

Relational (behaviour) policy and statement of behaviour principles

West Croft School



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1. Rationale

At West Croft school we want our Relational Behaviour Policy to reflect our insight and understanding of the needs of our children and how this contributes to supporting children to be able to regulate their feelings and communicate their words in a positive manner so they can be ready to engage with their learning. We believe that developing relationships by responding and calming and repairing and restoring as well as guidance on working in relationships in the classroom through a graduated response is what makes a difference to our children's behavior.

It is imperative we offer our children the security and relationships needed to meet their individual wellbeing and mental health needs and guide them along their journey in becoming independent, resilient, life-long learners. We incorporate a holistic, whole-person approach to ensure we are reflecting and planning for the needs of all our children, some with complex needs. We consider that behaviours which challenge always happen for a reason and may, in that moment, be the only way a child can communicate.

Children who display, or are at risk of displaying behaviours which challenge may need support involving both positive support and intervention and restorative practice.

2. Aims

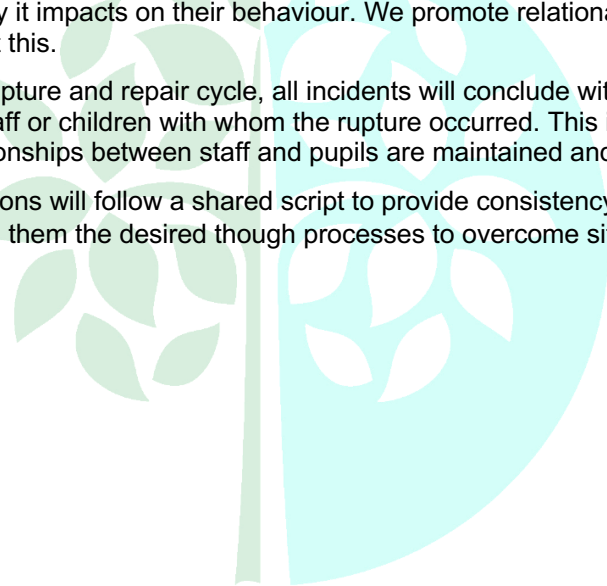
- To provide guidance to staff, parents and carers, governors, and other stakeholders on how to support our children to manage and regulate their feelings, communicate their words and feel safe so they are ready to learn.
- To provide a holistic, whole-person, inclusive model for our understanding of behavioural needs.
- To underpin our beliefs with evidence-based practice and current research in relational and restorative practice.
- To create a calm safe school environment within which all stakeholders feel safe, valued and respected.

3. Managing Behaviour Relationally

At West Croft School, we strive to demonstrate a relational approach to supporting social and emotional development and behaviour based on the following principles:

- We understand behaviour communicates unmet needs and can separate the child/young person from their behaviour.
- We accurately assess and understand the pupils' needs by referring to their Boxall and / or EHCPs in addition to assessment made by other professionals.
- We acknowledge the distinction between shame and guilt and recognise that shame prevents healthy emotional development. We provide empathy as an anti-dote to shame.
- We understand that each developmental stage has a range of typical behaviours which provide opportunities for adults to role-model and explicitly teach appropriate behaviours.
- We provide containment, predictability and routine to build a sense of safety in the emotional and physical environment.
- We encourage the children at our setting to become accountable for their actions and the impact they may have on themselves and others, promoting a solution-focused approach to changing future behaviours.

- We keep in mind that we are the adults and that children are still growing, learning and developing. Mistakes are part of the learning process; we recognise that all our pupils are at different stages of the developmental process. We don't make a judgement about it; instead, we support and guide our pupils to make appropriate choices.
- We seek to restore relationships and change behaviours rather than punish the actions a child may have taken. This does not exclude the use of sanctions as consequences, we seek the most appropriate way of supporting children to develop robust stress-regulation systems and therefore the skills of self-control, empathy and emotional management.
- By supporting the growth of emotional development and self-regulating skills pupils can learn to improve their behaviour. Learning new behaviour is a task, just like learning to read or write.
- Supporting pupils to effectively communicate is a very important way to promote them to self-regulate, build resilience and behave in a positive manner. All adults can learn strategies to support pupils to improve their behaviour. Most adults have evolved ways of responding to pupils' behaviour based on personal and professional experiences and training and experiential learning. All staff will be given the opportunity to learn, understand and have insight into why our pupils become dysregulated, and reflect on how and why it impacts on their behaviour. We promote relational and restorative practice and training to support this.
- In recognition of the rupture and repair cycle, all incidents will conclude with a restorative conversation with the member of staff or children with whom the rupture occurred. This is an important step, as it ensures that the relationships between staff and pupils are maintained and grow stronger.
- Restorative conversations will follow a shared script to provide consistency and predictability for our children, developing in them the desired thought processes to overcome situations of conflict before they arise.



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Figure 1, Source: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/document/quick-guide-to-developing-relational-practice-and-policy/>

Developing Relationships – this involves building relationships, supporting inclusion and setting and maintaining boundaries with empathy.

Responding and Calming – using relational skills to keep things calm, using co-regulation skills in order to regulate strong emotions and developing skills and plans to manage crisis.

Repairing and Restoring – using restorative conversations as part of our daily interactions to support a harmonious environment, facilitating restorative encounters to resolve conflict and harm and to support change.

4. Consistency in practice

Consistency in practice: 'In every encounter we either give life or we drain it; there is no neutral exchange.'
Brennan Manning

Consistency lies in the behaviour of adults and not simply in the application of procedure. A truly sustainable consistent approach does not come in a toolkit of strategies but in the whole school community having an agreed understanding of behaviour. The key is to develop a consistency that ripples through every interaction on behaviour. Where children feel heard and treated as valued individuals, they respect adults and accept their authority

How all members of staff behave:

- Positively
- Calmly
- Consistently

All staff every day will:

- Promote a positive culture by communicating the school's expectations, routines, values and standards through teaching behaviour and in every interaction with pupils
- Build relationships by using PACE, meet and greet and check ins (see appendix 2)
- Model positive behaviours and always highlight the behaviour we want to see in positive terms
- Hold restorative conversations to repair relationships that have been ruptured
- Seek both resolution and learning when dealing with incidents. Follow up every time, retain ownership and engage in restorative dialogue with children to repair the rupture by using the 3Rs. (see appendix 3)
- Use the school's restorative conversation script when managing situations of conflict (see appendix 5)
- Promote intrinsic motivation by rewarding the process of learning (behaviours for learning).
- Model expected behaviour and positive relationships
- Provide early intervention to support children's behaviour
- Provide a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of particular pupils
- Record behaviour incidents promptly
- Challenge pupils to meet the school's expectations
- Ensure that pupils move around the school building and site in a calm and orderly way (see appendix 6)

Senior Leaders will:

- Meet and greet on the gates each morning and afternoon
- Be visible and positive

- Engage in learning time and wellbeing walks to see positive behaviours, provide support and coach and model expectations
- Drop into classrooms to catch children being positive
- Ensure restorative conversations take place
- Celebrate staff, leaders and children whose effort goes above and beyond expectations
- Model PACE in their own interactions
- Regularly share good practice
- Support staff in managing children with more complex behaviours
- Regularly review provision for children who fall beyond the range of written policies
- Ensure there is a consistent approach to the management and organisation of learning and teaching
- Ensure that the Relational Policy is consistently and skillfully followed when dealing with behaviour referrals, Senior leaders will not work in isolation. Instead, they will stand alongside colleagues to support, guide, model and show a unified consistency to the children. Senior leaders are first to offer support, they lead by example.

Teachers every day will:

- Be responsible for the consistent awarding of rewards (dojo points) in their classroom
- Attune and respond to pupil needs in the classroom
- Plan lessons that engage, excite, challenge and meet the needs of all children.
- Organise classrooms to develop independence and personal initiative (arrangements of furniture, access to resources and classroom displays all have a bearing on the way children behave).
- Hold restorative conversations to resolve situations of conflict

And over time:

- Take responsibility for their own learning
- Practice PACE

We recognise positive behaviour through:

- Dojo points
- Star of the Week certificates
- Verbal recognition

Support Beyond the Classroom: (To be used for change of face or to support the restorative conversation.)

- Behaviour Specialist
- Phase Leaders
- Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher

Alternatives to suspension and Exclusion:

- Children will have a Relational Support Plan and/or behaviour care plan
- A multi-agency approach (Inclusion team, Team Around the Family etc.)
- A bespoke curriculum and or adapted learning opportunities

Parents and Carers will:

- Get to know the school's behaviour policy and reinforce it at home where appropriate
- Support their child in adhering to the school's behaviour policy
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the class teacher promptly
- Take part in any pastoral work following misbehaviour (for example: to create personalised plans or by attending reviews of specific behaviour interventions)
- Raise any concerns about the management of behaviour with the school directly, whilst continuing to work in partnership with the school
- Take part in the life of the school and its culture

Children will:

- Follow the behaviour policy
- Follow the school's key rules and routines
- Understand they can earn for meeting behaviour expectations, and know the consequences they will face if they don't meet expectations
- Understand the pastoral support that is available to them to help them meet the behavioural standards
- Engage in restorative conversations when situations of conflict have arisen
- Move around the school building and site in a calm and orderly way

The school will endeavour to build a positive relationship with parents and carers by keeping them informed about developments in their child's behaviour and the school's policy, and working in collaboration with them to tackle behavioural issues.

The headteacher is responsible for reviewing this policy in conjunction with the governing board and giving due consideration to the school's statement of behaviour principles (see appendix 1)

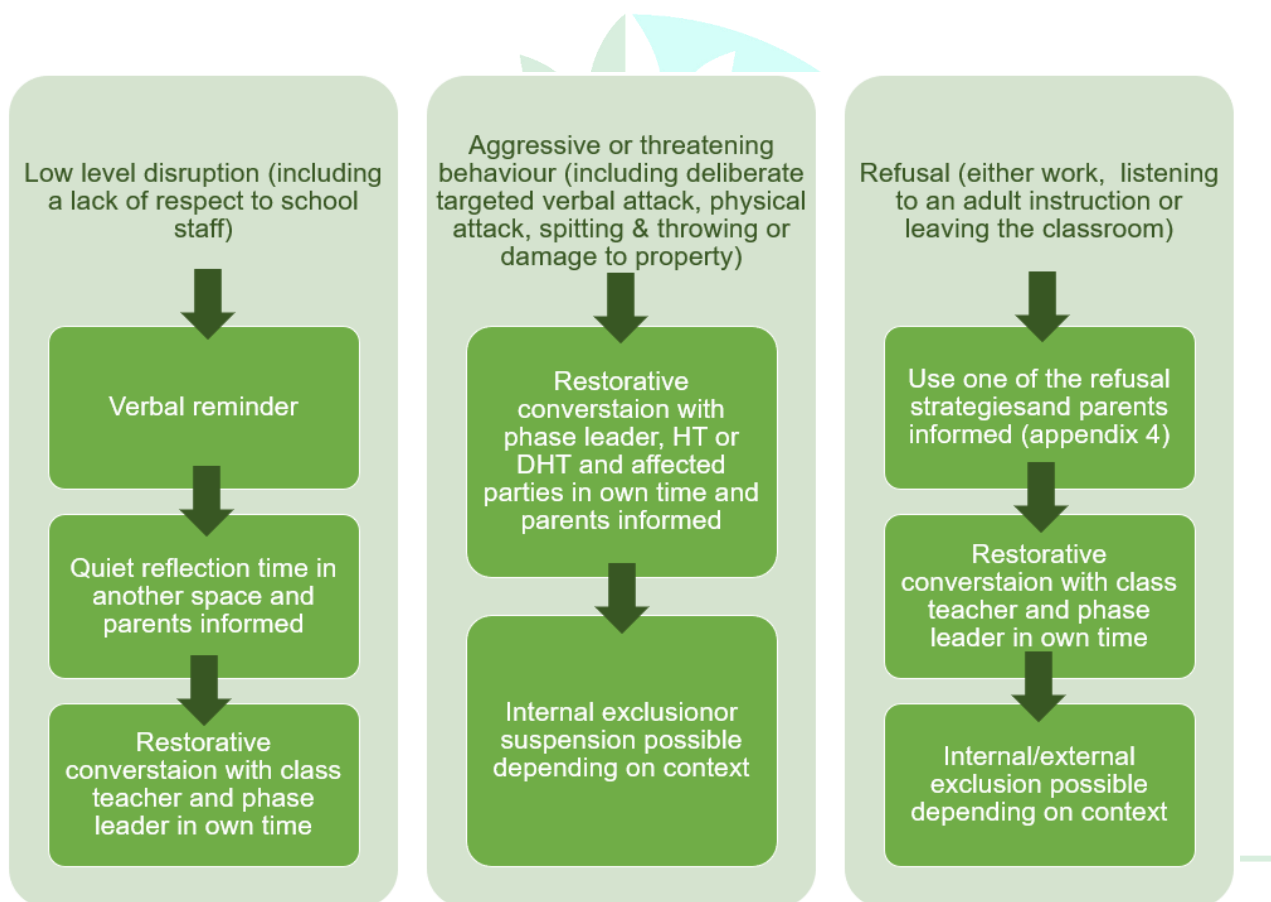
5. Responding to undesirable behaviour

When a pupil's behaviour falls below the standard that can reasonably be expected of them, staff will respond in order to restore a calm and safe learning environment, and to prevent recurrence of undesirable behaviour.

Staff will endeavour to create a predictable environment by always challenging behaviour that falls short of expectations, and by responding in a consistent, fair and proportionate manner, so pupils know with certainty that undesirable behaviour will always be addressed.

De-escalation techniques can be used to help prevent further behaviour issues arising, such as the use of pre-arranged scripts and phrases.

All pupils will be treated equitably under the policy, with any factors that contributed to the behavioural incident identified and taken into account. Staff will use the following flow chart to ensure consistency of approach.



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6. Use of reasonable force

Reasonable force covers a range of interventions that involve physical contact with pupils. All members of staff have a duty to use reasonable force where necessary to keep children or property safe from harm. When considering using reasonable force, staff should, in considering the risks, carefully recognise any specific vulnerabilities of the pupil, including SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions and refer to the Safe Touch policy for guidance.

7. Links with other policies

This behaviour policy should be read and understood in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Mobile phone policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Safe Touch and Positive Handling policy
- Online Safety Policy

The governing board also emphasises that violence or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated in any circumstances.

This written statement of behaviour principles is reviewed and approved by the full governing board annually.

8. Legislation, statutory requirements and statutory guidance

This policy is based on legislation and advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- Behaviour and discipline in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff, 2016
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2022
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school 2018
- Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools 2022
- The Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England 2017
- Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement - 2022
- Use of reasonable force in schools
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school

It is also based on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice.

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils
- Sections 88 to 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which requires schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate pupils' property
- DfE guidance explaining that maintained schools must publish their behaviour policy online

Appendix 1: Written statement of behaviour principles

Rationale and Purpose

Section 88 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires governing bodies of maintained schools to have regard to the statutory guidance from the secretary of state for Education in making and reviewing a written statement of behaviour. The Governing Body has a duty to produce, and review, a written statement of general principles to guide the Headteacher in determining measures to promote good behaviour and discipline amongst children. The document 'Behaviour and discipline in schools' – Guidance for governing bodies' has been used as a reference in producing this Statement of Behaviour Principles.

Schools are required to have a Behaviour Policies (Positive Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Safe Touch and Positive Handling) so that they reflect the shared aspirations and beliefs of governors, staff, parents and carers for the children in the school, as well as taking full account of law and guidance on behaviour matters.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to produce the school's Behaviour Policy and the duty of the Governing Body to provide the Headteacher with a clear written statement of the principles around which the Behaviour Policy will be formed and follow. In deciding on these Behaviour Principles, the Governors and school leaders work in unison to ensure that the Principles are both relevant and appropriate for the standard of behaviour expected; the use of rewards and sanctions; the circumstances in which reasonable force will be used and when multiagency assessment will be considered for children who display continuous disruptive behaviour in our school.

Our Behaviour Principles reflect our school values, our commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and our curriculum.

- West Croft is an inclusive school. Everyone should be free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation of any sort. Equity is when everyone gets what they need to achieve.
- We strive to ensure that every child understands they all have the right to feel safe, valued and respected, and learn free from the disruption of others. Bullying or harassment of any description is unacceptable even if it occurs outside normal school hours.
- Every child should be educated in an environment where they feel valued, listened to and respected
- We believe children should be given opportunities and openly encouraged to support each other in the process of positive reinforcement and personal growth, learning and recognising good behaviour.
- Children should be encouraged to be accountable for their actions and the potential impact on themselves and others through the use of relational and restorative practice
- When necessary to be used, consequences should enable a child to reflect on, and learn from a situation and to make reparation wherever possible.
- High expectations for positive behaviours and attitudes towards learning provide the foundations for our children to become confident, resilient and self-assured learners
- Adults in school should model, maintain, encourage and promote positive behaviour and the principles of fairness and justice.
- The school should work in partnership with parents/carers to develop and promote positive behaviours - and seek advice from appropriate outside agencies wherever necessary.
- Families are involved in behaviour incidents to foster good relationships between the school and Childs' home life.
- Suspensions (fixed-term exclusions) and permanent exclusions will only be used as a last resort

Pastoral care for school staff:

The Managing Allegations Policy include details of how the school will respond to an allegation against a member of staff. The Governors would not expect automatic suspension of a member of staff who has been accused of misconduct, pending an investigation. The Governors would, however, expect the Headteacher to draw on and follow the advice in this policy when setting out the pastoral support school staff can expect to receive if they are accused of misusing their powers.

Appendix 2

What is PACE?

PACE therapeutic approach from Dan Hughes which is a holistic approach to supporting children that involves thinking, feeling, communicating, and behaving in a manner that cultivates feelings of safety and security for your child. More than just a technique, PACE is often described as a 'way of being', influencing the way you relate to children on multiple levels.

Based on the way caregivers interact with very young infants, this style of support engages professionals to focus on the whole of the child, not just their behaviour. PACE invites professionals to consider the 'inner life' of the child as well as the external.

Its four principles of communication – playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy – facilitate the building of healthy, secure attachments between caregiver and child. PACE asks caregivers to pay close attention to how different communication styles deliver different messages to their children, encouraging them to maintain a calm and measured approach.

P

Playfulness

Playfulness encourages professionals to maintain a level of playfulness when interacting with their child. This means keeping communication fun; try using a light tone, like the one you might use when telling a story. Refraining from using a harsh tone or lecturing enables your child to maintain a sense of security, while defusing tense or difficult situations.

Adopting a playful stance doesn't mean being funny all the time, though, and it certainly doesn't mean making jokes when a child is sad. Rather, using a light, playful communication style when appropriate helps children to be more open.

Being playful together encourages the growth of a healthy bond, showing the child that it is okay to have fun with their caregiver, promoting a positive connection to them. It also creates a safe, engaging environment that invites closeness without asking too much of the child, signalling to them that their presence in your life is positive.

A

Acceptance

Acceptance means validating the child's experiences and emotions, rather than trying to change or censor how they are feeling. You might not agree with their interpretation of a situation, or the way they are expressing themselves, but you accept them, nonetheless.

You can show the child it is okay to feel the way they are by actively communicating your understanding. When the child says something like 'everyone hates me,' you might feel like telling them that isn't true, or they shouldn't say things like that. However, responses like this might invalidate their experience and make them feel unheard or misunderstood.

Instead, a PACE approach would mean answering with something along the lines of 'I'm sorry you think that everyone hates you, that must be upsetting' or 'I didn't realise you felt like that, no wonder you are angry.' These responses not only accept their emotions, but also help to reduce any feelings of shame.

C

Curiosity

Curiosity invites you to ask yourself questions about why the child is feeling or acting the way they are, without placing judgement or blame.

Ask yourself questions, like what is important in your child's life? What are their strengths? How can you bring out the best in them? Approaching the child with an air of curiosity means wondering about the experience of your child and using this to better your understanding of them.

When a child is acting out or is expressing their emotions in a certain manner, avoid asking them questions like 'why did you do that?'. Children often do not know why they are behaving in a certain way. They may not have the right words to express their feelings.

Instead, try approaching these situations with curiosity and the goal of understanding. A PACE parent might say something like 'what do you think that was about?' or 'you seem upset, I wonder if you might be a bit tired?'. These questions help to diffuse tension, all while conveying to your child that your intentions are to understand them, not punish them.

Empathy

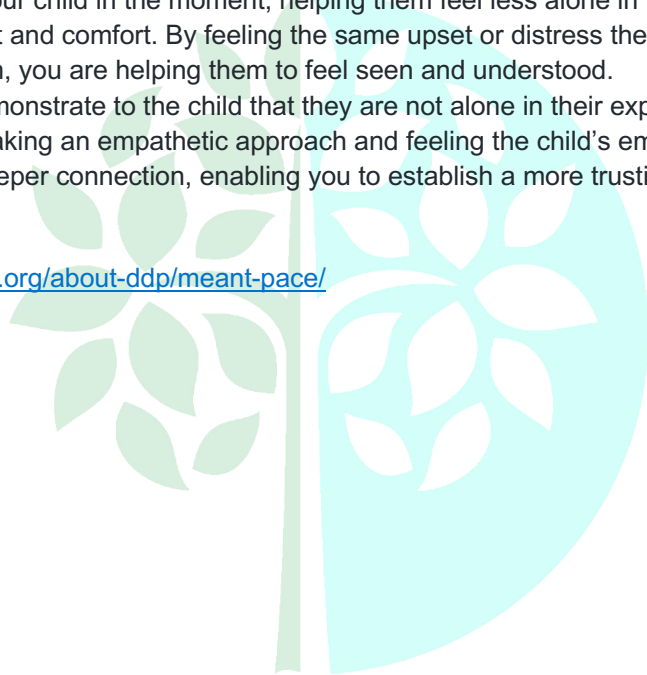
E

Empathy reminds you to always approach difficult situations through the child's eyes, whether or not they are behaving in a way you condone.

Being empathetic is not about reassuring the child or trying to make their problems go away. Rather, empathy means being present for your child in the moment, helping them feel less alone in their emotions, sitting with them and providing support and comfort. By feeling the same upset or distress the child is feeling, and communicating this to them, you are helping them to feel seen and understood.

With empathy, you can demonstrate to the child that they are not alone in their experiences. That, together, you will get through this. Taking an empathetic approach and feeling the child's emotions with them will help to lay the foundation for deeper connection, enabling you to establish a more trusting relationship.

Source: <https://ddpnetwork.org/about-ddp/meant-pace/>



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Appendix 3

The 3-R's: Regulate- Relate-Reason

Dr. Bruce Perry has developed a simple but powerful model to show how to reengage the thinking brain when a person is stressed and operating in survival mode. This works well for students or adults whose stress response is always on or easily triggered.

Regulate

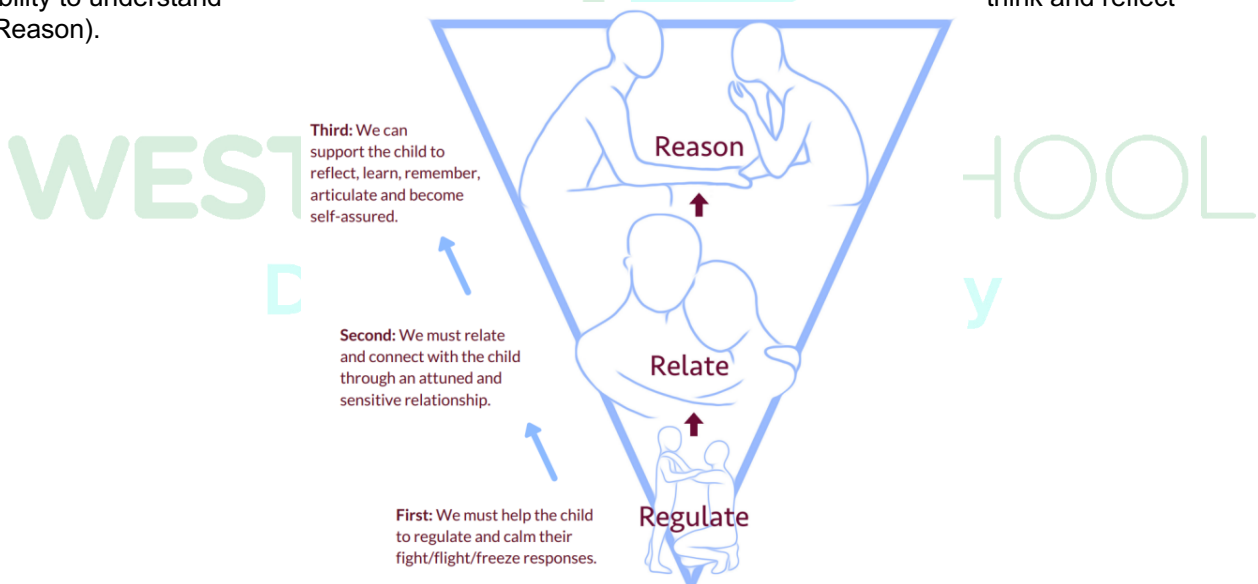
When someone becomes very stressed (dysregulated), they are operating in the survival part of their brain. An actual or perceived threat has triggered their stress response and they are no longer in the calm/relaxed state. This can lead to fightflight-freeze behaviour as their ability to listen, learn, comprehend, and cope will be significantly impaired. It is important to help people to become calm and feel safe in order to enable them to access their ability to relate socially. This can be done through a pattern of repetitive and soothing tasks, such as deep breathing, doodling or walking.

Relate

Once someone is calmer we need to relate and reconnect with them in a way that reminds them that they are safe, understood and supported. Dr Perry states that "the most powerful buffer in times of stress and distress is social connectedness. Instinctively, we may wish to talk and reason when someone is stressed but ways of communicating other than using words can be more effective at this time. Non-verbal communication and tone of voice used can be more significant than the actual words used. If you can relate to others in an attuned and sensitive way this will have a powerful effect in reducing the impact of stress on them. Examples of ways to relate include eye contact, listening, validating feelings.

Reason

Reasoning involves our thinking brain. It is only when someone is calm (Regulated) that they are able to form trusting relationships (Relate) and access their ability to understand (Reason).



Source: <https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/The-Three-Rs.pdf>

Appendix 4 - Refusal strategies

12 Strategies to Handle Work Refusals

www.thepathway2success.com



Give extra wait time 

Conference with the student 

Keep teaching the class 

Use de-escalation strategies 

Focus on the relationship 

Provide supports and accommodations 

Create an incentive plan 

Give student choice 

Be reflective and open-minded 

Avoid threats and power struggles 

Keep the student in the room 

Focus on your own self-care 

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Clipart by Kate Hadfield & Sarah Pecorino

Appendix 5 – Restorative script

Restorative conversations

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. Who has been affected?
4. How have they been affected?
5. What should we do to put things right?
6. How can we do things differently in the future?



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Appendix 6 – Movement around school

Movement around School

At West Croft School we recognise that organised movement around the school plays an integral part in maintaining high standards of behaviour. We understand that it is the responsibility of every member of staff to ensure that pupils move around the school building and site in an orderly way.

To support this, staff ensure that:

- They have a line of vision at all times to all pupils (teachers position themselves at corners so that both ends of the line can be seen and direct children where to go in front of them whilst they supervise the end of the line)
- They consider the order of the children in the line e.g. regular front and end person, register order, identified pupils sat apart or at the end of lines
- That pupils move calmly with purpose
- There is an orderly dismissal from classes with teacher supervision at break times, lunchtimes and end of school
- That corridors are supervised as children move to playtime, lunchtime and when going home
- That cloakrooms have adult supervision at all times
- That children are collected from the playground at the end of playtimes and lunchtimes and that lining up is orderly and supervised
- That 'blind spots' are avoided

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