

Underlying Philosophy of Behaviour Guidance

Values



At Kerry Street Community School all community members are guided by four core values:

1. We act with trust, honesty, integrity and courage
2. We encourage excellence and foster the growth of wonder and wisdom
3. We are a community that contributes to the daily life and future of our school
4. We act with care and love, mindful of our place in the wider world

All community members commit to acting in accordance with these values when they become signatories to one of our Code of Conduct documents:

- i. KSCS Staff Code of Conduct – staff, Board members, regular volunteers and practicum students;
- ii. KSCS Student Code of Conduct;
- iii. KSCS Community Code of Conduct – parents, carers and community members; and
- iv. KSCS Visitors and External Providers Code of Conduct – allied health professionals, contractors, extended family members, and all other noncommunity member visitors.

These agreements are reviewed periodically by the current members so they are clear, real and a considered part of choosing to belong to the school community.

Relationships & Co-regulation



Relationships sit at the heart of all interactions at Kerry Street Community School. Building trusting relationships is prioritised by staff, students and the wider community. Smaller class sizes and a smaller school population overall allows for all teachers to better know and understand the particular needs of individuals and adapt routines and expectations to support these. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to form relationships with staff across the school and all staff know the names and needs of students in all classes. Staff hold open communication regarding individual student needs and supports and emergent concerns or conflict. This enables staff to best support all students during break times or shared learning.

Through forming these strong and trusting relationships, all staff are able to better support students through co-regulation: when two people adjust to regulate one another's behaviour (Shanker, S).

Sense of Safety



We value and prioritise supporting our students to feel safe at school. This includes physical safety and protective behaviours, and also social emotional processing and learning, use of language around unmet needs and acknowledgement of the role of the stress responses. We know that when a child feels unsafe due to an unmet need their stress response is triggered and they become dysregulated. Viewing behaviour in terms of a child's sense of safety and their stress response, means we are acknowledging what is happening at nervous system level which then guide us in how we can support their behaviour and regulation.

Beliefs



We believe people are intrinsically good, have a natural desire to belong to a group and have friends, care for and accept others, and have power to influence their world. All members of the community deserve to feel happy, to learn and be intrinsically motivated. We each have different past experiences and needs, learn in different ways and develop at different rates, yet are equal in terms of human worth and dignity. We have faith in people.

We believe in the power of our expectations, if we are clear about what we expect and why and believe in the intrinsic desire of people to contribute to a community in a positive way, then we have the opportunity to build a thriving, dynamic, cooperative culture.

Communication



We believe honest, early communication is paramount, both for positive feedback about student behaviour and progress and to resolve difficulties staff or students may be experiencing. It helps to increase understanding and compassion and create more possible strategies. It can avoid misunderstandings, possible misuse of power and escalation of undesirable behaviours.

The Use of Force



There is a difference between protective and punitive force. Protective force may need to be used in circumstances where there isn't time to communicate and the situation is dangerous, to the point of causing harm if not managed. "In the punitive use of force, the person using such force has made a moralistic judgement of another person, a judgement that implies some kind of wrongness that is deserving of punishment." (Rosenberg, 2005). Usually, the aim of punitive force is to control and creates internal shame, guilt or fear.

Shame guilt and fear inhibit risk taking, learning and growth. It makes it harder for us to be compassionate, generous, and open and to build relationships. The deliberate use of fear has no place in our school and we do not use punitive force, rather we aim to build supportive communities and use empathy to interact with one another.

Cooperation rather than Compliance



We aim for our behaviour guidance strategies to assist in developing students' willingness and ability to cooperate. This involves much more than simply complying to (or rebelling against, inwardly or outwardly) a request from a person in authority. It involves developing values, for example, the intrinsic motivation to belong to and contribute to a community or being aware of and considering other people. It involves allowing the growth of self-determination, self-responsibility and a sense of personal power. It involves learning to make decisions in an environment where outcomes are relatively predictable and safe. It involves being aware of other people, surroundings and routines in order to act appropriately without direct instruction.

Two factors enabling students to cooperate are predictability and choice. Thus, to encourage cooperation, we aim to increase the number and variety of real choices students are given, which provides power over their own life and an opportunity to test cause and effect. We maximise the predictability of our responses and our routines, thereby maximising the students' ability to accurately predict the outcome of their choices, leading to a feeling of both security and self-determination.

Rewards and Punishments



We believe rewards and punishments have limitations in achieving our aims of a cooperative and self-responsible culture. At best they may be said to be effective in controlling a class. At worst they can result in shame, embarrassment, resentment, competition, rebellion, power games, low self-esteem, lack of personal power and choice, perception of "us and them", and destruction of intrinsic motivation. We recognise that it is difficult to eliminate these strategies completely but we aim to reduce them wherever possible. We attempt to consider the possible outcomes beyond the simplistic stimulus and response. We examine the possible long-term impact on the individual and the group and try to design strategies with the possibility for positive and sustainable learning and change, rather than just maintenance and control.

Rewards charts and extrinsic motivation through token economies will not be used at the class level. There may be times that such a system will be employed for an individual student when advised by a psychologist or therapist and agreed upon by the school. These strategies would be documented in a student's Individual Education Plan, Risk Management Plan or Collaborative Action Plan and communicated to parents.

Visible recording systems such as Stop light systems, names on boards etc., or audible tracking such as 1,2,3 MAGIC, where children's level of behavior is apparent to others, will not be used.

Group punishments, where a whole group is punished for the wrongdoing of one or more group members, are not consistent with providing positive guidance or procedural fairness and will not be used.

Detaining students during break times and after school deprives students of the opportunity for eating, movement and a break from the classroom. This strategy will not be used as a punishment. Where a student is refusing to complete work, staff and students may negotiate alternative times for work to be completed. In all cases staff will ensure that students get sufficient time for eating, movement and to take a break from class, during break times.

When problems occur, different strategies will be employed to address the feelings and needs of groups and individuals, set limits and discuss solutions. This may include:

- i. individual conferencing;
- ii. peer or small group mediation;
- iii. class meetings;
- iv. parent meetings; or
- v. Kids Council meetings.

If issues continue to arise the guiding student behaviour chart will be utilised.

Consistency



The acknowledgement of individual needs and the fostering of individuality is important to us. So is the fostering of a culture in which the needs of the group are considered by individuals. It is a strength of our small size that we are able to cater for individual needs within the group. It is, however, a balancing act requiring skill, creativity and sometimes compromise.

We aim for a whole school approach to behaviour guidance, consistent with our school Values and Philosophy. We acknowledge everyone is different. "Equity" does not mean "the same". We also recognise the complexity of behaviour guidance and that managing concerns and conflict can take time and may occur differently in different contexts. Teachers may have different approaches and students may be treated differently, within the bounds of the policy, but consistency of expectations and procedures will be maintained. These differences allow strengths to be utilised, creative options to be employed that are effective for the particular situation, compassion and personal development and circumstances to play a part, and people to develop individually. As long as the core beliefs and basic responses remain consistent, this flexibility is seen as a strength and an advantage of our small size.

Many factors contribute to the KSCS Behaviour Guidance approach including the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005. "The Standards recognise that not all students with disability are alike. Students with disability have specific needs, including the type and level of support they need in order to access and participate in all aspects of education on the same basis as students without disability" (Education Services Australia, 2020).

One important aspect of consistency is the surety that action will be taken. This requires staff to be mentally present at all times, to be aware, to listen, to think and to act. It is the primary responsibility of the teachers to manage behaviour and the development of cooperative behaviour in the school. It is also the responsibility of the whole community to contribute to the development of our culture, by acting as role models and utilising NVC methods when communicating with staff and other community members.

Non-Violent Communication



At Kerry Street we have chosen to utilise Non-Violent Communication as a whole-school Restorative Justice strategy. We believe this process supports not only our values but also the underlying principles behind our behaviour guidance policy and procedure.

"Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a process of communication created by psychologist Marshall Rosenberg. It is a compilation of ideas about compassionate human behaviour, packaged to meet the needs of modern times." (Schultz, 2020)

"NVC is based on the assumption that compassionate communication yields different results than uncompassionate communication and that these differences have a significant impact on both individual and societal levels." (Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015)

References and Resources

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- Education Services Australia. (2020). NCCD: What is the underpinning legislation? Canberra, ACT, Australia.
- Rosenberg, M. (2005). Raising Children Compassionately: Parenting the Nonviolent Communication Way. Encinitas, California: PuddleDancer Press.
- Goodall, E: Book - Emma Goodall and Charlotte Brownlow (2022): Interoception and Regulation: Teaching Skills of Body Awareness and Supporting Connection with Others; Video - [Healthy Possibilities](#)
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- Siegal, D: [Website address](#); Book - Daniel Siegal and Tina Payne Bryson (2020) The Power of Showing Up: How Parental Presence Shapes Who Our Kids Become and How Their Brains Get Wired; Video - [Dan Siegal Presenting the Model of the Brain](#)
- Schultz, J. (2020). Your Complete Nonviolent Communication Guide. Maastricht, The Netherlands.
- Shanker, S: [Website address](#); Articles - [Teacher](#) and [Early-years Educator](#); Book - Self-Reg for School: A handbook for Educators
- [The Regulated Classroom](#). (2022)

Interoception

- Department for Education: South Australia [Applying interoception skills in the classroom](#) (2022).
 - Goodall, E: Book - Interoception and Regulation By Emma Goodall and Charlotte Brownlow; Video - [Healthy Possibilities](#)
 - Mahler, K: [Website address](#); Book - Interoception: The eighth sensory system
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Guiding Student Behaviour

Viewing Behaviour

- We view all behaviour as communication
- We consider how unmet needs influence student behaviour
- We acknowledge that a child's sense of safety and their stress response when feeling unsafe relates to what is happening in their nervous systems allows us to support their behaviour and regulation.

How can this look in practice?

Feelings	Actions	Possible Unmet Needs	Supports	Outcomes
Happy, calm, focused, interested, curious, engaged, satisfied, comfortable, inspired, peaceful, relaxed	Engaged in work Focused on task Helpful Showing respect Ready to Learn Listening		Small class sizes High teacher to student ratio Sensory tools Brain breaks Flexible seating	Regulation Achieving success Task completion Effective discussion
Sick, sad, tired, bored, lonely, fragile, numb, upset, vulnerable, disappointed, puzzled	Laying on floor Distracted Off task Requesting to go home Hungry Sensitive and emotional Withdrawing and isolating	Balance and Ease Health (Rest, Food, Movement) Authenticity Connection	Brain breaks Extra support in class Sensory Room Quiet work space Drink and bathroom breaks Co-regulation	Rest time provided Alternative work space provided Negotiation of incomplete tasks Parents contacted for support
Frustrated, worried, silly, anxious, confused, excited, stressed, apprehensive, overwhelmed, shocked, uncomfortable, mad, angry, annoyed, scared, grief	Distracting peers Constant movement Off task Fidgeting Refusal to complete tasks Talking over others	Movement Comfort Creativity Choice Passion Understanding	Co-regulation Brain breaks Extra support in class Flexible seating Alternative work spaces Sensory tools	Alternative work space provided Negotiation of incomplete tasks Parents contacted for support Wellbeing Coordinator
Mad, angry, mean, aggressive, terrified, disgusted, enraged, fearful, grief, complete overwhelm.	Physical violence Swearing and verbal abuse Refusal to stay in supervised areas Leaving school grounds Destruction of property Throwing objects	Safety Understanding Recognition Health (Rest) Communication and Understanding	Co-regulation Clear limits set Calm down space provided Leadership support Restorative/ re-entry meeting Individual documentation review	Collection of student for regulation Parent notification Removal of student from class to office Suspension/ Expulsion