

Behaviour Update June 2025

The behaviour curriculum has been in place now for a year and teachers and children are using it well across all areas of school. Outside visitors are made aware of the routines and expectations and mostly use them successfully. There is greater consistency in adults in school reminding children in any class of the expectations as they move around school. Following the staff survey in January it was noticed that some children were not moving around the school building in the way we would expect and so Mr Penny has used staff briefing meetings to reiterate our expectations and the need for all staff to hold all children accountable.

With the new behaviour curriculum being launched it was right that we invested a lot of time training the adults and children in it and revisiting it on a very regular basis in class. I began to feel earlier in the year whilst completing the staff audit that, with the expectations and routines well-established, we needed to re-centre our focus on the relational approach that Mr Clark developed at Ashcombe based on the work by Paul Dix. Research shows that positive relationships with adults in school will have a greater impact on behaviour than simply implementing rules and consequences. Building relationships with children and their family's needs to be top priority which is then supported by the behaviour curriculum. Good behaviour is borne out of relationships based on mutual trust and respect not adults being in control of children by wielding the rule book! Staff responded well to a curriculum meeting I lead and I feel that the balance has shifted positively.

A question that previously arose following the staff audit and my own network meetings was the question of how SMSAs can successfully implement the behaviour curriculum. We initially decided that whilst we gave SMSAs training in the behaviour curriculum, we would not expect them to make decisions on an individual child's actions at lunchtime. Last year, any incidents would be reported to the class teacher or SLT and would be dealt with by the adults who knew the child best. The concern when introducing OPAL was that SMSAs are no longer attached to a particular class so communication of incidents could have been challenging. As we had hoped however, OPAL has drastically reduced the number of behaviour incidents happening at lunchtimes and the use of the Reflection Zone allows for any serious incidents to be dealt with in real time. Communicating behaviour incidents to class teachers at the end of lunchtimes does need some improvement though. At a recent informal teacher briefing, some staff talked about times when a parent asks about the incident that their child has told them happened at lunchtime and the teacher is unaware of it as it was dealt with by someone else. Ensuring incidents are communicated to teachers wouldn't be too difficult to remedy.

An area that I would like to give more focus to next year is the relationship between school and parents. The ideal is that parents work alongside teachers as co-partners in their child's learning. This is not something that happens overnight but there are already lots of things that we do to contribute to this;

- Early parents evening at the start of the year which gives parents time to tell us about their child and family.
- Parent workshops in each year group.
- Opportunities to look at children's books as part of the workshops.
- Regular Facebook posts and communication of important information via Ping.
- Teachers communication with individual parents through Ping.
- Parents consultations/surveys

What I am keenly aware of is that there are an increasing number of parents who don't recognise or even know that their child's learning and behaviour is just as much their responsibility as it is ours. The schools who help parents to take accountability for their children's experience at school and foster working relationships as co-partners are the schools that see improved behaviour and ultimately, improved outcomes. The power of the school-parent relationship cannot be underestimated. Many children at Ashcombe do not arrive at school ready to learn. This is normally through no fault of their own and can be caused by many contributing factors such as;

- No breakfast
- Bad start to the day at home (arguments with family members)
- Not enough sleep
- Too much screen time

There is very little that staff can do to change these issues as they are home-related but we are dealing with the fallout from these issues every single day. I hope that over time, we can help all parents to take responsibility for their child's school experience and feel supported by giving them well-researched information and guidance whilst also building relationships that are based on trust and respect, allowing safe spaces for difficult conversations that might challenge parents expectations or their own behaviours.

This feels like a big piece of work that would develop over time and I am only really in the initial stages of my own thinking. Some initial thoughts are;

- Sending out regular Pings offering research-based advice around a range of issues i.e good sleep habits, the impact of screens etc
- A working group of staff and parents to identify issues and how to approach them.
- Visiting other schools who are known to have done good work in this area.
- Setting out clear expectations for parents at the start of the year and revisiting them regularly.