

Safeguarding and Behaviour Update



As we move towards the end of term and look forward to the Christmas Break there are some messages we feel are important to share with you at this time. Many of them stem from questions we get asked by parents.

Whilst it may be tempting to leave reading this update for another time – please don't!

There is important information about **staying safe online** which is **vital at this time of year** when children will be opening new devices or spending time online during the Christmas break.

Please do take time to read and consider the points raised as they are intended to keep children safe at home as well as in school. Remember that **Safeguarding children starts at home.**



Protecting them from harm and encouraging healthy attitudes and behaviour is a collective responsibility in the times in which we live.

Often we get asked questions like what can I do to help my child?

Sometimes the simple things are best!

“Be connected with your child's world!”

Keep up with the Positive Attitude and Help

I am delighted with the efforts of parents and support for your child and the aims of school. Regular reading, help with homework and positive conversations about school helps develop a positive mindset and a healthy and resilient outlook on school life.

With a positive attitude, school and home are enjoyable places to be for all where children can grow, learn and have fun. **Keep up the good work!** Little and often is the key to developing sustainable habits of support for your child.



Play games with your child and talk

Children really do benefit from the **simple things** in life including a **good chat** with mum or dad, **playing a game**, learning that winning and losing are all fine and part of life. We have observed that generally children don't sit and play games as much as they used to a few years ago and as a result they cannot always manage their emotions if they lose. Encourage **fair play, effort and enjoyment** of the game whatever the result.

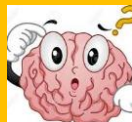
We suggest you try and set aside a minimum of **10-15 minutes each evening** of quality time with your child to talk, play or share a story together. (Devices, TV and other distractions should not be a part of this special time together). Find time a few times a week to play board games, puzzles and even word games or i-spy around the home. A good conversation at home over tea develops **listening, turn taking and confidence** in public speaking (something which is part of school life and beyond).

In playing games, encourage the messages of being a **gracious** winner (children who are not **respectful** or gracious winners can upset others and don't win over friends in the long run). Please model good language "Well done; good game; I see you nearly beat me; maybe next time; you didn't give up; I enjoyed playing that game with you!"



Put the screen away- Be healthy

We are in a world surrounded by screens and they are often a "go to" for children and parents but they do not create a connection to the real world and the use of screens **inhibits normal brain development in children**.



There are many sources of evidence indicating that children who spend too much time on screens view this as "their reality". It is addictive and unhealthy.

Although games are often entertaining initially, frustration occurs and anxiety levels rise.



Children who spend hours on screens ultimately find it **difficult to concentrate and connect** with others.

It is also recommended that children should have at least an hour before bedtime **without** any screens to help them relax and unwind before bedtime; this then helps children develop better sleep habits.

Questions to ask yourself.



1. How much time does your child use a screen each night?
2. When was the last day they didn't go on a device?
3. Do you REALLY know what they are accessing on line?
4. Do you think it is healthy?
5. What small change can you introduce to help keep your child healthy?

Phones, WhatsApp and Games

Unkindness on phones and messaging services sadly occurs from time to time. A few years ago it was only the oldest children in school with mobile phones (and certainly not all of them), now children as young as 8 have their own phones. Fall outs over online and phone messages can cause upset and children can then become anxious.

Whilst phones may be part of modern day parenting/ children's lives it is certainly not a universally positive thing. **School NEEDS your support with this issue- please be responsible for your children's online interactions.** Checking what they are doing and saying online is crucial to keep them safe as they have not yet got the skills to use social media in consistently positive ways.



We are grateful for the hard work of many parents in supervising children's online activity. However we have had a couple of serious incidents recently when children have put themselves in a vulnerable position by posting photographs and personal details online. A couple of children have also accessed inappropriate material for their age. Obviously this has been alarming for the families but we are grateful for the full support they have now given the children. Please continue to keep an eye on what your child is doing.



Behaviour Update, Reminders and Explanations

We hope you find the following information helpful in understanding our work and approach with children's issues.

We have close to 400 children from ages 4-11 years navigating childhood pretty well in the main and they are a great and diverse group of children playing and learning harmoniously together.

When **OFSTED** visited school earlier in the year they reported that:

"In the vast majority of lessons pupils behave well."

"Pupils understand the school rules."

"At playtimes children play happily together."

"They know that if they are upset, they can let an adult know."

"They feel safe at school."

"They do not think bullying happens at school."

We are **very proud** of the behaviour and **relationships between the children at Wren Park**. On a daily basis we see so many lovely things that the children are doing and we regularly celebrate these in our Friday morning assemblies. We are a diverse community and children enjoy their childhood learning and playing with their peers.

However we are not complacent with this and know that there is always room for improvement as cohorts of children differ over time.

OFSTED also identified that **"some older pupils do not treat each other with respect"**.

In the **OFSTED Parent view** survey **"94% of parents said their child feels safe at school"** and **"87% said the school makes sure it's pupils are well behaved"**.

This was echoed again this term by the parents who responded to the EPDA survey.

We are sure you will agree that we would like **all** children to show kindness and respect to their peers.

Growing up responsibly takes learning from mistakes!

We all acknowledge that growing up is a tricky business and it takes years of **learning from mistakes** of selves (and others) to **be positive, resilient and respectful and kind** to all others. On occasions all children will make mistakes and like with other areas of school when this happens children need our help and guidance.

How do we encourage positive behaviour?

We encourage positive behaviour through our focus on positive relationships.

Our school motto:

"Wren Park, One School, Kind and Resilient Together"

supports what we want for and from our school community.

It is underpinned by our school values:

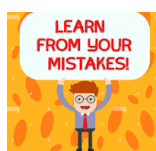


What happens if a child behaves in an undesirable manner? A graduated response.

We expect the children to be kind and respectful to others as well as ambitious and resilient.

If we find your child has not followed the expectations we have in terms of their behaviour they may be required to miss a **playtime as a sanction** (usually after a reminder although sometimes, as their behaviour warrants it, immediately). During the missed playtime the child will be supervised and they will be **reminded of expectations in line with school values**. They will be able to have a drink of water and go to the toilet prior to going back to class.

When this happens **we do not notify parents as we believe children should have the opportunity to be independent and learn from their mistakes** and move on without making a “big issue”.



If a child has three missed playtimes within a 6 week period then we will contact you so both school and home can **work in partnership to support the child**. Please note we will not discuss “one off” incidents of behaviour unless it is a significant issue.

If a child’s playtime behaviour just warrants “**time out**” for example rough play then they will be asked to stand out of play for 3-5 minutes or so before resuming play.



This should not cause undue stress and we use this to keep play going for the children and just giving a “gentle reminder”.

What happens if my child reacts and “gets caught” doing something they shouldn’t?

We sometimes hear that children “did not start it” or was only reacting so “they shouldn’t be punished”. As we teach children about **modern day Britain** we not only talk about values but talk about the importance of **showing restraint and doing the right thing as well as following rules**.



We need to instill that there will be a consequence of their actions- after all we can't have children entering society thinking that it is ok to react in a negative way if something or someone upsets them.



We occasionally hear messages from parents that “children should defend themselves” or “others did it first and my child is the only one being spoken to”. Our response is that if they are found to have behaved in an inappropriate way there is no “defence” for their action and if they **choose to say or do something and they are caught they will be held responsible**. I'm sure you will appreciate this is the same as every aspect of adult life to which we are preparing them. We will always follow up and speak with children who are “identified” as being involved with incidents.



Within school there are always avenues of support for the children but they must use them!



My Child has SEND - are they separate to the schools approach to behaviour?

In a nutshell we have the **same high expectations for all our children** and so they will be held accountable for their behaviour in a similar way to all children.



It may be that additional support is given to these children in order to manage within school and additional help to understand and regulate their behavior.

Although children with SEND need and deserve our best endeavours; if their behaviour impacts upon the safety and well-being of others or their own, we will talk with you and put a risk reduction plan in place. We will talk with you about this if it is needed.



What is Relational Behaviour approach?

At Wren Park we adopt a relational behaviour approach whereby when significant behaviour issues or fall outs occur or there are ongoing difficulties between children we focus on **building relationships** through reflection of impact on others. It is about how to manage things differently and better in the future. It is about educating and upskilling the children to cope with the demands of being in a community.

This approach uses the most informed **research at its core** and implications for best practice from neuro-cognitive science, our understanding of trauma and attachment aligned to our values, ethos and British Values. All staff have had training in working with children who have experienced trauma and attachment issues.

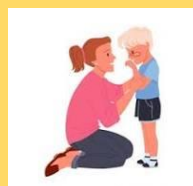
How does that work in practice?

“Connection before Correction”

It is important that when children become dysregulated (angry / unsettled) they are enabled to have a **safe place and time in which to calm down**. This might involve sitting with an adult maybe doing some breathing exercises or some other activity to calm them.



Once the children are calm then the child will be able to talk through or write about what happened (the child’s story) from their point of view. Other children involved will be encouraged to do the same. Once they have given their story they are then encouraged to reflect upon the impact that has had on themselves and how they feel as well as to **consider how those involved (another child /adult) may feel.**



They will then **talk through the consequences of their actions** and what they can do to move the situation on to a **better place**. Sometimes this will involve getting the children together but on occasions the children have this discussion facilitated by the adult or

sometimes this will just be with the adult. This is focused upon doing something positive either to help someone feel better or constructive work and where necessary an apology or explanation.



Following that we discuss **preventative measures to reduce the risk** of incidents occurring again and providing the children with support to **seek help rather than react** in the future. We talk about the school expectations linked to our values as well.

This is a supportive and developmental process rather than simply a punitive one.

Obviously like all aspects of learning it takes teaching and practice to **educate the children to be kind and responsible** and this approach builds **better children over time**.



We expect all parents to appreciate this whole school approach and need your full support.

What sort of issues requires a Relational Behaviour approach?

Whilst not exhaustive, typical things may be a **“fall out”** with another child which has escalated to **causing harm, bullying, prejudice related comments/ actions (including online and out of school)** or behaviours towards a child which are **unkind over time causing ongoing upset and isolation** of a child as well as **persistent or significant disrespectful** behaviours.

Well done for reading this far!

We hope you have found this guide useful. It may be something you keep for reference.

As always, our aim is to **help children through childhood** and through the issues that may arise as part of that journey through school. We believe that with the support of **school and parents in partnership** we can be **proud of the children and the impact they have on their immediate community**. We hope they develop the skills, attitudes and behaviours which **equip them well for life**.

Finally- Remember

- ✓ **We are proud of children's behavior and attitudes the vast majority of time.**
- ✓ **When mistakes occur children need to learn from them and need support from both parents and school to provide a consistent and positive message based upon being kind and respectful.**
- ✓ **Take time to talk to your child about keeping safe online.**

Thank you for your ongoing help and support.