




# Supporting Pro-Social and Pro-Learning Skills (Behaviour) Policy

## 2021

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Date to be reviewed	October 2022
Signed: Chair of Governors	
Signed: Headteacher	<i>Becky Reed</i>

# Supporting Pro-social and Pro-learning Skills Policy

## Introduction

This policy has been created with support from Changing Chances to align with The Empowerment Approach now being implemented at Chantry Community Primary School.

Successfully implementing the Empowerment Approach across school requires a cultural shift – it is not just about changing approaches and methods. As with any school improvement strategy, it will take time to bring about long-term change, several years rather than several months. This policy is therefore likely to evolve and develop as the school community become proficient with the approach. It will be regularly updated to reflect this.

## SECTION 1 – OUR AMBITION

Our overarching ambition at Chantry is to create an inclusive school where children are supported to become confident, prosocial and have both the skills and the intrinsic motivation to do the right thing, whether or not someone is watching. We believe our responsibility lies not only in the present but also ensuring children develop the skills to become great future citizens who contribute positively to the communities in which they live.

We recognise that, as with all learning, children will enter our school at very different stages. Some children will already have developed a good level of pro-social and pro-learning skills, due to the support and experiences they have enjoyed. It will be easy for them to learn and play successfully. Other children may have greater needs and difficulties than their peers. This means it will be much harder for them to follow routines, work with others and meet the daily demands of school. They will need greater support. We are aiming to achieve an inclusive school where **every** member feels safe, content and able to learn. Our approach therefore ensures that, whilst we meet the needs of the most vulnerable, those of the whole group also hold paramount importance.

We want Chantry to be a place where we inspire children to set themselves aspirational goals, and be intrinsically motivated to achieve them. We know that a person never rises to low expectations and so we will always insist children work hard to become the best they can possibly be, in every way. We also know that some children will find meeting our high expectations much harder; so we will always combine this with equally high support. Every child deserves a champion - we will never give up on a child.

We recognise that learning means children will not always get things right. This is as true of the skills associated with behaviour as it is with reading, writing, swimming or maths. We are educators, not controllers. When children do not meet expectations, we will therefore focus on working **with** them so they can do better next time. At Chantry we work hard not to just ‘manage’ children, sitting an adult by their side to ‘keep them on task’. We will keep working with a child to build their skills and ensure they make ongoing progress until they can succeed independently. At the same time, we will make sure things are in place to ensure all those around them are safe, content and able to learn.

## **SECTION 2: OUR GOALS**

### **For all children to:**

- Build the learning skills needed to achieve well in the classroom and beyond.
- Develop strong pro-social skills so they talk and act in ways that are good for those around them and contribute positively to the groups and communities in which they belong.
- Become strong and positive self-advocates so they secure their individual needs successfully and in ways that work for others.

## **SECTION 3: AIMS OF THE POLICY**

- To secure a calm, supportive and enjoyable environment for children and adults alike.
- To support all children in meeting their physical, emotional and learning needs fully and with increasing independence so they feel great and can learn and play at their best.
- To support all young people in developing the skills needed to learn and play successfully and with increasing independence.
- To have a consistent approach to behaviour throughout the school community and beyond so that all adults supporting our children use shared language and strategies.
- To establish clear procedures for agreeing expectations with children, supporting children to prepare and plan to meet them and for responding and following up when they do not manage to do so.
- To ensure that all members of our school community are aware of these procedures and follow them consistently.
- To agree clear expectations with children ahead of tasks and events and provide opportunities for them to plan and prepare to be at their best.
- To teach children about pro-social and pro-learning behaviours through our Wellbeing curriculum (which includes but is not limited to PSHE, RSE, Online Safety, the Empowerment Approach, Neuroninja and British values).
- To promote Chantry values
- To recognise and celebrate progress in all areas of learning, including pro-social and pro-learning behaviour.

## **SECTION 4 – OUR APPROACH TO SUPPORTING BEHAVIOUR: ADOPTING EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE**

At Chantry we have adopted The Empowerment Approach to behaviour because it has been developed by a team of educationalists, psychologists and coaches. It uniquely brings together a range of disciplines, including neuroscience, neurobiology, psychology, coaching and education, ensuring the strategies we use with children to support their behaviour are firmly evidence-based. Please see the Appendix for further information.

## **SECTION 5 – OUR STRUCTURED & SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO IMPROVING BEHAVIOUR**

At Chantry we utilise a systematic way of preparing young people to be at their best and a clear structure for responding when children do not meet agreed expectations. We use straightforward strategies to respond in the moment and a consistent method of follow-up to ensure children make sustained progress.

### **Key elements of our approach**

- Teaching children about their brains
- Agreeing high expectations
- Supporting children to prepare and plan to be at their best for learning and play
- Responding by connecting when things go wrong
- Following up every incident and solving problems together
- Coaching young people to resolve unhelpful behaviour patterns

### **Cultural shift**

Our approach is not simply a strategy for managing behaviour but a cultural shift in how difficulties are perceived and children are supported in securing long-term essential life skills, mental well-being and future success. It utilises neurobiology and neuroscience to support young people, their teachers and families in understanding the factors underlying unhelpful behaviours.

It provides a clear and structured approach based on this scientific evidence for responding to difficulties, problem solving and working towards future progress. The structured nature of the approach, along with its clear principles, mantras, tools and visual supports, ensures it is easily accessible for all ages, from nursery upwards.

### **Beyond the Classroom through a Shared Language**

At Chantry we believe that real impact requires all adults around our children to adopt a shared language and consistent techniques. Our approach to behaviour is therefore not limited to the classroom. We ensure that training, information and support extends to all members of our community, and there is an emphasis on developing a shared language accessible to all, from the youngest reception child to their parents and grandparents.

### **Putting the child at the centre**

At the core of the approach is ensuring the young person's voice remains central. In order to have a genuine voice, it is crucial that children are supported to understand their behaviour and develop strong metacognitive skills. Knowledge is power. By understanding their own responses to situations and the responses of others, we give children an authentic opportunity to voice their thoughts, concerns and develop solutions that last.

## SECTION 6 – WHAT WE BELIEVE

### Key principles of our approach to behaviour:

- **Be Curious Not Furious:** maintaining a calm, investigative and solution-focused mindset towards behaviour that can be unhelpful for the individual and those around them; training and supporting all adults in the school to respond by acknowledging and addressing the unmet needs and missing skills that underlie the behaviour, rather than focusing on the behaviour itself.
- **Positive, kind, unconditionally positive relationships:** prioritising strong, kind, trusting relationships between staff, children and their parents/carers. Adults must position themselves **for** rather than **against** the child, with the core belief that when people **feel** better, they **do** better.
- **High expectations, high support:** expecting all children to achieve their very best and make good ongoing progress; providing high quality, systematic and carefully planned support (**with** the child, **not done to** the child) for any pupils who are not yet able to meet those expectations. High expectations should always be teamed with a spirit of kindness and unconditional support.
- **Teach children (and adults) about their brain:** placing a high priority on developing children's understanding of themselves and their brains; recognising that knowledge of oneself is empowering and is the first step towards progress – one cannot change what one doesn't know or understand.
- **Understand needs:** when emotional, physical, sensory and learning needs aren't well met, challenging behaviour may be the outcome for some children and young people. By understanding needs, one is in a better position to prepare to meet them well.
- **Follow-up is essential** – 'without follow-up, there will always be mopping up'. We believe that, like all other areas of learning, we must have a systematic and rigorous approach to improvement and consistently follow-up any times when a child does not meet the agreed expectations. Consistent follow-up is essential in securing good progress.
- **Children's voice at the centre** – supporting children to understand their behaviour and decide on goals and how to achieve them should be at the heart of our work; by doing so, we secure intrinsic motivation and positive self-advocacy.
- **Teach Executive Function Skills:** attention control, impulse control, processing speed, working memory; cognitive flexibility and emotional regulation are key skills for life. They need to be taught and practised.

## **PART 7 – WHAT OUR BELIEFS MEAN IN PRACTICE**

### **A. Building the Foundations: how adults should prepare for children to be at their best:**

There are four main elements to how adults at Chantry support young people to achieve the best they can:

- I. **Teach children about their brain** so they can prepare to meet their needs positively:
  - All classes follow teaching plans which ensure children learn about their brains, their needs and are taught the skills needed to learn and play successfully on their own and with others.
- II. **Agree expectations** with children so they feel a sense of control over what happens to them and an ownership of boundaries.
- III. **Help children to plan and prepare to be at their best:**
  - All adults will follow a routine in which expectations are agreed ahead of a task or event and children are given the opportunity to consider what they may need in order to work at their very best.
- IV. **Show unconditional support** – work with children and put preserving good relationships first.
  - All adults will work hard to establish secure, positive relationships with children. If the relationship is not positive, the adult will take responsibility to put this right.

**What this looks like in practice at Chantry:**

#### **I. Teach children about their brain**

All classes follow specific curriculum plans related to The Empowerment Approach as part of our Wellbeing Curriculum. These plans focus on helping children to better understand their physical, emotional and learning needs and the needs of those around them so that they can learn and play at their best. The plans will also focus on supporting all children in building strong pro-social and pro-learning skills.

#### **II. Agree Expectations: Our School Charter**

At Chantry we believe the key to teaching children pro-social and pro-learning skills is to provide as much practise as possible in thinking through how people would need to talk and act for everyone to feel safe, content and able to learn and play at their best – for it to be, ‘Good for Me, Good for You, Good for Everyone!’.

Pro-social and pro-learning expectations can vary widely for different situations. What is considered acceptable in a mosque, temple or church is very different to how people expect us to talk and act in a playground. Social etiquette is different in a cinema than it is in a vibrant café. Having static ‘rules’ which are given to children rather than being agreed collaboratively strips children of the opportunity to develop their skill at thinking through the needs of all parties in varying situations.

An essential element of the approach therefore includes agreeing expectations **prior** to any activity or event and helping children think through and agree what will help everyone to feel safe, content and able to learn or play at their best, what they might find difficult in keeping to that agreement and what will help them manage it well. We call this strategy ‘Prep4Best’ and it is explained in further detail in the following section.

At the same time, there are some expectations which are common to all situations: talking and acting in ways which mean the people around us feel safe and respected; looking after our physical world so it is in a good condition for others to enjoy for example.

It is equally important for children to have a role in thinking through these wider expectations and we do this through our 'School Charter'. The process of establishing our Chantry School Charter each year enables children to feel greater authorship and leads to a greater investment in keeping to these. It also means children understand the purpose of the expectations; knowing the 'why' results in individuals feeling less controlled and better motivated to keep to the boundaries agreed. Please see Appendix for further information.

### **Should our expectations be the same for everyone?**

Yes. We believe it is important for everyone to feel safe, happy and to be able to learn at their best. This will only happen if every person in the class (including adults) keeps to the charter.

However, we also know there are genuine reasons why some children find it much harder to keep to the expectations agreed. These children need adjustments, support and scaffolds to ensure they can succeed.

Further information on the reasons why some children may have greater difficulty in keeping to expectations and what we can do to support their progress can be found in the Appendix.

### **III. Help all children to plan and prepare to be at their best (Prep4Best):**

Whilst some children with higher needs and poorer EF skills may require 'Prep4Best' which is individual to them, these strategies should also be a routine element of **daily practice** in every class and for **all** children.

Prior to any activity or event, adults should routinely use 'Prep4Best' (with the visual cue so children know it is 'Prep4Best' time), during which the class think through needs, what might go wrong and consider what will help them prevent this so they can be at their best. This may not need to be repeated for regular activities once all children have established how they will be at their best but should be repeated regularly as a reminder and **always** take place prior to any new or unfamiliar task.

Prep4Best is a crucial element since it ensures all staff set consistently high expectations and ensures a proactive rather than reactive approach to behaviour. It is also a good habit for children to develop and prevents an individual from launching into a task without preparation. It is a habit that which will be of great help far into their future studies and work.

### **IV: Show unconditional support**

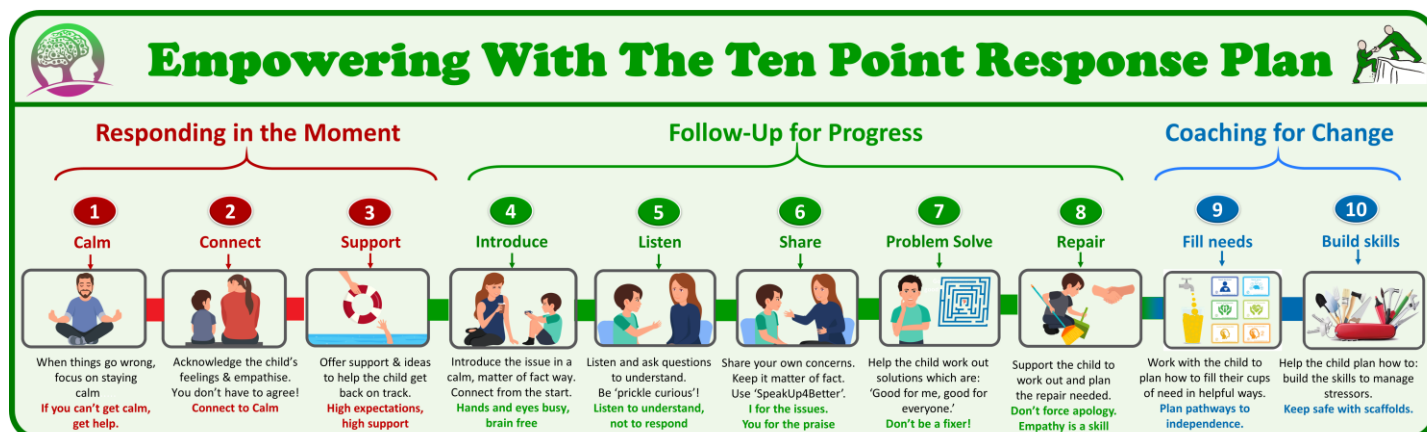
Every child needs a champion; research has shown that just one supportive adult in a child's life can make all the difference. We are educators, and as such, we will ensure every Chantry child feels unconditionally supported and cared for, whatever the challenges. We recognise that children can sometimes present with behaviours that are incredibly challenging and upsetting for those around them. Whilst securing the safety and well-being of all within our school community, this will always be teamed with a spirit of unconditional support and kindness for the individual child. This support does certainly not have to be at the expense of high expectations – we can be kind without agreeing or condoning an unhelpful behaviour.



## B. How adults should respond when children do not keep to expectations:

If a child does not manage to keep to expectations, all staff and adults supporting should follow the '10 Point Response Plan to Challenging Behaviour'.

All staff receive training in all elements of the approach and it will be a core aspect of our Induction Programme. Any staff who are struggling with any of the different elements of the 10 Point Response Plan should speak with their Line Manager and request support and coaching so they can secure improvement as soon as possible.



The 10 Point Response Plan has been carefully designed using evidence from neuroscience, psychology and coaching in the most effective strategies for supporting young people.

The 10 Point Response Plan is divided into three clear stages:

- I. **Responding in the Moment** – how adults should respond at the time when a child presents with unhelpful behaviours.
- II. **Following-up for Progress** – the way we follow-up after an incident to ensure the child does better next time
- III. **Coaching for Change** – how we support children who present with more significant difficulties to ensure ongoing improvement.

It is essential that these stages are followed consistently and systematically; without doing so, the approach will not be as effective and the child will be prevented from making the progress they deserve: the progress which is so essential for their own success and the well-being and achievement of those around them.

Procedures for the different elements of the Ten Point Response Plan and when to use them are contained Appendix of this policy.

### Stage I Support: Responding in the Moment (think paramedic):

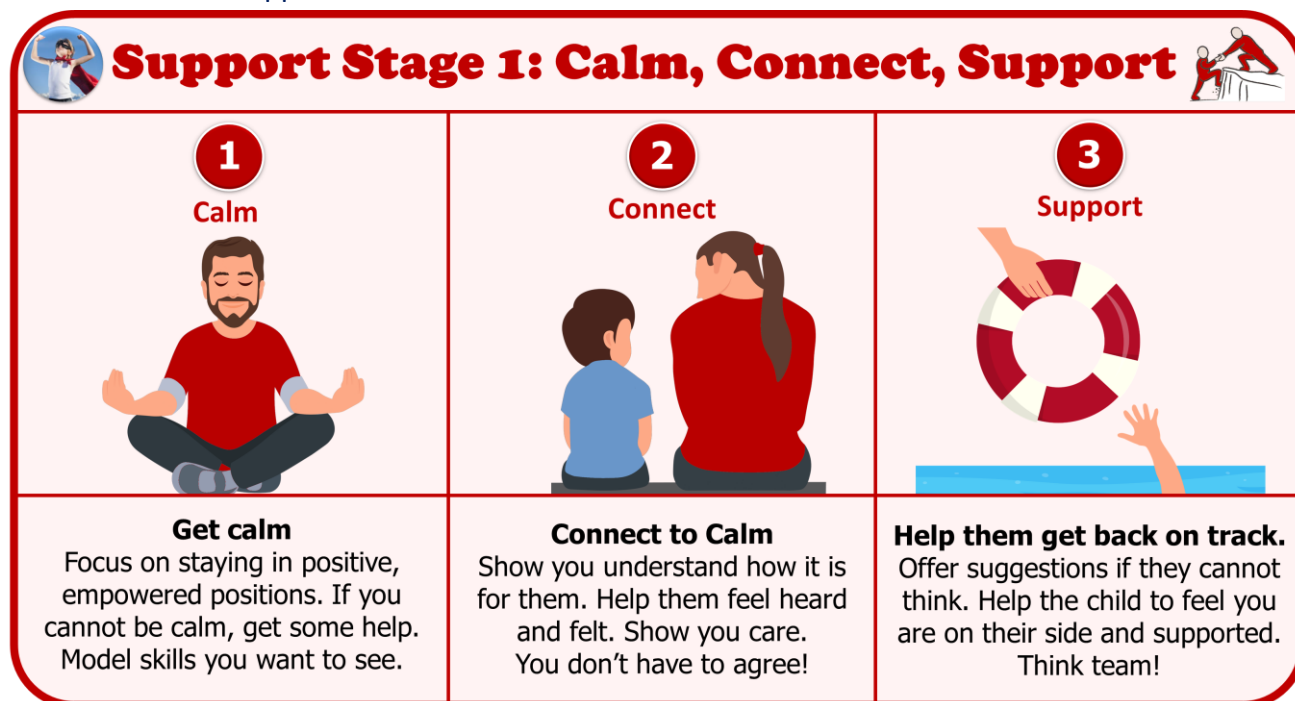
Whenever a child is not meeting the expectations agreed, the adult should respond through Calm, Connect, Support:

- **Calm:** the adult needs to find their own calm.



All adults will model self-regulation at all times, helping the child to regulate their own emotions.

- **Connect:** acknowledge and empathise with their feelings, you don't have to agree.  
When things go wrong, the adult will say things which help the child to feel supported and understood.
- **Support:** Help them to get back on track for the moment. Working out steps for next time comes later.  
Adults will always offer ways to help the child get back on track, such as a different space to learn or other available supports.



### Why should adults use this approach when responding to unhelpful behaviours?

We know from neuroscience that when children dysregulate, the areas of the brain responsible for rational thinking, reasoning and problem solving are inhibited. This means that the first priority is to regulate the child. We know that, when someone is given support and empathy, oxytocin is released into the body which in turn speeds up the regulatory system. Adults should therefore always respond with support and empathy, even when a child has done things we don't agree with. Showing support and empathy does not mean we have to agree with or condone the action.

Another reason for responding with Calm, Connect Support is that we know that responsive, positive relationships are crucial to long term well-being and success. When adults respond in cross or disappointed ways, the child begins to feel adults are not on their side. Relational safety is crucial for children and if this is damaged, it becomes a significant unmet need which can further exacerbate the stressors contributing to unhelpful behaviours.

In addition, negative responses from adults can lead the child to self-identify as 'bad' or 'naughty' (and for her / his peers to label them as 'naughty'). When a child 'feels naughty', they feel worse about themselves and their responses can spiral downwards; in many schools, children become trapped in the 'punishment cycle'. It is therefore crucial that adults **always** respond calmly and supportively so that a child's self-concept is protected. When people feel better, they do better!

**However, embracing a spirit of support and empathy does not mean lowering expectations or not holding children to account.** Maintaining high expectations is crucial; it is therefore vital that there remains a consistently tight focus on the importance of pro-social and pro-learning skills and there is **always** follow-up

when a child does not meet expectations. Every member of the school community should know that children who aren't managing to keep to expectations will be given lots of extra help, just like someone in reading might receive if they are struggling, and they may have to work harder and give extra time until they can manage successfully.

## Stage II and III Support: Follow-up for Progress - (think surgeon):

Follow-up involves two elements: a) Coaching Conversation and b) Repair Time.

Repair Time should always be carried out separately if the child's words or actions had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

Repair Time is separate to a Coaching Conversation and they have very different purposes: the purpose of the Coaching Conversation is to problem-solve the concerns and needs of all parties and find a solution to enable the child to do better next time. Repair Time on the other hand is about reflecting on any amends that should be made and building the skills of social cognition and empathy.

## Coaching Conversations: How all adults should follow-up every incident:

Every time a child does not meet the expectations agreed at the start, it should be followed-up at a time when everyone is calm using a 'Coaching Conversation'. Coaching Conversations are a problem-solving technique which focus on understanding needs, building skills and planning how to do better next time.

We use this method because we know that punitive consequences are good at making children feel bad but are very poor at helping children to:

- a) work out how to meet their needs better next time
- b) build their EF skills
- c) develop their Emotional Intelligence.

Coaching Conversations support children in all these vital areas. During a Coaching Conversation, the concerns of the child **and** the adult are explored and ways to meet both are discussed.



## Stage II Support: The Coaching Conversation

- **Introduce the concern** in a way that keeps the child regulated and feeling supported

- **Listen to the child** – listen to understand, not to respond.  
Ask questions until both you and the child really understand the needs and missing skills behind the issue. Ask questions in a way the child feels heard and their perspective understood.
- **Share** your concerns and your point of view using the ‘Speak Up for Better’ technique (start with evidence and how you are interpreting it, use ‘I’ rather than ‘you’).
- **Problem-solve** together – always ask for the child’s ideas first; expect the child to work hard at thinking of solutions which are ‘Good for Me, Good for You, Good for Everyone’. If they really cannot think of solutions, despite trying hard, the adult should make suggestions and encourage the child to decide which would be best. The principle is that the child feels authorship of the solution as this will make it more likely they will follow it through.

### Things adults should keep in mind to secure sustained ongoing progress

- **Real, long-term change takes time** – our job is to help children and young people to create new neural pathways, and to recognise that they can’t do this overnight. This means that the first Coaching Conversation is unlikely to lead to instant change – ‘Change needs more than a chat’.
- **Scaffolding pathways to independence:** Children and adults need to be clear about the end goal. Small steps should be planned with the child, and successes recognised and celebrated.

It may be necessary to put scaffolds in place for a while, but it is essential that over time these are reduced and removed as the child develops the skills to function independently. When supports and scaffolds remain static, children become dependent.

### Repair Time: a restorative justice technique (used at all stages):

Repair Time should **always** take place if a child’s words or actions have had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

Repair Time is separate to the Coaching Conversation and, as noted on Page 14, has a distinct and separate purpose.

Repair Time should be scheduled to take place as soon after the incident as possible but only once the child is calm. It is preferable that the adult first involved in the incident leads Repair Time, wherever possible.

During this stage, the child is supported to consider the perspectives of others; they are helped to think through whether the needs of other people were compromised in any way – the natural impact that their words or actions may have had. By exploring this in a matter-of-fact way and in a spirit of support, the ‘repair stage’ supports improved skills within the areas of social cognition and empathy.



If a child says they do not care about the impact on others and do not want to make things better, they should never be forced. The adult should simply show them the Control Centre Skills card for Emotional Intelligence (gold needs card) and explain that this just means they haven't learned the skills yet to either feel what others feel or want others to feel better. The adult should also emphasise that:

- These are really important skills for everyone in the world to have to make sure it is a pleasant place for us all to live
- As the child's educator, we have a duty to help them improve in these skills so some extra help will be put in place.
- This may mean some extra learning before or after school, or during unstructured times but it is not a punishment – it is because you care about them and those around them deeply – we want them to achieve well and for others to feel safe and content.
- Reassure them that any extra sessions will be within a spirit of support and as enjoyable as possible.

### Stage 3: Coaching Time

Coaching Time should take place in the event that a Coaching Conversation has been used several times yet not led to any noticeable improvement.

It is vital that the child does not see Coaching Time as a punishment but rather as a commitment to wanting them to do better so they can achieve well. This message should be emphasised to the child and everything should be done to ensure the experience is a positive one for the child, whilst also firmly holding them to account for making progress.

Coaching Time should be carried out in a spirit of support with an adult with whom the child has a good relationship. It is ideal if this is the adult who teaches the child most. Coaching Time can take place in groups, if necessary.

Coaching Time incorporates the following different elements:



If three Coaching Times have taken place and these have not led to a change to the unhelpful behaviour, an individual plan and a coaching programme should be put in place.

### Support Stage 4: Coaching for Change Programme

If Coaching Time has taken place on three occasions and sufficient progress has not been achieved, the child should be placed on a Coaching Programme. The Coaching Programme is a more intensive level of support for children who have higher levels of difficulty; it involves a series of sessions which should ideally take place outside of the school day.

The Coaching Programme involves the following elements:



At Support Stages 3 & 4 a child will always have an individual plan which identifies and plans for unmet needs and the building of any lacking Executive Function Skills. At Chantry, our SENCO, Nurture Lead Teacher and Nurture Support Assistant are here to lead and support class teachers with this. The Educational Mental Health Practitioner, outside coaches and therapists, along with other outside agencies (ESBAS, CLASS etc) are here to support children with building missing skills and finding helpful ways to get need met.

### C. Consequences:

The consequences of keeping and not keeping to each expectation on the charter are focused first on the **natural impact** i.e. If we are kind and calm in how we respond to others, they will feel safe. If we respond unkindly and aggressively, others will feel unsafe and may feel scared. They may then not wish to spend time with us.

**The reason for this is that a focus on the natural impact supports the development of:**

- Emotional intelligence
- Empathy
- A strong moral compass
- Intrinsic motivation to do the right thing



**We know that, if consequences are focused on the rewards children will get or the punishments they will suffer, it leads to children:**

- Thinking about what's in it for themselves rather than developing social and emotional intelligence
- Doing things because they think they may be seen or get caught rather than developing a strong moral compass
- Becoming dependent on authority rather than developing the independence to think through the right thing to do for the well-being of themselves and others
- Relying on extrinsic motivation rather than feeling internally motivated to make moral decisions.

Internal motivation, independence and a clear moral compass are crucial for children's futures; by building these early, they will be better equipped to avoid the common pressures experienced in teenage hood and beyond which lead to substance abuse, risky behaviours and crime.

At Chantry, we hold children tightly to account by always following-up every incident of unhelpful behaviour through Coaching Conversations and, if the unhelpful behaviour continues, supporting ongoing progress through a programme of coaching.

Unlike the consequences commonly used in schools such as missing play and detentions, we use ConEDsequences; the difference is that a ConEDsequence is focused on helping the child to **do better** rather than **feel worse**; the child may therefore be asked to stay for coaching outside of school hours or in unstructured times, but this will be carried out with a spirit of support and kindness – like all learning, we want the child to learn the skills to do better **and** enjoy the experience along the way. At Chantry for example the Reflection Room or alternative lunchtime and playtime provision provides a safe and settled experience for those who find it hard to manage well.

### **What makes this different from a traditional behaviour management strategy?**

Much of **what** happens will be the same; it is **how** it happens and the **intentions** and **focus** behind the adult actions that will be different.

#### **a) Supportive Intentions**

When a child isn't managing, the 10 Point Response Plan will be used to help get them back on track and they will be reminded of the needs of the adult and others in the class. The focus will be on regulation, protecting self-esteem, developing emotional intelligence and collaborative problem-solving.

If a child's actions are stopping others from learning or putting others at risk, of course it isn't appropriate for the child to remain in the class. However, **how** this is communicated will be very different – it will be in a supportive and calm manner emphasising that the adult needs to help the child find a place to be where they and others around them can feel good and successful. The intention is to secure the best achievement for all children – the child and the rest of the class.

#### **b) A Skills Focus**

This approach is also far more concerned and rigorous in recognising and addressing any unmet needs and making progress in the skills that are preventing them from meeting the class charter in the first place. This differs from traditional behaviour policies that assume sanctions or rewards alone will help children to make progress.

### **What happens if a child continues to fail to meet expectations on the charter?**

Every child at Chantry deserves to feel safe, happy and be able to learn. It is therefore vital that, if a pupil in the class is putting this at risk, the right support is put in place so that other children are protected.

If the use of Calm Connect Respond, Coaching, support on skill building and scaffolds and adjustments to help whilst these are still developing, isn't proving sufficient, it may be the child needs some different provision within the school whilst they develop the necessary skills.

This might be an alternative timetable with shorter sessions in class for tasks in which they are able to achieve well along with Nurture Group Sessions, or 1:1 nurture support to practise key Executive Function skills. It might also include working within other areas in the school where the child can build confidence and skills. In all contexts, the specific skills which will be a focus to build should be **explicit, decided with the child and progress tracked**.

Overviews of our Strategies at Chantry:

1. 10 Point Response Plan
2. Follow up with a Coaching Conversation: follow-up is crucial, without it, children won't make progress
3. Individual action plan if there is a pattern of not meeting expectations
4. Adjustments and scaffolds put in place
5. Alternative provision arrangements may need to be made within the school whilst skills being developed

Please see Appendices and the following linked policies and documents for more information:

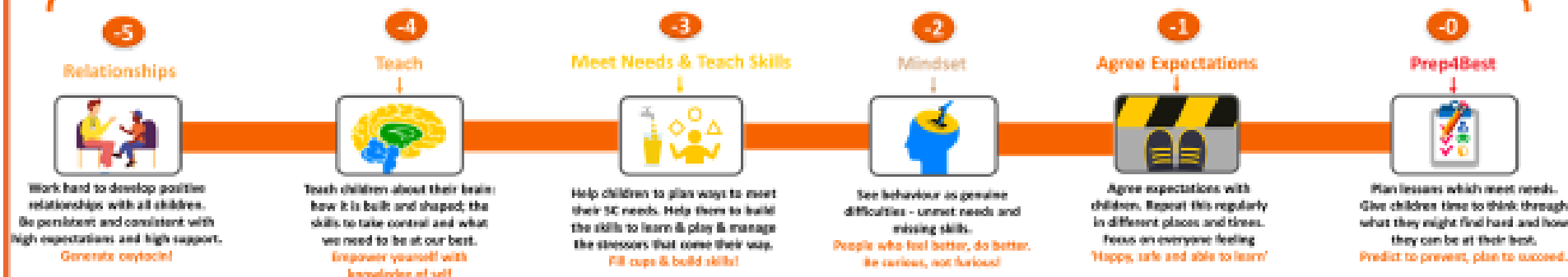
- Wellbeing Policies (including PSHE, RSE)
- SEND Local Offer
- SEND Information Report
- Safe Touch (Positive Handling) Policy



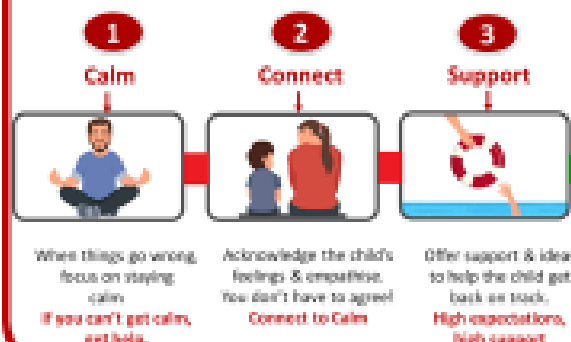
# Appendix

# The Four Key Elements of the Approach

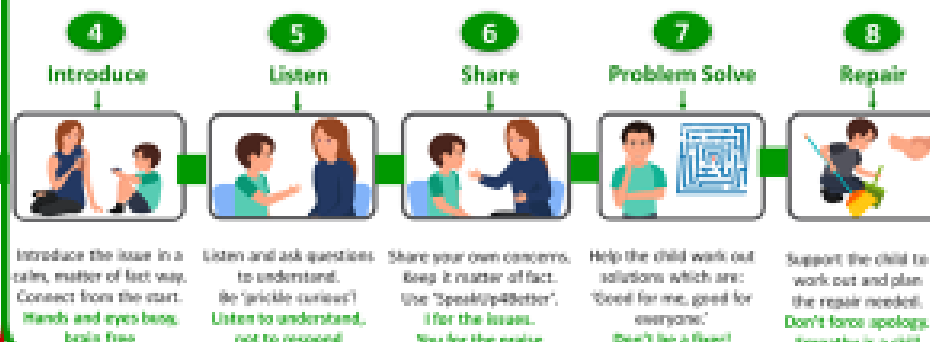
## Building the Foundations (before things go wrong)



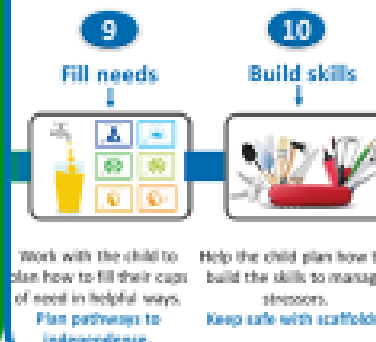
## Responding in the Moment



## Follow-Up for Progress



## Coaching for Change



### The process of agreeing Our School Charter:

- Each class contributes, by first agreeing the behaviours which would ensure every member feels safe, content and able to learn in the different situations they experience within school.
  - Each class discusses the natural consequences of keeping to and not keeping to these expectations. E.g. If I fidget around a lot in class, the natural consequence is that others won't be able to focus so well and they may not enjoy sitting near me and want to sit away from me.
  - Each class list is shared with the School Council and a whole school class charter, based on all the suggestions, is designed. (See Appendix: 'Ten Steps to creating Class Charters' document).
  - Class Charters are referred back to at all times to ensure that children understand the natural consequences of both showing pro-social and pro-learning behaviours and also the natural consequences of showing anti-social and anti-learning behaviours.
1. Explain the meaning of pro-and anti-social. Show photographs. Ask children to discuss in pairs and list the pro- and anti-social behaviours they can spot.
  2. Explain the meaning of pro and anti-learning. What behaviours do people need to learn at their best? Show photographs again and children use to discuss and list pro learning and anti-learning behaviours.
  3. Scribe a list of pro-social and pro-learning behaviours under the two columns PRO-SOCIAL and PRO-LEARNING. For younger children, they will need these to be created using communication in print / pictures.  
  
Print copies – enough for children to work in pairs. (If children give ideas as negatives e.g. 'don't hit' or 'no swearing', help them turn them into positives – behaviours that ARE pro-social and pro-learning).
  4. Introduce the three main goals: For everyone to:
    - a. Feel safe in this class
    - b. Feel happy in this class
    - c. Be able to learn at my best and achieve well in this class

Ask children to work in pairs; under each of the three goals, stick what everyone would need to be like (from their list of pro-social and pro-learning behaviours) to achieve each of the three goals – to feel safe, happy and be able to learn.
  5. As a class, create a large version of the above to give to the School Council.

#### THIS NEXT PART IS IMPORTANT:

Say to the class: **"You may find some of these things difficult to keep to; this is because you may not have the skills yet to manage. We will be learning about the brain so you better understand why you find it difficult. It is important to know which parts you find difficult so you can ask for help before things go wrong."**

Have a look at the list together.

Ask: "Which parts do you think you will find difficult?"

**Give each child a copy of the list.**

**Ask children to highlight the ones they think they may struggle with.**

Ask: "What could help you to manage the parts you think you will struggle with better? Discuss strategies.

IT MAY BE BEST FOR AN ADULT TO DO THIS WITH SMALL GROUPS WHILST THE REST OF THE GROUP WORK ON SOMETHING THEY CAN DO INDEPENDENTLY. FOR CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS, IT MAY BE APPROPRIATE TO WORK INDIVIDUALLY WITH THEM TO COMPLETE THIS PART.

6. Each class gives their final large version of their pro-social and pro-learning list to The School Council. They look at the list from each class and with help from an adult, summarise so that there are no more than 2 or 3 expectations under each column (pro-social and pro-learning).
7. Explain that this list will become the 'School Charter'. The three goals (happy, safe, able to learn at our best) will be at the top and the two columns of pro-social and pro-learning behaviours beneath.
8. Create the Charter as big posters – the children could produce their own creative pictorial versions.
9. Display the Charters in each class and in key places around the school.

Have a school display with the Charter and photos of the different behaviours.

10. Ask each child to sign up to the Charter – explain that signing means they will work with you to do their best at keeping to the expectations and will ask for help with the parts they are finding difficult.  
It is an intention to work hard at it and have the willingness to keep to it – not a promise they will be perfect

### The Class Charter: Our Rights & Responsibilities

- We have the right to feel good and be able to learn at our best in school.
- We have the responsibility to make sure the people around us also feel good and can learn at their best.

#### For this to happen, we have agreed everyone needs to:

1. Respond to others calmly and with kindness (using Calm Connect Respond )
2. Make sure what we say and do helps us and those around us to learn
3. Take turns to speak and listen to others.
4. Look after equipment and resources with care

#### The Positive Impact if I do this will be:

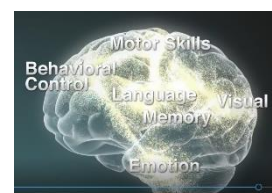
1. People will feel safe around me
  2. People will enjoy being around me and want to spend time in my company
  3. I will feel good about myself as a learner
  4. I will feel good about myself as a friend and a pro-social member of the class and school
- This is likely to help me become a confident, happy and successful member of the class.

#### The Negative Impact it may have if I don't manage to keep to these agreed ways of working:

1. Other people won't be able to learn and achieve as well as they could
  2. I will not learn and achieve well
  3. Others will not feel so safe and happy around me.
  4. Others might not be so keen to spend time with me.
- This may lead to me not feeling so good about myself and not doing so well at school.
  - I know I will be supported and have extra practice and coaching times so I get better at the things I find hard. Adults will help me and I know I will have to work hard too.
  - Before my skills improve with practice, I know I may have to learn in a different space so that others in the class feel safe and can learn.

We have learnt about the brain and know that some people in the class will find keeping to Our Class Charter more difficult.

This is because their neural pathways haven't yet developed in the areas of the brain needed for these skills.



These children may need special things to help them and extra support from adults and other children in the class. They may have to work in a different space until they can manage.



### Will everyone find it easy to keep to our School Charter?

No. We know from neuroscience that some children in the school will find this genuinely more difficult. Some children will have higher levels of stress chemicals in their body which will make them more sensitive and reactive to stressors. Some children will not yet have developed such strong neural circuitry in the part of the brain responsible for important '**Executive Function Skills**' which include:

- Working Memory
- Attention control
- Impulse Control
- Self-regulation - managing energy and emotions.
- Cognitive Flexibility – being able to think of different solutions
- Processing Speed

There are a number of reasons why some children may have poorer Executive Function Skills:

1. **Limited experiences** have meant that the neural pathways in the area of the brain responsible for Executive Function skills have not developed well.
2. **Poor early attachments** which can impede the development of brain circuitry and affect the stress response system.
3. **Trauma or stress** which can lead to 'toxic stress' (during which regions of the brain, including those in charge of executive function, become less active).
4. **A neurodiverse cognitive profile** (e.g. autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia) in which some areas of Executive Function do not develop in the same way.

### What difference do Executive Function Skills make?

If developed well, these skills help a child to keep to the expectations mapped out in our Class Charters.

If not developed well, it will be much harder for the child to manage the demands of the classroom, from following instructions and processing information to focusing on tasks and working with others. These children will need additional scaffolds, adjustments and support from adults and other children in the class in order to manage well.

### What should staff do when children haven't yet developed good Executive Function (EF) skills?

In addition to the procedures set out in our Inclusion Policy, there are three ways in which children with poorer Executive Function Skills can be supported:

#### **a. Coach**

Any child who has significant difficulty in areas of Executive Function in relation to her or his peers should, just as would occur in reading, writing or mathematics, receive additional coaching to support them in narrowing the gap. Adults at home and outside of school can make a significant difference to the development of EF skills and therefore any programme of support should include liaison with parents and carers and information should be provided and discussed regarding how they can support at home.

Any programme should include a pre-assessment, focus on specific EF skills and enable the child to track their own progress. A simple goal and tracking sheet should be kept by the child which they can take with them to activities outside of school too so that additional adults are aware of the focus and can support in the child in their progress towards them.

The key principle is to use a coaching approach so that **the child** is the driver – deciding on the goals, thinking through how they can reach them, tracking how well they are doing against them and thinking through strategies which may help along the way.

#### **b. Pre-Mortem**

First, when planning lessons, experiences and the environment, staff should reflect on the needs and skills of individual pupils, thinking through how stressors can be reduced and how missing skills can be supported for those children who have greater difficulties in areas of Executive Function.

For example, if planning a task which will be noisy, the teacher should reflect on how to ensure children with sensory processing issues do not feel too overwhelmed. If planning a long writing task, the teacher should think through how the task could be chunked into smaller parts for children with attention control difficulties.

The key is to think through what could go wrong (**pre-mortem**) for some children and plan ways those specific individuals can learn at their best and manage their difficulties successfully.

#### **c. Prep4Best**

Staff should also support children to '**Prep4Best**' (plan and prepare to do well) ahead of tasks and experiences. This may include helping them to work out any learning and environmental scaffolds that may help, such as writing frames, talking buttons, sensory cushions, ear buds and micro-environments.

Pre-mortem and Prep4Best (what might go wrong for x child and what could help to prevent this) is included specifically on our planning checklists / formats to support all staff in ensuring the needs of individual children are considered carefully.



# Procedure for Children Experiencing Difficulty in Meeting Agreed Expectations

**Key purpose: to help child regulate & get back on track.**

## RESPONDING IN THE MOMENT:

**Child does not meet one of the pro-social or pro-learning expectations....**

**Stage 1 Support:**  
**Calm Connect Support**  
**A. Adult uses Calm, Connect Support to help the child get back on track**



**If not successful, move to Step B**

**If high or extreme level behaviour, move to Step D (see notes)**

**B Adult repeats**  
**Calm Connect Support**

**If not successful and disrupting others, move to C.**

**C. Child given limited choice of space away from main group (see notes)**

**Carry out Coaching Conversation later in day or as soon as logistically possible.**

**If not successful, move to D.**

**D Child given limited choice of space away from class (see notes)**

**Carry out Coaching Conversation later in day or as soon as logistically possible.**

**Only if a child refuses should a Senior Leader be called.**

**Dual purpose: to repair & ensure child can do better next time.**

## FOLLOW-UP FOR PROGRESS

**Follow up with**  
**Repair**

**Repair should take place at ALL stages if the young person's actions have had any impact on others around them.**



**Stage 2 Support:**  
**Quick Coaching Conversation**



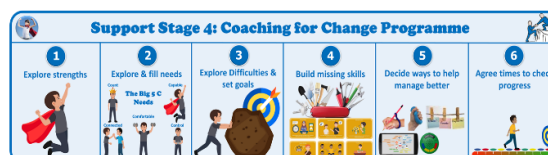
**If Coaching Conversation needed 3 times or more**

**Stage 3 Support**  
**Coaching Time**  
 (can be within group)



**If Coaching Time needed 3 times or more**

**Stage 4 Support**  
**Coaching Programme**  
 (with child, teacher, parent & SLT member)



## **Appendix 7: Evidence Base for The Approach**

The approach incorporates the ideas and theories from a range of seminal authors, such as Albert Bandura (self-efficacy), Alfred Adler (unmet emotional needs), Rudolf Dreikurs (emotional drivers), John Bowlby (attachment) and Eric Berne (transactional analysis). It combines these with the work of current experts such as Jack Shonkoff at the Harvard Center on the Developing Child (neuroscience & brain development), Bruce Perry (the neurobiology of threat and safety), Stuart Ablon (Collaborative Problem Solving); Peter Fonagy (mentalisation), Lisa Feldman-Barrett (emotional literacy); Stuart Shanker (self-regulation) and improving Executive Function Skills (Ellen Braaten, Peggy Dawson & Richard Guare) to name just a few.

Fuller details on the wide number of experts who have influenced the approach can be found in the Evidence Base Chart and reading list that sit alongside this policy.

### **A continuum of approaches to changing behaviour**

Approaches to managing and changing behaviour in schools can be placed along a continuum, with behaviourist approaches at one end and attachment-aware, therapeutic approaches at the other. The approach set out in this policy sits firmly at the therapeutic end of that continuum, based on a wide and growing body of evidence that such approaches are most effective at building skills for success at school and into adult life.

### **Behaviourist approaches**

In recent years, there has been a growing body of evidence demonstrating that while behaviourist approaches can be effective in the short-term, they do nothing to help young people to build the self-knowledge and skills that will help them into the future.

1. One major criticism of behaviourism is that it does not recognise **the uniqueness of the individual** (Vialle et al., 2005). In the educational context, Weare (2004) suggests that behaviourist approaches do not work equally with all learners and are particularly ineffective with those who may find it difficult to meet behavioural demands of the learning setting due to cultural differences, learning difficulties or emotional state. It is therefore argued that behaviour management should take a more holistic approach and consider the child's unique personal situation, their developmental level, cultural and social background and personality and characteristics instead of focusing on rigid norms of 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' behaviour (Kay, 2006).
2. The behaviourist approach is further criticised for its **simplicistic approach** to behaviour, largely derived from experiments on animals. Learners are considered to be passive recipients, simply reacting to various external stimuli (Wragg, 2001). By focusing on only observable behaviours, this view fails to account for the complex nature of human learning and thinking processes.
3. Garner criticises a behaviourist approach, arguing that by focusing only on **observable behaviours**, the approach fails to consider the mental processes of the individual and will therefore not impact on the learner's cognition. As such, is unlikely to be effective in the long-term (Garner, 2009). This is due to a behaviourist approach focusing simply on suppressing unwanted behaviours rather than teaching new responses and affecting change of unhelpful behaviour patterns (Kearney, 2007). As such, it is suggested that behaviourist approaches have little long-term effect and do not teach learners the skills to respond to situations in more appropriate ways.

4. Finally, behaviourist approaches to challenging behaviour have been criticised for their **focus on rewards**: it has been argued that this can reduce a learner's intrinsic motivation to complete tasks (Vialle et al., 2005) and fails to support young people to develop a secure moral compass, internal self-regulation skills or high levels of empathy and emotional intelligence. A behaviourist approach can lead young people to become reliant on extrinsic rewards in order to meet the needs of other people or to complete tasks. As such, they are not supported to become a self-motivated, independent, but are reliant on teachers' approval and direction.

## Therapeutic approaches

The Empowerment Approach adopts the principles of a therapeutic, attachment and neurodiverse-informed approach to working with children. It is underpinned by the belief that when a child presents with challenging behaviour, the first step should be to work **with** the child to identify the stressors and missing skills. Once the stressors are identified, adults should work with the child to reduce these stressors and build the skills they need to respond better next time.

New skills need to be taught and practised. Change will not necessarily be quick as new neural pathways take time to build; the child may therefore require additional supports whilst they build skills and new strategies.