



Relational and Personal Regulation Policy

Approved on: 4th October 2024

To be reviewed by: October 2027

Signed:  Position: Trustee

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Introduction

As an alternative provision working with students who are struggling to effectively manage their emotions in school, we recognise that a huge part of the work we do is in the area of helping these young people to manage their responses in a more appropriate way, indeed this is an important part of the teaching they will experience through their time spent at Eagle's Nest. This teaching will range from explicit 'anger management' or 'managing emotions' sessions, to 'on project training' which seeks to model, challenge and develop responses through interactions with others when studying a different explicit qualification, for example cooking, animal care or horticulture.

Our organisational values set the tone for our approach:

- **Accept:** We believe in accepting every young person as they are, no matter what their history, no-one gets turned away.
- **Belief:** We believe that every young person is uniquely valuable and has something positive to offer.
- **Relate:** We believe that modelling positive behaviour is the best way for students to learn what they have not seen/experienced (or grasped) before.

We seek to do this through our organisation's core approaches to:

- A. Educate: leading to increased positive experiences of education
- B. Empower: leading to the ability to make positive life choices
- C. Relate: leading to improved levels of trust within relationships

Rationale

The young people with whom we work, for a wide range of reasons, have not managed themselves well within the mainstream setting. It follows, therefore, that the approaches we use should be different in order to work with this specific and minority cohort. We use trauma informed approaches to recognise the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on the development of the brain, and seek to work with the young person and others to repair developmental brain damage that inhibits their ability to manage their emotions and responses.

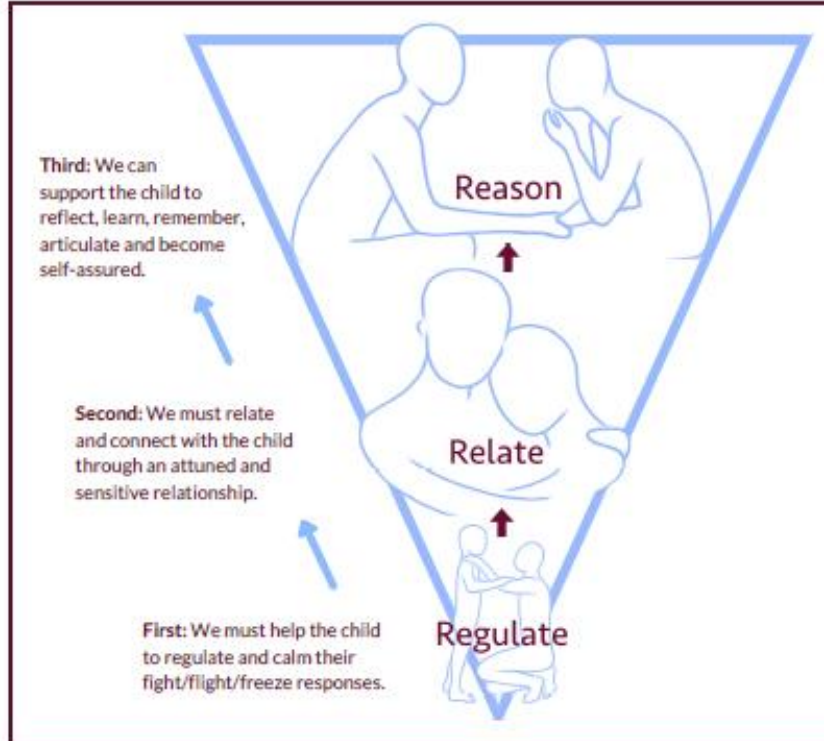
We follow the strategy of neuroscientist Dr Bruce Perry in the way we relate to young people, recognising that we will not be able to access the reasoning part of their brain unless we have first helped them to regulate their fight/flight/freeze response. We need to become trusted adults in their life to do this, (see diagram "The Three R's: Reaching the Learning Brain" on the next page, provided by www.beaconhouse.org.uk).

We are clear that routine and consistency are the best environments for young people recovering from trauma, and each day is set up with this in mind. We always seek to prepare students if there is a change coming, be that alterations to staffing due to illness/ holiday, or an alteration to the programme.

Our 'start of day' routines are an essential part of this. The target setting and social skills games over 'tea and toast' are used to assess the emotional state of the young people on arrival and to try to settle as a 'family unit' for the day. All the students we work with are struggling to express their emotions appropriately at times, so this first half hour is vitally important and allows us to make necessary adjustments to support and staffing for the day based on how students present.

The Three R's: Reaching The Learning Brain

Dr Bruce Perry, a pioneering neuroscientist in the field of trauma, has shown us that to help a vulnerable child to learn, think and reflect, we need to intervene in a simple sequence.



Heading straight for the 'reasoning' part of the brain with an expectation of learning, will not work so well if the child is dysregulated and disconnected from others.

In order to achieve this, staff should:

Be Clear What They Would Like to See

- Set clear expectations (recognising some students will fail to meet these on occasion, but not lowering the overall expectation as a result)
- Try to warn clearly what the consequence will be ahead of time so the student is clear. "If you choose not to hand the phone in this week, I will have to speak to home and arrange that it is left there next week"
- Ensure the situation is unpicked after an incident, be that on the day or in a follow up visit or session. Reset the expectations.

Build Trust with the Young Person (by following through)

- Always carry out what has been said, be that positive or negative consequence, even if you regret saying it afterwards (it is more important that they learn to trust you at your word).
- Take care not to voice a consequence that is not possible to enforce. E.g. "You will get in the car or your parents will be coming to collect you right now." (They may not get in the car and we don't know if their parents are available, and many live a long way away.) This kind of comment empowers them to take up the challenge rather than encouraging them to conform to the set boundary. Say sorry to them if you make a mistake!

Always use the Language of Choice

- Remind a student they are in control of the choice they will make, not you. Empower them to make the right choice by reminding them what you would like to see.

- Negotiate with a student who is in a state of non-compliance in order to get a solution that shows they have given a little, even if they do not manage the whole expectation. Be clear what the whole expectation is, but negotiate something in between to move things forward. Remind them they have a choice to do the right thing.
- Give them space to back down without losing face. If they are refusing to hand something over, tell them you want it in the next five minutes and then leave them. If possible, create a way for them to do this away from others.

Support Each Other

- Be relational, with some assertiveness if needed, but do not raise your voice, and, if you feel you are getting frustrated, ask another team member to take over (you have not lost, we are a team).
- Work together as a staff team. It is sometimes best to walk away and leave another staff member to take a different approach for the same end goal.

Eagle's Nest staff are supported through training and supervision to ensure these high level and high skill responses become second nature over time, working effectively as a team and seeking support when needed to provide the best support to young people in our care.

Our Expectations for Students

1. Phones and electronic devices (inc. vapes) – Place your devices in a personalised wallet just for you, so they can be kept safe for the day and not be a distraction.
2. Take part in the planned activities for the day – you are expected to have a go at everything, including worksheets. We will support you and understand it is sometimes difficult, but you are expected to try your best.
3. Respect others' views and opinions – Don't laugh or mock others because of what they have said. Whilst some opinions are not helpful to share, and we must be willing to learn that, it is not ok to laugh at others just because they think differently.
4. Do not be offensive to staff or students – it's never ok to use swear words or nasty comments to or about someone else, no matter how difficult they are to get along with.
5. Be willing to try to put things right – saying sorry is difficult, admitting we have said something we shouldn't have is tough, but we need to allow others to help us put things right.
6. Work on being able to talk about what is bothering you – developing the skills to talk about how you feel is really important to your future mental health and well-being.

Outcomes

Whether positive or negative, these should be related to the incident in a way that makes sense. At a time of conflict, it may not be possible to think through the best follow up if it has not already been agreed, so it is better to simply say, "If you choose not to do this, you know we will need to follow-up" This gives time to consider the appropriate strategy out of the heat of the situation.

Possible **positive outcomes** could be:

- Ongoing praise for positive choices, including work being praised by other staff and students.

- Praise for putting things right after a bad choice
- Letting a student know you are proud of them and being explicit about why
- Allowing a reward activity after work is completed (pool or other game of choice)
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- Ice cream or similar treat if managing well on an offsite activity, or at the end of a good half term
- Outing related to area of work at end of positive half term
- Emails/texts/phone calls home and/or to school/ social worker with praise
- Certificates
- Positive reward chart
- Recognition at Awards Evening
- Other appropriately identified reward
- Card posted home to congratulate on behaviour
- ½ termly reports home

Possible **negative** outcomes could be:

- Offsite reflection session (possibly using Student Reflection Sheet – Appendix A)
- Removed from group to complete session 1:1 (for session/temp/until review)
- Parent/ Carer does not leave until phone/vape/ other handed in at start of session (potential to return home if non compliant)
- Phone to remain at home for future sessions
- Parent/ Carer meeting before or after session to review
- Home visit to discuss and agree expectations moving forward
- Home visit to catch up on work missed/ not completed
- Work at home session, (either staffed by EN, or work provided following home visit after incident)
- Move from one project to another part way through term to facilitate fresh start/ different group dynamics
- Move to 1:1 if accessing group work not achievable for young person at the present time
- Positive Conduct agreement drawn up and signed by student and staff (see Appendix B for example)
- pause and restart project with a different group in next half term
- Emails/texts/phone calls home and/or to school with concern
- Card posted home to remind them of the positive things about them amidst difficult times (reminding them they are special and liked despite the challenge they present is both true and a very powerful tool to help them change)

The aim of this strategy is to encourage students to make positive choices about the way they participate both in activities and with each other, bearing in mind that we are always moving students towards being able to effectively manage their behaviour in a larger and less intensively managed setting as they move back to mainstream school, college or the work environment.

We use the language of choice regularly, making it clear what the right choice would be and leaving space for them to make it. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own conduct and to develop self-discipline. They are responsible for the choices they make and the consequences, good or bad, that follow.

De-escalation strategies (including use of physical intervention)

Staff at EN are trained in de-escalation techniques through TeamTeach which compliments the trauma-informed approaches that are embedded in our relational management strategies. This training focusses on positive behaviour strategies and de-escalation and is

often referred to as 95% of the training in terms of implementation. In addition, because of the struggles those attending EN can have with managing their emotions and the actions they take at times of dysregulation, the training also includes restrictive practices using techniques that are carefully planned to suit the needs of our organisation. All techniques are gradual and graded, from least intrusive to most restrictive and are only used in circumstances where not to do so could lead to harm to self, others or property. Indeed, not to act would be more of a risk and could be perceived as negligent. Possible examples of this would be to separate two students who were fighting, or to stand in front of a doorway if to do so would prevent a student or staff member being hurt. If intervention is used, it is always with the least force and for the least amount of time possible. In such circumstances, incident forms are always completed, and home and schools informed of the incident. Staff reflections are always completed with specific responses related to these actions.



Reflection Sheet

Name:

Date:

What happened?

What could have helped me make better choices?

What could I have done differently?

X's Positive Behaviour Agreement

We cannot believe you are almost finished at Eagle's Nest and will be moving onto your new full-time school soon. We love working with you X and know that you have so many great qualities. We know you can achieve the full Level 2 Award for your work on Girls' Group project before you go and really want to see you achieve your best in all your sessions in this final bit of time with us before you move too.

We have been so impressed with the effort you have put in recently to making really good choices and working well in almost all your sessions. Let's make this a really positive final bit of time so that you can be even more proud of all you have achieved here.

In order to support you to do this we will:

1. Help you as much as we can with worksheet activities.
2. Allow and encourage you to take time out and have rest breaks when things are getting too much. This could include a snooze in cushion corner or on the sofa.
3. Give you some alternative options if you do not feel able to engage in part of the session
4. Do our best to ensure we get you a nice chicken sandwich each week!
5. Try to take you out of the room to talk to you 1:1 when you have said inappropriate things so that others do not see this.

We need you to:

1. Do your best to get here on time for sessions – you always look beautiful so don't stress about needing extra time to get your hair perfect.
2. Do your best to speak positively about and to everyone in the room – we all get a bit frustrated with each other every now and then, but it's never ok to swear or say nasty things to people when in a session. We know we are all different and sometimes find it difficult to get on, but we need to respect each other and treat everyone in the best way we can.
3. Go with staff if they ask you to come outside with them, recognising this is what you have asked us to put in as a strategy – If you don't do this in the moment, then we will need to talk to you about whatever is happening in front of the class
4. Hand in your phone when you arrive for a session - This is to help you to focus and not be distracted until the end of the day. You know you work better when you don't have it and we really need this to happen in every session, invest in you.

We think this fourth one is SO important that if you do not hand your phone in at the start of a Friday group session, you will be choosing not to participate in education that day and will go back home. We will be SO disappointed if you make this choice as we really want you to be here, but that is out of our control, only you can make the choice, but **we know you are strong enough to do it.**

If you get worked up and frustrated about something, we want to help you to calm down. This might mean going outside for a walk or drive with a member of staff to give yourself time and space to calm down.

Signed (Student):

EN Staff: