- **Empathy** involves showing them that you understand how difficult they are finding things and reassuring them that you want to help them to manage this. Validate the student's emotional experience with phrases such as *"I know how difficult that must have been for you"* and work together to find ways to support them.

For more information about the PACE approach please refer to literature by Dan Hughes.

Examples of PACE used with students at Marland School

Situation: Student in heightened state of anxiety, attempting to climb onto roof and not following instructions to come down.

Application of PACE:

- **Playfulness** – Use playful language to de-escalate the situation, e.g. *"Blimey I really would rather you came down. Problem is that if you fall, I will have to fill out a lot of forms and I'm a bit like you - I don't really like writing".*

- **Acceptance** - the student is experiencing extreme anxiety as a result of a fall out with a friend and that this is a real experience.
  Communicate that you accept how they feel, e.g. *"I can see that this has made you feel really upset".*
  Avoid saying things like: *"Oh it doesn't matter, don't be upset about a silly fall out".*

- **Curiosity** - Enquire and check what the young person's emotional experience is, e.g. *"I wonder if you're feeling angry because of what X just said?"*

- **Empathy** - Show that you understand that how difficult they are finding things, e.g. *"I understand that this must be really difficult for you. I know that when I am feeling upset, I just want to run away from everything."*

Using PACE and a calm approach, the student's anxiety decreased, and they came down off the roof and went with an adult to the learning support room. Instead of imposing consequences, once the student was calm, a discussion was had about the dangers of climbing onto the roof. The student was able to reflect on their behaviour and think of alternative things they could do next time (e.g. go to the learning support office, go to the top field to calm, etc.).