

The Grafham Way

HOW WE ACT IN PUTTING OUR PHILOSOPHY INTO PRACTICE		
APPROACH	FOR EXAMPLE	WHY
Act as good role models to the pupils i.e. "do as I do" not "do as I say".	Apologise when wrong, be punctual, dress appropriately, talk to pupils as you would wish to be spoken to. Use positive body language and tone of voice.	We are trying to teach alternative, more appropriate behaviours. Pupils need to learn that some adults do what they say. It is easier to copy what you see than what you are told about.
Use descriptive praise in every interaction with a pupil.	We can praise achievement, effort and qualities "You were brave to take a guess, even though you weren't sure" "You tried and didn't give up; you gave it your best shot" "You have stopped shouting at me and now you are listening" "Even though you are angry, you are not hitting. Your self control is improving".	Descriptive praise is a way of giving detailed information about what we actually want. It means that we notice and mention the behaviour we wish to encourage. Pupils who are praised want to do more of the things that please us, in order to get our positive attention. As the praise describes what is actually happening, the pupil is likely to believe it and this is likely to increase their confidence.
Act in a consistent manner	Follow routines, do what you say you will do, follow agreed practices; do not allow your own mood swings to affect your behaviour towards pupils. Do not favour or discriminate.	Some pupils need to unlearn that adults cannot be trusted - by seeing that they can and that they are fair. Consistency gives pupils security (eventually), probably the most important ingredient for improvement and establishing relationships.
Enforce simple and clearly defined rules and limits, fairly and firmly.	Do not allow rule-breaking, turning a blind eye, etc. Do not make rules too complicated - check that pupils have understood them before they are broken. Tell pupils you are enforcing them, rather than saying nothing and reporting them later.	Pupils have often ignored or broken rules without anyone saying anything. Equally adults invent rules arbitrarily! This causes confusion and reinforces that adults are unreliable. Consistently applied, rules make life more predictable.
Speak to pupils in a clear, concise manner.	When giving instructions, keep them short - don't go on and on. Check that you are not using language which pupils cannot understand, or which, if taken literally, will be confusing. Don't use slang. Check pupils' understanding by asking questions, and get their attention before you give instructions/speak to them etc.	Pupils cannot always take in long talks or long words; it is sometimes too much information to process. Their attention span may be short. They may only remember the very last thing you said and you may gain a reputation amongst the pupils as a "waffler".
Express disapproval of behaviour, never of the individual.	"Stealing is an awful thing to do" rather than "You are an awful boy for stealing".	No one likes to be put down or labelled and where self-esteem and self confidence are already low, such comment can be harmful and long-lasting.
Give praise warmly, appropriately and sincerely at every opportunity. Describe the behaviour that you like.	Notice and comment when pupils have done something right, or haven't done what they usually do wrong. Recognise even small improvements - do not wait for perfection.	Praise is good for everyone. Success breeds success and positive reinforcement of good behaviour is far more effective than negative reinforcement of poor behaviour.
Be a fair and reliable adult. Avoid letting pupils down whenever possible.	Turn up for work every day; be punctual, fair, and stick to your word. Keep pupils safe from bullying, put downs and any form of harassment etc.	We want pupils to learn to trust adults and have faith in them - this may be a new experience for them. Predictability = security = improvement.
Refer to pupils, their parents, relatives or possessions in a positive manner, whenever possible, and always in a professional manner.	Whatever you may think personally about these matters, only voice that which you would wish them to hear. Do not show prejudice towards anyone. Be the one to mention positive attributes - look for them. Always refer to pupils by their first name.	It is hurtful to pupils and destructive to relationships and is completely contrary to the need to build self-esteem and trust in adults. Parents, home, relatives etc. are often sensitive areas for pupils.
Concentrate upon positives and what can be done, rather than the opposite.	Encourage pupils to compare their efforts and achievements, with their own abilities rather than those of others. Ignore minor negative behaviour and	This helps build self-esteem, self-confidence, and trust.

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	comment upon the positive behaviour you have identified. Where pupils do something wrong, remind them of all the good behaviour that has preceded it and acknowledge this yourself. Celebrate successes, however small.	
Show tolerance towards pupils exhibiting negative behaviour, but you may show intolerance towards the behaviour.	Pupils are not rejected i.e. staff do not dismiss them because of the behaviour - but having dealt with the behaviour, assume a positive working relationship with them. Pupils are given another chance, and another and another - but staff may make it clear that they disapprove of the behaviour.	Pupils may expect you to reject them - after all, many other adults before you have. To do so would merely confirm their own hopelessness and that adults don't really care for you, only if you're being good. Negative behaviour may be used to test you out - i.e. do you REALLY care?
Listen to pupils.	When pupils are in trouble ask for their version of what happened. Give pupils time - even if you have to delay it until later. Don't interrupt - check that you have heard correctly.	The pupil's view of events is likely to be different from yours - you do not share their difficulties after all. It is a strong message that you value them. Pupils will not expect you necessarily to agree and just getting it off their chest may help.
Be aware of individual needs and how they are being met.	For each pupil in the school can you name two current, priority needs. Be aware of how the activity in which you are involved contributes to meeting needs of the individual/class group.	If we do not meet the pupil's needs we are failing in our task. To meet them we have to know them and how they can be met.
Enable pupils to manage failure in a safe setting	Allow pupils choice, as appropriate, rather than making the decisions for them all the time. Allow them to take on as much as they think they can manage, rather than only what you believe they can manage. Look for opportunities where pupils can be involved in decisions which affect them.	Decision-making is part of growing up and moving towards independence. It can encourage pupils to view staff in a more collaborative rather than an authoritarian role. It can boost confidence through success and ownership and it provides the opportunity to teach pupils how to deal with failure in a constructive manner.
Plan your work for pupils. Then plan every other aspect of the school day.	Attention to detail often prevents difficult situations occurring. Think about classroom work, break times, meetings, assemblies, reviews, sports events, visitors. Difficulties often occur during transition times. Active supervision is crucial.	Events run better when they are planned. Planning is another sign from staff that pupils are important and valued. Needs cannot be met efficiently in an ad hoc manner. Pupils with chaotic backgrounds or life styles need order in their lives.
Behave respectfully. Act towards pupils in such a way that their respect and dignity are not threatened.	Be aware of your body language. Never mock or use sarcasm and avoid personal criticism and any criticism in public, if possible. Knock on doors before entering. Do not discuss pupils in front of others. Address pupils courteously and by all means expect this to be reciprocated. Show sensitivity and caring towards pupils who are distressed and unhappy whatever the actual causes or eventual outcome.	Pupils are often fragile individuals and cannot withstand attack. They are also young people with rights - even if they don't respect the rights of others at all times. They are other people's children in our care and we have no right to make their situation worse, only a duty to make it better.
Persevere with pupils, never give up on them.	After a problem always show that is over and that you bear no grudges or hard feelings towards pupils. Never refuse to have a pupil in your group. Start again as many times as necessary.	This gives a very powerful message that you are different from all those adults who have given up on them, and that you really DO care and value them as individuals.
Intervene to prevent or curb inappropriate behaviour	Stop fights, name-calling, swearing, running off, bullying or at least step in and tell pupils to stop. Express your disapproval of the behaviour. Follow school procedures having stepped in. Never ignore, unless it is minor. Divert wherever possible rather than confront. Look for signs and triggers and be proactive; act before it happens.	To do otherwise would be to abdicate your responsibility, and collude with the idea that the behaviour is acceptable. If you do nothing pupils will see you as weak and ineffective, as well as unreliable and unsafe. It is part of proving that as an adult you can be trusted and that you will uphold what is right. If you do not intervene, it is likely that the pupils' behaviour will deteriorate further until something more serious happens.
Allow and encourage pupils to grow and	Give pupils progressively more difficult work to do in class or tasks to	It shows you care and value pupils and that you have a high regard for their ability, possibly

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develop by having appropriately high expectations of them.	undertake out of class rather than allow repetition in safe areas beyond that required initially to provide success. Avoid giving simple work purely for ease of containment.	higher than their own. You owe it to them as an adult in this school. You may help them to surprise themselves as to just how much they can do - if pushed.
Take an interest in all pupils	Find out pupils' likes and dislikes, strengths, weaknesses, family background, sense of humour and interests e.g. musical, sporting, fashion. Talk to pupils about the positive areas and use your knowledge to start conversations and to build and cement relationships. Share your interests with them, if appropriate - but don't bore them!	Pupils are people and as such are unique, varied and interested in something. Taking this path differentiates you from all the other adults who perhaps have not taken an interest or listened.
Be positive, enthusiastic and aware of the need to motivate yourself and others.	Make an effort to ensure that the work or activity is interesting or exciting and talk about it enthusiastically. Look for new ways to make the task exciting and interesting - be lively yourself. If appropriate, use a "carrot" or reward to get an unpleasant task done. Encourage pupils to try new activities and join in yourself.	New activities can cause anxiety for pupils and unless they are encouraged they are more likely to opt out. If you are not enthusiastic about a new project, why should pupils be? If activities are new to pupils, they cannot have experienced failure in it previously and may therefore be easier to motivate.
Express your care for the pupils through the quality of your supervision of them.	Regularly "count heads" to check that the pupils for whom you are responsible are still with you. Follow up absences - check their authenticity. Follow school reporting procedures when a pupil is missing. Stay mobile around the school area in order to supervise. Don't be gullible by accepting bogus excuses. Lay down clear rules, e.g. stay within 5 metres of me.	You cannot actively care for pupils who are absent. Supervision is an element of the structure required to bring a degree of security to chaotic lives. Make school an interesting, caring and special place so that pupils want to be here.

CARING AND LEARNING TOGETHER