



Building Positive Relationships
at Samuel Lucas JMI School

What we do at Samuel Lucas to promote positive relationships

SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural) development and the 5Rs (Relationships, Resilience, Risk taking, Resourcefulness and Reflectiveness) are threaded throughout the children's curriculum. We have a strong ethos in our school where children are encouraged to Care, Co-operate and Contribute. To support children in the playground we have MSAs (Midday Supervisory Assistants) whose specific role is to help the Early Years children learn to play. We have Year 6 play leaders who support the infant children with play at lunchtimes. There are also various lunchtime clubs for Key Stage 2 children. The School Council are responsible for deciding what play equipment needs to be updated and replaced.

There are areas on the playgrounds where the children are allowed to run and areas designated for different types of play. For example, in the Key Stage 2 playground, the patio is reserved for quiet games. We also have buddy benches where children can go if they don't have a friend to play with.

This support, along with school rules, encourages children to be safe and happy in school. On occasion children may need reminding about rules. Very rarely, when rules aren't followed and, as a result other children are not feeling safe, short term sanctions are put into place; these give children time to be calm and think about how their play may affect others. Children who still have difficulties with learning to play, have one to one or small group sessions with our Teaching Assistant, responsible for Pastoral care, to help them to have successful playtimes.

Wherever possible, we seek to repair relationships as part of the resolution process. Children are expected to be friendly to, though perhaps not always friends with, everyone in the school.

The children at Samuel Lucas School support each other very well and reported incidents of bullying are extremely rare. The aim of anti-bullying week was to maintain our high standards for safety and behaviour. Please have a look on the school website to see what the children have been learning.

We are committed to fostering positive behaviours, so that every individual feels safe and supported in an environment that is free from hurtful and bullying behaviour and where any incident is dealt with quickly and effectively so that it does not escalate. This requires vigilance from staff and the co-operation and support of parents.

Parents raising concerns – parent-school partnership

Staff do strive to be vigilant at all times, but we can only deal with problems that we know about. Please don't assume that we know what you know.

- If you have any concerns or are worried about your child's school life or wellbeing, please speak to a member of staff. Behaviour that might be of concern could include tearfulness, bad temper, depression, being withdrawn, lowered self-esteem, unexplained head or tummy aches, reluctance to go to school.
- If your child shows changes in their behaviour, sit down with them and try to establish the reasons.

Parents are strongly advised not to approach other parents or pupils directly. Please raise your concerns with members of staff.

The school's priorities in dealing with incidents between children

The school wishes to ensure a safe, secure and happy environment for all. However, children will have relationship problems from time to time because they are still learning social skills.

At Samuel Lucas, incidents usually arise from behaviour that is unintentionally brought about by games getting out of hand and this can lead to hurtful behaviour. Children across the school are taught that such behaviour is unacceptable. The school seeks to empower children by teaching them assertive techniques to use in response to hurtful behaviour. These strategies are designed to reduce their vulnerability and prevent any retaliatory behaviour which could escalate incidents.

In order to prevent children identifying themselves as a victim (which increases their vulnerability) and to build children's resilience and wellbeing we are careful not to allow children to label hurtful behaviour as 'bullying' when it does not apply. Behaviour is only deemed to be 'bullying' where it is deliberately hurtful, persistent and repeated, and where a child is powerless to defend themselves.

The following behaviours can cause distress and are taken seriously, but are not bullying:

- Teasing between friends where there is no deliberate intention to cause hurt.
- Conflicts and disputes involving 'tit for tat' hurtful behaviour.
- Falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement.
- Unacceptable behaviour that all parties have at some point consented to, e.g. rough play that results in someone getting hurt.

How you can support your child if they have experienced hurtful behaviour

- Listen carefully to how your child feels, what happened, where and when, who has been told and what has been done.
- Ask what happened before which might have contributed to the incident.
- Stay calm and measured and reassure your child that it can be sorted out with the school. Tell your child that sometimes bad things happen to everyone but they can bounce back.
- Please remember you only have part of the story.
- Help your child to report it themselves if they have not already done so, as this keeps them empowered. Or contact the school with your concerns.
- Give the school time to investigate and respond. We will keep you informed about our progress. Please keep reassuring your child.
- Expect some feedback on what has happened, but not necessarily all the details, as the school has a duty to maintain appropriate confidentiality for all the children.
- Please support the school in follow up support, for example stressing the importance of telling an adult at school, supporting work to restore self-esteem and self-worth, helping to implement any agreed strategy.
- Support your child to reconcile, repair relationships and put resolved incidents behind them.

How you can support your child if they have used hurtful behaviour

- Listen carefully to how your child feels, what happened, where, when and who has been told and what has been done.
- Ask what happened before, which might have contributed to the incident.
- Explain that this will need to be sorted out with the school.
- While the school investigates, please remember you only have part of the story. Stay calm and measured and help your child understand why their behaviour was unacceptable.
- Reassure your child that they made a bad choice. You want them to be confident and strong but not hurtful.
- Support your child in co-operating with the school and implementing any strategy. Where a change of behaviour is required, practice agreed strategies so they can perform them confidently under stress.
- Encourage and praise positive change and support your child to reconcile, repair relationships and put resolved incidents behind them.