NEW HEIGHTS SCHOOL
Focus · Learn · Achieve

Relationships and Resolution Policy

Status	**Statutory**
Responsible Governors' Committee	**Full Governing Body**
Date last approved by GB	**November 2025**
Responsible Person	**Co-Headteachers**
To Review Date	**November 2026**
Last Amended Date	**November 2024**

Our school is invested in supporting the very best possible relational health between:

- Parent and child
- Child and child
- Child and school staff
- Parent and school staff
- School staff
- School staff and external agencies
- Senior leaders and governors

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

Protect:

When looking to protect, we endeavour to:

- Look for increased 'safety cues' in all aspects of the school day
- 'Meet and greet' at the school door in the morning, and at the classroom door every lesson
- Have an open-door policy for informal discussions with parents/carers should the need arise
- At Key Stage 3, our Intervention Manager works closely with our Behaviour and Emotional Support Team (BEST) to identify and support those students who are showing their feelings through their behaviours
- At Key Stage 4 our Trauma Informed Practitioners work closely with all staff to identify and support those students who are showing their feelings through their behaviours
- Staff trained in 'PACE' modes of interaction (Hughes 2015) by being warm, playful and emphatic (proven to shift students out of flight/fright/freeze positions)
- Staff trained in Thrive Approach emotional development systems
- Regular CPD sessions on trauma and attachment and the expressions of feelings too great to be held in
- On admission, parents have the opportunity to talk about traumatic experiences (ACEs) which may have an impact on their child. These are supportive discussions and parents are given avenues for additional support should the need arise
- Staff ensure that interactions with students are socially engaging and not socially defensive, to decrease likelihood of students relating defensively (flight/fright/freeze)
- A whole school commitment to cease all use of harsh voices, shouting, put

downs, criticism and shaming (proven to be damaging psychologically and neurologically)

- A whole school commitment to dealing with bullying through taking all reports of bullying seriously, investigation and restorative conversations (where this is the correct outcome. Staff refer any reports to SLT and/or the safeguarding team to be fully investigated and dealt with in the correct manner for all involved. This may involve the referral to external agencies. Consideration will also be given to the person(s) carrying out the act and support offered to them, too
- Pedagogic interventions that help staff to get to know students better on an individual basis e.g. 'I wish my teacher knew'. (What matters to them, who matters to them, their dreams and hopes). This is key to enabling students to feel safe enough to talk, if they wish, about painful life experiences, which are interfering with their ability to learn and their quality of life
- Vulnerable students have easy and daily access to at least one emotionally available adult and know when and where to find that adult. If the child does not wish to connect with the available adult, an alternative adult is found
- School staff adjust expectations around vulnerable students to correspond with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress. This includes removing vulnerable and traumatised students in a kind and non-judgmental way from situations they are not managing well (e.g. students who are continually triggered into alarm states in their classroom or break/lunch time areas, can access a calmer, smaller areas with emotionally regulating adults)
- Provision of a clear, confidential and non-shaming system of self-referral for students help/talk time
- The nurturing of staff in such a way that they feel truly valued and emotionally- regulated and in so doing to support them to interact throughout the school day with positive social engagement rather than defensiveness

Relate:

All school staff trained in emotional coaching and in relating to students in terms of four key relational needs for secure attachment:

- Affect attunement
- Empathy/validate
- Soothing/regulate
- Containment

At New Heights School we have a whole-school commitment to enabling students to see themselves, their relationships and the world positively, rather than through a lens of threat, danger or self-blame.

Vulnerable students are provided with repeated relational opportunities (with emotionally available adults) to make the shift from 'blocked trust' (not feeling psychologically safe with anyone) to trust, and from self-help to 'help seeking'.

Regulate:
Relational interventions specifically designed to bring down stress hormone levels (e.g. from toxic to tolerable) in vulnerable students, enabling them to feel calm, soothed and safe. This is to support learning, quality of life and protect against stress-induced physical and mental illness, now and in later life.

Evidence-based interventions that aim to repair psychological damage and brain damage caused by traumatic life experiences, through emotionally regulating, playful, enriched adult-child interactions. The emotional well-being and regulating of staff is treated as a priority to prevent burn-out, stress related absence, or leaving the profession through stress-related illness, secondary trauma and/or feeling undervalued, blamed or shamed. New Heights School operates a Supervision programme for key members of staff to support their emotional wellbeing.

Reflect:
In order to reflect we offer opportunities for

- Staff development and training in the art of good listening, dialogue, empathy and understanding (instead of asking a series of questions/ giving lectures)
- Provision of skills and resources to support parents and staff in meaning empathetic conversations with vulnerable students who want to talk about their lives. This is to empower students to better manage their home situations and life in general
- Within the context of an established and trusted relationship with a member of staff, students are given the means and opportunity to symbolise painful life experiences through images as well as words, as a key part of 'working through' these experiences and memory reconsolidation. Means include the provision of different modes of expression, e.g. art/play/drama/ music/sand/emotion worksheets/emotion cards
- PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are used as preventative input, informed by current research psychological and neuroscience) on mental health, mental ill-health (full

range of specific conditions), relationships (including parenting) emotions, social media and tools for how to 'do life well'. The curriculum area is focussed upon positive relationship building and all schemes address this on a weekly basis

- At Key Stage 4, all pupils have access to a timetabled bespoke Wellbeing curriculum 1 hr per week
- The curriculum area is focussed upon positive relationship building and all schemes address this on a weekly basis- (This would be done through ROAR and THRIVE at Key Stage 2 on a daily basis)
- Curricular content enables students to make informed choices about how they relate to others, how they live their lives, and how they treat their brains, bodies and minds
- Staff development and training to help students move from 'behaving' their trauma/painful life experiences, to reflecting on those experiences, to reflecting on those experiences. Staff learn to do this through empathetic conversation, addressing student negative self-referencing and helping them develop positive, coherent narratives about their lives.

Resolution – the consequences of actions

At New Heights School we understand all actions have a consequence, whether that is positive or negative. **We also understand that all unregulated behaviour could be a call for attention or support, and evidence of an unmet need.**

We have a Relationship and Resolution Policy based not on punishment and sanctions, but on resolution and interactive repair (e.g. restorative conversations) of broken or damaged relationships.

We have expectations for behaviour which are in place to keep everyone safe. These include:

- Checking all students for contraband items during our daily meet and greet sessions
- Moving around the building in a calm manner
- Following Health and Safety rules where required. For example: wearing goggles when completing science experiments, and using bobbles to tie back long hair
- Students should not bring any banned and offensive materials into school, including a legally defined list which includes articles that have been or could

be used to commit an offence or cause harm. Schools have the power to search without consent when looking for such items, and we will do so with the best interest of the child in mind. When mistakes are made and items do find their way into school, we support students to share this information with us, and deal with incidents empathically and with an understanding of the lives of our students. We take it in our stride and support the child and their family to make better choices to keep themselves and others safe (e.g. parental contact, referral to We are with you, targeted services, our school police officer etc.). Should we need to inform other services, e.g. if a crime has been committed or suspected, we do so in a fully supportive manner.

In an attempt to support mental health and emotional wellbeing and reduce the impact of social media on the lives and learning of our students, all mobile phones are routinely handed in when they come into school each day.

Rewards – our positive attitudes approach

Praise and recognition of hard work, good attainment or 'above and beyond' acts are an essential part of creating a positive climate for learning. We spend lots of time discussing how students like to receive praise and utilise many different mechanisms from public praise, to a quiet affirmation for making progress both academically, socially or emotionally. Using the PiP – RiP approach (Praise in Public, Reprimand in Private) is an integral part of our approach.

Here are some examples of ways staff let students know they are doing well, that they are being held in our minds and they should be proud of the choices they are making and all they are achieving – both emotionally and academically:

- Thumbs up and smiles
- Verbal praise
- Behaviour watch points
- Stickers and stamps on work
- Achievement cards (above and beyond, great friendship skills, fab work ethic, great resilience, etc)
- Outstanding subject praise certificate and student of the week awards
- Presentations in assemblies
- Catch them being good
- Stickers and stamps on work
- Reward cards

- Weekly attendance and subject praise certificates and student of the week awards
- Presentations in assemblies
- Growth Mindset approaches (CPD provided for staff)

The most important element of praise is often letting parents/carers know how good their child is doing in school. We make daily or weekly calls as required. Should a child receive an outstanding award in assembly, a postcard is also sent home to parents. This happens every Friday.

What do we do when incidents occur:

All staff work in a consistent, firm but fair manner, understanding that fair doesn't always mean giving every child the same thing, but making sure a child's basic emotional needs are met at any particular time. As previously stated, unregulated behaviour could be an expression of an unmet need, and wherever possible staff discuss shows of unregulated behaviour, with the whole child in mind.

Staff will remember to use the approach of PiP – RiP (praise in public, reprimand in private,) and will use it when the situation requires. Some students find praise difficult to manage or overwhelming, and staff will remember to reflect upon this prior to acting.

Recording of incidents:

Students are encouraged in their:

- Readiness to Learn (Ready)
- Respect of the school, teachers and each other (Respectful)
- Safe approach (Safe)

These 3 key guiding principles are the backbone to our discussions with the students as they navigate through their New Heights learning experience. They lead to conversations and moments for reflection and a chance to discuss the 'all actions have a consequence, positive or negative' principle.

Sanctions:

Sanctions are used as a chance to 'put-right' things which need to be addressed. They are not meant to be punitive or demeaning. They can take the form of:

- Apologies for verbal outbursts or challenging behaviour (if the child is suitably regulated and working from their frontal cortex rather than from their limbic system or brain-stem)
- Fixing damage which has been caused whilst emotionally dysregulated
- Talking through the actions and consequences of actions and offering alternatives through restorative practices
- Discussion with parents as and when required

Recording of incidents:

- If there is a safeguarding concern, staff are trained to record these on CPOMS so the safeguarding team can deal with them as they arise at the staff member's earliest opportunity
- Arbor is used to record serious incidents within school. Teachers and LSAs can access the system so we have a record of incidents should they arise. Behaviour watch is also used to record the behaviour points for social attitude, personal conduct and attitude to learning

De-brief

At the start of the day at KS3/KS4 there is a whole school morning briefing. At KS2/KS3/KS4 at the end of each school day there is a daily briefing to share key events or significant information to support particular students on that day. Any concerns can be raised initially through this platform, unless it has already been raised through our safeguarding procedures via CPOMS. De-brief is a good way to get an overview of how the students are getting on from lesson to lesson, subject to subject. It also provides a supportive platform so staff can share their concerns and not carry them home with them – an integral part of our staff mental health and emotional well-being processes. Throughout the week and whenever necessary, LSAs and teachers make contact with parents/carers. This provides parents with at least 1 contact per week, and highlights to students that we work as a team with home to get them the best outcomes. The aim of these phone calls is to relay positive messages and the focus is always to be positive in our approach.

When a child needs adult help to keep themselves and others safe

Although every opportunity will be taken to de-escalate a situation using the techniques and methods, we spend a lot of time making our primary approach for all interactions with our students, there may be occasions when adults need to physically intervene to keep everyone safe.

Members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent students:

- Committing an offence
- Injuring themselves or others
- Damaging property
- Disrupting the good order and discipline in the classroom and around school

Our utmost concern is the integrity and wellbeing of the child and we endeavour to use physical intervention as a last resort and in as respectful and de-escalating manner possible.

Suspensions

At New Heights School we are aware of the detrimental impact 'suspension' can have on the mental health and emotional wellbeing of those who are suspended. It is always our very last approach and always taken using great caution. We will exhaust all other strategies before suspending and will only use this as a last resort, if at all.

For behaviour which causes great concern, Suspension may be given. The Co-Headteachers/Head of School decides on a Suspension, taking into account all the circumstances, the evidence available and the need to balance the interests of the child against those of the whole school community. Suspensions are served in the child's home and students are under the supervision of parents/carers or other responsible adult. Any child that is suspended from school is required to engage in the school's remote learning provision for the days of the suspension period. Parents / Carers need to accompany the child to a Return from Suspension (RfS) meeting in school before they are allowed back into lessons. During this meeting, the opportunity will be taken to complete restorative practices between the child and members of staff and /or other students directly affected by the incident resulting in the Suspension.