

# Deal Parochial Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Ms J Brown BEd HonsNPQH  
Headteacher  
Tel: 01304 374464  
email:secretary@deal-parochialkent.sch.uk



GladstoneRoad  
Walmer, Deal  
Kent CT14 7ER  
Website: www.dealparochialkent.sch.uk

## Deal Parochial C.E.P. School

### Nurture and Trauma support policy

#### Our Vision statement

Our School is built on the teachings of the Bible and inspired by The Gospel Values of Faith, Hope and Love.  
Our Christian ethos is upheld by respecting humanity fostered through our community that is welcoming,  
inclusive and forgiving.

Together we flourish through courageous learning, friendships and generosity.

TO BE THE BEST THAT I CAN BE – THE WAY GOD INTENDS

Policy written by J Brown and SLT & Nurture lead.

Agreed by Strategy team governors March 2024

Date for review: March 2026

This policy works alongside other significant school policies which are shared on the staff shared server and the school web site.

- Behaviour and relationships policy,
- SEND & Inclusion policy,
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

We turn to the story that Jesus told, The parable of the Lost Sheep. Luke 15, as a Christian source for inspiration in our work. This story can remind us how, sometimes, we all need to go the extra-mile, to care for and value every person. It inspires us to know that sometimes we need to celebrate individuals and to help when we can see someone struggling or lost.

Training that staff have undertaken in order to underpin this policy at Deal Parochial C.E.P School.

Becoming a Trauma-Informed School: C of E national training. Yearlong Expert sessions followed by termly, local network meetings. 2021-22.

Nurture UK

[The Theory and Practice of the Boxall Profile](#)

Senior Lead in Mental Health

SEMH Champion



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Youth Mental Health first aider

VSK and The Care Leaders – A Tool For Change

TQUK Level 2 Counselling Skills

We regularly refer to the Mainstream Core standards as part of our ongoing awareness and training. This maintains a thriving set of standards for all staff who can use these as a starting point when reflecting on the needs of our school community.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties Mainstream Core Standards	
What can be seen	What can help
<p><b>Fight response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal/physical aggression</li> <li>• Violence towards property/people</li> <li>• Inappropriate language</li> <li>• Blame others</li> <li>• Push people away</li> <li>• Inflexibility</li> <li>• Inability to follow rules/instructions</li> <li>• Disrespectful</li> <li>• Self-harm/self-sabotage</li> <li>• Refusal to comply</li> <li>• Stealing</li> <li>• Appears dishonest</li> </ul> <p><b>Flight response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to another area without notice/permission</li> <li>• Hiding</li> <li>• Inability to manage unstructured time</li> <li>• Avoids tasks/activities</li> <li>• Hyperactive</li> <li>• Hyper vigilant</li> <li>• Agitated</li> <li>• Fidgety</li> <li>• Immature behaviours/ tone of voice</li> </ul> <p><b>Freeze response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forgetful</li> <li>• Distracted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide safe/secure base</li> <li>• Consider possible reasons and context/history – be aware when planning</li> <li>• Tell in advance any changes</li> <li>• Consider seating</li> <li>• Link tasks to child's interests when able to</li> <li>• Develop understanding of presenting behaviours</li> <li>• Boxall profile</li> <li>• Movement/learning breaks</li> <li>• Support regulation</li> <li>• Key person</li> <li>• Exit cards</li> <li>• Support/activities during unstructured</li> <li>• Consistent boundaries but offer some flexibility</li> <li>• Support verbal input with visuals/demo</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment through teaching, e.g. easier parts? Use to develop confidence</li> <li>• Small social group work</li> <li>• Backward chaining</li> <li>• Play-based activities</li> <li>• Establish interests</li> <li>• Buddy/peer mentoring</li> <li>• Give responsibility to look after someone</li> <li>• Unpick behaviours – negative and positive</li> <li>• Seek advice – multi-professional</li> <li>• Identify what is not right</li> <li>• Look back, track behaviour</li> <li>• Liaise and collaborate with home</li> <li>• Provide substitutes for self-harming, e.g. elastic bands</li> </ul>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor concentration/engagement</li> <li>• Not listening/interacting</li> <li>• Confused</li> <li>• Clumsy</li> </ul> <p><b>Fold behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Withdraw from social engagements</li> <li>• Passive/neutral expression</li> <li>• Compliant – so vulnerable</li> <li>• Only answers yes/no</li> <li>• Self-harm</li> <li>• Unable to accept praise</li> <li>• Unable to show enjoyment</li> </ul>	
<p>Physical symptoms that are medically unexplained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide stress reducing activities</li> <li>• Keep record to identify trigger</li> <li>• Liaise with school health</li> </ul>
<p><b>Attention difficulties, ADHD/ADD</b></p> <p><b>Inattentiveness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short attention span, easily distracted</li> <li>• Forgetful, lose things</li> <li>• Unable to listen to/follow instructions</li> <li>• Constantly changes activity</li> <li>• Poor organisational skills</li> </ul> <p><b>Hyperactive/impulsive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fidgety</li> <li>• Poor concentration</li> <li>• Poor working memory</li> <li>• Excessive movement</li> <li>• Excessive talking</li> <li>• Unable to wait</li> <li>• Acts without thinking</li> <li>• Interrupts</li> <li>• Little danger awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand – is there a pattern?</li> <li>• Allow for small concentration periods</li> <li>• Clear structured day</li> <li>• Provide timers/clocks</li> <li>• Clear expectations and consequences</li> <li>• Note difficult times of day</li> <li>• Use known interests</li> <li>• Regular exercise opportunities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Attachment difficulties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anxious</li> <li>• Withdrawn</li> <li>• Intense emotions</li> <li>• Lack inhibitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurture group</li> <li>• Liaise with parent, share understanding</li> <li>• Robust/careful transition</li> <li>• Staff training</li> <li>• Reasonable adjustments</li> <li>• Consider family context</li> </ul>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty interacting in play</li> <li>• Sabotage situations</li> <li>• Avoids eye contact</li> <li>• Poor impulse control</li> <li>• Struggles with cause/effect thinking</li> <li>• Low self-esteem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with VSK for training</li> </ul>
<p><b>Low level disruption/attention</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiate use of voice, gesture, body language</li> <li>• Focus on reducing anxiety</li> <li>• Flexible/creative use of rewards/consequences</li> <li>• Positive reinforcement of expectations</li> <li>• Time out/quiet area</li> </ul>
<p><b>Difficulty in making/maintaining healthy relationships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group activities</li> <li>• Range of differentiated opportunities for social/emotional development</li> <li>• Restorative approaches/Mending conversations</li> </ul>

## What we believe

- In this school we integrate Attachment Aware and Trauma Responsive interventions into our everyday practice.
- From research we are aware that any disruption within the early years from pregnancy onwards can impact minds and bodies in three key areas: affect regulation, attachment and executive function.
- From research we understand that the toxic stress involved in ACEs impacts the nervous system of human beings.
- From research we know that over-compensatory, rich, relational interventions can bring about recovery so that children and young people can function well at home, school and out in their communities.
- We view ourselves as an important part of any pupil's recovery journey. We believe in recovery in community.
- We will not discriminate how we relate to the pupils in our care as we believe each pupil is worthy of our time, energy and patience. However, we will differentiate, according to need.
- We will have compassion for those who have muddles, are hurting and/or grieving for whatever reason.

## Who we are

- We see it as our responsibility to be stress and shame regulators for the pupils in our care.



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- We see it as our responsibility to learn all about our assigned pupil: what they have lived through to date, their resilience factors, their stressors and their calmers.
- We do all we can to ensure that our assigned pupils do not lose their thinking capacity (see Respecting Biology)
- We will be wise with our words, ensuring we do not label any of the pupils in our care.
- We will be gentle with our strength and strong with our gentleness, remembering that some pupils in our care have a very fragile sense of self.
- We see it as more important to always prioritise maintaining connection with our assigned pupil than aiming to prove a point or to get our point of view across (see Relate).
- We utilise all and any opportunity to communicate delight to the pupils in our care, rather than relying on conditional acceptance.
- We communicate with both our minds and our bodies that these pupils are not alone, that they have fellow travellers supporting them along their life course whilst at our school.
- We see it as our responsibility to remain regulated throughout the school day, taking regular, quality breaks and pressing the pause button occasionally to re-resource ourselves (see My Anchor)
- We see it as our responsibility outside of school to attend to our own regulation and relationship needs, to keep healthy and well in both our bodies and minds.
- We remember that everyone is doing the best they can, with what they have lived through to date.
- We try really hard to remember not to take personal insults and rejection personally, or get triggered, as we know that some pupils have experienced intimacy betrayal and do not trust adults in the moment.
- We will engage in relentless care.
- We will let others know if we are struggling, so that we can engage in safe, quality practice.
- We will do all we can to ensure we stay connected to our family, friends and colleagues so that we can experience the relational buffering we need to do our work well.
- We will be aware of the boundaries of our skills set and refer on to trauma recovery experts, as and when appropriate, for specialist advice and support.
- We will identify someone we trust in our work capacity to be our own professional Key Adult, to give permission to them to check in on us on a regular basis, to support our self-care.

How we will work with our pupils who have experienced relational trauma and loss?



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- We will know their story.
- We will trace back to what a child or your person has lived through, from pregnancy onwards, taking special note of any relational disruptions, ACEs and toxic stress.
- We will try and find out whether there were any others around the child at the time of difficulties, who were physically and emotionally present, attentive, attuned and responsive, for example an auntie, neighbour or a youth leader.
- We will provide a relational buffering
- We will allocate a Key Adult to all those who have experienced disruption in their early relationships, and a formalised team of 4 or 5 significant adults will be created around them in school (see Attachment Aware Schools Series (Bomber 2016/17) for more details on the roles and responsibilities of each of these team members.)
- We will prioritise spending quality time with our assigned pupils, being physically and emotionally present, attentive, attuned and responsive.
- We will always prioritise maintaining positive relationships with our pupils whatever other demands are going on, engaging in quality moments.
- We will intentionally use warm and open faces and body language, a varied tone of voice, humour and playfulness, in order to support felt safety.
- We will engage out playful parts wherever possible, not taking ourselves too seriously.
- We will be curious about why pupils do what they do, wondering aloud so that our pupils have opportunity to be curious too and start to make links between states, sensations, feelings and thoughts.
- Drawing on Perry's NME model, we will use the 4Rs and ensure we are mindful of the order needed: Regulate, Relate, Reason, Repair, as well as acknowledging the need to circle back through the stages if our pupil's stress levels and state indicate they are not yet or are no longer ready for a particular stage.
- If we have received the appropriate theoretical and practical training around Theraplay and DDP informed practice we will use this within our work.



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## Transitions

- If an adult needs to change their regular commitments with their assigned pupil, we will take all necessary efforts to communicate this change to the pupil directly and with compassion. The adult will also give the pupil something to support them to manage the separation or change of plan; for example a note or a card, or will swap something like a pen or a pencil case.
- If an adult needs to leave the school for whatever reason, we will make all efforts to ensure the assigned pupil has a carefully thought through and staggered goodbye (see Bomber, 2011) for details on how to handle longer term transitions well.
- If the pupil needs to leave suddenly, for whatever reason, the KA and Team Pupil will make necessary efforts to say goodbye by visiting, by using Skype, letters or cards. Genuine care will be communicated and a sense of them 'not being forgotten.'

## Provide relational repair

- We will never leave a pupil on their own after a difficulty or a relationship rupture. This is the time they need us the most (see Repair).
- If there is a difficulty between ourselves and our assigned pupil or another member of staff, we will do all we can to resolve it, so that we can be at peace with one another.
- If an interaction with a pupil becomes difficult for the adult, the adult will take time out to get themselves regulated before re-engaging at a later stage: another familiar adult from Team Pupil will swap in, to be with the pupil.
- As adults we will always apologise directly to the pupil if we mis-attune to them, and their state becomes aggravated.
- When a pupil is aggravated we will match the intensity of the pupil's affect so that the pupil feels heard and validated.
- If something needs to be repaired we will join in too, even if we don't consider the difficulty to be our own personal responsibility.
- If we notice a pupil becoming stressed by any of our interventions we will switch what we are doing, recognising that relationships can be stress-inducing for pupils who have experienced relational trauma or loss (see Regulate).
- If there is a tension build-up in a classroom we will ensure we check in with our assigned pupil with a smile, and 'It's going to be OK.'
- If something goes wrong we will seek understanding from the pupil themselves, rather than making our own assumptions. We will communicate curiosity: 'Help me to understand... 'or 'I wonder what was happening for you...'



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Our aims include supporting all pupils to:

- ✓ Function well at home, school and out and about, in their communities.
- ✓ Experience safety, security and stability with us.
- ✓ Reduce their blocked trust.
- ✓ Increase their tolerance of intimacy.
- ✓ Increase their comfort zone.
- ✓ Increase their stress tolerance.
- ✓ Increase their self-awareness.
- ✓ Strengthen their resilience.
- ✓ Feel confident and secure enough to explore, experiment, be curious and open to learning (enable their exploratory system to come fully online).
- ✓ Develop a personalised tool kit that will support them to move from alarm to social engagement.
- ✓ Integrate their body and mind.
- ✓ Integrate their past experiences into a coherent narrative.
- ✓ Move towards interdependency with others.

WE WILL MEASURE EFFECTIVENESS BY:

- Checking our attendance data.
- Asking the children and young people themselves to complete a 'Relationship Circle.'
- Seeking the pupil's own views about their mental health and wellbeing.
- Timing how long it takes our children and young people to recover from every day, low-level stressors in school.
- Logging how many times senior managers have to deal with serious incidents.
- Measuring their learning progress, in comparison with themselves, not their peers.
- Logging any transitions made between classes or schools mid-year.

## Nurture

A Pastoral Lead is employed full time who, in addition to timetabled talk time with children, facilitates additional groups, ad hoc sessions and nurture provision. This is also extended to our families and staff to help promote good mental health and well-being within our school community.

Robust and extensive CPD is undertaken to ensure skills and knowledge are up to date, to provide timely, appropriate and effective interventions, in line with our current policies and procedures.



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This includes statutory training, as well as more work-based courses including Mental Health First Aid, Counselling Skills, Eating Disorders/ARFID and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS).

## Cocoa Club – Family Group

Using elements of MFG, Lego Therapy and EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) training, to ease the transition back into school after the weekend. This is run with children and their parent/carer, to share ideas and strategies in a fun, informal way.

## Coffee mornings

Organised termly open to all families, sometimes with a specific focus or with outside agencies – EWT (Emotional Wellbeing Teams), PACT (Parents and Carers Together), KAE - attending to signpost additional information and support.

## Horse Riding

For selected groups of children throughout the year at Cornilo Riding.

Research shows:

Apart from being a great source of physical activity, it offers a host of psychological benefits. It can boost confidence, improve concentration, and teach responsibility and empathy. Moreover, horse riding encourages a connection with nature, helping children appreciate the outdoors.

## Kent Adult Education (KAE)

Providing a variety of free, fun and informal courses for parents, carers and their children.

This includes:

**Wider Family Learning (WFL)** - children join the adult in creative learning.

**Parenting (PAR)** - adult only discussion-based awareness, strategies and idea sharing.

**Family English, Maths and Language (FEML)** - For adults who wish to become more involved in their children's learning and enable them to help children acquire English, Maths and language skills. Parents can improve their own skills in English, Maths and language and improve their ability to help their children. Courses are for adults do not hold a current level 2 qualification in Maths and English, Grade 4 (formerly Grade C) and above.

All courses have an element of parent and child working together except those for adults only.

## Lego Therapy

Training completed through Dover District Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS)

Lego-based therapy (LeGoff et al 2014) is an evidence based approach that aims to develop social communication skills in autistic children, such as sharing, turn-taking, following rules, using names and problem-solving.

## Multi-Family Group (MFG)



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Multi-family groups in schools training completed through Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families.

An additional 10 week in-house training with the Educational Psychologists.

‘Developed over a period of more than 30 years, the multi-family groups in schools model offers accessible, non-stigmatising, psychological support to children who are disruptive, hyperactive, impulsive, anxious, depressed, have erratic school attendance or experience social difficulties. The aim is to improve emotional, mental health-related and academic outcomes for children and young people with these complex problems by sharing experiences with other families.’

## NNSP/Boxall

As a whole school we are in the final stages of the National Nurturing Schools Programme (NNSP), working towards becoming a Nurturing School.

To date, this has involved carrying out Boxall Profiles on all our children to establish their SEMH development. If gaps are identified, targets can then be put in place appropriate to their individual needs.

“Our **National Nurturing Schools Programme (NNSP)** helps staff develop and embed a nurturing culture and ethos throughout an educational setting; enhancing teaching and learning and promoting SEMH outcomes for the whole school community. It focuses on pupils’ emotional needs and development alongside their academic learning.”

## Rainbows

Co-ordinator and facilitator training completed through Catholic Children's Society.

There is also a team of facilitators trained to deliver this programme in school.

- Rainbows is a non profit making, international organisation that offers support to children grieving a death, divorce or other painful loss in their lives.
- Support is offered through a structured programme involving peer support groups, and Rainbows provides training/age appropriate resources for establishing these peer support groups.
- Trained facilitators give children the opportunity to work through and wrestle with the intense emotions of grief.

## Zen Den

A lunchtime club for children who prefer a quieter, less busy time for their break. This runs daily for 30 minutes, primarily for children in KS2 but also open to KS1 on an ad hoc basis. This is a space to colour, read and play board games in a safe, welcoming environment.

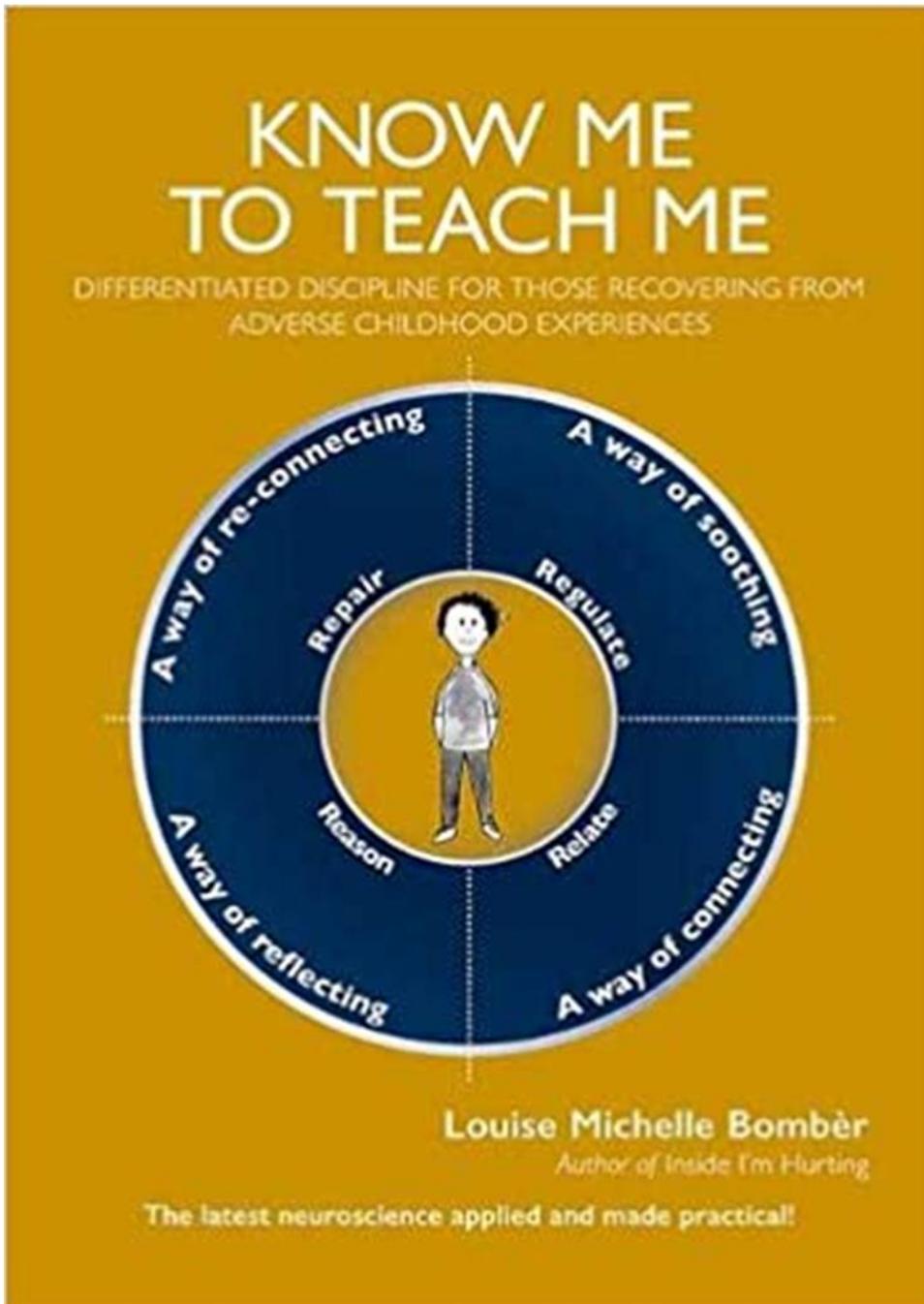


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