



“All Behaviour Is An Unmet Need”

We at Sheridan School believe that the adult–young person relationship is vital when developing the young person’s social and emotional skills, which are essential for life and learning. We strive to demonstrate a relational approach to support social and emotional development and behaviour based on the following six principles;

- We understand that behaviour communicates unmet needs, and we can separate the young person from their behaviour.
- We understand that each developmental stage has a range of typical behaviours, which provides opportunities for adults to role-model and explicitly teach appropriate behaviours.
- We provide containment, predictability and routine to build a sense of safety in the emotional and physical environment.
- We encourage young people at our setting to become accountable for their actions and realise the impact they may have on themselves and others, promoting a solution-focused approach to changing future behaviours.
- We keep in mind that we are the adults, and the young people are still growing, learning and developing.
- We seek to restore relationships and change behaviours rather than punish the actions a young person may have taken. Although this does not exclude the use of sanctions, we seek the most appropriate way of supporting our young people to develop robust stress-regulation systems and therefore the skills of self-control, empathy and emotional management.

Intent

We ensure that our school has a culture, ethos and practice that strengthens relational approaches and inclusion, recognising the importance of psychological safety. Our school implements Thrive – a trauma-informed whole-school approach to improving the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Our school embeds Thrive into our curriculum; our intention is that children and young people are taught to;

- develop their stress-regulation system,
- recognise and verbalise a range of feelings and emotions,
- build their emotional resilience so they can effectively manage stress,
- keep themselves safe
- develop healthy coping strategies and regulation skills.

All these skills can relate back to their personalised targets from their thrive assessments and ultimately link into their EHCP outcomes.

Implementation

At Sheridan School, we integrate Thrive as a comprehensive whole-school approach throughout our curriculum. Each class undergoes group assessment using Thrive Online, followed by weekly "Right Time" Thrive sessions where students work toward their identified goals. Students requiring additional support are referred to qualified Thrive practitioners for individual assessment and receive weekly one-to-one sessions for one term, focusing on their specific targets. At the end of each term, students are reassessed individually to determine whether they have achieved their goals or need to establish new ones. These sessions are tailored to each young person's objectives and personal interests—such as Lego, crafts, or sensory activities like slime—ensuring their sensory needs are met. This reparative work continues until students reach the threshold where they can successfully participate in the weekly "Right Time" group sessions alone.

Impact

Through ongoing evaluation of our young people, we anticipate gradual improvements in assessment scores as a direct outcome of our intervention sessions. Over time, these evaluations will demonstrate that students have acquired the necessary skills to progress independently, without requiring additional remedial support, allowing them to engage successfully in right time work. This developmental process requires patience and cannot be accelerated, as the timeline varies considerably based on each individual's unique needs and developmental gaps. Throughout our group programs, we expect to observe sustained progress within a range of personal, social and emotional areas.

Our hope is that we will see young people who we have helped to build resilience and coping mechanisms to deal with challenges throughout their lives and this, in turn will show a lower number of emotional outbursts and behavioural incidences within the school.

We will also see relationships between our young people and our staff flourishing through the consistent use of the thrive approach. Use of PACE and VRFs alongside the knowledge that there is always the opportunity to repair and rupture we may face.

Our biggest achievement will be witnessing our young people gain confidence in communication, emotional regulation, social interaction and resilience as they are supported by the thrive approach.