



KNOCKBRED A
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Safe Environment & Relationships

Policy

September 2025

In Knockbreda Primary School we strive to create an ethos that is nurturing and welcoming, where every pupil feels valued and supported.

We believe in fostering partnerships amongst pupils, staff and families, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

We are committed to equality and support the unique needs of each child.

In Knockbreda Primary School positive behaviour and relationships are essential elements of the school's ethos which aims to cultivate in pupils an acceptance and recognition of responsibility for their own decisions, their actions and their consequences. Positive behaviour and relationships help to create the conditions for effective learning and helps to develop self-discipline, self-respect, respect for others and values for life.

Our School Aims are;

- To create a secure and positive atmosphere throughout the school, where our pupils can reach their full potential.
- To promote positive working relationships throughout the whole school environment.
- To promote positive behaviour by the use of praise, rewards, privileges and modelling.
- To ensure good classroom behaviour through effective classroom management.
- To enhance the pupils' self-esteem and foster self-respect and respect for others.
- To encourage the pupils to develop independence by accepting the need for self-discipline and self-control and taking responsibility for their own behaviour.
- To encourage parental support and partnership in all aspect of their child's education.

Expectations

At Knockbreda we expect a high standard of behaviour and positive attitudes from our pupils at all times. We explain to our pupils the need for rules across the school, help them understand these rules and encourage them to abide by these rules.

We expect that all pupils will;

- Show respect for the views, ideas, feeling and property of others
- Show good manners and courtesy at all times
- Co-operate with staff and their peers
- Apply themselves to their learning and work to the best of their ability
- Show pride in belonging to our school inside and outside of the school
- Show respect for the school environment, equipment and facilities

Pupil Values

Over the 10 months of the school year, pupils are encouraged to embrace and display, in various ways, the following 10 qualities as part of our Pupil Values. These qualities are addressed in class, at an age appropriate level, and across the school each month. Pupil of the Week rewards acknowledge pupils who display these qualities each Friday during that month.

These qualities were established through consultation with pupils, parents and staff.

September - Kindness

October - Individuality

November - Respect

December - Empathy

January - Pride

February - Determination

March - Resilience

April - Inclusiveness

May - Independence

June - Encouraging

Class Charter

Each class will have in place a Class Charter which will be drawn up by the pupils at the beginning of each academic year. This charter will be referred to, to ensure that all pupils have access to learning and that positive behaviour and relationships are maintained within the classroom.

Elements included in the Class Charter include;

a. Readiness for Learning

- Good attendance, being prepared for learning and trying our best

b. Respect for Others

- Listening to others, good manners, looking after equipment, being truthful

c. Safety

- Walking around the school, lining up, leaving rooms in an orderly way, looking after equipment

Positive Recognition

Through the use of a variety of approaches we continually strive to promote positive attitudes. These approaches include:

Positive Feedback – oral and written

Merit Stickers

House System

Pupil of the Week

Line of the Week

Visit to Principal or another member of staff to share good work / behaviours

In class reward systems suitable to age

Recognition of achievements outside of school during weekly assemblies

Responsibilities

Our P7 pupils are given the opportunity to take on roles of responsibility. As House Captains and prefects they undertake various roles across the school, setting good examples to our younger pupils and developing themselves in preparation for their transition to secondary school. Our house system supports our approach to establishment of a safe, respectful and inclusive environment.

Eco Council Membership – pupils are given the opportunity to be part of the Eco Council from P4 to P7.

Positive Redirection and Support Strategies

At Knockbreda we recognise that not all of the positive strategies we have in place will achieve the desired behaviour outcomes. Therefore, the following will be implemented across the school.

Classroom Strategies for Redirection

- A look of disapproval
- A quiet word about expectations
- Reminders of whole class charter agreements
- Moving of seats to support individual and whole class learning
- Cooling off time before behaviours displayed are addressed
- Cooling off time in another classroom or sensory space
- Use of a Think Sheet to discuss what happened and reflect on behaviour
- Mr Bell (VP) involved if necessary
- Parents informed if necessary

At Knockbreda we understand the need to have sanctions in place as a positive form of intervention. Sanctions will be used in a respectful way to help pupils understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing that behaviour. All sanctions used will;

- defuse and not escalate a situation
- preserve the dignity of all the parties involved
- be applied in a fair and consistent way
- be timely

2 pathways are in place to deal with minor incidents and more serious physical violence, if necessary. Each pathway has several stages.

Minor Incidents Pathway

1. Playground disagreements including name calling where others are upset and it cannot be resolved with support by staff on duty.
 - a. Walk with an adult for the rest of playtime. Provides opportunities for adults to encourage regulation and thinking about the incident.
 - b. Adult should report incident to the class teacher and it will be recorded in the class incident book.
 - c. Pupil should complete a Think Sheet, a reflection on the incident **when they are ready to do so**.
 - d. If there are 3 incidents within a period of 4 consecutive weeks parents are to be contacted via phone call or at collection.
2. If 3 incidents have been recorded and the issues are not resolved;
 - a. Parents will be invited in to meet with the class teacher to discuss reoccurring issues and targets for improvements agreed upon.
 - b. A home / school diary will be set up and a timescale for review agreed upon. This diary can take different forms depending on the individual needs of the child. It may be a physical diary or communication via Seesaw.
 - c. Pupil must be included in the discussion, as appropriate, by age and understanding.
3. If after step 3 the issues continue, parents will be invited in for an interview with the class teacher and the vice principal. Consideration will be given as to whether a pupil needs to have behaviour intervention with a Note of Concern completed in conjunction with the Learning Support Co-ordinator.
4. When all of the above is exhausted the principal will become involved and consideration will be given to the school's position based on EA and DE guidance.

Physical Violence Pathway

1. Any singular incident of physical behaviour will be dealt with in the following way;

- a. If the incident happened during playtime, walk with an adult for the rest of playtime. Provides opportunities for adults to encourage regulation and thinking about the incident.
 - b. Adult should report incident to the class teacher and it will be recorded in the class incident book.
 - c. Incident reported to parents on the day it happens via phone call, **not Seesaw**.
 - d. Pupil will miss playtime on the next available day and complete a Think Sheet about the incident, reflecting on their behaviour. It is hoped that this will allow the pupil to reflect on what happened and also for a trigger or reason for the behaviour to be established.
2. If no improvement is evident and the incident occurs again;
 - a. parents will be invited in to meet with the class teacher and the vice principal.
 - b. A behaviour plan will be drawn up with all adults agreeing, the pupil will be involved in this plan. A timescale for review will be agreed upon.
 - c. Vice principal will monitor and be kept up to date by the class teacher.
3. When all of the above is exhausted the principal will become involved and consideration will be given to the school's position based on EA and DE guidance. Suspension will be considered.

Considerations due to Special Educational Needs

Pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or a medical diagnosis which the school is aware of will have an accommodation of difference applied when any behaviour issues arise.

Where a pupil needs support with behaviour and consideration is needed due to the circumstances mentioned above the following will be in place;

- Learning Support Co-ordinator will be consulted.
- Statement of Special Needs will be referred to.
- Class teacher and classroom assistant will be consulted.
- EA Behavioural support will be accessed if necessary / possible.
- Parental support will be sought.

Trauma Informed Practice

Across Knockbreda Primary School we implement Trauma Informed Practice. All staff have received training, at various levels in Trauma Informed Practice. We understand the importance of school being a safe place where children can make connections. We understand that trauma can come in many shapes and forms and can impact on pupil behaviour and wellbeing.

We provide a caring environment in which children can thrive and are understood. Staff adapt the PACE approach to support children who have experienced trauma and children's experiences, outside of school, are considered when issues around behaviour arise in school. We work closely with parents, carers and other agencies to support children who have experienced significant trauma to ensure children can access learning and any additional needs are met.

The following information has been provided by the *Primary Children Looked After Advisory Service at the Education Authority*.

PACE

P = Playfulness

Playfulness enables a child to experience joy and optimism. It builds relationships because it increases awareness of the positive impact people can have on each other. This helps to foster closeness and connection.

It might not always be appropriate to be playful in a given moment. But this part of PACE offers hope that present day interactions will be different to past relationships. It can dampen the effects of stress and shame and show that we truly like and care for a child even if tasks, expectations or misunderstandings lead to conflict.

A = Acceptance

We communicate acceptance when we resist the tendency to judge, evaluate or criticise a child's inner life. It is important that we show unconditional regard for all feelings.

Even when a behaviour is unacceptable, we can understand and affirm the thoughts, feelings and perceptions which are underneath. This maintains the strength, value and meaning of the relationship we have with a child.

Acceptance is difficult for adults because we want to reassure, console or challenge negative self-images. But children who have experienced trauma and loss may have lacked experience of relationships where all parts of their being were accepted.

C = Curiosity

Curiosity is about learning how children see themselves, others and the world around them. This is particularly important when a child's background is comprised of experiences which caused them to feel forgotten, rejected, angry, scared or unlovable.

When we engage in this process of non-judgemental discovery, we not only better understand who the child is and what they need, but we also promote their ability to notice and reflect upon their own strengths and vulnerabilities.

A 'not knowing' stance may initially be met with distrust, as some children may not have experienced much curiosity elsewhere. We can get things wrong and this is okay, as there will always be missing pieces and the potential for misunderstandings.

E = Empathy

This is the experience we have of, rather than for, a child's thoughts and feelings. It is the foundation of safety and understanding.

Empathy can initially generate anxiety and confusion. Given previous trauma and loss, the child may question whether it is genuine, wonder if it will be maintained or consider if it is designed to make them behave in a certain way.

Weaving empathy into relationships with children who have experienced trauma helps to co-regulate emotions, make sense of what is happening, facilitate communication and build the child's trust of our intentions. Knowing that an adult 'gets it' can make a huge difference

This policy has been drawn up following guidance and information from the following documents, legislation and circulars:

1. The Children (Northern Ireland) Order, 1995
2. The Human Rights Act, 1998
3. The Education (NI) Order, 1998
4. Welfare and Protection of Pupil's Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003
5. The Education (2006 Order) (Commencement No.2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2007
6. The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (NI) 2010
7. Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
8. Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016
9. Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour, DE, 2001
10. Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools, DE, 2017
11. Emotional Health and Wellbeing, Effective Practice in Educational Settings, DE & Eti, 2021
12. Empowering Improvement, Framework for Inspection, Eti, 2024
13. Circular 2021/04 – Suspensions and Exclusions
14. Circular 2021/13 – Restraint and Seclusion

Other policies are available to compliment this policy and are available on request;

1. Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy
2. Addressing Bullying Policy
3. Safeguarding Policy
4. Complaints Policy

This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose.