



Springwell  
Lincolnshire

# Together We Will Achieve

## A Relationship Policy (for all school staff)

**Our school is 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 Leads  
School staff and external agencies

**To this end our school is committed to educational practices which Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect:**

### Protect

Our children and young people need to feel safe so we have:

- Increased 'safety cues' in all aspects of the school day, e.g. 'meet and greet' and a warm welcome.
- Staff trained in 'PACE' modes of interaction - being warm, empathic, playful and curious
- Staff who ensure that interactions with children are socially engaging and not socially defensive, to decrease likelihood of children relating defensively (fight/flight/freeze).
- A whole-school commitment to stop use of harsh voices, shouting, put-downs, criticisms, and shaming.
- Staff who, when we get things wrong, spend time repairing relationships.
- Pedagogic interventions that help staff to get to know children better on an individual basis e.g. "I wish my teacher knew" to enable 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.
- Daily access to at least one named, emotionally-available adult, and know when and where to find that adult.
- School staff who 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.
- Ways to help nurture staff in such a way that they feel valued, emotionally-regulated and supported

### Relate

We know that building positive, supportive relationships is key for both students and staff, so we:

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

- Ensure all children have repeated relational opportunities with emotionally-available adults) to make the shift from not feeling psychologically safe to trusting others.

### Regulate

We work with our children, young people and staff to help them to feel calm, soothed and safe through:

- Relational interventions specifically designed to bring down stress levels in all our pupils, 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.
- Supporting staff - the emotional well being and regulating of staff is important to prevent burn-out, stress-related absence, or leaving the profession through stress-related illness, secondary trauma and/or feeling undervalued.
- Designated staff-only spaces, where staff can sit together, have drinks and de-stress.

### Reflect

We recognize that reflection is key, so we have:

- Staff development and training in the art of good listening, dialogue, empathy and understanding
- Provision of skills and resources to support parents and staff in meaningful empathic conversations with vulnerable children who want to talk about their lives.
- Opportunities for children to symbolise painful life experiences through images as well as words e.g. art/ play/ drama/music/sand-play/emotion worksheets/ emotion cards.
- PSHE (Personal, social, and health education) informed by current research (psychology and neuroscience) on mental health, mental ill-health (full range of specific conditions), relationships (including parenting) emotions, social media and tools for how to 'do life well'. 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 empathic conversation, addressing children's negative self- referencing and helping them develop positive, coherent narratives about their lives.
- A Behaviour Policy based not on punishment, sanctions and isolation, but one that models enquiry, reflection, resolution and interactive repair (e.g. restorative conversations).

## THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF NURTURE

Children's learning is understood developmentally

The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing

All behaviour is communication

The classroom offers a safe base

Language is a vital means of communication

The importance of transition in children's lives

  
**WELLSPRING**  
ACADEMY TRUST  
We Make A Difference