



# MacIntyre Academies

## MacIntyre Academies Trust Compassionate Schools Policy

Version Number	Purpose/ Change Section:	Resp.	Date
V3	New version	Group Director	Jul 2021
V4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Updated terminology throughout to 'child-on-child abuse' and 'suspensions' in place of previous terminology</li><li>- Tweaking to wording throughout</li><li>- Addition of point 4v relating to investment in pastoral support.</li><li>- Additional detail added to section 5 about a compassionate curriculum</li></ul>	Group Director	Aug 2024

**Person Responsible:** Group Director of Education and Children's Services  
**Date of first draft:** July 2016  
**Date adopted by the Trust Board:** September 2016  
**Date of implementation:** October 2016  
**Date of last review:** November 2024  
**Date of next review:** November 2027

## 1. Purpose and Introduction

Compassionate Schools is a key philosophy that underpins the operation of the Academies and Children's Care Homes in MacIntyre Academies Trust. This policy sets out our Compassionate School approach and our commitment to do all we can to understand and acquire the knowledge and skills to alleviate and prevent trauma, harm, suffering and distress.

Our compassionate approach goes beyond the young people we support to the way we work with each other.

Our Academy's local Behaviour and Exclusion policies will be aligned to this document.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all MacIntyre Academies Trust employees, including volunteers, Local Advisory Board and Trust Board Members.

## 3. Underlying Principles

Our Compassionate Schools Policy is founded on the Trust's drive to be **solution focussed, optimistic and compassionate** and the following underlying principles:

- We will be leaders and role models, showing compassion for each other, young people and their families.
- We believe that a young person who is motivated, encouraged and made to feel worthwhile will thrive.
- Our ambition is to, wherever possible, be a Trust that does not exclude young people and to reduce restrictive practice as far as possible. Where we do suspend or exclude a pupil it will be a last resort.
- Our Academies will have a positive culture, where reflection is actively pursued and practice is evidence based.
- We are non-judgemental and have unconditional positive regard for young people and their families. We believe that you 'get more of what you focus on', so we always build on positives and celebrate positive behaviour and progress.
- We focus on building young people's wellbeing, self-esteem and life chances as our primary goal.
- Our approaches are person centred and individualised.

## 4. What is our Compassionate Schools Approach

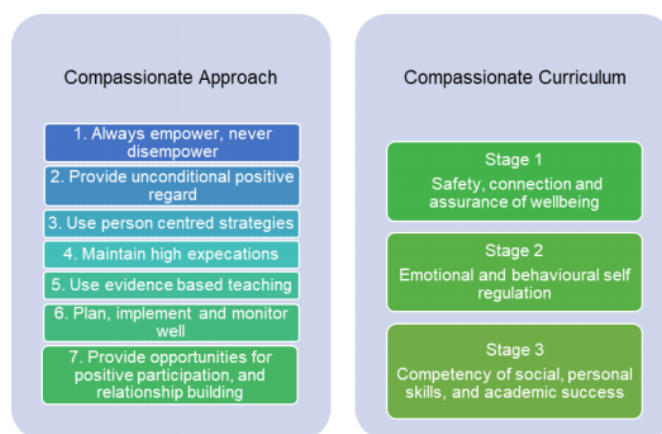
A compassionate Academy or Children's Home:

- a) Provides a secure base for young people and staff which promotes security, confidence and resilience.
- b) Focuses on building young peoples' resilience, empathy, connection and wellbeing as the basis for academic and personal success.
- c) Avoids the use negative words such as 'punishment' and 'sanctions' and uses natural consequences to help young people learn that their behaviour has an impact on themselves, others, and their environment and reduce feelings of shame.
- d) Continuously seeking to minimise the use of restrictive physical interventions (RPIs) through preventative strategies and includes these actions in its School Development Plan.
- e) Supports staff to develop their own self-awareness, self-compassion, wellbeing and personal resilience.
- f) Works with families as partners and uses person centred planning.

- g) Captures data and other information to inform decision making and ensures interventions are evidence based.
- h) Ensures that young peoples' needs are thoroughly assessed and understood prior to enrolment and that their transition out of school is smooth.
- i) Liaises with outside agencies such as educational psychology, health, social care services etc
- j) Ensures all staff, including agency, do not work unsupervised until they have had an adequate induction to be able to comply with this policy.
- k) Uses restorative practice post incident and has a culture of honesty and learning where staff can talk about and report concerning behaviours.
- l) Provides a safe, inspirational and vibrant environment where young people can thrive.
- m) Supports young people to learn what is and is not appropriate behaviour and provide them with skills to help them make sense of the world and how their actions can have an impact on others.
- n) Ensures every young person has a Positive Behaviour and Education Support Plan (or equivalent) and where appropriate a Communication Plan. Staff adhere to these plans at all times.
- o) Expects staff to consistently seek to understand and have the courage to respond to behaviour, trauma and suffering in kind and respectful ways.
- p) Trains all staff on the use of trauma informed approaches, Team Teach and Positive Behavioural Support.
- q) Ensures all staff understand relevant aspects of neuro-science and the impact of adverse childhood experiences on a child's development.
- r) Where all staff are seeking to build attachment with young people.
- s) Where all staff are consistently seeking to understand and have the courage to respond to behaviour in kind and respectful ways and participate fully in learning, development and reflection activities.
- t) support young people in a way that demonstrates unconditional positive regard and a belief that behaviour is a means of communication and that all behaviour has a purpose (behaviour of concern may signal a need for support).
- u) Requires managers and senior leaders role model best practice and ensure staff are adequately trained, coached, observed, monitored and supported and that they have adequate role models and feedback to ensure our Compassionate approach is happening in practice.
- v) Invests in our pastoral support structures to ensure that every child has a network of safe adult support they can access daily.

## 5. A Compassionate Curriculum

We believe that building a young person's resilience, empathy, connection and wellbeing is the basis for academic and personal success and intentional design our curriculum and support with this in mind.



We will incorporate aspects of supportive programmes such as 'Zones of Regulation' or 'Protective Behaviours' in our offer to pupils and their families.

As ambitious rights respecting schools we will ensure that our pupils are exposed to curriculum opportunities and enrichment that develop their skills in advocating for themselves and others.

## 6. Authorising and Reducing Restrictive Interventions

PBSPs which include restrictive interventions will need to be authorised by the Academy Principal or Registered Manager in a Children's Home. They will ensure that:

- all PBS plans include a range of non-restrictive (first resort) strategies and that restrictive physical interventions are only used in the last resort and for the shortest time possible to reduce a real possibility of harm.
- where practicable staff receive training in PBS, human rights and non-restrictive strategies before any training in restrictive strategies.
- any authorised intervention is in the person's best interests, and that any best interest decisions are recorded.
- Ensure that seclusion or face down ground restraints are not used or included in any plan.
- Where restrictions may amount to a deprivation of liberty (relevant in care homes), they have sought legal authorisation for the deprivation.
- All young people and/or their representatives know about all proposed interventions, including RPIs and prescribed antipsychotic medicine.
- Support young people to be aware of their right to complain if they feel that any aspect of their support is not in their best interest.
- Support young people and their families to know how to access independent advocacy, and support families to take part in interventions positively where possible.
- RPIs are always followed by appropriate emotional and medical support for the person restrained and anyone restraining.
- RPIs are always reported using an incident form or e-report within 24 hours and to parents/carers (unless otherwise requested), commissioners (if required to do so) and recorded on the Academy's system within 72 hours.

The use of restrictive interventions will be risk assessed balancing the needs and vulnerabilities (physical and emotional) of the person being restrained and any risks within the environment against the risks of not using a restrictive intervention.

All staff must be aware of their Duty of Care, to intervene in the least restrictive way (no more force than needed) to prevent harm in an unforeseen exceptional circumstance. If a restrictive practice is used that is outside usual practice and training or a young person's plan (where specified), this must be reported to the Principal or Registered Manager and a review will be instigated.

## 7. Recording and reporting of incidents and intervention

The Academy Principal (either directly or through delegated responsibilities) will oversee the implementation of a system for functional assessment of the meaning behind concerning behaviours. They will ensure PBSPs are live documents and reviewed regularly:

- where changes in behaviour have been observed.
- where the use of restrictive interventions increases.
- where decreases in the quality of life have been observed.
- as part of planning for external changes such as staff changes or moving home.
- when specific targets are set to be reviewed.
- following any use of a restrictive practice, or other incident where learning is identified.
- following any use of an emergency response that was not within the plan.

Academies will maintain a log of reviews and changes to PBSPs over time, keeping an archive of past versions.

As standard practice (unless it has been requested otherwise by the young person (over 16), their family, or their local authority) Academies will inform parents/carers and commissioners (where appropriate) of any use of a restrictive practice and the process for restriction review as soon as is reasonably practicable but within 24 hours. Where practicable parents/carers should be made aware of any use of RPI before a child arrives home, so that they understand the context and are best able to support their child to understand the circumstance and the need for the use of RPI.

We will arrange for a multidisciplinary review by appropriate medical professionals of any antipsychotic medicine prescribed to support young people to manage their concerning behaviours 12 weeks after starting treatment, then at least every 6 months (only for care homes).

We recognise that children and adults with learning disabilities and behaviours of concern can be increasingly vulnerable to intentional or unintentional abuse. All staff must promote an open and reflective culture where abuse is less likely to exist and follow MacIntyre Academies Safeguarding and Child Protection and Whistleblowing Policies.

We understand that incidents can be distressing for all involved and recommend that any staff or pupils who are feeling particularly affected seek support from a trusted adult, line manager or the Principal, if they feel they would benefit from further support and discussion.

We expect that reports of incidents are written in a manner that is respectful of all involved, fact based and non-judgemental. Reports may include unsavoury language where this was a feature of the incident, but it should be clearly in quotation marks to avoid any confusion.

Any injuries sustained as a result of the use of restrictive physical interventions must be recorded and reported as a safeguarding issue and where thresholds are met this may involve consultation with or reporting to the LADO.

We believe in the importance of reflective practice and learning from all incidents.

- All staff must report all incidents of behaviours of concern.
- All staff must encourage a culture of kindness, honesty and learning where staff can talk about and report behaviours of concern without feeling judged.
- Managers must agree clear systems with staff about how to report different types and severities of behaviours of concern and they must review these reports regularly. We recognise that behaviours of concern can be stressful for everyone.

- Managers must support their team to equip themselves with tools to maximise their own resilience and wellbeing and provide personalised post-incident support as needed.
- PBS plans must include post-incident support and recovery plans (emotional and, where necessary, medical) for the person supported.

**8.** There will be times when the best learning and restoration after an incident occurs with the child and in some cases their parent or carer involved. We expect all staff to be open to this process as a learning and restorative process. **Child on Child incidents**

Within MacIntyre Academies we are aware that group environments can result in young people sharing space with others to whom they at times may struggle to share with. Some of our young people may not be able to tell us that they have a concern or understand the consequences to their own behaviour so we work with them to support them in these areas and monitor everyone's wellbeing. To reduce the likelihood of peer on peer incidents from occurring we currently engage in the following:

- We work with families from the initial transition phase to identify suitable placements for all young people, completing impact risk assessments and reviewing placements as and when needed (or if changes occur) to try to ensure best fit.
- We have a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure whereby any child on child related incidents are reported as a concern, notifying the Designated Safeguarding Officers or Designated Safeguarding Lead. These are reviewed and actions implemented to prevent re-occurrence.
- PBS training is provided for staff to support them to identify warning signs and prevent incidents occurring for all young people they support.
- Risk assessments of the environments are carried out to utilise space and room management strategies. Social stories and debriefs / emotional support is given to all young people involved in an incident, addressing any concerns they may have raised as a safeguarding concern.
- Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings are held where concerns are significant and would involve families
- All incidents require a level of reflection to form the actions moving forward to prevent any reoccurrence.

If child on child incidents form a pattern we would utilise and follow the guidelines identified in the academy Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **9. Suspensions and Exclusions**

Our Academies need to be able to access the widest range of educative and consequential strategies in order to best support and protect young people, this includes excluding young people from school. However, it should only be utilised as a last resort and will only be implemented as part of a wider strategy and approach to best support a student or protect others. On occasions, fixed term exclusions will be used to create time and space for reflection following an incident and to enable the Academy to implement any necessary changes in provision.

When considering an exclusion and its length, we will consider

- The nature of a learner's diagnosis and condition;
- The need to keep an individual safe;
- The physical safety of the whole learning community;
- The time (and resources) needed to further personalise a learner's provision;
- The need to build and share a clear reintegration plan.

All exclusions will be signed off by the Group Director in consultation with a Principal and reported to the Chair of the Local Advisory Board.

## **10. Training**

Staff are expected to engage in a range of relevant training courses relating to this policy. For example:

- Safeguarding
- Team Teach
- An introduction to Positive Behaviour Support
- Human Rights and non-restrictive interventions
- Restrictive Physical Interventions
- Trauma informed approaches
- Attachment awareness
- Neuro-science and childhood development
- Adverse childhood experiences

Other courses will be developed and implemented depending on the individual needs of our young people.

All staff who directly support our young people are expected to take part in all training provided, particularly Team Teach, which is needed in order to work at an Academy or in a children's home. If staff are not able to take part in physical intervention training for a particular reason, e.g. due to a health concern, this will be reviewed and assessed by their line manager and HR on case by case basis.

## 11. Governance

Each Academy will present a yearly Compassionate Schools Report to its Local Advisory Board which will include as a minimum:

- A detailed breakdown of their Compassionate Schools training and development plan and its impact.
- A compliance check against section 4 of this policy.
- A summary of young peoples' progress against their social and emotional goals.
- A summary of incidents – including data on physical interventions, staff and student injuries with commentary, including a year on year analysis which demonstrates progress towards our aim to reduce RPIs.
- A summary of safeguarding alerts related to concerning behaviours.
- The number and summary of Fixed Term and Permanent Exclusions.
- An analysis of staff wellbeing.
- Conclusions and an action plan for next year.

The Group Director will also provide the Trust Board with an amalgamated report on progress across the Trust. Periodically the Trust will commission an external organisation to challenge and support us on this the implementation of this policy.

## Appendix 1: Compassionate Schools Infographic

