

Ethos, Culture and Relationships

**MOORFOOT
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



getting it right for every child

Ethos, Culture and Relationships

LIFE at Moorfoot

Introduction

Moorfoot Primary School seeks to create an environment that promotes and respects the rights of learners, provides for the health and welfare of those using the school and encourages and reinforces positive behaviour of all.

This will be an ongoing process, from our Early Learning and Childcare to Primary 7, developing the Personal, Social and Emotional Development of each child.

Their progress will be regularly monitored by staff, who will use this information to improve the environment, learning and teaching, and resources.

Our Ethos, Culture and Relationships ambition aims to work within the above principles of the 'Rights of the Child':

Aim

- ❖ To develop strong, mutually respectful relationships which create a cohesive community, focused on;
 - Genuineness - honesty, openness, sincerity.
 - Positive regard for all individuals - valuing the person for who they are.
 - Empathic understanding – being able to understand another's experience.
 - Individual responsibility and shared accountability.
 - Self-actualisation - the human capacity for positive growth.
 - Optimistic perspectives on personal development - that people can learn and can change for the better

School Ethos

Adults have an important influence on the children within their care. Therefore, it is essential that we model the kinds of behaviour that we wish to promote.

As adults we aim;

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- To create a positive climate.
- To provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- To show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To emphasise the importance of being an individual.
- To promote, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- To encourage relationships based on respect, kindness and the understanding of the needs of others.
- To ensure fair treatment, regardless of age, race, ability, gender & disability.

Learning and Teaching

Clear and effective planning enables us to provide a stimulating and interactive environment.

At Moorfoot, forward planning is done on several levels.

In doing this we provide an appropriate, differentiated and exciting curriculum, taking account of the needs and interests of the children.

Reporting on the success of the plans helps to highlight the next steps in learning, ensuring that children remain busy, happy and challenged. These are vital components in the success of creating a positive ethos.

Moorfoot Primary and ELC aim to be welcoming to all, organised to develop independence and personal initiative.

The children are actively involved in making decisions about their play, learning and their day to day life at school.

Children and parents' wishes are respected and their opinions actively sought.

This is achieved through conversation, small group time, questionnaires, emails, a range of techniques such as 'thumbs up, thumbs down', 'Circle Time', focus groups, Mind Mapping Books, Emotion Talks Boards etc. We also have focused Pupil Groups and an active Parent Teacher Group.

Materials and resources are carefully arranged to aid accessibility, reduce uncertainty or disruption while providing a wide range of choice and open-ended play and learning opportunities.

Adults encourage and praise children's efforts, good behaviour and participation.

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LIFE at Moorfoot

At Moorfoot our core values of Learning, Inspiration, Friendship and Enjoyment guide our practice.

The school asks all children to be;

- **READY**
- **RESPECTFUL**
- **SAFE**

These 3 considerations allow classes to discuss and develop codes of conduct or class expectations.

Children are consulted and their ideas recorded and displayed.

Children coming to school demonstrate different behaviour patterns based on their age and stage of development, home values, and life experiences.

At Moorfoot we work towards standards of behaviour based on the concepts of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility.

It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles and our LIFE values.

Celebrating

Praise is the most widely used form of positive reinforcement at Moorfoot.

It is used informally and formally, publicly and privately, to groups and individuals.

Praise is given for all kinds of involvement in school **LIFE**, ranging from acts of kindness, enthusiastic participation, helping others and thoughtfulness.

House points and Gold Stars are used as a way of celebrating, as are certificates. Displays in school celebrate these achievements.

We also use group times to discuss issues arising and to seek children's opinions and give praise.

Communication

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Positive partnership with our parents is crucial in promoting and maintaining a welcoming ethos and culture with high standards of behaviour.

Daily verbal feedback to carers, newsletters, written reports, email, photographs, parents' evenings, information boards. Seesaw and forward planning formats are all ways of keeping parents informed of their child's progress and their successes and what is happening in school.

Managing Behaviour

Taking a Restorative Approach

While praise and celebration and modelling are central to the establishment of a positive climate, there is also a need to address challenging behaviour. Challenging behaviour is almost always a means of communication. It can be a child's way of telling us there is a problem, and they may be feeling some big emotions. We aim to handle situations like this with compassion and sensitivity.

When the time is right we would look to adopt a restorative approach with the child or children involved.

Those affected are invited to share:

1. What has happened.
2. What the impact has been on those involved: i.e. who has been affected and in what ways they have been affected.
3. What needs to happen to put things right or to make things better in the future.

This approach is based on sound learning theory regarding how people relate to each other and how best to meet the different needs that can arise from conflict or harm.

To facilitate such a process requires the ability to:

- establish a respectful rapport with people;
- listen and respond calmly, empathically and without interruption or judgement to all sides of an issue;
- inspire a sense of safety and trust;
- encourage people to express their thoughts, feelings and needs appropriately;

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- appreciate the impact of people's thoughts, feelings, beliefs and unmet needs on their behaviours;
- encourage those involved in the problem to find their own solutions.

What is being restored?

This depends on the context and on the needs of those involved. What is being restored is often something *between* the individuals involved such as:

- Effective communication;
- Relationship, and even friendship;
- Empathy and understanding for the other's perspective;
- Respect;
- Understanding the impact of one's own behaviour on others;
- Reparation for material loss or damage.

However, something may also be restored *within* an individual – for example:

- A sense of security;
- Self-confidence;
- Self-respect;
- Dignity.

Overall, the process often results in the restoration of someone's sense of belonging to a **community**.

Staff, children and parents/carers who work restoratively report that this way of working leads to:

- A more **respectful climate**;
- A shift away from sanction-based responses that aim to 'manage' behaviour, toward a more **relational approach**;
- Better **relationships** amongst children and staff;
- People being more **honest** and willing to accept responsibility;
- People feeling more **supported** when things go wrong;
- A **calmer**, quieter and more **productive** learning environment.

We use the following pathway to help us bring a consistent approach from all adults when managing behaviour.

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