

THE FEDERATION OF GUARDIAN ANGELS' AND OUR LADY OF LOURDES RCPS RELATIONSHIP POLICY

Policy approved by: Governors	Date: February 2026
Last reviewed: February 2024	
Next review: February 2028	

Together as a Federation we endeavour to maintain the outstanding standard of care, guidance and behaviour that will allow us to continue to work towards fulfilling our Mission Statement.

Mission Statement

We follow in the footsteps of Jesus to Love, Learn and Grow.

Aims

As a Federation we are invested in supporting the very best possible relational health between:

- Parent and child
- Child and child
- Child and school staff
- Parent and school staff
- School staff
- School staff and Senior Leads
- School staff and external agencies
- School staff and the Governing Board

To do this our schools are committed to educational practices, which **Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect**

Protect

- Increased 'safety cues' in all aspects of the school day, e.g. in primary schools meet and greet at the school entrance / classroom door
- School staff trained in 'PACE': being warm, empathic, playful and curious (proven to shift children out of flight/flight/ freeze positions)
- School staff to ensure that interactions with children are socially engaging not socially defensive, in order to decrease chances of children relating defensively (fight/flight/freeze).
- A whole school commitment to cease using harsh voices, shouting, put-downs, criticisms, shaming (proven to be damaging psychologically and neurologically).
- School staff will 'interactively repair' the occasions when they themselves move into defensiveness.
- The implementation of pedagogic interventions that help staff to get to know children better on an individual basis e.g. "I wish my teacher knew" (what matters to

them, who matters to them, their dreams hopes). This is key to enabling children to feel safe enough to want to talk, if they so wish, about painful life experiences, which are interfering with their ability to learn and quality of life

- All vulnerable children to have easy access on a daily basis to at least one named emotionally- available adult, and these children know when and where to find that adult. If the child does not wish to connect with this adult, an alternative person is found.
- School staff adjusting expectations around vulnerable children to correspond with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress. This will include removing vulnerable and traumatised children in a kind and non-judgmental way from situations they are not managing well (e.g. children who keep 'triggering' into alarm states in the main playground given access to a separate calmer smaller playground).
- Provision for children of a clear, confidential and non- shaming system of self-referral for help/talk time.
- The nurturing of school staff in such a way that they feel truly valued and emotionally regulated enough to be able to interact throughout the school day with social engagement rather than defensiveness
- Through the Unicef Rights of a Child, Children and adults work together to recognise and act upon the rights of the child within our school, our local community and the wider world. We believe that by understanding their own rights, children learn to respect and value the rights of others'.

Relate

- All school staff trained in emotional coaching and in relating to children in terms of the four key relational needs for secure attachment: affect attunement, empathy, soothing and containment
- A whole school commitment to enabling children to see themselves, their relationships and the world more positively, rather than through a lens of threat danger or self-blame
- Relational opportunities for vulnerable children with emotionally available adults at school to enable them to make the shift from 'blocked trust (not feeling psychologically safe with anyone) to trust, and from self-help to 'help seeking'

Regulate

- The implementation of interventions designed to bring down stress hormone levels (e.g. from toxic to tolerable) in vulnerable children, enabling them to feel calm, soothed and safe. This is to support learning, quality of life and protect against stress-induced physical and mental illness, now and in later life.
- Evidence-based nurturing and regulatory interventions that aim to repair psychological damage and brain damage caused by traumatic life experiences, through emotionally regulating and playful, enriched adult-child interactions
- The emotional well-being and regulating of staff is treated as high priority in order to prevent burn-out stress-related absence or leaving the profession through stress-related illness, secondary trauma and/or feeling undervalued, blamed or shamed

- Designated staff-only spaces, which are specifically designed to support the release of natural anti-stress, pro-social neurochemicals (opioids and oxytocin).

Reflect

- Staff educated in the art of good listening, dialogue. empathy and understanding (instead of asking lots of questions/giving lectures)
- The provision of skills and resources to support parents and staff to have meaningful empathic conversations with vulnerable children who want to talk about their lives in order to empower children to better manage their home situations and life in general.
- Within the context of an established and trusted relationship with a member of staff ('working alliance') children are to be provided with the means to symbolise painful life experiences through images rather than solely everyday words, should they wish to do so, as a key part of 'working through' and memory re-consolidation. To this end, there is the provision of different modes of expression for children e.g. art/ play/drama/music/sand-play/emotion worksheets)
- PSHE (personal, social, and health education) informed by current research (psychology and neuroscience) on mental health, mental ill-health (full range of specific conditions) relationship health: family, parenting, intimate relationships and tools for how to do life well. Curriculum content to enable children to make informed choices about how they relate to others and how they choose to treat their brains, bodies and minds now and in the future
- Staff trained to help children move from 'behaving their trauma/painful life experiences, to reflecting on those experiences through empathic conversation in order to address negative self- referencing and help them to develop coherent narratives about their lives
- To follow our successful Well-being and Readiness to Learn policy, which is based not on punishment sanctions but one that models enquiry, resolution and interactive repair. (e.g. restorative conversations).