BOWER

Learning Partnership

Relational Policy 2026

Belong - Empower - Aspire

Bower Learning Partnership

Relational Behaviour Policy

"Every child deserves a champion; an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists they become the best they can possibly be" Rita Pierson

At the Bower Learning Partnership we recognise that this policy should relate to the behaviour of and relationships between all members of the schools communities. We feel that positive relationships are the root of positive behaviour and attitudes to learning and we all have a part to play in building that positive foundation. A relational learning approach is much more than an approach to behaviour management. Rather it is a value-based approach which describes how an understanding of our relationships with each other, both as schools and as individuals can enhance both academic and social learning and is a cornerstone of our commitment to community cohesion.

Under DfE guidance, the current framework 'Use of reasonable force in schools' remains the primary statutory authority until 31 March 2026. On 1 April 2026, the schools will formally transition to the updated guidance: 'Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools'. This policy revision provides the necessary bridge to ensure continuous compliance throughout this 2025–2026 period.

There are three key components to our relational model, aligned with Bruce Perry's 3Rs: Regulate, Relate, and Reason. These stages guide our universal approach to behaviour and learning, beginning with helping children and young people feel safe and emotionally regulated, followed by building trusting relationships, and finally supporting them to reflect, problem-solve and grow. These principles are embedded in our quality-first teaching and underpin a graduated response to early intervention for those requiring additional support. Our aim is to foster a whole-school ethos rooted in connection, emotional safety, and a 'Belong–Empower-Aspire' growth mindset that promotes positive relationships and behaviour.

Many of our young people have experienced adverse childhood experiences. This can cause children to struggle to regulate in the environment without additional support. For Children and Young People who have experienced trauma and loss, including vulnerable groups such as Looked After Children (LAC) and children previously in care (Post-LAC), behaviourist approaches often serve to re-traumatise them and do not teach them how to express their emotions in a more appropriate manner. Therefore, the Bower Learning Partnership is committed to following an Attachment Aware, Trauma Informed Relational approach to positive behaviour support.

Ethos

At Bower Learning Partnership, we recognise each child and young person's unique lived experience. Children and young people need personalised responses to supporting their personal development and well-being. We recognise that whilst each individual child or young person benefits from a consistent approach, being

consistent and fair is not about everyone getting the same, but everyone getting what they, individually, need. We seek to understand the motives, wishes and feelings behind behaviour because we know that all behaviour is communication. We aim to nurture connection, build healthy relationships and promote resilience to achieve success in the present and hope for the future. All adults in our schools need to be aware of how to create an ethos and environment of both physical and psychological safety and have the skills to respond to those who have been impacted by traumatic stress. We fully understand and support the impact that connection with a trusted, emotionally available adult has on a child, or young person.

By applying Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed principles we believe we can foster an inclusive approach and together achieve better outcomes around pupil attainment and attendance. We encourage all adults in the schools to respond in a way that focuses on the feelings and emotions that might drive certain behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself. In effect, taking a non-judgmental, curious and empathic attitude towards behaviour. Students with behavioural challenges need to be regarded as vulnerable; we all have a duty to explore this vulnerability and provide appropriate support. Creating a safe school climate, based on structure, nurture, engagement and challenge to enable effective learning and social and emotional growth.

Relational, regulatory and restorative approaches are more effective in supporting the development of internal control and regulation. In order to be successful at school all children need to develop secure relationships which enable them to feel safe, secure and feel good about who they are. In order for this to happen, relationships need to be at the heart of school life. For many children and young people, the development of these relationships will need to be explicit, meaningful and very clearly perceived. Children and young people who are showing signs of insecure attachments and a lack of well-being need a significant adult or small team of adults in school who can provide them with a secure relationship within which they feel a sense of safety, trust, belonging and being listened to. Through this relationship the child, or young person, will also develop their ability to regulate their feelings and behaviour, develop their understanding of social situations and develop healthy and positive feelings about themselves and their abilities. Building these relationships, supporting inclusion and establishing strong and caring boundaries are integral to making this happen.

Purpose

At Bower Learning Partnership we believe in providing every child and young person with the opportunity to experience an outstanding education academically, emotionally and socially. We strongly believe that by identifying the barriers to learning, we can provide an inspiring and relevant curriculum that considers the whole 'individual' and provides the necessary support for pupils to achieve, develop and reach their true potential. This policy confirms the alignment of the Partnership's trauma-informed philosophy with the following statutory requirements:

- Behaviour in schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff (September 2013, updated February 2024).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE).
- Use of reasonable force in schools (2013, updated 2025) — Effective until 31 March 2026.

- Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (2025) — Effective from 1 April 2026.

We are committed to ensuring that our schools develop a Trauma Informed Approach to ensure that all our pupils develop positive mental health and resilience, enabling them to fully engage in life and learning. There is a growing body of research and understanding of the impact of Childhood Adversity Experiences on long term mental and physical health and the protective factors that mitigate the potential impact. It is our aim to maximise the protective factors of school by creating an environment of safety that has strong, positive and supportive relationships at its heart.

Our priority as schools is to ensure psychological and environmental safety first; it is the foundation on which everything else depends. The ability to learn without fear in order to relate to others and engage in learning. Through a trauma informed approach our focus is not only the physical environment, but the relational environment and the very culture and ethos of our schools. This requires emotionally regulated and available adults; who can provide essential calming and containment of our children and young people when they are overwhelmed by an event, a situation, or their feelings. In some circumstances, this may mean the use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force (literal physical containment), to keep all safe. Such measures are used as a last resort to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, damaging property, or causing disorder, in line with Department for Education expectations All children and young people need to feel safe and secure. Our need for safety trumps everything and without a sense of safety and security children and young people cannot explore, play, learn or interact effectively with others. Children and young people who do not feel safe tend to be hyper-vigilant and have difficulty regulating their emotions. This can lead to defensive behaviours which can be difficult to manage. People get their sense of safety primarily from others.

All children and young people will need to experience relationships with adults in school who are able to make them feel safe. Some children and young people will need significant relationships with one adult, or a small group of adults who become a safe base for the children or young person in school. Children and young people need to feel that they can trust and depend on adults. Some children and young people have not experienced being dependent on others and until they experience dependency, they will not be able to be independent. Allowing a child, or young person, to practice dependency is a key role for a significant adult.

In practical terms it means that we try to not place the pupils in situations that they are unable to manage. It is vital that our response to their distress and often behaviours that challenge is supportive and focusses on how best to support the brains frontal lobe functioning to be able to relate to the world and each other in a healthier way, rather than employing punitive sanctions that are detrimental and inappropriate to the child's development. If we are truly to protect our children and young people and each other, our schools approach needs to reflect a differentiated and developmentally appropriate response to behaviour by recognising that behaviour represents an unmet need, Adverse Childhood Experiences and/or particular neurocognitive or neurochemical profile. For children

with additional needs such as Learning Difficulties, ASD, ADHD and SEMH, the relational approach is pivotal.

Solution focused approaches to support both staff and children to identify the skills, strengths and resources that they already possess, build individual capacity and effective problem-solving skills. Child centred approaches which are based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991 and which seeks to develop adults' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of children's rights and dignity and how this can impact on their work with children and young people. In the past it was felt that these children and young people responded really well to one-to-one support because it helped them with their work. What actually helps is forming a positive relationship with an adult, but this can be detrimental if the pupil doesn't then go on to form relationships with others. These children and young people often need explicit teaching of how to follow the rules and additional support to help them form relationships and their development of 'attachment pathways'. Spending lots of effort on this initially means much less input is needed later. The Bower Learning Partnership is committed to supporting staff wellbeing and reflective practice through a structured debrief strategy following incidents involving challenging behaviour, accidents or near misses. The aim is to ensure emotional safety, promote learning from incidents and reduce further risk. The schools leadership and governing body recognize their responsibility to ensure all staff feel confident and supported in their power to use reasonable force when necessary. This authority is exercised within our relational framework to ensure the safety and dignity of both pupils and staff.

The Bower Learning Partnership recognises the emotional impact of incidents on staff and students and aims to:

- Provide a safe, non-judgemental space for reflection and emotional processing.
- Encourages discussion of what happened, what worked, what didn't and what could be improved.
- Supports staff in regaining emotional regulation and confidence.
- Promotes a culture of learning, not blame.

Our way of interacting with the child or young person, in a relational manner, will be vital in securing a sense of safety. Porges (1994) describes 'safety cues' as being the key to enabling the child to feel safe and secure. Safety cues are specific sounds or vocalisations, facial expressions and movements which let us know that we are safe. Friendly, warm and attuning facial expressions, modulation and frequency of the voice, which mimics the singsong or story telling nature of early caregiver - infant interaction, and unthreatening body movements which are in sympathy with our own, indicate safety. A lack of safety cues can be interpreted as threat.

Values underpinning the policy are:

1. All members of the school communities are responsible for their own behaviour

and for fostering positive relationships and communication with others. We firmly believe that children and young people learn by example and adults must act as positive role models in their behaviour and relationships.

2. We believe that we all respond better to encouragement and support than to a negative response. By focusing on positive behaviour and relationships and on the unique gifts and capacity that each member of the community brings to the schools, we can support each other to make Bower Learning Partnership truly inclusive schools where all members are equally valued.

3. We believe that teaching and learning and behaviour are inextricably linked. We strive to ensure all pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum and know that by teaching social and emotional skills to our pupils we will make it easier for them to access learning.

4. We are all members of a learning community and regard any adult or child asking for help in any area as displaying a strength rather than a weakness. We strive to create a community where all members feel safe to learn, whatever their role.

5. Children and young people need to connect and to socially engage with others. Children and young people who do not easily connect can be become isolated. This can be because their interaction, speech and language skills are delayed or because they are emotionally and sensorily inhibited, resulting in withdrawal or reacting in ways which are defensive to social approaches. Being and feeling connected is a right for all children and young people.

6. As well as access to learning we also need to consider inclusion and to ensure that schools are equally accessible to all children regardless of social identity, ethnicity, gender or sexuality. Schools should constructively challenge oppression and prejudice, to take great care to ensure equal opportunities for all and that their practices are not excluding children and young people due to economic, social and cultural diversity. This policy, along with all policies in our schools, will be applied equally to all members of the schools communities regardless of their learning difficulty, gender, race, religion, sexuality or any disability. (Please refer to the school's Equalities Policy for further details)

Whole School Approach

As a Partnership we have embraced a wider definition of trauma to encompass any event that is experienced as frightening, painful or out of control, characterised by there being no one available to support or mitigate the impact of traumatic toxic stress. As such, even the day-to-day exposure to events such as divorce, loss of a loved one, illness within the family, moving house can be experienced as traumatic.

Children, young people and adults can be affected by toxic stress. Children and young people who have experienced trauma, have insecure attachments or who have had adverse childhood experiences may present with complex behaviours. Some of these behaviours will be adaptive responses to their past experience or

current situation, some will be related to difficulties with stress/sensory regulation. Their behaviour will be an expression of an emotional or an unmet need and in order to support them we need to be able to read their behaviour. This involves being able to empathise with their feelings and understand their thinking. We need to be able to use our knowledge of brain development, trauma and attachment to investigate how better we can meet their needs.

Providing, an environment that has safety, connection and compassion at its heart ensures that our schools environments never unwittingly re-traumatise any of our school members and act to maximise protective factors through the conscious use of our relationships.

In order to connect with adults, children and young people need to experience attunement (meeting the child where they are emotionally, using attuning tones, facial expressions and body language, helping the child know that you get-it), mutuality (doing things together, alongside, experiencing another person with them so they feel they are not alone) and reciprocity (responding to and influencing each other). We need to ensure that we are connecting with children at their developmental level and in a way which takes into account their stress level.

Children and young people who have had limited experience of connection will not be able to cope with activities which require reciprocity. They will need high levels of connection through being alongside others matching them in time and rhythm and regulating safety cues.

Children and young people who may ordinarily be able to engage in higher level connection involving reciprocity will not be able to do so when stressed. At times of stress children and young people need connection through attunement – voices, facial expressions, rhythmic movement matching their own in time and rhythm. This can also help to settle, often overstimulated, sensory systems.

Bill Rogers describes a collaborative process for establishing classroom and whole school rules and expectations around behaviour which is based around discussions of rights leading to responsibilities and responsibilities leading to rules and unconditional positive regard.

We have specially trained Thrive, Trauma Informed Schools (TIS), Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA's), Trauma Informed Practitioners to support children who are identified as requiring additional support. This support may be offered in 1:1 session's, in class or in small groups. Our aim is to support children and young people to make sense of their experience, find ways to manage their emotions and feelings and ensure that they maintain the capacity to learn, despite difficult events that may happen for them.

Children and young people are identified for additional support by a number of methods. We universally screen the emotional and social development of some of our children using Thrive and or Boxall. These assesses key executive functions and skills, emotional literacy and self-regulation. children and young people do not always present through their behaviour when life is becoming difficult for them, our screening, complex needs profile and intervention referral system ensures that no children or young people is missed. Children and young people may be referred

by their class teacher or highlighted through a significant change in their behaviour in schools or through a parental concern when behaviour changes at home or a significant life event impacts the family.

As part of our commitment to a relational and trauma-informed approach, The Bower Learning Partnership works closely with the NEST team—a dedicated group of skilled professionals who provide targeted, wraparound support for children and young people. Following a referral, the NEST team collaborates with school staff and external agencies to assess individual needs and coordinate appropriate interventions. This process includes regular triage meetings with clinical therapists to ensure that support is timely, evidence-informed, and tailored to the child's developmental and emotional profile. Operating within a multi-agency framework, the NEST team plays a vital role in promoting emotional regulation, relational safety, and long-term wellbeing for our most vulnerable learners.

All staff are responsible for adhering to positive practise that promotes a child or young person's ability to engage in, and access their learning. This is based on the understanding that children and young people best achieve, develop and reach their true potential when staff are; fair, flexible, trustworthy, respectful, and model positive relationships. It is the expectation at Bower Learning Partnership that all staff, regardless of role act in this way.

We believe that our parents/carers know their children and young people best and we are committed to working in partnership to identify the best ways of providing support for everyone within our schools. We aim to develop positive, non-judgemental working alliances with all our parents/carers, coffee mornings and PFSA work.

Key premises of our approach

When developing relationship-based provision we need to think in terms of:

- Developing Relationships – This involves building relationships, supporting inclusion and setting and maintaining boundaries with empathy. Responding and regulation – 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

- Being 'fair' is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity).

- Behaviour serves a 'Function', if we can develop an understanding of the function(s) served then we will be better able to support/meet the underlying needs being communicated.

Behaviour Expectations and Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND)

As a Partnership we consistently promote high standards of behaviour and provide the necessary support to ensure all children and young people can achieve and thrive both in and out of the classroom.

Whilst all of our students have individual SEND and life experiences, a whole Partnership approach is undertaken to meet the needs of all of the children and young people. We believe that: Consistency is the key to ensuring effective positive behaviour.

Within our consistent culture of positive behaviour support, our staff will ensure:

- Consistent language and consistent response, with simple and clear expectations reflected in all conversations about behaviour.
- Consistent follow up, ensuring certainty at classroom and school level, all staff taking responsibility for challenges within the classroom. Never passing problems up the line, teachers taking responsibility for behaviour challenges, seeking support but never delegating.
- Consistent positive reinforcement, with routine procedures for reinforcing, encouraging and celebrating appropriate behaviour.
- Consistent natural consequences which are defined and applied by all staff as well as following established structures for more serious behaviours.
- Consistent, simple expectations promoting appropriate behaviours.
- Consistent respect from the adults.
- That they demonstrate consistent levels of emotional control i.e. to model and not just teach.
- Consistently reinforced routines for behaviour around the site.
- A consistent environment which displays our core values.
- That we consistently develop and share, in conjunction with the Junior Leadership Team, our schools rules.

Some behaviours are more likely to be associated with particular types of SEND, such as children and young people with speech, language and communication needs who may not understand a verbal instruction. Behaviour will often need to be considered in relation to a child or young person's SEND, although it does not follow that every incident of 'misbehaviour' will be connected to their SEND; the influence of Trauma and ACEs underline the need to undertake a Relational Approach to behaviour management. As schools we need to manage pupil behaviour effectively, whether or not the child and young people have underlying needs. A graduated approach will be used to assess, plan, deliver and review the impact of the support being provided. The provisions set out in the child or young person's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) must be incorporated and secured within provision and graduated response.

Behaviour is a form of communication.

At Bower Learning Partnership all behaviour is understood as communication and 'poor' behaviour is understood to result from an unmet need or as an adapted, defensive, stress response. The understanding that children learn best within positive, trusting relationships informs our approach to managing and then to adapting behaviour. We expect staff to work to identify the need and provide developmentally appropriate support to remove the barriers to successful engagement in school life. Our expectations underline our understanding that positive, trusting relationships enable learning.

- The change in terminology in the 2014 Code of Practice of Special Educational Needs (SEN) - which replaces the Behaviour and Social Difficulties (BESD) with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties – helps to promote a shift towards viewing behaviour as a communication of an emotional need (whether conscious or unconscious), and responding accordingly.

- It is vital to ensure that children and young people's needs with regard to learning, literacy and language are assessed alongside assessments of their needs with regard to their social and emotional development. Intervention for learning, literacy and language needs to sit within our relational framework.

- Taking a non-judgmental, curious and empathic attitude towards behaviour. We encourage all adults in our schools to respond in a way that focuses on the feelings and emotions that might drive certain behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself. Children and young people with behavioural difficulties need to be regarded as vulnerable rather than troublesome, and we all have a duty to explore this vulnerability and provide appropriate support. 'Thinking of a child as behaving badly disposes you to think of punishment. Thinking of a child as struggling to handle something difficult encourages you to help them through their distress'

- Putting relationships first. This requires a school ethos that promotes strong relationships between staff, children and young people and their parents/carers. It also relies on creating a positive school culture and climate that fosters connection, inclusion, respect and value for all members of the schools communities.

- Maintaining clear boundaries and expectations around behaviour. Changing how we respond to behaviour does not mean having no expectations, routines or structure. In order to help children and young people feel safe, their educational environment needs to be high in both nurture and structure. Children and young people need predictable routines, expectations and responses to behaviour. These must be in place and modelled appropriately, within the context of a safe and caring school environment. Natural rewards and consequences that can follow certain behaviours should be made explicit, without the need to enforce 'sanctions' that can shame and ostracise children and young people from their peers,

school communities and family, leading to potentially more negative behaviour.

- Behaviour must always be viewed systemically and within the context of important relationships (i.e., a relational communication pattern rather than an internal problem).

- Encouraging parental engagement and involvement is crucial when addressing and planning support for children with challenging behaviour. As schools we work creatively with parents and regular invite them in to help support them further with strategies at home. This is not just limited to Annual reviews and can be weekly if needed to wrap support around a child and their family. Relational and Co regulation plans are embedded and created in collaboration with parents, the child and the network of adults around the child.

Within the broader Attachment Aware framework, staff will need to differentiate according to children and young people emotional needs, following different levels or waves of intervention and ensuring that expectations are appropriate and monitored alongside the graduated response to escalation.

- It is important that indicators of emotional are clearly recognised, to ensure that it is not just pupils who are displaying observable and 'hyper-aroused' behaviours (e.g. those who are non-compliant, show mood swings, verbal and physical aggression, those who abscond, who lack empathy or personal boundaries) that are identified. Children and young people who display more passive 'hypo-aroused' behaviours (e.g., those who present as withdrawn, isolated, disengaged and/or distracted, who avoid risks, who appear very anxious, self-harm, who refuse to accept praise, are reluctant to speak) sometimes go unnoticed because their behaviour can feel less challenging to manage.

- Early intervention is imperative for addressing both active and passive behaviours, to ensure that low level features/difficulties can be addressed early.

- It is essential to be aware of the tendency to make judgements around behaviour and to see all behaviour as an indicator of emotions to which we must respond in an empathic and caring manner. This can be particularly hard to do when children and young people act in a way that hursts or frightens others. Children and young people who are identified as particularly vulnerable will need specific approaches tailored to their individual needs and experiences, strengths and difficulties. These will need to be planned in conjunction with parents/carers and relevant partners and shared sensitively, as deemed appropriate.

Window of Tolerance

We recognise that we all have a "Window of Tolerance" within which we can be relaxed, ready to learn and show respect. This open and engaged state can be challenged by unique triggers which we may or may not be conscious of, that can push us out of our window of tolerance by a little or a long way. In response, this may

cause someone to become hyper-aroused, going into "fight" or "flight" with behaviours that on the outside may appear anxious, aggressive, agitated or controlling, whilst on the inside they may feel unsafe, frightened, frustrated and confused. Alternatively, they may become hypo aroused, which means going into "freeze" or even "collapse", appearing withdrawn, hard to reach, inactive, unable to learn or engage. On the inside they may feel flat, disconnected, shut down or numb. Staff also need to recognise their personal emotional state and maintain an 'Open and Engaged' response to children and young people.

Relational Health

Our schools are invested in supporting the very best possible relational health between;
Parent and child, Child and child, Child and school staff, Parent and school staff, School staff, School staff and senior leaders, School staff and external agencies.
To this end our schools are committed to educational practices which Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect;

Protect

- Increased 'safety cues' in all aspects of the school day; 'meet and greet' at the classroom door and an open-door policy for informal discussions with parents/carers.

- Staff trained in 'PACE' modes of interactions (Hughes 2015); being warm empathic, playful and curious (proven to shift children out of flight/fright/freeze positions).

- Staff ensure that interactions with children are socially engaging and not socially defensive, to decrease likelihood of children relating defensively (flight/fright/freeze).

- Staff 'interactively repair' occasions when they themselves move into defensiveness.

- Pedagogic interventions that help staff to get to know children better on an individual basis e.g. 'I wish my teacher knew'. (What matters to them, who matters to them, their dreams, hopes). This is key to enabling children to feel safe enough to talk, if they wish, about painful life experiences, which are interfering with their ability to learn and their quality of life.

- Vulnerable children and young people have easy and daily access to at least one named, emotionally available adult, and know when and where to find that adult. If the child or young person does not wish to connect with the allocated adult, an alternative adult is found.

- School staff adjust expectations around vulnerable children and young people to correspond with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress. This includes removing vulnerable and traumatised children and young people in a kind and non-judgmental way from situations they are not managing well (e.g., children and young people who are

continually triggered into alarm states in the main playground can access a calmer, smaller areas with emotionally regulating adults).

- Provision of a clear, confidential and non-shaming system of self-referral for children and young people's help/talk time. The nurturing of staff in such a way that they feel truly valued and emotionally-regulated and in so doing to support them to interact throughout the school day with positive social engagement rather than defensiveness.

Relate

- A whole-school commitment to enabling children and young people to see themselves, their relationships and the world positively, rather than through a lens of threat, danger or self-blame.

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

Regulate

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

- Evidence-based interventions that aim to repair psychological damage and brain damage caused by traumatic life experiences, through emotionally regulating, playful, enriched adult-child interactions.

- The emotional well-being and regulating of staff are treated as a priority to prevent burnt-out, stress related absence, or leaving the profession through stress-related illness, secondary trauma and/or feeling undervalued, blamed or shamed.

- Calming: All staff are expected to use the Vital Relational functions (as part of our Thrive strategy) to support children whilst addressing unregulated behaviours.

This provides co regulation through the support of predictable and emotionally regulated adults. The Vital Relational functions (VRFs) are:

Attune: Be alert to how the child is feeling.

Validate: Validate their perspective/experience/feeling. Validate the feeling not the behaviour.

Containment: Catch it, match it and digest it by thinking about it out loud and offering it back, named, in small digestible pieces. Make the experience manageable.

Calm/ Soothe: demonstrate emotional regulation by soothing and calming their distress, enabling them to address the behaviour.

Reflect

• Staff training and development and training in the art of good listening, dialogue, empathy and understanding (instead of asking a series of questions/ giving lectures).

• Provision of skills and resources to support parents and staff in meaning empathetic conversations with vulnerable children who want to talk about their lives. This is to empower children and young people to better manage their home situations and life in general.

• Within the context of an established and trusted relationship with a member of staff (working alliance), children and young people are given the means and opportunity to symbolise painful life experiences through images as well as words, as a key part of 'working through' these experiences and memory re-consolidation. Means include the provision of different modes of expression, e.g., art/play/drama/ music/sand/emotion worksheets/emotion cards.

• PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) is accessed as preventative input, informed by current research (psychological and neuroscience) on mental health, mental ill-health, relationships, emotions, social media and tools for how to 'do life well'. Curricular content enables children and young people to make informed choices about how they relate to others, how they live their lives, and how they treat their brains, bodies and minds.

• Staff development and training to help children and young people move from 'reliving' their trauma/painful life experiences, to reflecting on those experiences. Staff learn to do this through connection, empathetic conversation, addressing children and young people's negative self-referencing and helping them develop positive, coherent narratives about their lives and self-esteem. Studying the features of secure relationships helps us to understand how we need to be in order to build relationships. In order to be effective, it is necessary to be personally reflective about how we are in relationships: what we feel and think and how this affects our way of being.

• A relational behaviour policy based not on punishment or sanctions rather resolution and interactive repair (e.g., restorative conversations). The relational approach suggests that children and young people need consequences that teach, rather than punish. Relevant consequences, rather than arbitrary ones, are fairer and help children and young people to understand the effect their behaviour has on others.