



Trauma Informed Practice & Behaviour Policy

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Explore Connect Belong Thrive

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Section 1: Policy and Principles

Policy Introduction

This policy is designed to promote a positive ethos of good behaviour in which children can work and learn well together. There is a high expectation of behaviour in all aspects of the day which places the needs of the child at its centre.

Our provision will support all children including those displaying social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties. We maintain the belief that students' behaviour is a form of communication, it should be understood so they can be supported so they can continue to positively engage in learning.

EVOLVE strives to create a community which is trauma informed. This trauma informed approach is embodied by our aspiration to build a nurturing and caring ethos which is embedded within our environment. We have developed a behaviour policy which places relationships as the cornerstone for children/young people to thrive, both academically and in relation to their wellbeing.

Aims & Objectives

EVOLVE aims to provide a caring, calm and secure environment in which tolerance, understanding and respect for others is fostered. We aim to promote a positive culture and to encourage in all students a sense of responsibility to themselves, to EVOLVE and to the wider community. This is achieved through, staff, volunteers, students, parents/carers and schools working in partnership.

We aim to:

- Encourage a calm, purposeful and happy atmosphere
- Enable students to feel safe
- Implement mental health and trauma-informed approach to behaviour
- Foster positive attitudes towards themselves and others which recognises and values achievements at all levels
- Enable students to recognise and appreciate appropriate behaviour
- Encourage increasing independence and self-discipline so each child learns to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and choices
- Provide a consistent approach to behaviour management
- Make boundaries of acceptable behaviour clear and understand the relationship between actions and consequences
- Provide an interesting, well-planned curriculum that motivates children to learn alongside developing their social, emotional and behavioural skills
- Ensure that all members of our community feel safe
- Allow children/young people to develop a strong sense of morality that allows them to take on board the thoughts and feelings of others
- To teach children/young people how to communicate their thoughts and feelings in a way that would be beneficial in their adulthood

This Trauma Informed Practice and Behaviour Policy seeks to inform, guide and support staff, parents/carers, and students to achieve these aims through actively promoting positive behaviour.

Purpose of the policy

To provide guidance to staff and students that can be:

- Accessible and applicable at all levels within the setting
- Used to create and embed a nurturing, inclusive ethos that reflects the aims of the policy
- Monitor and evaluate as part of a plan-do-review cycle, with input from students/young people, parents/carers and partners.

Student Expectations

- We are empathic and kind
- We keep ourselves and others safe
- We are ready to engage in all aspects of learning

Staff Expectations

- We value our relationships with children and their families
- We strive to understand the function behind a child's behaviour
- We consistently model the behaviour we wish to see
- We always give children/young people a fresh start as required
- We ensure that we support and implement the agreed trauma informed approaches (e.g. emotion coaching/responsive co-regulation plans)
- We use trauma informed language in our daily routine

PACE Model: Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy

We are committed to educational practices which Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect;

Protect

Increased 'safety cues' in all aspects of the day;

- 'meet and greet' at the door and an open-door policy for informal discussions with parents/ carers.
- Staff trained in 'PACE' modes of interaction (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).
- A whole centre commitment to cease all use of harsh voices, shouting, put downs, criticism and shaming (proven to be damaging psychologically and neurologically).
- Staff 'interactively repair' occasions when they themselves move into defensiveness.
- Interventions that help staff to get to know children better on an individual basis e.g. 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 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 does not wish to connect with the allocated adult, an alternative adult is found.
- Staff adjust expectations around vulnerable children to correspond with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress. This includes removing vulnerable and traumatised children in a kind and non-judgmental way from situations they are not managing well.
- Provision of a clear, confidential and non-shaming system of self-referral for children'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 day with positive social engagement rather than defensiveness.

Relate

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

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 to better manage their home situations and life in general.
- Within the context of an established and trusted relationship with a member of staff, children 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.

- Curricular content enables children 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 move from 'behaving' their trauma/painful life experiences, to reflecting on those experiences. Staff learn to do this through empathetic conversation, addressing children's negative self-referencing and helping them develop positive, coherent narratives about their lives.

Environmental Consistency

At EVOLVE, we recognise that consistency and routines help children and young people to feel safe. We aim to ensure that:

- All staff have read the behaviour policy and feel confident in applying the policy
- We refer to the expectations every time we provide feedback or discipline, in which we explain how a behaviour has/has not embodied these expectations
- All staff are aware of the strategies being used to support individual children/young people with additional needs (including acknowledgement and awareness of the responsive co-regulation plans)
- Staff use Emotion Coaching to support children/young people's emotional needs and provide consequences/problem solving opportunities when required.

Differentiation

- We will differentiate our behaviour policy as appropriate to the needs of all children/young people within our setting, in line with the Equality Act (2010)
- For some students this approach will require an individualised emotional regulation approach
- Children/young people have a wide range of individual needs which change over time. As such, children/young people require a flexible approach within an overall structure of consistency.
- Children/young people will be provided with support based on their level of need. Given that EVOLVE views behaviour as a communication of need, frequent behaviour will be seen as an indication that level of support may need to be increased. Decisions about the level of support required will always be made in consultation with the child or young person, their parents/carers and external professionals as appropriate.

Section 2: Co-regulation and Behaviour Management

Consistency & Leadership

The policy should also promote regular attendance, a good work ethic, self-discipline and respect for others.

To help us achieve our aims we will:

- provide a clear set of rules, rewards and consequences through consultation with staff, children and parents/carers
- publicise the above so that everyone is clear about what is expected and approaches to behaviour management are consistent;
- ensure that there are consistent nurturing practices;
- ensure a trauma-informed approach is embedded across EVOLVE so that the mental health and wellbeing of students and staff is a priority;
- ensure that children understand the meaning of inappropriate and unsafe behaviour and bullying and know how they will deal with it.

Our Trauma Informed Practice and Behaviour Policy acknowledges the legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of safeguarding and in respect of students with special educational needs (SEN).

Classroom Management

We encourage good behaviour through communication of high expectations, clear policies and an ethos which fosters discipline and mutual respect between staff and students. Expectations and routines are explicitly taught to the children to ensure consistency of approach.

In our centre, all students are expected to:

- Respect themselves and others and behave safely
- Be curious about the world around you and ask questions
- Ignore distractions and do your best
- Listen to and follow instructions
- Be kind, fair and polite
- Be open minded to others peoples ideas and perspectives, cultures and beliefs

These expectations are clearly displayed around the building in communal spaces. Staff reinforce these displays by drawing attention to them daily as part of their management strategies.

Everyone within EVOLVE has the right to feel safe and secure, and all incidents of violence will be dealt with bearing this in mind. Physical and verbal aggression, and bullying is unacceptable and will be challenged and managed. All reported incidents of bullying whether they are observed by staff or reported by a student or parent will be dealt with rapidly and from the premise that bullying is unacceptable. Parents/carers will always be informed if their child has been physically aggressive towards other students or staff, or if they have been the perpetrator or victim of bullying behaviour (see Anti-Bullying Policy).

Rewards and Consequences

We regularly celebrate the success of all students in a variety of ways as we recognise that focussing on success and positive outcomes is essential in developing a positive culture and ethos. We celebrate these successes in many ways including;

- Multiple opportunities during the day for a fresh start
- Verbal praise/feedback
- Certificates in celebration
- Points awarded for good behaviours
- Achiever of the Week
- Vouchers

Although our aims to focus on positives at all times, there are unfortunately occasions when some students may display unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour. All of our staff will undergo regular Trauma Informed training and key information including ACES and external factors will be shared promptly with relevant staff. All of our staff understand that presented behaviour are often an outcome or a response to ACES and will adopt and implement trauma-informed strategies that pre-empt unacceptable behaviour.

We want students to take responsibility for their behaviour and will encourage students to do this through restorative justice approaches which enable students to reflect upon their behaviour and to make amends. This process does not, however, replace consequences.

We know that consistent management of behaviour is essential for students to understand what is expected of them and to avoid mixed messages. It is vital that students learn early on in life that there are always consequences for poor and unacceptable behaviour which undermine the positive atmosphere of our settings community.

The consequences of not keeping to the expectations are clearly taught to the students. The consequences are short, clear and progressive. Students are taught to understand that it is their choice to break a rule and they must take responsibility for making that choice.

Our expectations about behaviour also apply to all off-site activities, educational visits and whilst students are being transported.

Consequences across our centre may include but are not exclusive to the following list:

- Verbal rule reminders
- Verbal warning given and inappropriate behaviour explained; expectation for improvement given
- A loss of a privilege
- Fixed term exclusion (known as reflection days)

A fixed term exclusion (reflection day) is the decision of the Head of Centre following an investigation. Reflection day are usually consequences of behaviours which have

caused significant health and safety risks or have had a significant impact upon the safety and learning of others.

Consequences should always be reinforced by telephone calls, letters to parents/carers and recorded on our Lamplight system. Consequences will be shared with parent and any supporting agencies.

Behaviour Strategies and the Teaching of Good Behaviour

It is recognised that good behaviour needs to be modelled and taught. We embed the PACE (Play, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) approach originated by Hughes in order to support children's social engagement system. The development of positive student/staff relationships along with effective teaching which recognises individual needs encourages children to behave in appropriate and less challenging ways.

Staff use a range of strategies which allow students to learn how to manage their emotions more effectively without disrupting the learning of others. These strategies may include:

- Time alone in another part of the room
- Time out of with a known adult supporting
- Support staff intervention
- Use of a calm/sensory box
- Use of time away

In order to model appropriate behaviour, staff play games and encourage the students to play appropriately with their peers. Staff will supervise students during lunch and breaks at all times and a rota for this is in place. This establishes strong relationships between students and staff, providing secure attachments and key adult figures.

Staff will use physical restraint of a student if their behaviour is placing themselves or others safety at risk and will do so only as a very last resort. Staff will be trained in restraint by an approved provider. A log of training will be kept and maintained to ensure training is current. Significant physical interventions will be recorded and information passed on to all parties as soon as possible after the event. In extreme cases staff have the right to ask for Police Intervention.

Use of exclusion

EVOLVE recognises the potentially detrimental impact of exclusion and consequently avoids using any form of exclusion to respond to behaviour that challenges us.

Research has raised concerns about practices of exclusion and zero-tolerance approaches to behaviour management. The following research findings are of significant concern:

- Exclusion has been associated with a significantly higher likelihood of becoming a teenage parent, being unemployed or homeless later in life, or even ending up in prison (Gordon, 2001).

- Researchers have associated exclusion with additional poor outcomes later in life, for instance difficulties with relationships, unstable employment, crime involvement, social exclusion (Nuffield Foundation, 2004).
- Exclusion is perhaps the most explicit form of rejection by a setting of its students and for some excluded students increases the likelihood of wider social exclusion (Munn & Lloyd, 2005).

In order to avoid exclusions, we:

- identify and meet the need being communicated through a behaviour at the earliest opportunity (rather than using sanctions to reduce the behaviour). This will include informing referral school/support services of the risk of a fixed term or permanent exclusion as soon as possible.
- Use restorative conversations alongside the child or young person to reflect on triggers, thoughts, feelings and what might help in the future
- Use a relational approach to behaviour management
- Use Emotion Coaching to provide co-regulation and to support a child or young person to understand their emotions. On the rare occasions that exclusion is used, we will:
- Maintain contact with the child or young person and their family throughout the process (e.g. telephoning the child or young person at the beginning and end of each day, to check how they are doing)
- Use Restorative Practice to structure reintegration meetings and reduce blame
- Hold a restorative group for staff involved in supporting the child or young person
- Place the child or young person's (and parent's/carer's) voice at the heart of each step of the process

Allegations against staff

In line with our trauma informed approach to behaviour management, any malicious and unfounded accusations made against staff would be investigated on an individual basis, with staff, the child or young person and parents/carers working together to understand the possible functions of this behaviour. If appropriate, a Restorative Practice based approach (e.g. a restorative conference) would be used in order to repair relationships between the student and the staff member, whilst aiming to avoid eliciting shame in the student. The member of staff involved would also be provided with access to emotional support from staff on a more private basis, and/or counselling if required.

Engagement with parents/Carers

EVOLVE values parents/carers as experts in their own child's life. We will provide feedback on their child's emotional wellbeing at parent/carer meetings but will also contact them immediately if we have any concerns about their child's wellbeing. We also place great value on feedback from parents/carers about the wellbeing of their child. If they have any concerns or would like to provide feedback they can contact:

Head of Centre
Siobhan Donoghue

siobhan@evolve-hub.org.uk

Behaviour outside our premises

Regulation must be reasonable and is as follows:

- consequences can be imposed when students are on a trips or being transported - in these circumstances the student may have to wait until they are back in the centre for the consequence.
- cyber bullying - where parents or children are treated inappropriately using phones, internet, email or social networking by a student from EVOLVE, they are advised to bring phones or copies of pages from sites into the Head of Centre, report using the CEOP's website, contact the Police or all three.

In acting reasonably to regulate student behaviour when off our site, staff will consider the following principles:

- the severity of the behaviour
- where the behaviour took place
- the extent to which our reputation has been affected
- the extent to which the behaviour would have an impact on the orderly running of our service
- the extent to which the behaviour might pose a threat to another students or staff member (e.g. bullying behaviour, threatening behaviour, extortion).

Staff Development & Support

The induction of new staff includes an introduction to our Trauma Informed Practice and Behaviour Policy. Staff briefings at the start and end of every day enables relevant information about children to be shared. Staff have opportunities to discuss difficulties within an open and non-judgemental framework. This may include informal and private conversations with colleagues, staff debriefing, formal mentoring, supervision, annual appraisal and staff meetings. Regular and on-going training is provided to ensure all staff are skilled professionals and are able to manage challenging behaviour in a consistent and professional manner.

Student support systems

Students are expected to adhere to the agreed expectations and strive to meet and reflect on their personalised targets. They are always able to request a meeting with a member of staff that they feel comfortable with, and more general concerns or suggestions can be voiced through social times such as shared play, circle time and nurture breakfast time.

If a student makes a complaint or allegation against a member of staff, the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true - it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably. Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force (see Complaints Procedure and/or Allegations against Staff documentation).

Liaison with parents/carers and other agencies

Parental support for our Trauma Informed Practice and Behaviour Policy, and the encouragement of their child to adhere to it, is an important part of making positive changes in their child's attitudes and behaviour.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact us whenever they need to with any concerns they may have, and are encouraged to be proactive in sharing and solving problems as they arise.

Managing student transition

Changing school is often a time of increased anxiety for students and may result in behaviours escalating. We aim to support students and parents/carers wherever possible to ease the transition of both coming into and leaving EVOLVE.

Organisation and facilities

Staff establish strong routines across our centre which will help greatly to establish the smooth running of the Centre.

Due to individual needs of the student there may be times when a student may not be managing within a group and require a period of reflection or calm down time. This may be done using a quiet space or room. In these situations, children are monitored at all times by an adult and used for no longer than is necessary. This time should be used as constructively as possible and children are supported in getting back into class.

Monitoring & Review

It is the responsibility of all staff to incorporate, reinforce and model these expectations in their everyday work, their teaching of the curriculum and their interactions with students.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and the Senior Leadership Team to lead, support and monitor the consistent implementation of this policy.

The Head of Centre and the Senior Leadership team are expected to monitor the implementation of the policy ensuring equality for all and that defining principles are upheld.

This policy is subject to annual review by the relevant Directors committee.

Section 3: Trauma and Education

Trauma & Education

Children and young people may experience trauma through a number of different ways. Research into adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) consistently shows that a set of 10 adverse experiences in childhood are associated with an increased risk of mental health problems and other problems in later life (Early Intervention Foundation, February 2020). However, it must be noted that there are also several other experiences and factors that might contribute to poor outcomes, including economic disadvantage and discrimination.

The 10 ACEs are:

1. Physical abuse
2. Sexual abuse
3. Psychological abuse
4. Physical neglect
5. Psychological neglect
6. Witnessing domestic violent
7. Having a close family member who misused drugs or alcohol
8. Have a close family member with mental health problems
9. Have a close family member who serviced time in prison
10. Parental separation or divorce on account of relationship breakdown

Early Intervention Foundation, 2020

A trauma informed educational setting is one where all adults recognise and respond to those children and young people who have experienced trauma in a way that meets their social, emotional and mental health needs.

Research suggests that “when schools place a strong emphasis upon the emotional health and well-being of all members of the school community, and this ethos is driven by the school’s senior leadership team and is evident in practice, this leads to better outcomes for all – e.g. staff retention, student attendance and attainment, positive home-school relationships” (Banerjee, Weare & Farr, 2014).

Research of this nature supports the use of trauma informed approaches to behaviour in educational settings, not only for children and young people who have experienced trauma but for the whole cohort.

Behaviourist Approaches	Trauma Informed Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Focus on using rewards and sanctions to increase or decrease the frequency of a behaviour▪ See behaviour as being related to an immediate trigger (e.g. “the student started distracting others because he was bored”)▪ Focus on treating all children and young people equally, regardless	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Place relationships and a child or young person’s sense of safety and security at the heart of classroom management▪ Encourage nurture, warmth and empathy, even when a child or young person is presenting with behaviours that feel challenging▪ Promote a sense of community and

of need or circumstances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be used repetitively and consistently until the behaviour is changed. 	belonging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take individual circumstances into account (there is a need for differentiation in behaviour)
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Research on attachment and trauma strongly indicates that a relational rather than behavioural framework is more effective in supporting children and young people’s behaviour (Bergin and Bergin, 2009; Cozolino, 2013). Below is a summary of research relating to the impact and effectiveness of relational approaches:

- Close and supportive relationships with staff have demonstrated the potential to mitigate the risk of negative outcomes for children who may otherwise have difficulty succeeding in school (Driscoll & Pianta, 2010).
- Children who can regulate their own emotions and responses are more popular, have fewer behavioural problems, are more emotionally stable, have fewer There is no more effective neurobiological intervention than a safe relationship, the relationship works to bring the brain back into regulation. (Bruce Perry, PhD, MD, researcher & child psychiatrist)
- Attachment influences students’ school success. Secure attachment is associated with higher grades and standardised test scores compared to insecure attachment. Secure attachment is also associated with greater emotional regulation, social competence, and willingness to take on challenges, and with lower levels of ADHD, each of which in turn is associated with higher achievement (Bergin and Bergin2009).
- When staff think empathically, and not punitively, about misbehaving students, they cultivate better relationships and help reduce discipline problems (Okonofua et al., 2015).
- Secure, nurturing environments and stimulating, engaging experiences support the development of neuronal networks – they help to build brains. Empathetic, supportive attachments and relationships are essential to optimize brain development as ‘the attunement of emotional states is essential for the developing brain to acquire the capacity to organize itself more autonomously as the child matures’ (Siegel, 2012).

A Trauma Informed Behavioural Approach

These principles aim to compliment the OFSTED Education Inspection Framework(2019), in particular, the references to relationships among students and staff reflecting a positive and respectful culture, and the importance of learners feeling safe.

- Recognising, validating and attuning to children and young people take precedent over other means of discipline – ‘connection before correction’
- A relational approach to discipline should be prioritised – this will still include discussing consequences and using problem solving skills as opportunities for learning.
- Recognising the impact of an incident on your own feelings, behaviours and triggers before applying discipline approaches.
- Focusing on the function behind a behaviour rather than the behaviour itself.

Trauma informed behavioural approaches prioritise relationships, empathy and feeling safe above discipline and other behaviour management principles. The four steps of Emotion Coaching provide a useful outline for embedding principle within a relational approach.

Emotion Coaching Four Steps:

1. Notice Empathy
2. Label, validate & Attune
3. Set limits (if required)
4. Problem solve (if required)

Steps 1 & 2 of the Emotion Coaching Framework outlined above provide an opportunity to prioritise relationships, empathise, and support the child or young person to feel safe. Step 3 & 4 of the Emotion Coaching Framework provides opportunities for behaviour reflection, behaviour change, discussion around consequences and opportunities for problem solving.

A note on Discipline & Consequences

It is important to remember that discipline within an educational setting should represent an opportunity to teach, nurture, provide boundaries and problem solve. It is important to reflect on the function behind the behaviour, the lesson that should be taught and the best way to teach that lesson (Siegel & Bryson, 2018). Trauma informed approaches to behaviour aim to understand what a child or young person might be trying to say to us through their behaviour. Behaviour that challenges is not seen as a choice, but as being a communication of an unmet need. Staff using a trauma informed approach strive to understand the function behind a behaviour, rather than using rewards and consequences to promote/discourage behaviour that is desirable/undesirable to the member of staff.

Consequences are not seen as a central element of trauma informed approaches to behaviour. However, some children and young people benefit from having the opportunity to co-construct ideas for repairing a situation, alongside an adult. An emphasis should be placed on restoration, not punishment or blame, and should aim to reduce feelings of guilt in the child or young person.

Whilst consistency of approach is important for children and young people to feel safe and secure, it is also important to differentiate expectations and approach according to a child or young person's abilities, needs and experiences. Whilst the majority of children and young people will thrive when a whole setting approach to behaviour is applied, some will need further support and intervention, and a few will require more intensive, individualised support. As such, behaviour policies should outline the different levels of support available dependent on the child or young person's level of need.

Trauma Informed Language

Words are important. The language we use and the stories we tell have great significance to all involved. They carry a sense of hope and possibility or can be associated with a sense of pessimism and low expectations, both of which can influence personal outcomes. In particular, the language we use to describe children/young people and their behaviour can have a significant impact on classroom environments (Orsati et al., 2013).

The section below provides some examples of language to avoid, and language that can be particularly helpful:

Language to avoid:

- Language that reinforces staff control, for example 'enforce', 'punishment', 'isolation', 'naughty corner', 'removal', 'rule', 'power', 'control', 'confiscate', and 'impose'
- Language that places negative judgement on a child or young person or their behaviour, including 'attention seeking', 'malicious', 'choice', 'poor behaviour', 'misbehaviour', 'manipulative', 'naughty', 'immoral'
- Language that reinforces negative gender stereotypes, such as 'naughty boy', or 'bossy girl'.

Language that can be particularly helpful:

- Language that promotes trauma informed approaches and acknowledges the need behind a behaviour, for example 'emotionally dysregulated', 'what is the function behind this behaviour?', 'attention needing', 'feeling unsafe', 'presenting as distressed', 'requiring co-regulation support'

Approaches that draw on trauma and attachment theory tend to advocate separating the child or young person from any behaviour that challenges. This can be achieved through the language used to describe the child and their behaviour, for example:

- 'Attention seeking' could be considered to describe the surface-level behaviour, but not the underlying need. Instead, 'attachment needing' might reframe the behaviour as being the function of an unmet need
- 'Manipulative' is another word that describes the surface-level behaviour and has negative connotations within society. Instead, phrases such as 'trying to find a way to have their needs met' or 'feeling insecure in their relationships with others' might be more appropriate.
- Using externalising language around behaviour that challenges and separating the child from their behaviour, e.g. 'The expectations are that we..., so we need to...' (rather than saying 'you need to').
- Using internalising language around behaviour that meets our expectations or can be celebrated, and showing warmth towards the child or young person, e.g. 'You were very thoughtful when you... so you did brilliantly at showing me our 'be kind' expectation'.
- Often, children and young people who have received regular feedback on their behaviour can develop reputations amongst staff and other children/young people. These reputations often relate entirely to their behaviour, and are often

powerful, pervasive and dominating. As staff, we can work to challenge these narratives by:

- Talking to other staff about exceptions, e.g. 'Jay was so kind today when she...' (N.B. it is important to talk about exceptions in a way that avoids isolating other staff members/avoids a 'she behaves fine for me' discussion)
- Reinforcing an alternative identity, e.g. 'Zak, you're my ICT expert, can you help me...'
- Seeking opportunities to reinforce exceptions in the classroom, e.g. 'Sami, it was really kind of you to get a pencil for Jack as well as yourself'.
- Write scripts for responding to behaviour that feels particularly challenging (e.g. using emotion coaching script templates)
- Use sorting, classifying, ordering activities to help the student to co-regulate/self-regulate
- Use humour or personal interests as a way to diffuse tension and de-escalate situation.
- Use restorative conversations that avoid blame and use visual prompts. Ensure public blame or discipline is avoided. Holding a special (transitional) object can take the place of the staff for short periods of time 'please look after this for me for a while'
- Redirect unfocused behaviour towards being helpful in class, taking responsibility for tasks, not people

In addition to the above 'top tips' it is also encouraged that a 'responsive co-regulation plan' is completed for students who have experienced trauma. The following template provides some guidance on how a 'responsive co-regulation plan' can be used within a classroom setting. It recognises that at different stages of regulation, children will benefit from different responses from those around them. A class setting is considered to be 'trauma informed' when staff have consistent, clear and planned steps to respond to students at different stages of regulation. Please find the blank responsive co-regulation plan within the appendix section.

State of Regulation	Potential Displayed Behaviours	Responsive Co-regulation
CALM	Steady heart/breathing rate. Calm state of arousal. Open to social engagement. Expressive facial expression and voice prosody. Able to listen,	Maximise expressive social engagement. Fully engage and connect using the face, voice, movement. Encourage listening and expressive responses. Engage thinking skills

	process language and engage in thinking to learn.	to reflect and make connections. Introduce gentle challenge through play/activity
Mild Stress	Slightly raised heart/breathing rate. Signs of agitation, frustration, anxiety. Raised hypervigilance. Lack of focus, easily distracted. Increased mobilisation. Early signs of needing to take control or helplessness.	Connect through eye contact, movement and facial expression. Express calmness through storytelling prosody and open facial expression. Attune to mood, intensity and energy of the child. Respond by being more animated to attune to agitation, increase intensity to attune to anger, be gentle and delicate to attune to sadness. Respond empathically and validate feelings. Use calming, soothing and regulatory activities.
DYSREGULATED (MOBILISED)	High levels of arousal/distress. Hyper vigilant. Difficulty listening and focusing. Mobilised – fidgeting, jumping, running, climbing etc. Raised voice with lack of prosody. Decreased expressivity. Threatening behaviour. Oppositional behaviour	Reduce social demands whilst remaining present. Provide individual attention. Convey adult containment. Let them know you are able to ‘hold’ their dysregulation by remaining regulated. Convey your calm and regulated state by being confident and contained. Use quiet, calm sounds and tones which are expressive and confident. Reduce language, give short clear directions. Avoid questions and choices. Use predictable routine. Reduce sensory input, lights, noise. Use sensory soothing

<p>DYSREGULATED (IMMOBILISED)</p>	<p>Lowered heart/breathing rate. Reduced energy. Shuts off from surroundings/ dissociates. Depressed state. Immobile/frozen. May feel faint.</p>	<p>Gentle, soft and delicate manner of coming close, making them aware of your presence and support. Use comforting and predictable voice. Use invited touch to soothe. Singing, humming, music. Use sensory soothing. Calm and gentle reassurance.</p>
<p>CRISIS</p>	<p>The child's behaviour means that they or other people are not safe</p>	<p>An individualised plan of action which outlines action to be taken in the event of unsafe behaviour. This may include advice from outside agencies. The plan should be shared with the child and include their views as to what helps and with all staff working with the child. Roles and responsibilities should be clear. If the plan includes physical intervention staff should have had the appropriate training, Adults need to provide high levels of containment through their way of being – having a plan can help.</p>