

Newbattle High School

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Positive Learning Policy - *Aims, Purpose & Guiding Principles*

Positive Learning Policy - *Procedures & Guidance:*

- 1 Building Relationships
- 2 Expectations in Learning
- 3 Rewarding Positive Learning
- 4 Reflection and Intervention
- 5 Restorative Approaches
- 6 Recording on SEEMiS
- 7 Recording on SPHERA
- 8 Managing In-class Device Use
- 9 Managing inappropriate language
- 10 Contacting Home
- 11 FDW and Beyond
- 12 Positive Learning & Reflection Room Summary Diagrams
- 13 References & Further Reading



Positive Learning Policy

Aims and Purpose

Newbattle High School is committed to this Positive Learning Policy, with relationship building and restorative approaches embedded in our daily practice. At the heart of our policy are the school's core values which permeate everything we do:

- **Achieve**
- **Include**
- **Motivate**
- **Respect**

'Living' these values involves building, maintaining and restoring effective relationships. This has a beneficial effect on the ethos of the school in the following ways:

- It is important for maximising learners' attainment and achievements.
- It prepares pupils for adult life.
- It is necessary for learners' safety and well being.

To ensure that we have a supportive and safe working environment for all, and in line with sound educational practice, all stakeholders should aim to *consistently* follow the principles and procedures outlined in this policy.

A diagram which summarises the key features of the Positive Learning Policy can be found in Section 12.

Guiding Principles

- Some of our learners may need to be taught, or reminded, what is expected of them. This is most effectively achieved through following whole school classroom routines. *All staff* must follow these routines and expectations to ensure that learners make appropriate choices for which they can then be praised and / or rewarded.
- No one strategy or approach will work with all pupils. We have to be willing to seek advice and *anticipate* which interventions and support is most appropriate in our classrooms. Our approaches should be pre-emptive.
- Relationships are key - everyone should 'matter' and feel valued. Teachers can show this by being highly visible, by showing kindness, and removing obstacles or barriers to learning, and by having high expectations of learners in the delivery of well planned and engaging lessons.


Positive Learning Procedures & Guidelines

1 Building Relationships

In any classroom, the teachers' personal approach will set the ethos, climate, pace and sense of achievement for learners, and the quality of teacher-pupil relationships will have a vital bearing on the success of strategies to support classroom management.


Whilst it must be recognised that teaching approaches will vary across the school, there are certain key principles which should be embedded to elicit a positive response from pupils, ensure that minor incidents are managed appropriately and pupils leave lessons feeling accomplished.

- Learning should be at the heart of everything we do in our classrooms and well planned lessons help to ensure that learners are engaged and feel valued. Teachers and Learning Assistants should be familiar with Newbattle's best practice for learning and teaching as set out in the **Learning, Teaching & Assessment Policy, Learning & Teaching Toolkit** and summarised in **Key Components of a Lesson** overview

 [NHS Learning, Teaching & Assessment Policy V2.0](#)

 [NHS Learning & Teaching Toolkit](#)

 [Learning at Newbattle HS](#)

- Teachers should set clear and consistent expectations for classes from the outset (reference the '**Strong Starts**' summary). Any and all instructions should be precise and concise.
 [Embedding our School Routines with a 'Strong Start'](#)
- Teachers should foster a climate of mutual respect. All staff should be polite and courteous toward pupils, and in return pupils should be the same. 'Please' and 'Thank you' should be automatic responses. Outdoor clothing should not be worn in the classroom. Every teacher needs to model these expectations in every interaction with pupils. Some learners will need to be reminded more often than others with positive redirection.
- Pupils should be supported and guided to take responsibility for their learning, respect the rights of others, develop positive self-esteem and build workable relationships. It follows from this that classroom activity should be characterised by praise and positive reinforcement.
- Teachers should seek to adopt a **restorative approach** in order to allow learners to come back from difficult situations (see Section 5).

A summary poster which shows what our school values look like in the classroom should be visible and referred to consistently by staff. Pupils should be supported to understand how these expectations relate to them .

[School Values Posters](#)

2 Expectations in Learning

Effective classroom practice is underpinned by **class routines** which are **consistently applied** and encouraged with positive reinforcement and positive redirection. They should be memorable and concise, and help to initiate productive routines in pupils.

We should all share similar core routines which includes finishing lessons on time and using the last 10 minutes of a lesson productively; greeting pupils at the door as they come in; and starting lessons promptly with routines which are familiar to pupils. Consistency with routines at the start and finish to a lesson will then free up time for lesson content and pedagogy.

 Embedding our School Routines with a 'Strong Start'

A summary poster which outlines expected core class routines for teachers and pupils should be visible in the classroom and pupils should be supported to understand the importance of these routines for their learning.

[School Values Posters](#)

3 Rewarding Positive Learning

In order to recognise positive choices in line with the school's core values, the following systems are in place to capture our learners' achievements.

Everyday Praise

To capture the spirit of achievement, staff - and classmates - should utilise positive reinforcement at all times when interacting with learners. The default position with any learner should be to lead with the positives and use positive praise in feedback relating to learning and teaching, and within relationship building.

Faculties and teachers should have in place internal rewards systems that meet the needs of their subject area. Such rewards could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Verbal praise*
- *Written praise or recognition, e.g. in jotters, praise postcards*
- *Electronic praise or recognition, eg. given a Merit on SEEMIS*
- *Stickers and stamps*
- *Reward and achievement charts*
- *Display of work*
- *Competitions based upon achievement*

House Points

The school operates an inter-house competition based on points which are awarded to learners for:

- *Maintaining 100% attendance in a half-term*
- *Achieving a Merit or subject award*

- *Entering, placing or winning competitions*
- *Teacher nominations for excellent effort, good pieces of work and other projects.*

Pupils are given 'tokens' which contribute to a **House Award** given to the overall winning house.

Texts for Zero Demerits

For learners who have no recorded demerits on SEEMIS (e.g. they have never required an extended reflection from their class), the House team will send a text home to parents and carers at the end of each term congratulating the learner on their respectful and positive choices in school.

Positive Praise Postcards

Faculties have the use of centrally produced 'Positive Praise Postcards' which are individualised to their own subject areas. These can be filled in and given to the learners from the class teacher. These contribute to the House Points system.

Values Award

Throughout the year staff can nominate pupils who exemplify school values. This is collated on a half termly basis. Those selected by the head teacher will then meet for a rewards breakfast.

Merit Awards and Award Ceremony

Throughout the year, the school's tracking system, TAMAR, is used to identify learners who are consistently meeting, or exceeding, expectations in their subjects. The system is divided into three tiers and each term learners have the opportunity to achieve a Bronze, Silver or Gold merit award.

- **Bronze Merit Award** - off track in only two subjects that term
- **Silver Merit Award** - off track in only one subject that term
- **Gold Merit Award** - no off tracks in any subject that term

In the summer term, those learners who have earned three successive Gold Merit Awards are invited to receive their third award in a special awards ceremony.

"In It To Win It"

Learners who are above 95% in their attendance, with less than 5% lates and zero demerits are entered into a competition to win a prize which will be presented at the merit ceremonies at the end of each term.

4 **Reflection and Intervention** *(A summary diagram can be found in section 12)*

Advise / Reflect / Intervene

The first step in the positive learning process is to remind Newbattle learners of our high expectations for them. Such interactions should have relationship building at their heart and should always be non-confrontational. Restorative strategies are central to any follow up to supporting learners..

(Further information and links to support such conversations can be found in section 5)

Advise

Pupil Advice

Remind learner(s) of relevant expectations in terms of classroom routines and overarching school values (Section 3). This may also involve reference to the classroom expectations or routines posters.

Reflect

The next step in the positive learning process is to ask learners to consider the impact of their choices on themselves and others.

Initial Reflection

This will depend on the situation for the learner but could include strategies such as:

- Moving seat
- Restorative one-to-one chat with teacher on the edge of the teaching space
- A five-minute time to reflect in another room / quieter space
- Use of a cool-down pass (if authorised)

Extended Reflection

When a pupil continues to be a cause for concern an alternative, supervised (inter)departmentally agreed space for them to complete the remainder of the lesson should be used. PTCs have internal procedures in place for outcomes such as this.

An extended reflection should be followed by one or more of the next steps by the classroom teacher:

- Class teacher is responsible for meeting the pupil for a restorative chat before next class (every class being an opportunity for a 'fresh start')
- Class teacher is responsible for phoning or emailing home
- Ask PTC for advice
- Ask Pupil Support or Guidance teacher for advice

What if?

A learner refuses the reflection opportunity or continues to disrupt learning.

The class teacher should refer this learner to the PTC in the first instance. If further support by the PTC does not de-escalate the situation, then 7447/On call should be contacted.

This should be followed up with a SEEMIS referral (Section 7) to the PTC outlining what strategies have been tried and what support you would like.

A **demerit*** should also be given via the SEEMIS class list at this point. See accompanying notes in the link on how and when this should be done.

[Positive Learning](#)

What if?

A learner refuses the reflection opportunity and leaves the teaching area.

The class teacher should contact 7447/On call to advise them of this. The PTC should be advised retrospectively and a **referral generated on SEEMIS by the class teacher for the PTC**. Again, a **demerit*** should be given at this point.

***Demerits** are a mechanism to share information with the House Teams who will generate weekly updates on individuals and respond accordingly to any emerging concerns. **They are not in themselves to be used as a means of managing behaviour**, that is they should not be used as a consequence / warning to pupils.

Intervene

There are three types of intervention: PTC, House Team, and On Call

All information relating to interventions should be generated on **SEEMIS** electronically through the **referral system** and passed on to the relevant staff, ie. PTC, House Team or Support Team.

Guidance on how to generate a referral on SEEMIS is available by following the link below (All Staff > Positive Learning Folder)

[Positive Learning](#)

Intervention with PT(C):

- **(immediate) where extended reflection is refused or has been unsuccessful**

If in-class extended reflection in another room has not resolved the problem then the class teacher currently accommodating that learner should send them to the PT(C), in the first instance.

If further support by the PT(C) does not de-escalate the situation and return the learner to an extended reflection, then 7447/On call should be contacted. The teacher should generate a referral on **SEEMIS** for the PTC, who may then update it and send this on to PT House for information, depending on the situation.

- **(retrospective) where a pattern of extended reflections develop**

If a persistent pattern occurs then this **should be followed up by the PTC** in consultation with the House PT. The class teacher should discuss this with their PT(C) who will then lead the next steps

Actions that could take place:

- Class teacher or PT(C) contacts home
- Restorative conversation involving PT(C) and class teacher: this should include targets, expectations and support for future conduct as part of the agreement (see Section 5)
- Issue a departmental conduct card
- Organisation of a temporary class/working space change for the learner within the department
- PT(C) refers intervention on to pastoral teacher to request support or advice
- PT (C) requests input from Nurture or the Positive Learning Officer
- Other PT(C) options, as appropriate to the situation.

In all instances above, a **demerit** should be given on the SEEMIS class list system and **a referral should be generated on SEEMiS** by the class teacher or the PT(C) retrospectively. This may be closed off or directed to the member of the House team responsible for that learner either for the purposes of information only (if dealt with within the department) or for further action if House intervention is required.

Intervention at House Level Required:

This may be immediate or retrospective, depending on the situation:

- Periods of extended reflection with a focus on restorative practices for individual learners may be considered following a pattern of behaviour across the school. This decision is informed by referrals already logged on SEEMiS. This will enable counselling and interventions via the House or Nurture teams.
- Incidents of bullying or discrimination - where this cannot be dealt with via a restorative conversation in class or is suggestive of a sustained or larger issue within the class - should be referred on to the pastoral team for investigation.
- Where anger management issues require the use of cool-down strategies
- Where a meeting with parents to discuss learner choices or patterns of choices and agree support for the learner has been identified as an appropriate response
- Monitoring using a conduct card

Intervention by On Call / Tel: 7447 Required:

When all previous strategies have been exhausted or a significant incident has occurred, then On Call (7447) should be called. The member of staff on duty at that time will speak to the learner or remove them from the situation:

- Where opportunities to reflect have been refused and further support from the PT(C) has not been successful in de-escalating the problem
- Violent incidents: inclusive of threats, physical violence, verbal aggression towards staff members or the causing of fear and intimidation. Such incidents should be recorded via SPHERA (Section 7 below)
- Where a learner is not managing their emotions and exhibits aggressive conduct such as inability to manage anger; aggressive physical acts towards furniture, fixtures or fittings; aggressive shouting or swearing.
- Where learners are out of class and have been observed to be continuously wandering the corridors.
- Where learners are out of class and intentionally disrupting other classes and not complying with reasonable requests to stop and return to their teaching area.
- Situations where there is an immediate safety risk to yourself, a pupil, or any other person, that you cannot resolve without assistance
- Anything illegal

Pupils who require on-call are supervised in Rm 11.

Our Positive Learning Officer monitors the pupils who require on-call support and a range of interventions and communications take place thereafter between the House Team, PTCs, teachers and the Nurture team as appropriate.

Support from SLT

Please see **Section 11: FDW and Beyond**

5 Restorative Approaches

Restorative approaches offer a powerful aide to building and repairing relationships. As a restorative school we:

- ★ Develop a sense of fairness and respect
- ★ Provide safe environments and opportunities to discuss problems
- ★ Engage participants with dignity and respect
- ★ Involve participants in generating thoughtful and empathetic responses
- ★ Develop emotional intelligence and empathetic listening
- ★ Lead towards shared understandings
- ★ Promote learning and acceptance of responsibility
- ★ Encourage appropriate behavioural and cultural change

Restorative approaches include all parties in finding a solution to the problem. The focus is on *reasons, causes, responsibilities and feelings*. Those

involved are asked questions such as *'Who has been affected and how?'* and *'How can we put it right and learn from this experience?'*


The majority of the restorative interactions that happen during a normal school day will take place between classroom teachers and the learner(s). There are multiple tiers of restorative approaches which can be used, but typically at Newbattle these will take the form of a restorative conversation or a more formal restorative meeting.

Referral by House PTs for external Nurture support for a pupil may be made after department and classroom strategies have been tried. Work here will engage pupils in small scale group work and tasks with the positive learning officer. These activities will vary depending on the pupils and will focus on getting to the root of the problem.

By doing this it is hoped that behaviour and relationships will improve.

Return to class will only take place once restorative conversations have happened between the pupil and teacher. These can be facilitated by the positive learning officer, or house teacher as appropriate.

Refer to the accompanying document 'Restorative Approaches to Support Positive Learning'.

 Restorative Approaches in Supporting Positive Learning

6 Recording on SEEMiS

All communication regarding any incidents or requests for advice about pupils in relation to supporting positive behaviour should be done on the SEEMIS system. **This creates an ongoing record of concerns or information which follows a pupil throughout their time at school.** These referral logs can be accessed by teachers, PTs, Heads of House, the Learning Support and Nurture teams, and SLT.

The SEEMIS system should be used to pass communication on, as well as receive responses from, all those involved at each stage in supporting a pupil.

A summary of how to send and receive SEEMIS referrals is available in the accompanying document 'Referrals'

[Positive Learning](#)

7 Recording on SPHERA

All incidents involving a member of the school community who has sustained direct verbal abuse, or violent behaviour should be recorded.

Guidance on how to do this can be found in the document 'Recording an incident on SPHERA'

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bsKKkbHvYtqy1pZA4diJhzAKMTEx69tmYdrF10hS_N0/edit

Support for Victims of Violent Behaviour

The support of staff subjected to violent behaviour will be by the direct line manager and/or SLT.

Support for pupils who are subject to violent behaviour will be by the relevant House PT and/or SLT Year Head

Supporting staff should advise the use of the employee assistance program (PAM Assist) and communicate all actions taken to any member of staff who has been subject to violent behaviour.

8 Managing In-class Device Use

Refer to the [NHS Equipped for Learning Policy](#)

9 Managing Swearing

Casual swearing:

If a learner is casually swearing (e.g. it takes the form of punctuation, or is clearly a mistake, or is due to an inability to read the social situation) and is not aggressive, abusive or offensive in its intention, then this issue should be dealt with by the class teacher in the first instance, with the PTC in support if necessary.

Professional judgement should be used alongside knowledge of the learner in order to use such incidents as an opportunity to build relationships and establish our core value of 'Respect'.

Aggressive swearing:

If such verbal aggression or offensiveness does occur, then the PTC or OnCall should be asked to intervene, depending on the severity, and a Referral should be generated via the SEEMIS referral system. All incidents of deliberate aggressive verbal abuse should be recorded on SPHERA.

10 Contacting Home - Class Teachers & PTCs

Parents / carers should be contacted both to share any ongoing concerns and to develop or build on home school partnership links which are a valuable aspect of supporting pupils in their learning. Contact with home should be seen as an additional intervention strategy.

Class teachers and PTCs should be involved in communicating directly with parents / carers. Reasons could include:

- Non completion of home learning
- Pupils falling behind in their day to day work and at risk of not achieving their targets
- A specific incident in class which was a cause for concern
- A series of ongoing concerns which is impacting negatively on progress.

In consultation with the support and House teams, teachers should have an awareness of any circumstances which may be relevant to a particular pupils' behaviour concern and take that into account when contacting home.

Where appropriate any relevant information resulting from the parent / carer conversation should be passed on to the House or support teams.

11 FDW and Beyond

Where a choice or series of choices have resulted in highly inappropriate or antisocial conduct, the following measures will be applied in a staged progression:

Formal Disciplinary Warning (FDW)

A formal disciplinary warning usually occurs after a learner has been involved in conduct which is in significant breach of the schools expected standards and core values, or when a range of interventions have failed to have a positive impact on pupil behaviour.

Parents and carers are invited to attend a meeting with the House Head. Year Heads may often be a part of the meeting also.

FDW paperwork includes an agreement on conduct and support(s) to be put in place for the learner

Exclusion

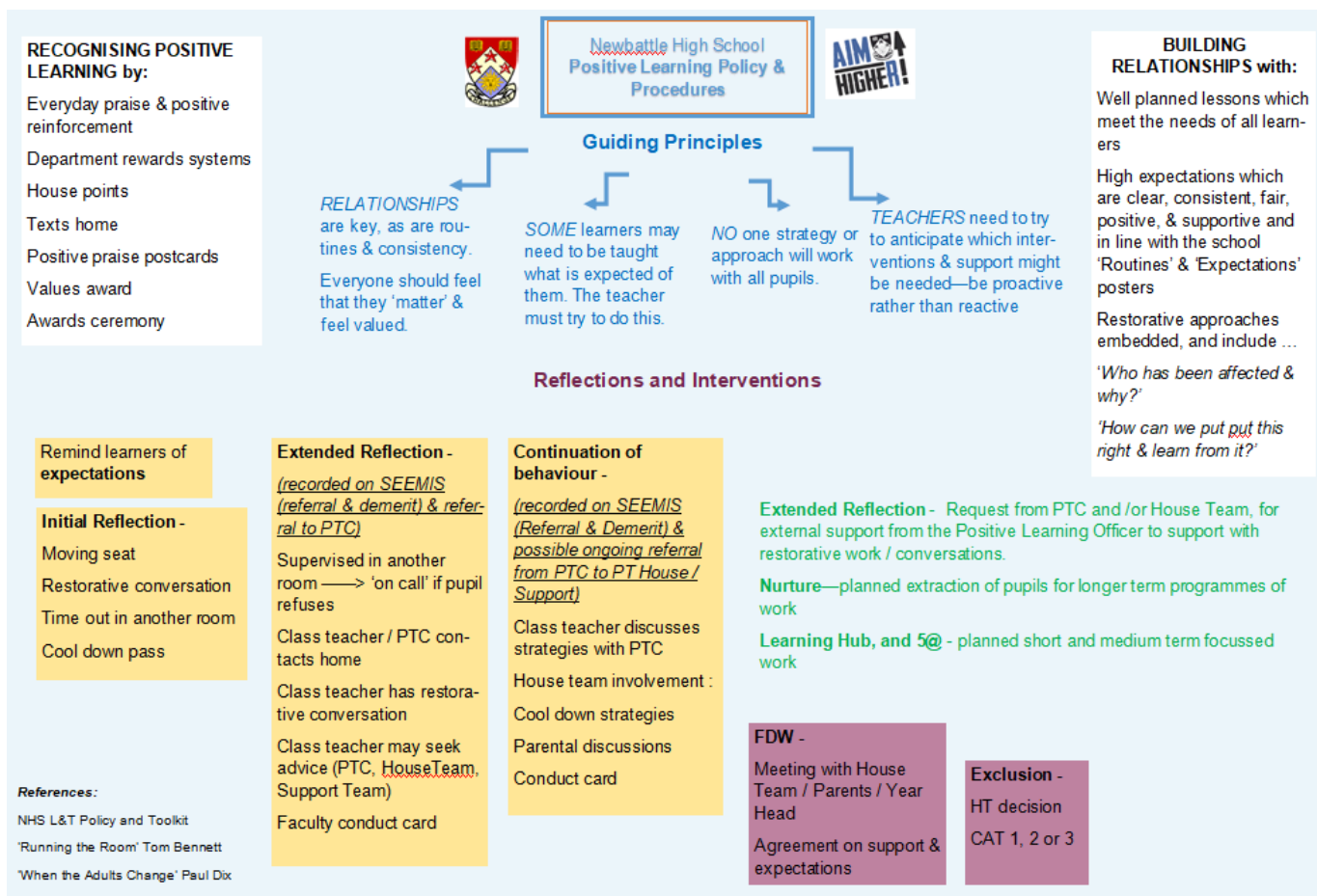
A **Category 1 or category 2 exclusion** will be imposed by the Head Teacher (or a Depute Head Teacher, who will refer their decision to the Head Teacher for approval).

Category 3 exclusion will be recommended by the Head Teacher to the Head of Education highlighting the need for alternative provision to be found for the pupil.

When considering whether to exclude a pupil, the Head Teacher will follow all procedures contained within Midlothian Council's policy 2.2 '*Guidelines on Managing School Exclusion*'

Pupils will not be allowed on school grounds for the duration of the exclusion, except to attend the readmission meeting.

Pupils should be provided with work to do at home on Google Classroom for the duration of the exclusion. The Head of House is responsible for arranging suitable work to be provided



12 Positive Learning Summary (above)

13 References & Further Reading

[Equipped for Learning at Newcastle High School](#)

NHS Learning & Teaching Policy

NHS Learning & Teaching self evaluation Toolkit

'Restorative Approaches in Supporting Positive Learning' (doc)

'SEEMIS Referral System' (doc)

NHS Equipped for Learning Policy

Resources shared as a result of Inservice workshops in Aug & Oct 2022

Positive Learning Environments -]Oct Inservice 2022

[August 2022](#)

Teaching & Learning Spotlight, Oct 2023

'When the Adults Change' Paul Dix

'After the Adults Change' Paul Dix

'Running the Room' Tom Bennett

*available to borrow in the NHS PL Library

