

## Relational Approaches

### Ethos, culture and values are essential for good relational practice

- Relationships are powerful, they are central to the learning process, and they create the optimal conditions for learning
- Trusting relationships encourages healthy attachment, healthy attachments helps build a safe environment, safe environments foster risk-taking and exploration which drive learning
- Learners who feel safe and supported are more likely to perform better academically
- Our values and expectations drive our behaviour and our behaviour has a profound effect on our relationships
- To ensure learners experience a consistency of support from the adults working with them, there must be shared values, and approach, across all the adults working with them
- Values should be co-developed by, and applicable to, everyone in a learning community
- Establishing a rights and relationships-based **ethos and culture** requires time and involves everyone in the learning community to create it and be responsible for it
- Adults being honest and authentic with learners strengthens their connections with learners
- Emotion and learning are interconnected

### Values-led relational practice involves:

- **listening** with purpose
- **understanding** and responding to behaviour (in a developmentally friendly and holistic way)
- showing **unconditional positive regard**
- embracing qualities such as open-mindedness, **kindness, empathy**, and perseverance
- understanding and managing our **emotions** (helping others to do this too)
- **being proactive** in supporting needs – wellbeing, social and emotional, and learning
- **modelling** the behaviour we wish to see

### Relational approaches:

- are by default **rights respecting** and involve more than learning about rights, they involve making rights real in every day practice
- involve learning about emotions, how the brain works, attachment, trauma and adversity, and how these factors have an impact on relationships and behaviour
- involve teaching learners, and at times parents, about emotions, how the brain works, attachment, trauma and adversity, and how these factors have an impact on relationships and behaviour
- when translated into practice involve using our understanding and skills to promote positive relationships and behaviour
- include a range of different approaches which can be used for different purposes in different situations and all of which complement each other
- approaches should be explicitly identified in a settings Relationship Policy and should be explicitly linked to the settings vision, values and aims
- approaches include the Curriculum, nurture, trauma informed practice, restorative practice, solution orientated practice and bespoke programmes such as Mentor in Violence Prevention

## Information Note

### The Curriculum

- **Responsibility of All, Health and Wellbeing, PSE, and Social and Emotional Learning** programmes all promote learners understanding of emotions and their relationship building skills
- Learning through the health and wellbeing aspects of the curriculum reinforces and develops the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which children need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future.

### Whole School Nurture:

- can benefit every child and young person in an educational setting and may prevent social, emotional and behavioural issues escalating to a point of crisis for some learners
- can be as simple as adults modelling many of the basic skills which may have been missed in early childhood
- involves an understanding of early development and attachment theory and its impact on children and young people
- involves an understanding of brain, stress and trauma and how it relates to children and young people's behaviour and emotional and social development
- involves an understanding of the Nurture Principles and how they can be used in practice

### Trauma informed practice:

- recognises different types of trauma and acknowledges that trauma is common
- recognises the signs of trauma and responses include:
  - making others feel safe
  - being someone that can be trusted
  - offering choices and control in situations when someone feels unsafe
  - showing compassion and not judgement
  - working with others to provide holistic help and support
  - focussing on strengths and not deficits

### Restorative practice:

- recognises that people are the experts of their own solutions and if implemented effectively will promote accountability and maximise personal responsibility
- provides a framework of values, thinking and language that is helpful when 'something' needs to be restored
- can be proactive (relationship building) or responsive (relationship repairing) and can be used at every level from everyday informal interactions to more formal restorative meetings
- can be demonstrated by everyone through their values and language

### Solution-oriented practice:

- helps people to develop goals and solutions rather than just explore and analyse current problems
- focusses on the present and the future, on goals and how to achieve them
- is strength-based rather than deficit-based and enable a person to identify the skills, strengths and resources that they already have which can help them to find their own solutions

## Information Note

- builds capacity for effective problem solving and reflective practice and can often be used effectively to support key meetings and discussions
- contributes to positive relationships, building understanding and connections, and recognising what influences behaviour

## Mentor in Violence Prevention Programme:

- gives young people the opportunity to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying and other forms of violence
- trains Senior pupils to become young leaders who support and mentor younger learners
- explores behaviours including bullying, name-calling, sexting, controlling behaviour and harassment
- uses the bystander approach to empower both male and female pupils to support and challenge peers and to be active in preventing violence in a safe way
- is most effective as a whole school approach helping young people to stay safe and support each other
- fits well with Curriculum for Excellence health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes and the national approach to promoting positive relationships and behaviour in educational settings
- encourages positive healthy relationships amongst peers

## Additional helpful resources and information

- [Promoting Positive Relationships and Behaviour in Educational Settings](https://education.gov.scot/resources/promoting-positive-relationships-and-behaviour-in-educational-settings/)  
[https://education.gov.scot/resources/promoting-positive-relationships-and-behaviour-in-educational-settings/]
- [Restorative approaches to support positive relationships and behaviour](https://education.gov.scot/resources/restorative-approaches-to-support-positive-relationships-and-behaviour/)  
[https://education.gov.scot/resources/restorative-approaches-to-support-positive-relationships-and-behaviour/]
- See the related Modules on Relationships Matter
- Policy Guidance: [Included, Engaged and Involved part 2: preventing and managing school exclusions](https://www.gov.scot/publications/included-engaged-involved-part-2-positive-approach-preventing-managing-school/)  
[https://www.gov.scot/publications/included-engaged-involved-part-2-positive-approach-preventing-managing-school/]
- Policy Guidance: [Developing a positive whole school ethos and culture: relationships, learning and behaviour 2018](https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-positive-whole-school-ethos-culture-relationships-learning-behaviour/pages/1/) [https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-positive-whole-school-ethos-culture-relationships-learning-behaviour/pages/1/]
- [Curriculum for Excellence: Health and Wellbeing](https://education.gov.scot/curriculum-for-excellence/curriculum-areas/health-and-wellbeing/) [https://education.gov.scot/curriculum-for-excellence/curriculum-areas/health-and-wellbeing/]
- [Health and wellbeing; Responsibility of all - Making the links...making it work](https://education.gov.scot/resources/health-and-wellbeing-responsibility-of-all-making-the-links-making-it-work/)  
[https://education.gov.scot/resources/health-and-wellbeing-responsibility-of-all-making-the-links-making-it-work/]
- [Applying Nurture as a Whole School Approach](https://education.gov.scot/resources/applying-nurture-as-a-whole-school-approach-a-framework-to-support-self-evaluation/) [https://education.gov.scot/resources/applying-nurture-as-a-whole-school-approach-a-framework-to-support-self-evaluation/]
- [Nurture and trauma-informed approaches](https://education.gov.scot/resources/nurture-and-trauma-informed-approaches-a-summary-of-supports-and-resources/) [https://education.gov.scot/resources/nurture-and-trauma-informed-approaches-a-summary-of-supports-and-resources/]
- [Keeping Trauma in Mind](https://education.gov.scot/events/keeping-trauma-in-mind/) [https://education.gov.scot/events/keeping-trauma-in-mind/]
- [Compassionate and Connected Communities](https://professionallearning.education.gov.scot/learn/learning-activities/)  
[https://professionallearning.education.gov.scot/learn/learning-activities/ ]
- [Mentor in Violence Prevention](https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/mvpsotland/) [https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/mvpsotland/]