

Our Building Brains Approach

At the Baird, we have a whole school ethos that takes elements of psychology, coaching and neuroscience, and underpins our behaviour policy. We understand that behaviour is a form of communication and that challenging behaviours occur when children do not yet have the skills to manage unmet needs.

As a result of this understanding, we do not punish children who do not meet our expectations. Punishing children creates a rift between us and them, with the potential for them to experience feelings of resentment or self-pity. The focus in the child's mind becomes the punishment rather than the action that led to it. Once punishments are out of the question, the child feels safe to focus on what really happened, and what the impact was for different people and the natural consequences of their actions. Not punishing children for the times they do not meet expectations does not mean we are not acting upon what happens - we are just dealing with it in a different way.

We maintain high expectations for behaviour, but we support children who do not meet these expectations through structured coaching conversations. In these conversations children are listened to, other perspectives are explored, and children are supported to think of solutions for their problems. We support children to repair problems that have occurred as a result of their behaviours, and this process helps them to develop the skill of empathy. We understand that children who feel better, do better. Therefore we seek to build children's self-esteem by treating them respectfully at all times and giving them unconditional support and care.

On occasions, we may keep children back for 15 minutes after school without giving prior notice to parents. This is to give us the opportunity to support the child to reflect on what happened, plan strategies to manage in future, or to plan how to repair relationships that have been fractured as a result of their actions. The sessions are not intended as a punishment, and the children are assured that they are not in trouble when they attend.

Children who continue to struggle to regulate their behaviour may be referred for more regular coaching sessions to build their skills and plan strategies to manage better.

All children at The Baird are taught that, in school, everyone needs to have the opportunity to be happy, safe and learning. They are taught the language of 'pro-social' and 'anti-social' behaviours. They learn that all their actions have consequences but, at the Baird, the consequences for anti-social or anti-learning behaviour are educational, not punitive. We help them to understand the effect of their actions, and to problem solve how to put things right and repair relationships.

In class, all children learn about their physical and emotional needs. They are supported to understand how a desire to meet these needs may drive their behaviours. We help them to plan ways to meet their needs (or to manage when it is not possible for them to be met immediately) in ways that are good for everyone. Our children are taught about the development of their brain and how their neural pathways strengthen as they practise their skills. They learn that this means they can always make progress at anything they choose to work at. Children are supported to manage relationships with peers independently, learning skills to resolve conflicts through structured conversations.

We aim for our children to take conscious control of their behaviours, to understand their stressors and know how to manage them, to be able to self-advocate and to grow into confident, pro social members of the school community.