



## Relationship & Behaviour Policy

Name of Organisation: Amy's Trust CIO

Venue/address for which policy applies: Duffield Acres, Redmile.

Date of last review: 22nd September 2025

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This policy contains information split into the following categories:

- Introduction
- Mission, Vision and Values
- Our approach
- Policy statement
- Policy scope
- Policy aims and objectives
- Roles and responsibilities

### **Introduction**

Amy's Trust works through a relationship-based behaviour regulation policy in alignment with Nottinghamshire County Council's 'Understanding behaviour in schools: a relationship-based approach to inclusion' toolkit.

### **Mission, vision and values**

**Mission:**

Our mission is to support children and young people experiencing mental and emotional health challenges through Equine Facilitated Learning.

To this end, we work to create a child centred provision of excellence that focuses around 'the way of the horse' to provide an environment of acceptance and compassion which validates their experiences and provides the space and time for each unique learner to heal, discover and grow. This happens on their own timeline and provides a foundation from which to move forward from a place of wellbeing.

**Vision:**

In recognition of the desperate need for nurturing spaces capable of supporting children and young people in mental and emotional distress, Amy's Trust's vision follows:

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“To provide and continue to develop a peaceful sanctuary that fosters connection and healing, changing the lives of children and young people in our community through the power of nature and the horse-human bond”.

At no time has there been a greater need for the space, time and care to discover who we are and find out what it means to be truly well. We stand as part of this movement towards unity by protecting our land and working with the horses and nature to provide a safe haven, capable of facilitating the healing and restoration of health our children and young people deserve.

Values:

#### Sentience

Acknowledging the sentience in all beings is at the centre of our work. It is the foundation of all our interactions. The sentience of the horse is central to our practice; they are our wise partners who we work alongside.

#### Equality and inclusivity

A passion and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusivity is woven into the foundation of our organisation and will continue to be at the forefront of our minds as we grow.

#### Safety

Our provision is built on the foundation of providing a safe environment in which to heal, learn, and grow. This includes reducing reasonable risk and extends to include an understanding of factors that make an environment *feel* safe.

#### Professionalism

Providing a professional and personable service is at the heart of our provision. We work diligently with relevant regulating bodies, supervisors and supporting services to ensure a safe and professional child-centred service for every learner visiting us.

#### Authentic Community Building

Amy's Trust values the power of authentic communities. Our ability to connect to one another is central to our wellbeing. The process of learning to develop authentic relationships is key to creating the positive change outlined in our mission.

### **Our Approach**

We use a relationship-based approach that is informed by the following areas including:

- A child-centred approach that has the core foundation of a psychology of original goodness
- P.A.C.E (Daniel Hughes <http://www.danielhughes.org/p.a.c.e..html>)
- Trauma-informed practice
- Awareness of attachment issues and how they impact children and young people
- Active listening (<https://www.educationcorner.com/active-listening-skills-education.html>)
- Happy Teachers Change the World & the principles of Engaged Spirituality (Thich Nhat Hanh)

In-depth details of our approach can be found in the Amy's Trust approach document.

This policy reflects our ethos which sees behaviour as communication, whether from children or animals.

We work to create safety and to connect with each child as an individual wherever they are and however they are presenting.

We try to understand what need the child (or animal) is communicating through their behaviour, and to meet that need wherever possible, or to communicate why we are not able to meet the need.

We do not view difficult behaviour as deliberate, something to be punished (or rewarded) and we are aware that behaviourist approaches do not work in the long term and can be traumatising for some, especially neurodivergent, children and young people.

We use psychoeducation, observation of horse behaviour, mindfulness techniques, sensory integration and the zones of regulation to help children and young people learn to understand and regulate their emotions and behaviour.

Our values incorporate these three key ideas of the relationship-based approach to inclusion philosophy (Nottinghamshire County Council's 'Understanding behaviour in schools: a relationship-based approach to inclusion' toolkit):

1. Unmet Need: Behaviour communicates an unmet need. Therefore, to change behaviour, we must respond to the unmet need.
2. Individual Influences: Children's behaviour cannot be fully understood in isolation, without considering their individual influences.
3. Relationship-based, restorative approaches offer an evidence-based alternative to zero-tolerance behaviour management systems.

Recognising the unmet need, naming it and meeting it where possible through 1 to 1 working in which strong relationships are built between staff and learners.

Amy's Trust seeks to create an environment in which individuals can feel safe, accepted and understood – seen, safe, secure, soothed.

Our child led approach allows learners to follow their interests and be supported to understand, recognise and name their emotions.

Staff develop close relationships with learners and seek to help them understand their behaviour and responses by naming them and supporting them to develop an understanding of the link between thoughts and feelings and behaviour.

Through really knowing our learners, we can help them to understand themselves and their responses to a range of situations.

When dysregulation begins to occur, staff seek to de-escalate the situation through a range of research-based strategies, including PACE, use of the zones of regulation and, as a last resort, holding or restraining as approved by BILD in order to maintain safety for all involved. After any occasion where a child or learner has been dysregulated we work to repair the relationship using restorative practices.

### **Policy Statement**

This policy was based on guidance provided by Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) Local Authority and has included input from all members of staff. It will be shared with young people, commissioners, parents and carers and directors for further development.

### **Policy Scope**

This policy is for all staff, learners, parents and carers, directors, visitors and partner agencies working within the setting and provides guidelines and procedures as to how our provision supports and responds to behaviour and emotional distress.

### **Policy Aims and Objectives**

Our setting is committed to supporting the physical and mental well-being of all staff, learners, parents/carers and our animal partners.

We work towards this in everything we do by:

- supporting staff through regular support/supervision as outlined in the staff supervision policy so that they are able to remain regulated during moments that can challenge (this will be complemented by their own personal commitment to ongoing somatic work and supervision);
- by modelling relationships that respect all people and animals, and by maintaining a positive attitude to each learner however complex their needs.

Through this we aim to provide an ethos and environment that supports the social, emotional and mental health of the whole community.

We work therapeutically with young people and animals to help them learn to understand themselves and how they work best.

We believe this is done most effectively by building strong relationships with individual learners and supporting them to interact positively with the animals.

We see all behaviour as unmet need and the first response to any dysregulation would be an attempt to discover what this might be.

We provide unconditional positive regard and respect for the people, animals and environment in which we work.

It is acknowledged that members of the community may have very different parenting experiences and views on behaviour. However, the aim of our Behaviour Regulation Policy is to bring us all together to adhere to some basic key principles and practices that reflect our ethos:

- To create an environment where children and young people feel safe to explore their thoughts and emotions.
- To demonstrate that each individual is accepted exactly as they are and that their behaviour is not seen as a reflection of their character
- To maintain an attitude that reflects the inherent goodness of each individual (see a psychology of original goodness)
- To use a relational approach to discipline as opposed to a behaviourist approach.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

We have a shared responsibility to promote a relationship-based approach which applies to all relationships that occur in our setting.

#### Staff working on a one-to-one basis with each learner:

Staff build strong positive relationships with students which act as the foundation for any interaction. This strong relationship makes the adult working with the learner at any time the best person to recognise an unmet need.

#### Team working:

Other adults within the setting may be able to make a positive contribution to recognising unmet need, and staff work as a team to facilitate this.

#### Management:

The lead EFL facilitator may become involved in making decisions about the best way forward to help a learner who is struggling.

Individual learners need individual strategies, and we recognise that no one approach will suit all children. Each learner will have a tailored care plan to acknowledge this.

The Community around each learner:

Parents and carers, wider families and teachers as well as local authority workers and health professionals may be part of the journey to meet unmet needs, and Amy's Trust works with them in whatever way is most appropriate to support the learner.