

**Empathy- Validation and Mental State Talk:**

the recognition and acceptance of another person's thoughts, feelings, sensations, and behaviours as understandable. It involves validating how the child is experiencing the event, imagining into what might be driving their behaviour – *'you are not my boss' – 'it must feel like everyone is always telling you what to do and you never get a say, no one listens to what you want'* It is not – distracting, judging, discounting, minimising or placating.

**Consistency:** Boundaries applied in a supportive, matter of fact, non-punitive way.

**Containment:** Emotional containment of feelings too big for the child by a regulated and steady adult, in charge of their own feelings and emotions

**Calming and Soothing:** The adult will support the child to regulate themselves.

At a point when a child is fully regulated there will be reflection and analysis of the behaviour which will involve making the child aware of the physiological clues of what happened within their body and in their actions. Adults will say what they see and label the emotions, ensuring they are explicit about the behaviour that was inappropriate, e.g. *'It's okay to feel cross, but it's not okay to...'*

Adults refocus the behaviour, e.g. *What can we do next time to support you to behave differently?* At this point, there will be an

agreement between the child and adult about what should happen as a consequence. It is important that any consequences are developmentally appropriate and are designed to support children to learn about both their physiological response to challenge and difficulty and how better to manage this in the future. Consequences should not be punitive, shaming or detrimental to the child's view of themselves.

[Restorative approaches](#)

When an incident occurs, we try to:

- Give the child/ren time to calm down before speaking to them
- Showing curiosity through our questions promoting social engagement *'Will you help me understand what happened?'*
- Listen to each child explaining what has happened including any witnesses if possible
- Supporting children to find solutions *'Let's think together about what might be best to do now'*
- If developmentally appropriate, we should support the child to apologise. If this is not appropriate, adults will need to apologise on their behalf, modelling good practice.

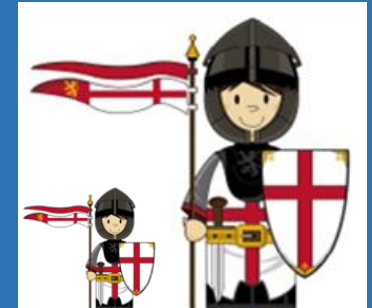
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## Knights Templar Community Church School and Nursery



## Supporting Positive Behaviour

## Key Information for Visiting Adults

At Knights Templar Community Church School, **behaviour** is understood neuro-scientifically as a **communication of an unmet need** or as an adapted, defensive stress response. The understanding that children learn best within positive, trusting relationships informs our approach to managing and changing behaviour.

We strive to create a safe, stimulating environment where everyone's spiritual and moral beliefs are nurtured. We strive to ensure our young learners develop as good citizens based on our core Christian values of **Love, Hope, Commitment** and **Belonging**.

The management of distressed behaviour and the support offered to the child is the responsibility of every member of our school community. A consistent, whole school approach offers **predictability, containment** and **safety**. Our relationships with each other as staff and how we interact with our children, model our expectations for behaviour.

The development of positive social, emotional and learning behaviours is at the heart of our approach. Our differentiated response to behaviour recognises that our children are unique and that some will require additional support in order to achieve the high expectations we have for behaviour for all children.

We aim to actively promote high self-esteem

and high aspirations for all children, through an ethos that values every child. We support children to manage and understand their emotions, to apply thinking between feeling and action, and to increasingly show empathy and understanding to others.

### [Trauma Informed Schools UK](#)

An understanding of trauma and childhood adversity underpins our approach to relationships within our school. We are committed to ensuring that our school develops a Trauma and Mental Health Informed Approach to ensure that all children develop positive mental health and resilience, enabling them to fully engage in life and learning. There is a growing body of research and understanding of the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on long-term mental and physical health and the protective factors that mitigate the potential impact.

We have embraced a wider definition of trauma to encompass any event that is experienced as frightening, painful or out of control, characterised by there being no one available to support or reduce the impact of traumatic toxic stress. As such, even the day-to-day exposure to events such as *divorce, loss of a loved one, illness within the family or moving house* can be experienced as traumatic leading children and adults to be affected by toxic stress.

Providing an environment that has **safety, connection** and **compassion** at its heart ensures that we never unwittingly re-traumatise any of our community members.

### [Key Relational Skills](#)

We actively promote key relational skills, drawn from research, which contribute positively to the development of a healthy sense of self.

We have a whole school commitment to cease using: harsh voices, shouting, put-downs, criticisms and shaming which are proven to be damaging psychologically and neurologically. All school staff ensure that interactions with children are socially engaging not socially defensive and are aware of facial expressions and other non-verbal communication and presenting as open, warm and engaged at all times.

These skills, when provided within a positive relationship with an emotionally available adult, will provide a relational basis for a child's emotional, social and neurological development.

**Affect Attunement:** the ability to hear, see, sense, interpret and respond to someone, both verbally and non-verbally. This is how we communicate to the people we are close to so that we see them, feel with them and understand their experiences. In practice, attunement is meeting and riding the same emotional wave as the child.