



Tywardreath School Behaviour and Well-being Policy

(Phased return to school June 1st)

Covid – 19 has been a traumatic experience for all of us. Trauma can be defined as a psychological, emotional response to an event or an experience that is deeply distressing or disturbing.

At Tywardreath School we pride ourselves in putting the well-being of our pupils and staff at the forefront of all that we do; this is even more important with the return to work after the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. Pupils and staff will have experienced a range of emotions and experiences during the 'lockdown' period and their reaction to these may present in a variety of ways. Pupils and staff may be extremely anxious about returning to school and it is imperative that we are as prepared as possible to support these emotions and any associated behaviours. We may notice behaviour changes in the children and it is important that we react to these in an appropriate way. Rules and routines are important to our pupils; they keep them safe. However, pupils will have had at least 10 weeks away from school and they will be coming back to a school life that is very different from before. It will take time for everyone to get used to the new routine and behavioural difficulties need to be dealt with using compassion and understanding to what the underlying issue is – remember there is always a reason for why children present with challenging behaviours, We need to be aware of signs that pupils and staff may be in distress. Some possible examples may be:

- Refusal to follow rules and routines
- Becoming angry – verbally and physically
- Becoming withdrawn
- Becoming easily upset
- Separation anxiety
- Becoming easily frustrated as they cannot do something they could do last time they were in school. This is also important for school staff – children will have forgotten how to do certain things, they may not be as confident to have a go – patience and empathy are the key here. “ I can see you’re feeling frustrated that you can’t remember your sounds, here let’s have a go together – it’s ok to forget how to do things we’ve been away from school for a long time.’
- Disclosures of safe-guarding concerns. Please report to DSL (Claire McColville or David Gilbert DDSL) and log on ‘My Concern’

It is important that we validate and help to name emotions – “I can see how angry you are by the way the you are shouting – it must be awful to feel so angry.’ Our usual behaviour system of sending children for time out (orange/red/ thunder clouds) is not relevant at this time. Isolating a child who

has been through a traumatic event that has involved an isolation experience could exacerbate the emotion, the behaviour and have long last effect. If pupils are refusing to follow rules then we need to get to the bottom of why this is. It might be a simple reminder is needed (remember they have been out of school for 10 weeks.) It may be that the child needs some 'time out' to talk or get some fresh air (this needs to be done with an adult). It may be that it is the other adult in the class that needs to talk with the child. If behaviours or emotions escalate and the staff member feels that are unable to deal with the situation they need to seek advice in the first instance from the child's class teacher (remember they are not all going to be with their teacher and this may be distressing for them too) then seek advice from Claire, David or Broni who will support and intervene if needed. Please remember to record any safeguarding concerns onto 'My Concern.' If needed we can also look at putting interventions into place to support pupils and staff well-being.

It is important we give the children time to talk about their experiences – this may be as a group or 1:1 with an adult – there are many positives that have also come out of this event. Their emotional well-being has to be at the forefront of everything that we do. Staff may wish to provide:

- opportunities for children to talk about their experiences of the past few weeks
- opportunities for one-to-one conversations with trusted adults where this may be supportive
- some refocussed lessons on relevant topics, for example, mental wellbeing or staying safe
- pastoral activity, such as positive opportunities to renew and develop friendships and peer groups
- other enriching developmental activities

The different experiences all pupils will have had at home will naturally play a large part in how easily they re-adapt to attending school and its routines. Staff will need to strike an appropriate balance between reintegrating pupils into a reassuring and familiar work ethic to support their mental wellbeing on the one hand, and identifying and taking time to address explicitly individual concerns or problems on the other.