Merryhills Primary School

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Reviewed: September 2026
Reviewed by: Fran Worby/Stella Ioakim
Adopted on: September 2026
Adopted by: Local Governing Body
Next review: September 2027

Behaviour Policy

Our Aims

We recognise the importance of a consistent whole-school approach to behaviour. To achieve maximum benefit from this policy, it is vital that all staff are united in our vision of a positive approach to behaviour management. Therefore, every child, all staff and visitors throughout Merryhills Primary School can expect the same consistently calm approach to behaviour management. All members of staff in the school community are trained in our whole school approach and restorative practice approaches. Using this policy, staff are able to guide and lead children effectively. It is recognised that it takes time as it requires an enquiry-based, restorative approach that relationally supports the development of the child's self-awareness.

At the very core of this policy is the strength of the relationships between Merryhills' staff and children. Staff work hard to understand individual children on many levels, for example their attachment behaviours, behaviours as communications, their past experiences with people and authority figures, and the impact of any special educational needs, illness, adverse childhood conditions and trauma.

As a school, we work with parents to understand children's needs, any difficulties they may face, as well as their experiences. We help provide support for parents & carers to meet their child's needs away from school. Close liaison between our Inclusion Team, class teachers, support staff and parents ensures we are all informed and can tailor support to children and families where needed.

We promote fairness and restorative principles across Merryhills Primary School. We are child-centred, inclusive and based on positive relationships. Additionally, we aim to enable all children to have the ability to understand their own behaviour, to self-regulate and build positive relationships throughout their lives.

As a result, children at Merryhills Primary School have the right to:

- Unconditional Positive Regard
- Recognition of their unique identity and needs
- Be treated with respect and dignity as a valued member of the community
- Learn and achieve in a safe environment
- Be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse
- High expectations from staff that ALL matter equally
- Learn to understand and self-regulate their own behaviours
- Learn how to apply restorative principles in their life
- High-quality first teaching and support from trained staff meet the needs of all individuals

Responsibilities

All staff and Governors have a responsibility to:

- Provide a safe, well-managed, caring and positive environment where learning can take place.

- Praise children for their efforts and achievements so that they develop high self-esteem
- Listen to children and ensure they treat them respectfully and fairly, showing unconditional positive regard for all
- Take children's worries and concerns seriously
- Discuss behaviour expectations regularly in the classroom through the RSHE curriculum, assemblies and other opportunities
- Deal firmly and consistently with children who do not keep to the school rules
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to express their views
- Liaise with and involve family immediately if a child demonstrates negative behaviours
- Liaise with other staff regarding concerns or strategies in place to support a child to ensure a consistent approach
- Model and support the children's SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) needs and SMSC (spiritual, moral, social, cultural) development
- Promote, through example and class displays, the school values
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding the needs of others
- Implement rewards following the whole school approaches explained below
- Update Arbor with behaviour updates to support transitions between adults
- Follow our complaints policy to resolve any concerns

All parents have a responsibility to:

- Support the school's core values and ethos
- Ensure their children attend school unless there is a just reason for absence and arrive punctually every day ready for learning
- Engage constructively to discuss their children's behaviour
- Discuss any concerns or worries as soon as they arise, ensuring that these are addressed to the correct person in an appropriate manner
- Support their children with their learning
- Ensure children are wearing the correct uniform at all times
- Show courtesy and respect to all members of the school community
- Be a positive role model

All children have a responsibility to:

- Follow our school rules and routines at all times
- Demonstrate our Merryhills Values at all times
- Complete work to the highest possible standard
- Treat all members of the school community with courtesy and respect
- Take responsibility for their own behaviour and play an active role in reconciliation and restoration
- Behave appropriately when representing the school e.g. on a school trip, sports event, travelling between home and school
- Treat living things with care
- Take responsibility for personal possessions and respect school property
- Be a good role model

The Local Governing Body have a responsibility to:

- Monitor the implementation of the policy

- Analyse behaviour data and hold the headteacher to account

School Leaders and governors play a key role in making sure all staff understand the behavioural expectations and the importance of maintaining them. They will work to review the policy regularly and to analyse any trends that may occur.

The school leadership team should be highly visible, with leaders routinely engaging with pupils, parents and staff on setting and maintaining the behaviour culture and an environment where everyone feels safe and supported.

SLT will be responsible for training staff on the behavior policy and keeping this training up to date, such as with additional behaviour sessions throughout the year. They will work with external agencies, such as the SWERRL team and Educational Psychologists, to support our interventions and practices. When new staff are inducted to Merryhills, their mentors/line managers will give training and support on how to deliver the behaviour policy.

Our Approach

<u>School values:</u>

Our Behaviour policy is underpinned by our 6 values: Curiosity, Resilience, Respect, Kindness, Collaboration and Responsibility. At Merryhills we see these in values which shape:

Who I am and how I grow:		**How I treat people:**		**How we work together and shape our world:**	
Curiosity	Resilience	Respect	Kindness	Collaboration	Responsibility

<u>Nurture Principles:</u>

All staff are trained on the six principles of nurture which sit at the heart of this policy and alongside the 3 school rules of Ready, Respectful and Safe. We ensure they are enacted in the classroom and around the school. At the centre of this is the relationships Merryhills staff have with the children and the nurturing approach that recognises that there may be times when managing emotions can be challenging but that every child matters. We also have unconditional positive regard towards all children. This means that everyday is a new day, and that every child is valued, regardless of previous actions or behaviours.

<u>Principle 1</u>	<u>Principle 2</u>	<u>Principle 3</u>
Children's learning is understood developmentally	The classroom offers a safe space	The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
Ready: Being ready looks different to every child, we meet them where they are	**Safe**: Our routines, relationships and spaces help everyone feel secure	**Safe**: Feeling emotionally safe is just as important as physical safety

Principle 4	Principle 5	Principle 6
Language is a vital means of communication **Respectful**: We use words to build understanding and connections	All behaviour is communication **Respectful**: We respond to others with empathy and curiosity, not judgement	Transitions are significant **Ready:** Help children be ready for changes, big or small, supports calm and confidence

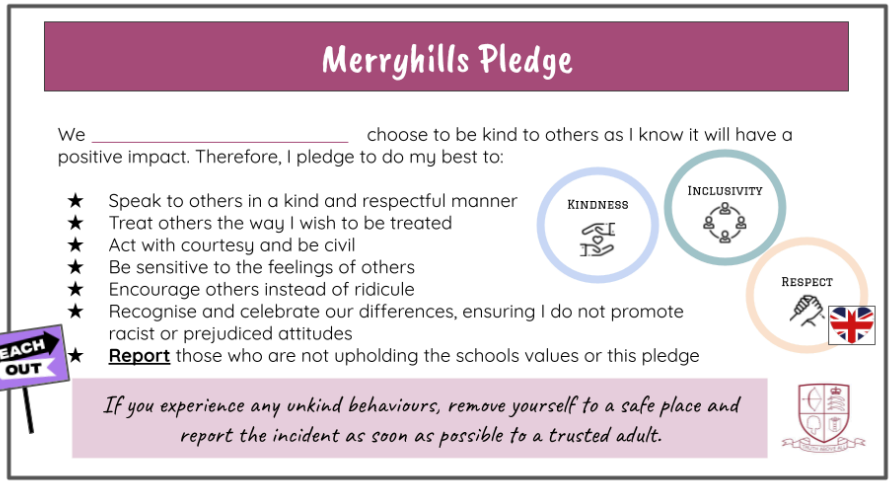
Trauma informed Practice

Emotional and learning behaviours are at the heart of our ethos. As an ELSA trained school (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) and Trauma Informed Practice (TIPs) school, we use our understanding of emotional development and needs with all children; whole class, small group and individual, when appropriate.

We use “Zones of Regulation” at Merryhills, all staff have received training on this and it is implemented throughout the school. Children are taught how to identify which “zone” they are in and how/which tools they can use to help them move back towards the “green zone”. Children have access to a self-registration tool to support children in thinking about their emotions. In KS1 children ‘register’ daily, in KS2 children use this as a tool to ‘alert’ the class teacher.

Merryhills No Name Calling Pledge

At Merryhills, we use our No Name Calling Pledge to reinforce our values. Children pledge to use kind and respectful language, celebrate differences and speak to a trusted adult when they experience or witness unkind behaviour.



School Expectations

Our school values and 3 school rules are central to creating a positive learning environment for our pupils. Whilst there is no exhaustive list of expected behaviours children are taught our key habits and routines, these are:

Be ready:	**Be respectful:**	**Be Safe:**
In class, listen to adults, friends and visitors Use learning resources appropriately Always line up in register order	Use a calm voice when talking to others Show you are listening to other people Show good manners	To walk calmly and quietly around the school To be a good friend to everyone in the playground To use school resources appropriately

Our first attention will be to best conduct as opposed to negative behaviours. We catch children 'getting it right'. This is reflected through our rewards systems, we ensure that there are many incentives and therefore many opportunities for all children to receive the recognition they deserve.

We believe that rewards have a motivational role, helping children to see that positive behaviour is valued. The most common reward is praise, informal and formal, public and private and to individuals and groups. Rewards are an integral part of development, but it is important to recognise that for some children who may have experienced trauma or insecure attachments or negative experiences of school, they may not always respond to rewards in the expected way. All staff need to be mindful of this and respond appropriately to the individual needs of children - this is again where strength of relationship is key to getting it right for the children.

<u>House Points</u>

House points are handed out throughout the week. They are handed out to each team, so the rewards are earned by collectives and not individuals. In each Friday assembly, the winning house for the week is announced and that house has 'queue jump Friday' meaning that they will be called to lunch first. Each week, classes give 4 tokens to the house in first, 3 tokens to the house in second, 2 tokens to the house in third and 1 token to the house in fourth. Tokens from every class are accumulated and at the end of the half term, the winning house will have first choice of the 'Time to be Merry' activities.

<u>Values assemblies</u>

Each week, children have a values assembly. These assemblies take real-world examples, current local and world news and commemorative occasions and view them through the lens of one or some of our values. Children will be given opportunities to reflect on these and how they can

incorporate the school values into a positive week.

Celebration assemblies

Each week, a celebration assembly takes place that promotes and celebrates children's attitudes to learning. Each class will have a certificate for:

- Writer of the Week (For positive contributions within writing lessons)
- Above and Beyond Award (For positive contributions to either work or behaviour)
- Values Award (For positive contribution to the school values)

Celebration assemblies are also an opportunity to celebrate reading; each week, children who have completed their home reading logs and journals will go onto a year group spinner for the opportunity to win a golden token for our Reading Vending Machine.

Additional circumstances

Some children may have additional reward charts or certificates at the discretion of their teacher or Headship Team. Where necessary, the school will support open communication with parents/carers, this may be through a home/school communication book, where appropriate (EHCP pupils), phone calls and conversations at drop off.

Other positive behaviour strategies in place include:

- Verbal feedback/praise and non verbal feedback (e.g. thumbs up/smile)
- Headteacher Awards
- Stickers
- Recognition in the newsletter

Classroom management

The classroom environment gives clear messages to the children about the extent to which they and their efforts are valued.

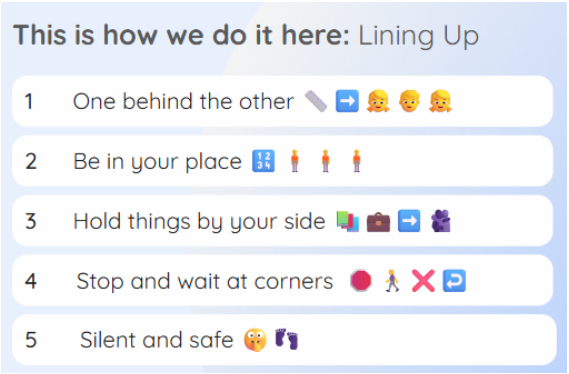
Staff will ensure classrooms:

- Create and maintain a stimulating environment that encourages children to be engaged and organised in a way which develops independence and personal initiative.
- Have appropriately arranged resources to aid accessibility and to reduce uncertainty and disruption.
- Display the school rules, school values and Behaviour blueprints (See Appendix 3)

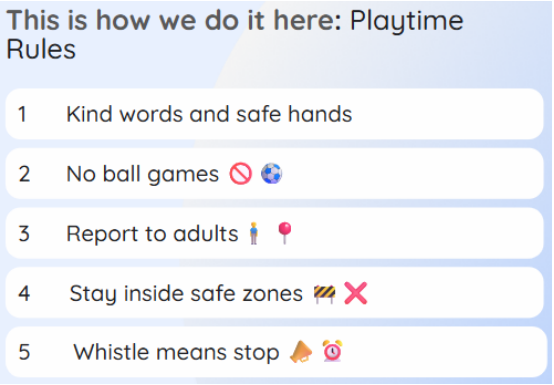
Routines

Routines help children to manage transitions and to held ensure the classroom is a safe space. Staff will greet children each morning/at the start of lessons as their first interaction. Alongside this, staff will conclude the day positively and start the next day afresh.

The following key routines or 'how we do it here' will be shared with children each year and enable them to know what is expected of them.







At Merryhills, we recognise that there may be times when a pupil might make a negative/wrong choice and a discussion needs to take place. This might be a deliberate choice by the child or an overwhelming impulse which results in impact on others.

If any child breaks our behaviour agreements we follow a calm, consistent approach as per our Behaviour Blueprint and Consistent Practices (Appendices 1 and 2). As part of this we have stepped 'sanctions' that would only ever be conducted in private. Prior to the use of sanctions, numerous non-verbal cues will have been utilised.

Stepped sanctions

Broken rule of ready, respectful, safe	1st occasion	2nd occasion	3rd occasion	Final stage
	Reminder of the rule	Last Chance	Time out to reflect	Repair

What it looks like	The pupil is to be informed of the school rule which they have broken, and reminded of the routines we have in place at Merryhills	The staff member managing the situation follows the last chance guidance on the micro-script	The pupil will be withdrawn from the scenario. This may be to another area in the class or a paired class. The staff member carrying out the restorative conversation will use the guidance from the blueprint.	During reflection the pupil will be encouraged to repair. This could be an apology, a letter, an action for example.

Staff are to follow the stepped table as a guide for more serious incidents:

	Step 1:	Step 2:	Step 3:	Step 4:
	- Throwing a small item - Refusal to follow instructions - Swearing aloud - Misuse of property - Talking out of turn, interrupting others - Minor dress code violations	- Persistent step one misdemeanors - Refusal to come into classroom - Rudeness to others - Incidences with no consent - Inappropriate play - Play fighting - Continuous disruption - Pushing - Name calling/unkind words - Minor defiance - Dishonesty - Inappropriate online activity	- Persistent step two misdemeanors - Swearing at someone/inappropriate language - Deliberate violence towards a child - Upturning furniture - Climbing on school property - Leaving the classroom - Biting - Hitting/kicking/ Scratching - Fighting - Vandalism - Verbal abuse/threats - Behaviour that risks safety - Inappropriate online behaviour	- Persistent step three misdemeanors - Violence towards staff - Leaving the school grounds - Incidences against inclusion - Sexism - Inappropriate sexual behaviour - Homophobia - Racism - Online Abuse - Significant vandalism
Sanction	**Time out in class, with a restorative conversation with teacher** Follow restorative questions and/or how	**Time out with phase leader, restorative conversation with phase leader** On second occasion of the ½ term phase leader to contact parents	**Sent to inclusion team, AHT or DHT for restorative conversation and possible sanctions:** Time out of class Letter/phone call home Meeting with parents Check in log	**Sent to the Headteacher for restorative conversation and possible sanctions:** Internal exclusion Fixed term exclusion Meeting with parents/carers Lunchtime exclusion

	to make it right			

Many online behaviour incidents amongst young people occur outside the school day and off the school premises. Merryhills is mindful that parents are responsible for this behaviour. However, the school may sanction pupils if the behaviour poses a threat or causes harm to another pupil, and/or could have repercussions in school or adversely affect the reputation of the school.

We believe wholeheartedly in preserving the strong relationships that our staff work to build with children and therefore all adults follow a positive handling script when discussing misbehaviours with children.

Restorative Approaches

Punitive consequences are unlikely to change behaviour. We do not encourage use of this and instead, alongside our unconditional positive regard offer restorative opportunities regularly. Interventions that are restorative by nature offer children unique learning opportunities in which inappropriate behaviour can be highlighted and addressed allowing for positive outcomes and minimising the opportunity for those behaviours to further present.

Teachers should follow the micro-script and restorative questions as a guide. Restorative approaches and lack of punitive consequences enable a shift away from focussing on the behaviour displayed, and instead focusing on the emotional impact of both victims and perpetrators. A restorative approach enables pupils opportunities to explore, resolve and learn to develop the skills of effective communication.

This may look like:

- Planned support strategies, including sensory breaks, mentoring, key workers and calming strategies
- Verbal and non-verbal communication to demonstrate mood, facial expressions, body language, hand gestures etc.
- Positive reinforcement and unconditional positive regard
- Consistent, calm and fair attention
- Consistent modelling of positive behaviours and desired behaviours from all staff
- Opportunities for children to remove themselves from a situation that may increase their anxieties or frustration

At times, formal intervention may be required for restoration to take place. This may include:

- Children taking part in restorative conversations outside of classroom time
- Having restorative conversations with parents present

Pupil Support

Merryhills have access to various professionals, who are trained in supporting children with mental health and/or social and emotional difficulties. Designated staff consist of: two members of staff

who are ELSA trained (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants), SENDCo and staff trained in Trauma Informed Practice. We frequently seek advice and guidance from other partners within the Local Authority; other schools and specialist settings.

For children who find the environment overwhelming, reasonable adjustments are made to further support both structured learning and unstructured times: lunch breaks are segmented into shorter time periods, and different parts of the school building/grounds are utilised, use of a smaller play area/playground, additional adult support to structure play and facilitate social interactions. Learning time is divided into shorter periods of time, with shorter tasks, frequent movement/sensory breaks and opportunities to work in quieter environments. Technology is offered to children who would benefit from alternative methods of learning and recording.

Supporting Vulnerable Groups
We recognise that certain groups of pupils may face additional safeguarding challenges and require tailored support:

Young Carers:

- We will identify young carers through sensitive conversations with pupils and families
- We will ensure young carers receive appropriate support and that their caring responsibilities do not impact negatively on their education or wellbeing
- We will work with external agencies where appropriate to support young carers and their families

Children with Medical Conditions:

- We recognise that children with medical conditions may be more vulnerable to bullying or abuse
- Individual healthcare plans will be in place for children with medical conditions/allergies
- Staff will receive appropriate training to support children with specific medical needs
- Reasonable adjustments may be made to behaviour expectations where medical conditions may impact behaviour

Off-site

When children are off site during the school day (such as on an educational visit) they understand that the behaviour expectations of them remain the same. If restorative conversations cannot take place at the time, for example due to the nature of the trip, it may be in the best interest of the children to have these conversations back at school. All other approaches remain relevant to off-site activities.

Physical restraint

In some circumstances, behaviour displayed by a pupil may be challenging and pose a risk to the safety of themselves, their peers or staff. In exceptional circumstances, staff may use reasonable and proportionate force to restrain a pupil to prevent them:

- Causing disorder
- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property

It is important to recognise that for some children who have experienced trauma or attachment disruption, the use of restraint can escalate a situation due to the fear and anxiety this may cause. The use of reasonable force will always be a last resort after all other strategies have been exhausted.

A risk assessment will be completed for any child whose individual needs indicate they may be at increased risk of situations requiring physical intervention to maintain safety.

For some children, and with agreement from parents/carers, a Restrictive Intervention Log is completed weekly, this is recorded on Arbor and shared with parents.

Staff who may be required to undertake physical restraint will receive appropriate training.

Incidents of physical restraint and/or seclusion (Merryhills defines seclusion as supervised confinement and isolation of a pupil, away from other pupils, in an area from which the pupil is prevented from leaving of their own free will) will:

- Always be used as a last resort
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded on Arbor and reported to parents and governors

Exceptional Circumstances

In the event of extreme behaviour where:

- The child puts others' safety at risk (physical assault)
- Bullying
- Racist abuse
- Sexual misconduct
- The child puts their own safety at risk
- School property is seriously or repeatedly damaged
- There is a persistent breach of the Behaviour Policy
- There is a significant breach of the Behaviour policy

There may be no option but to impose a Fixed Term or Permanent Exclusion. Any child considered to be at risk of exclusion will be subject to a (Behaviour Support Plan). Where there has been and/or likely to involve physical harm, a Risk Assessment and Stress Support Plan (RASSP) may be formulated by the Inclusion Team and shared with parents. This plan is designed to support the child to manage their behaviour difficulties positively so that they are able to achieve success with clear expectations and regular reviews of progress. It is our intention to support children to remain in mainstream education wherever possible and wherever this is in their best interest.

Internal Suspension

Occasionally, children may show more serious behaviours which warrant an immediate response. The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher may choose to internally suspend a child. This means that they will have no contact with any children in their class and will not be allowed out for break or lunch. Before this happens, a meeting/conversation will be arranged with parents to inform them and discuss their child's behaviour.

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion

All pupils are entitled to an education where they are protected from disruption and can learn in a calm, safe and orderly environment in which pupils can learn and thrive. The Headteacher can use suspension and permanent exclusion in response to serious incidents or in response to persistent poor behaviour which has not improved following in-school sanctions and interventions. The school will follow the guidance in the DfE document 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement' August 2024. The decision will be made taking individual circumstances into account.

An integration meeting must take place before children are allowed to return to school. We will arrange this meeting at a time which best supports the child to return to class and to help them to have a successful day. We may consider arranging the meeting for the day before children return or on the morning itself.

Banned Items

Banned items at Merryhills include all items from the DFE prohibited list 2022:

- knives and weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used: - to commit an offence, or
  - to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil).
- an article specified in regulations:
  - tobacco and cigarette papers
  - fireworks
  - pornographic images

Merryhills Primary School is a mobile phone-free environment. In line with statutory guidance, pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones onto the school site. This restriction applies during lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes to safeguard pupils and support their wellbeing. In exceptional circumstances where parents believe their child requires a mobile phone for safety reasons on their journey to/from school, they must seek written permission from the Headteacher. Any approved devices must be switched off and handed to the school office upon arrival, and collected at the end of the school day. The school accepts no responsibility for any mobile phones brought onto site against this policy.

Items from home such as toys, stickers and collectables are not to be brought into school, unless the class teacher has authorised this for a specific reason in class. Merryhills does not take responsibility for any items from home, such as mobile phones, being brought onto the school site.

Adult Expectations

We work in close partnership with all parents. However, we will not accept rudeness or clear lack of

respect towards staff at school; should the need arise, the school has the right to:

- Notify parents/carers with 2 verbal warnings.
- A letter will be sent to the parent

If the situation persists the parent can be banned from entering the school grounds. There may be circumstances where this must come into immediate effect, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Racist/Homophobic/Sexist Incidents

All incidents of racism, sexism (including misogyny and misandry), homophobia, or any other incidents against inclusion will be reported to a member of the Headship Team who will investigate and record this on Arbor. These incidents will be treated with the utmost seriousness and appropriate sanctions will be applied in accordance with our stepped sanctions approach.

Children from all ethnic groups will be treated fairly. If you are unsure how to deal with an incident please discuss it with a member of the Headship Team. The Racist Incident log is kept in the Headteacher's office.

The behaviour policy will be reviewed annually to scrutinise the effectiveness of the school's approaches, this will be done internally with SLT and as part of governors team visits to the school.

Child-on-Child Sexual Harassment, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Sexual Violence

We teach children and create a culture at Merryhills that unacceptable behaviour needs to be challenged. We teach them the types of behaviour which are unacceptable and, if left unchallenged, can turn into abuse. We teach children to recognise when they should come forwards and to have the courage to report incidents. In addition, staff should recognise incidents that may lead to abuse. We use our Worry Button to ensure children can raise concerns and then have a 1:1 conversation about this with a member of SLT.

We recognise that child-on-child sexual behaviour exists on a continuum from harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) through to sexual violence. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, or a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

HSB includes sexual behaviours that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards oneself or others, or be abusive towards another child or adult. This can include:

- Inappropriate sexual language or jokes
- Inappropriate touching over or under clothing
- Sexual behaviour that makes others uncomfortable
- Use of sexual images or pornography
- Sexually explicit behaviour in play or conversation that is not age-appropriate

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline, such

as:

- Sexual comments, jokes, or taunting
- Physical behaviour like deliberately brushing against someone or interfering with their clothes
- Online sexual harassment including the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes
- Upskirting (taking a picture under someone's clothing without permission)
- Sexual bullying

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence includes rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault. These are criminal offences. Sexual violence may also include:

- Gender-based violence
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Peer-on-peer exploitation

Making or Sharing of Nudes or Semi-Nudes

The making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (including images digitally altered or wholly generated by artificial intelligence such as deepfakes) is a serious safeguarding matter that requires an immediate response. This includes:

- Taking, possessing, or sharing nude or semi-nude photographs or videos
- Images that have been digitally manipulated or created using AI technology
- Pressuring someone to create or share such images

All incidents, regardless of whether they are described as 'consensual' or involve coercion, mandate a safeguarding response. Staff who become aware of any such incident must immediately report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and not attempt to view, share, or delete any images. The DSL will follow the procedures outlined in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which may include referral to external agencies.

Staff should understand that:

- Children under 13 can never legally consent to sexual activity
- Sexual activity between children may be harmful even if it appears consensual
- Power imbalances between children can affect the validity of apparent consent
- Children with SEND may be particularly vulnerable and face additional barriers to reporting abuse
- Consent cannot be given if a child is under the influence of substances, asleep, unconscious, or subject to threats or coercion

Staff Response

When any of these incidents occur, staff should address and challenge them at an age-appropriate level, following the consequences laid out in this policy and ensuring equality for all. If staff are unsure of how to challenge these behaviours, they should discuss it with a member of the senior leadership team.

All incidents must be taken seriously and reported immediately to the DSL. Any reports of child-on-child sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour or sexual violence should be logged on Arbor and any consequences given should also be logged.

Staff should refer to NSPCC resources on typical stages of sexual development to help identify concerning behaviour. The DSL will assess each incident and determine appropriate action, which may include:

- Immediate support for the victim(s)
- Risk assessment
- Referral to children's social care and/or the police
- Involvement of parents/carers (unless this would put the child at greater risk)
- Implementation of safety plans
- Consideration of support for the perpetrator, recognising they may also have unmet needs

The DSL will follow the procedures outlined in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Our Commitment

We will never tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or harassment as 'banter', 'part of growing up', 'just having a laugh' or 'boys being boys'. We are committed to:

- Creating a culture where children feel safe to report concerns
- Taking all reports seriously, regardless of the age of the children involved
- Providing appropriate support to both victims and perpetrators
- Working in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training to recognise and respond to these issues
- Regularly reviewing our approach through our RSHE curriculum, assemblies and other opportunities

All members of the school community have a responsibility to challenge inappropriate sexual behaviour and to report concerns promptly in line with the Child Protection Policy

Bullying

Rationale

At Merryhills we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.

If bullying does occur, all pupils and their parents should be able to tell an adult and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a 'Telling' school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell staff.

Objective

This policy outlines what Merryhills School is doing to tackle and prevent bullying. We believe that it is the responsibility of the whole school community to deal effectively with bullying and this policy has been drawn up through the involvement of pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

What is bullying?

It is essential that the Merryhills School community has a shared understanding and definition of bullying so that we can work together to tackle and prevent it. The Government defines bullying as: "*Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.*"

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting or any other use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic: because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: bullying concerned with all areas of the internet, such as email and social media websites, mobile phone threats via texts and calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

All staff must be aware that bullying issues can manifest themselves via child on child bullying, which can include cyber bullying, gender based violence or sexual assaults and sexting (when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video.)

Pressurising someone into sending nude selfies, pictures or sharing someone's picture without their permission, even if it's a friend, is wrong and illegal; as is being touched in a sexual way that makes you uncomfortable or being made to sexually stimulate yourself or others.The school will follow the procedures set out in this policy to protect pupils against child on child bullying and promote open conversations through our PHSE programme. Staff will also follow all cases of bullying or abuse through the procedures set out in our Safeguarding Policy. Raising awareness with all pupils about the effects of child on child bullying is essential, as is ensuring all pupils have a voice in the school and are given opportunities and support to raise concerns.

We are committed to ensuring that:

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Pupils and parents feel supported when bullying is reported.
- All staff are trained to identify bullying and follow the school's Behaviour Policy and procedures on bullying.
- We recognise and address the needs of all parties involved in incidences of bullying.

<u>Merryhills is a bully-free zone</u>

At this age, school children are learning about social interaction and building relationships. Sometimes they fall out or are unkind to their friends. It is important to distinguish friendship issues from incidents of bullying. Such situations will be investigated, monitored and managed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy unless the investigations suggest that the situation has become bullying.

We take bullying very seriously. If after our investigation there is no evidence of bullying, but there is

evidence of a falling in and out of friendship, the situation will be monitored. A phone call will be made after a three week period to a parent or carer, to see how things are. A member of the Headship Team or Senior Leadership, will also check on the child, at least once a term to ensure they feel happy and safe. The class teacher will continue to monitor the child closely.

Signs and symptoms

As a 'Telling' school, we expect pupils to tell an adult if they or someone they know is being bullied. Sometimes pupils are reluctant to come forward and tell and therefore the school community must be vigilant for indicators which might suggest that a pupil is being bullied.

There is no fool-proof way of telling that someone is being bullied and some signs could be signs or effects of something else. Adults should be aware of the following possible signs, and they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to school.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work.
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing."
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises. Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating.
- Is nervous or afraid to use the internet or their mobile phone.

Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Every pupil has the right to be treated with respect and feel safe at school. Bullying is serious both for the victim and for the bully. The victim needs to be supported and made to feel safe. Those who bully need to be supported in learning different ways of managing their feelings, thoughts and behaviours.

At Merryhills, staff and pupils take steps to minimise the opportunities for bullying to take place. These measures include:

- The early identification and support of vulnerable children, including those who are most at risk of being bullied.
- Actively providing systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their self-regulation and support systems.
- Zoned playground areas, including a quiet area for vulnerable pupils.
- The modelling and reinforcement of positive, respectful behaviour and relationships.
- Ensuring that pupils are aware of the sanctions which may be applied against pupils who bully.
- Working with staff and outside agencies to identify and address all forms of bullying.
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying including through the curriculum and displays.

Regrettably, bullying can sometimes happen. At Merryhills we want to support everyone in the school community to be able to identify bullying and respond effectively if it does happen. We use a range of strategies and resources to provide opportunities for pupils to report bullying and feel supported if they are or know someone who appears to be being bullied. Both the affected pupil(s) and the perpetrator will need support and both sets of parents/carers will be informed. These strategies and resources include:

- Peer support networks through the school council, our 'house' system, mini-mentors
- 'Concern boxes' in classrooms and throughout the school.
- Friendship and social groups, including 'circle of friends'.
- The use of PSHE lessons, or during assemblies or P4C lessons, and 'Beat Bullying' resources.
- Circle time opportunities.
- Staff, visible and accessible, during playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Useful websites and helpline contact numbers displayed in the school.
- Consideration with parents and child of referral to counselling, either in-school or external as appropriate
- Key staff member
- Spot checks
- Check-ins with affected pupils

Procedures and outcomes

Merryhills has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. If an incidence of bullying is reported, we will:

- Ensure that a senior member of staff investigates the matter thoroughly, with all parties involved.
- Staff will check in with affected pupil(s) daily and complete a playtime log (where relevant) which will be collected see Appendix A.
- When necessary, inform parents/ carers of the findings of any investigations into bullying involving their child/ren.
- A follow up phone call will be made by a member of the Headship Team to the parents/carers after three weeks of reporting a bullying incident, to check that everything is well. If there are any further concerns, parents and carers will be invited in for discussion.

If an incidence of bullying has taken place, we will:

- Apply sanctions and consequences in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy, leading up to and including exclusion.
- Monitor and review the situation after sanctions have been applied, to ensure that repeated bullying does not take place.
- Support reparative work, including asking perpetrators to apologise after considering the impact on themselves and others, and, where possible, supporting reconciliation and more appropriate ways of relating in the future
- Continue to reinforce the Behaviour Blueprint for all pupils.

The Merryhills school community will regularly discuss, monitor and evaluate this policy to ensure that Merryhills is a safe place to learn.

APPENDIX A - Playtime Log

Name: Week Commencing:

Date	What games did you play?	How good was your play? 1-10?	Any other information
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
		0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

***APPENDIX B*-BehaviourBlueprint**

Merryhills Primary School

Behaviour Blueprint

3 Rules

Ready
Respectful
Safe

Relentless Routines:
Deliberate Calm
Catch them getting it right
Greet with a smile

Adult Behaviour

- Calm, consistent, fair
- First attention to best conduct
- Deliberately bothered
- Meet and greet
- Recognise above and beyond

Over and Above

- Praise
- Stickers
- Phone call home
- Positive note
- Recognition Board

"We inspire children and foster curiosity; together we create a better future with values at the heart of everything we do."

Private Stepped Sanctions

1. Reminder (3 rules)
2. Last chance (micro-script)
3. Time out to reflect (restorative conversation)
4. Repair

Micro-script

"I've noticed that..."
"You know the school rules (ready, respectful, safe)..."
"Can you remember when I phoned home when...and how that made you feel?"
"I expect you to..."
"Thank you for listening..."

Restorative Questions

1. What has happened?
2. What were you thinking/feeling?
3. How are you feeling now?
4. Who has been affected?
5. How do you think they are feeling now?
6. What needs to be done to make it right?
7. How can we do things differently next time?

Our School Values

- Resilience
- Kindness
- Respect
- Curiosity
- Responsibility
- Collaboration

