

Never look down on anybody unless you are helping him up. Jesse Jackson

Barley Lane School

Hard work, humility, kindness

Ethos and values

Our community: *the diverse children and young people that are Barley Lane.*

When we meet with parents and carers often their first concern is the other children in the school and this is not unreasonably prompted by the label we and they are given of “SEMH”: social, emotional and mental health and we would like to explain how we see this.

All of us will experience times when how we feel and then consequently behave negatively impacts our relationships and consequently our wellbeing and happiness and in school our learning: that is to be a human being.

Many ultimately successful and happy young people and adults have needed help with:

- Difficulties with literacy, missing periods of school, family life can be tough and eventful and this is all normal stuff but it can disadvantage our children in school;
- Similarly all of us too are somewhere or sometimes on the autistic spectrum (ASD) or at least we experience that difficulty making sense of people and the world around us;
- Many people experience and experienced problems with attention and concentration before ADHD or attention deficit, hyperactivity disorder entered our vocabulary;
- Whilst less common difficulties in our childhoods can make forming trusting relationships with others hard, “attachment disorder”.

All these terms are useful is deciding what education and help young people need but there is no avoiding they can also leave children and young people and their parents and carers and a school community feeling negatively labelled and ambitions and aspirations can be dented.

Our children and young people’s dignity and their enormous worth and their progress as people and learners are all better supported by the clear acknowledgment that we are all “SEMH” at some time but that it in no way defines or limits us and more than that it is often a characteristic of the most talented and good people and that is how we see our students as universally talented and good.

A significant minority of our children and young people are in or have been in care and we are powerfully aware of our particular duty to live out what follows for them but mindful too that in a small special school of this nature children in care have much in common with their peers and we share the rationale set out by the Devon Virtual School for them...for all the children in our “care”.

- Supporting them to raise their aspirations;
- Giving them a sense of the control they have over their own lives;
- Fostering positive attitudes and behaviours;
- Providing continuity and ‘normality’ for those who may have been subject to emotional distress, abuse and disruption.

Barley Lane Core Values: *what we believe in.*

*We believe that British values most powerfully and pertinently those of hard-work, self-reliance and compassion for others imbue our ethos and culture and have identified them in **bold print**...*

- The children and young people in our care are innately good, bursting with learning potential and as bright and capable as any student anywhere.
- Their families and carers in all their diversity have the same rights to high expectation and the best possible service and outcomes for their children.
- We must therefore have the **highest expectation** of them always and of ourselves in a context where everyone in the diverse school community is committed to forgiveness, redemption and fresh starts.
- In **challenging and improving** our own practice we will model and promote the **humility and healthy self-evaluation and self-motivation** our young people must acquire to thrive beyond school.
- In **caring for and respecting** and guiding the children and young people we will model and promote the **reason, kindness and compassion** they must acquire to be happy people and to make others happy.
- When we challenge and discipline the young people we do so safely and in that context of **reason, kindness and compassion** and encourage the making of good choices and promotion of self-control.

Our Vision: *what our collective imagination tells us is possible and we must strive for.*

- A school where all children and young people are and feel **valued, safe, cared for and happy** and therefore can learn **to care for themselves and others**.
- A school where all children and young people develop **self-reliance and self-discipline** and good judgment and as their esteem and confidence grow **the humility** to see their place and **responsibilities** in family, in school, in work and in the community.
- A school where all children and young people engage with and enjoy learning in all its diversity and secure knowledge and skills that prepare them for success and security as adults.

Our aims: *what we want for the children and young people in our care.*

- To engage with and enjoy their learning and achieve qualifications and accreditation that secures both their next steps to college and training and beyond to work and economic wellbeing.
- To be reflective, **self-managing, self-disciplined and self-improving people who are safe and ethical**.
- To be **humble, kind and compassionate** people who enjoy life, essentially happy and **make others happy**.

Our objectives: *how we will achieve our aims?*

- Manipulate and mediate the prescribed curriculum and reflect, innovate and develop to make it diverse and accessible; flexibly and creatively teach engaging lessons in comfortable stimulating classrooms and beyond making learning both enjoyable and ensuring it successfully secures tangible and credible accreditation.

- Be adults who are **safe and ethical and show the humility to admit errors and take responsibility** and live out daily those values, attitudes and behaviours we seek to embed in the children and young people in our care: and from that ethical and supportive platform apply safe boundaries and fair consequences.
- To model always **reason, kindness and compassion** and promote self-esteem and happiness and build rapport and relationships with students and all our partners not least parents and carers and those diverse professionals who care for our students by relentlessly generating opportunities across school life and beyond for achievement and success and acknowledging and celebrating them equally relentlessly.

Our core and key measures: *how will we know if we are achieving our objectives?*

- The children and young people will enjoy their lessons and achieve at least good progress year on year across diverse subjects and courses and go on to secure multiple and diverse GCSE and other credible accreditation both academic and vocational at a challenging level and then secure also appropriate and worthwhile training and work beyond school.
- Our behaviour indicators; attendance, exclusion, rates of serious incidents, physical intervention, reward mechanisms will all evidence an orderly school as will feedback from our diverse stakeholders, children, parents, visiting professionals and our neighbours for example.
- Children and young people will know their goals and aspirations both learning and behavioural and feel they are progressing and succeeding and that their success is celebrated. They and their parents and carers will express they feel happy and secure in school and have multiple friendships with peers and value their positive relationships with staff. They will identify with the school and feel influence how it is run.

Integrity; *how are our values lived out in our improvement plans in 2017-18?*

- The humility to recognise where practice has frailties and standards are slipping and behaviour and learning are at risk and the humility too to speak up and seek help to improve;
- Continuously seeking to understand the children better in all their diversity and complexity, spark and challenge and being a “present” and active listener and contributor to and sometimes leader of the shifting and dynamic conversation formal and informal about best-practice;
- Consistently demonstrating the graft and energy to make real both emerging and the established best practice we have learned and shared and set out over time through bloody hard work and being alive and open to new ideas and ways of working.

School improvement 2017-18

- This can be distilled or simplified further: personal responsibility and accountability; high expectation of the children and self; the humility and self-awareness to face up to things not going well; the curiosity to understand more and the drive and energy to make necessary changes and improvements that is what is being demanded of you all in the context of your roles and experience and current skill set.

Team performance management focus 2017-18

Integrity; *how can we prove we live out our values?*

Compared with other similar other schools, your pupils, and how we work together has been just brilliant; we get risk assessments, EHCP plans, weekly communication and staffing and so it's a pleasure to work with you guys.

College Tutor November 2017

Couldn't be happier with how he's turning out – he's found his confidence, sense of humour. Trusts people – never had any before. "If Carling made Schools...they'd make Barley Lane"

Parent August 2017

...was delightful on his first day here and if he continues like that and doesn't become complacent, then he can stay here for a long time; we'll see how it goes but today he was keen and enthusiastic and no trouble at all.

Work placement manager November 2017