



**CHANGING CHANCES**  
— BUILDING BRAINS FOR BETTER FUTURES —



## Supporting Pro-Social & Pro-Learning Skills Policy

|                      |                              |                          |           |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Written by:</b>   | Changing Chances/Headteacher | <b>Reviewed by:</b>      | FGB       |
| <b>Review Date:</b>  | July 2026                    | <b>Next Review Date:</b> | July 2027 |
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## **SCHOOL VISION & VALUES**

**At Hart Plain Junior School we foster a lifetime love of learning, where children acquire the knowledge, skills, resilience and heart to pursue and achieve their individual dreams**

| <b>Aspiration - We strive to succeed and to be the very best we can in order to achieve our goals</b> |                                                                                                  |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Courage - We have the bravery to tackle the challenges of life and face them head on</b>           | <b>Respect - We treat others as we would like them to treat us and celebrate our differences</b> | <b>Integrity - We do the right thing and make responsible choices even when it is difficult</b> | <b>Happiness - We know what makes us happier and how to make our community a better place for all</b> |

## **OUR AMBITION**

Our goal is to make sure every child feels welcome, safe, and supported at school. We want them to be confident, happy, and motivated to do the right thing—even when no one is watching. We aim to help all children become kind, responsible individuals who can make a positive difference in their communities. We know that children arrive with different experiences and needs, so we provide extra support where it's needed most, while valuing everyone equally. We believe in setting high expectations and helping children reach them through encouragement and support. Mistakes are part of learning, and we're here to guide children through them without giving up. Above all, we want every child to feel safe, good and happy about themselves and able to learn.

## **OUR GOALS**

**For all children to:**

We aim to help children develop the skills they need to succeed in learning and life. This includes building strong learning habits, developing positive social skills to work well with others, and becoming confident self-advocates who can express their needs in respectful and effective ways.

## **AIMS OF THE POLICY**

- Create a calm, supportive, and enjoyable environment for both children and adults.
- Support every child's physical, emotional, and learning needs, helping them grow in independence and confidence.
- Help young people develop the skills they need to learn and play successfully on their own.
- Ensure a consistent approach to behaviour across the school community, using shared language and strategies.
- Set clear expectations with children, support them in planning to meet those expectations, and respond consistently when they struggle.
- Make sure everyone in the school community understands and follows these procedures.
- Agree on expectations before tasks and events, giving children time to prepare and succeed.
- Teach and promote positive behaviours through the PDL curriculum and British values.
- Promote our Core Values: Happiness, Aspiration, Courage, Integrity, and Respect.
- Celebrate all progress, including positive behaviour and learning achievements.

## **HOW WE HELP WITH BEHAVIOUR: USING PROVEN METHODS**

At our school, we use **The Empowerment Approach** to support behaviour, which is grounded in evidence from neuroscience, psychology, coaching, and education. Unlike behaviourist methods that focus only on managing behaviour in the short term, our approach looks deeper—focusing on each child's emotions, needs, and skill development. Rooted in therapeutic, attachment-aware, and neurodiverse-informed principles, we work with children to understand the reasons behind their behaviour and help

them build the skills they need to succeed. This process takes time, and we provide the support they need as they learn and grow.

## **OUR STRUCTURED & SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO IMPROVING BEHAVIOUR**

The Empowerment Approach helps children be at their best and respond effectively when things go wrong. This includes teaching children about their brains, setting high expectations, helping them prepare for success, and using connection and coaching to support behaviour. Every incident is followed up with problem-solving and skill-building to support long-term progress. Our approach is more than just behaviour management—it's a cultural shift that focuses on understanding the reasons behind behaviour and helping children develop essential life skills and emotional well-being. It's designed to be clear, consistent, and accessible for all ages, and it extends beyond the classroom through a shared language used by staff, families, and the wider community. At the heart of it all is the child's voice—empowering them to understand themselves, reflect on their actions, and take part in creating lasting solutions.

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE**

Our approach is built on curiosity, kindness, and high expectations. We encourage adults to stay calm and look beneath the surface of behaviour to understand unmet needs or missing skills. Strong, trusting relationships are at the heart of everything we do, and we believe that when children feel better, they do better. We set high expectations for all children and provide the support they need to meet them. We teach children (and adults) about how their brains work, helping them understand themselves and their behaviour. By recognising and meeting emotional, physical, and learning needs, we can prevent many challenges. When things go wrong, we always follow up and work with the child to find solutions and build better habits. Children's voices are central—they help set goals and take ownership of their progress. We also teach key life skills like focus, self-control, memory, and emotional regulation, which need to be practised just like any other skill.

## **WHAT OUR BELIEFS MEAN IN PRACTICE**

### **Building the Foundations: how adults should prepare for children to be at their best:**

To help children succeed, adults play a key role in preparing them for learning and play. This involves four main steps:

- **Teach children about their brains** – so they understand their needs and learn how to manage themselves positively.
- **Agree expectations together** – giving children a sense of control and ownership over boundaries.
- **Help children plan and prepare to be at their best** – by discussing what they need to do their best before tasks or events.
- **Show unconditional support** – by building strong, trusting relationships and taking responsibility for repairing them if needed.

### **What this looks like in practice at our school:**

#### **Teach children about their brain**

All classes will follow specific plans from The Empowerment Approach as part of our curriculum. These lessons help children understand their own physical, emotional, and learning needs—as well as the needs of others—so they can learn and play at their best. They also focus on building strong social and learning skills for all children.

#### **Agree Expectations: Our School Charter**

We believe the best way to help children learn good behaviour and learning skills is to give them regular chances to think about how their actions affect others. Our main idea is:

“Good for Me, Good for You, Good for Everyone.”

Because every situation is different, we don’t use a long list of fixed rules. Instead, we talk with children about what behaviours help everyone feel safe, happy, and ready to learn. We use a plan called Prep4Best, where children think ahead about how to be their best selves.

Some expectations are the same everywhere—like being respectful and taking care of shared spaces. Children help decide these expectations by creating a School Charter each year, with ideas from every class. This helps them understand why the rules matter and makes them more likely to follow them.

Each class also talks about what helps everyone feel safe and ready to learn, and what happens when expectations are or aren’t met. These ideas are shared across the school to make a whole-school Charter that guides behaviour all year.

We believe expectations should be fair and the same for everyone. But we also know that some children need extra help, and we make sure they get the support they need to succeed.

### **Help all children to plan and prepare to be at their best (Prep4Best):**

While some children with higher needs may need personalised Prep4Best, these strategies should be part of everyday classroom routines for all children.

Before any activity or event, adults should use the Prep4Best sequence (with the visual cue) to help the class think about what they need, what might go wrong, and how to stay at their best. For familiar tasks, this may not be needed every time, but it should be revisited regularly and always used before new or unfamiliar activities.

Prep4Best is a key part of our behaviour approach. It helps staff set high expectations and take a proactive, rather than reactive, approach. It also builds a helpful habit in children—encouraging them to pause, plan, and prepare before starting something. This is a valuable skill they can use throughout school and later in life.

### **Show unconditional support**

Every child needs a champion - someone who believes in them. Research shows that just one supportive adult can make a big difference in a child’s life. As educators, we are committed to making sure every child in our school feels cared for and supported, no matter the challenges they face. We understand that some behaviours can be difficult, but we always respond with kindness and support—while still keeping high expectations. Being kind doesn’t mean accepting unhelpful behaviour; it means helping children grow while making sure everyone feels safe and respected.

### **B. How adults should respond when children do not keep to expectations:**

If a child does not manage to keep to expectations, all staff and adults supporting within the school should follow the ‘**10 Point Response Plan**’.

The 10 Point Response Plan has been carefully designed using evidence from neuroscience, psychology and coaching in the most effective strategies for supporting young people.

The 10 Point Response Plan is divided into three clear stages:

**I. Responding in the Moment** – how adults should respond at the time when a child presents with unhelpful behaviours.

**II. Following-up for Progress** – the way we follow-up after an incident to ensure the child does better next time.

**III. Coaching for Change** – how we support children who present with more significant difficulties to ensure ongoing improvement.

It is essential that these stages are followed consistently and systematically; without doing so, the approach will not be as effective and the child will be prevented from making the progress they deserve: the progress which is so essential for their own success and the well-being and achievement of those around them.

### **Things adults should keep in mind to secure sustained ongoing progress**

- **Real, long-term change takes time** – our job is to help children and young people to create new neural pathways, and to recognise that they can't do this overnight. This means that the first Coaching Conversation is unlikely to lead to instant change – 'Change needs more than a chat'.

- **Scaffolding pathways to independence:** Children and adults need to be clear about the end goal. Small steps should be planned with the child, and successes recognised and celebrated. It may be necessary to put scaffolds in place for a while, but it is essential that over time these are reduced and removed as the child develops the skills to function independently. When supports and scaffolds remain static, children become dependent.

### **Repair Time: a restorative justice technique (used at all stages):**

Repair Time should always take place if a child's words or actions have had a negative impact on anyone or anything.

Repair Time is separate to the Coaching Conversation and has a distinct and separate purpose.

Repair Time should be scheduled to take place as soon after the incident as possible but only once the child is calm. It is preferable that the adult first involved in the incident leads Repair Time, wherever possible.

During this stage, the child is supported to consider the perspectives of others; they are helped to think through whether the needs of other people were compromised in any way – the natural impact that their words or actions may have had. By exploring this in a matter-of-fact way and in a spirit of support, the 'repair stage' supports improved skills within the areas of social cognition and empathy.

### **C. Consequences:**

The consequences of keeping and not keeping to each expectation on the charter are focused first on the natural impact i.e. If we are kind and calm in how we respond to others, they will feel safe. If we respond unkindly and aggressively, others will feel unsafe and may feel scared. They may then not wish to spend time with us.

The reason for this is that a focus on the natural impact supports the development of:

- Emotional intelligence
- Empathy
- A strong moral compass
- Intrinsic motivation to do the right thing

**We know that, if consequences are focused on the rewards children will get or the punishments they will suffer, it leads to children:**

- Thinking about what's in it for themselves rather than developing social and emotional intelligence
- Doing things because they think they may be seen or get caught rather than developing a strong moral compass
- Becoming dependent on authority rather than developing the independence to think through the right thing to do for the well-being of themselves and others
- Relying on extrinsic motivation rather than feeling internally motivated to make moral decisions.

Internal motivation, independence and a clear moral compass are crucial for children's futures; by building these early, they will be better equipped to avoid the common pressures experienced in teenage hood and beyond which lead to substance abuse, risky behaviours and crime.

At Hart Plain Junior School, we hold children tightly to account by always following-up every incident of unhelpful behaviour through Coaching Conversations and, if the unhelpful behaviour continues, supporting ongoing progress through a programme of coaching.

Unlike the consequences commonly used in schools such as missing play and detentions, we use Natural consequences; the difference is the focus on helping the child to **do better** rather than **feel worse**; the child may therefore be asked to stay for coaching outside of school hours, but this will be carried out with a spirit of support and kindness – like all learning, we want the child to learn the skills to do better and enjoy the experience along the way.

Natural consequences help children understand the impact of their choices by allowing them to experience the direct result of their actions in a safe and supportive way. For example, if a pupil chooses not to complete their work during lesson time, they may need to use some of their break or another suitable time to finish it. Similarly, if a child displays unsafe behaviours at breaktime, protective measures may need to be put in place to keep everyone safe until they have developed and demonstrated the skills needed to manage those situations appropriately. Natural consequences encourage responsibility, independence and reflection, helping pupils learn from their actions while maintaining positive relationships and high expectations.

### **What makes this different from a traditional behaviour management strategy?**

Most things in the classroom will look the same, but what's different is how adults respond and the reasons behind their actions.

a) Supportive Intentions - If a child is struggling, we use the 10 Point Response Plan to help them get back on track. Adults will remind them of what others in the class need too. The focus is on:

Helping the child stay calm  
Protecting their confidence  
Building emotional understanding  
Solving problems together

If a child's behaviour is stopping others from learning or making others feel unsafe, they may need to leave the classroom. But this will be done in a calm and caring way, with the message that the adult is helping them find a better space to feel good and do well. The goal is for everyone—the child and the class—to succeed.

b) A Focus on Skills - This approach looks closely at why a child might be struggling and helps them build the skills they need to meet classroom expectations. It's not just about giving rewards or punishments—it's about helping children grow and improve over time.

### **What happens if a child continues to fail to meet expectations on the charter?**

Every child deserves to feel safe, happy and be able to learn. It is therefore vital that, if a pupil in the class is putting this at risk, the right support is put in place so that other children are protected.

If the use of Calm Connect Respond, Coaching, support on skill building and scaffolds and adjustments to help whilst these are still developing, isn't proving sufficient, it may be the child needs some different provision within the school whilst they develop the necessary skills.

This might be an alternative timetable with shorter sessions in class for tasks in which they are able to achieve well along with sessions to practise key Executive Function skills; it might also include working within other areas of the school (if appropriate) where the child can build confidence and skills. This will be bespoke and tailored for individual children with the resources available to us. In all contexts, the specific skills which will be a focus to build should be explicit, decided with the child and progress tracked.

The Headteacher has the power to be able to suspend or permanently exclude a child as a preventative measure when actions are in serious breach of our three rules – for everyone to: feel safe, feel happy and good about themselves and be able to learn. This includes prohibited items. Pupils must not bring items into school that may compromise safety, wellbeing, learning or the orderly running of the school. This includes, but is not limited to, weapons or sharp objects, lighters, matches, fireworks, vapes, tobacco products, alcohol, illegal substances, laser pens, toy weapons, and any item that could be used to cause harm, intimidation or disruption. The school also reserves the right to prohibit other items that are deemed inappropriate or unsafe.

In circumstances of emergency situations, the use of physical intervention may be necessary. Please refer to our policy on our website regarding this.

## Use Calm, Connect, Support – Be A Paramedic – All staff are responsible

### I can stay calm, modelling skills I want them to build:

I can stay calm, even when the young person is saying and doing things which are hurtful, worrying or even dangerous. I work out my own triggers so I can 'Prep4Best' – planning and practising ways to stay calm.

### I can 'Connect to Calm' to help them regulate:

I say things which help the young person feel understood and supported. The things I say help them to feel I'm there for them and understand what they are experiencing.

### I can offer support to help them get back on track:

I can offer something that might help, even when the young person is being anti-social. I stay calm and kind. I give the child choice wherever possible so they feel a sense of control over the situation. I stay focused on the fact that this is the 'Paramedic' stage. Later will be the time to address any concerns.

Pupil is heightened and struggling with support and needs space to be able to regulate.



Pupil is offered 3 **different** support techniques.

In class – Pupil to use regulation station

Pupil offered different support which may include a movement break

Lunchtime – Pupil to use calm room regulation station (Art/DT room)



Pupil needs a separate space to be able to regulate

Pupil to go to regulation zone room – accompanied by an adult (use change of face if needed)



Pupil has spent time with adult(s) being a paramedic, has used the regulation space but is still finding it hard to regulate

Pupil is being unsafe

SLT called  
Parent/Carer called

# The Empowerment Approach

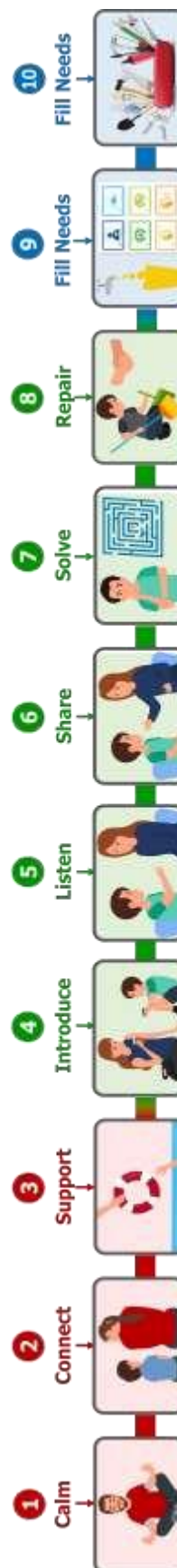
## Building the Foundations

### Before things go wrong



## Follow -Up for Progress (Coaching Conversations & Repair)

### Responding in the Moment



## Appendix 2: Class Charters

These will be displayed in our classrooms. An example of this is below:



# OUR CLASS CHARTER

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## OUR RULES IN SCHOOL

FOR EVERYONE TO:

1. FEEL SAFE
2. FEEL HAPPY AND GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES
3. BE ABLE TO LEARN

FOR THIS TO HAPPEN, WE HAVE AGREED EVERYONE NEEDS TO:

RESPOND TO OTHERS CALMLY AND WITH KINDNESS – CALM CONNECT RESPOND  
MAKE SURE WHAT WE SAY AND DO HELPS US AND THOSE AROUND US TO LEARN  
TAKE TURNS TO SPEAK AND LISTEN TO OTHERS.  
LOOK AFTER EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES WITH CARE

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THE POSITIVE IMPACT IF I DO THIS WILL BE:

1. PEOPLE WILL FEEL SAFE AROUND ME
2. PEOPLE WILL ENJOY BEING AROUND ME AND WANT TO SPEND TIME IN MY COMPANY
3. I WILL FEEL GOOD ABOUT MYSELF AS A LEARNER
4. I WILL FEEL GOOD ABOUT MYSELF AS A FRIEND AND A PRO-SOCIAL MEMBER OF THE CLASS AND SCHOOL

THIS IS LIKELY TO HELP ME BECOME A CONFIDENT, HAPPY AND SUCCESSFUL MEMBER OF THE CLASS.

THE NEGATIVE IMPACT IT MAY HAVE IF I DON'T MANAGE TO KEEP TO THESE AGREED WAYS OF WORKING:

1. OTHER PEOPLE WON'T BE ABLE TO LEARN AND ACHIEVE AS WELL AS THEY COULD
2. I WILL NOT ACHIEVE WELL
3. OTHERS WILL NOT FEEL SO SAFE AND HAPPY AROUND ME.
4. OTHERS MIGHT NOT BE SO KEEN TO SPEND TIME WITH ME.

THIS MAY LEAD TO ME NOT FEELING SO GOOD ABOUT MYSELF AND NOT DOING SO WELL AT SCHOOL.

- I KNOW I WILL BE SUPPORTED AND HAVE EXTRA PRACTICE AND COACHING TIMES SO I GET BETTER AT THE THINGS I FIND HARD. ADULTS WILL HELP ME AND I KNOW I WILL HAVE TO WORK HARD TOO.
- BEFORE MY SKILLS IMPROVE WITH PRACTICE, I KNOW I MAY HAVE TO LEARN IN A DIFFERENT SPACE SO THAT OTHERS IN THE CLASS FEEL SAFE AND CAN LEARN.

WE HAVE LEARNT ABOUT THE BRAIN AND KNOW THAT SOME PEOPLE IN THE CLASS WILL FIND KEEPING TO OUR CLASS CHARTER MORE DIFFICULT. THIS IS BECAUSE THEIR NEURAL PATHWAYS HAVEN'T YET DEVELOPED IN THE AREAS OF THE BRAIN NEEDED FOR THESE SKILLS. THESE CHILDREN MAY NEED SPECIAL THINGS TO HELP THEM AND EXTRA SUPPORT FROM ADULTS AND OTHER CHILDREN IN THE CLASS. THEY MAY HAVE TO WORK IN A DIFFERENT SPACE UNTIL THEY CAN MANAGE.



GOOD FOR ME

GOOD FOR YOU

GOOD FOR EVERYONE

### Appendix 3: Why Some Children Will Find it Harder to Keep to Our Expectations

#### **Will everyone find it easy to keep to our School Charter?**

No. We know from neuroscience that some children in the school will find this genuinely more difficult.

Some children will have higher levels of stress chemicals in their body which will make them more sensitive and reactive to stressors. Some children will not yet have developed such strong neural circuitry in the part of the brain responsible for important 'Executive Function Skills' which include:

- Working Memory
- Attention control
- Inhibitory Control
- Self-regulation - managing energy and emotions.
- Cognitive Flexibility – being able to think of different solutions, adapt to change, shift tasks and see different perspectives,
- Processing Speed

There are a number of reasons why some children may have poorer Executive Function Skills:

1. **Limited experiences** have meant that the neural pathways in the area of the brain responsible for Executive Function skills have not developed well.
2. **Poor early attachments** which can impede the development of brain circuitry and affect the stress response system.
3. **Trauma or stress** which can lead to 'toxic stress' (during which regions of the brain, including those in charge of executive function, become less active).
4. **A neurodivergent cognitive profile** (e.g. autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia) in which some areas of Executive Function do not develop in the same way.

#### **What difference do Executive Function Skills make?**

If developed well, these skills help a child to keep to the expectations mapped out in our Class Charters. (You may want to list examples such as: to respond calmly, listen, take turns and keep focused on a task.)

If not developed well, it will be much harder for the child to manage the demands of the classroom, from following instructions and processing information to focusing on tasks and working with others. These children will need additional scaffolds, adjustments and support from adults and other children in the class in order to manage well.

## **Appendix 4: Why Some Children Will Find it Harder to Keep to Our Expectations**

### **What should staff do when children haven't yet developed good Executive Function (EF) skills?**

In addition to the procedures set out in our SEND Policy, there are three ways in which children with poorer Executive Function Skills can be supported:

#### **a. Coach**

Any child who has significant difficulty in areas of Executive Function in relation to her or his peers should, just as would occur in reading, writing or mathematics, receive additional coaching to support them in narrowing the gap. Adults at home and outside of school can make a significant difference to the development of EF skills and therefore any programme of support should include liaison with parents and carers and information should be provided and discussed regarding how they can support at home.

Any programme should include a pre-assessment, focus on specific EF skills and enable the child to track their own progress. A simple goal and tracking sheet should be kept by the child which they can take with them to activities outside of school too so that additional adults are aware of the focus and can support in the child in their progress towards them.

The key principle is to use a coaching approach so that the child is the driver – deciding on the goals, thinking through how they can reach them, tracking how well they are doing against them and thinking through strategies which may help along the way.

#### **b. Pre-Mortem**

First, when planning lessons, experiences and the environment, staff should reflect on the needs and skills of individual pupils, thinking through how stressors can be reduced and how missing skills can be supported for those children who have greater difficulties in areas of Executive Function.

For example, if planning a task which will be noisy, the teacher should reflect on how to ensure children with sensory processing issues do not feel too overwhelmed. If planning a long writing task, the teacher should think through how the task could be chunked into smaller parts for children with attention control difficulties.

The key is to think through what could go wrong (pre-mortem) for some children and plan ways those specific individuals can learn at their best and manage their difficulties successfully.

#### **c. Prep4Best**

Staff should also support children to '**Prep4Best**' (plan and prepare to do well) ahead of tasks and experiences. This may include helping them to work out any learning and environmental scaffolds that may help, such as writing frames, talking buttons, sensory cushions, ear buds and micro-environments.

Pre-mortem and Prep4Best (what might go wrong for x child and what could help to prevent this) is included specifically on our planning checklists / formats to support all staff in ensuring the needs of individual children are considered carefully.

## Appendix 5: Flow Chart

**Key purpose: to help child regulate & get back on track.**

### RESPONDING IN THE MOMENT:

**Child does not meet one of the pro-social or pro-learning expectations....**

**Stage 1 Support:  
Calm Connect Support**  
**A. Adult uses Calm, Connect Support to help the child get back on track**



**If not successful, move to Step B**

**If high or extreme level behaviour, move to Step D (see notes)**

**B Adult repeats Calm Connect Support**

**If not successful and disrupting others, move to C.**

**C. Child given limited choice of space away from main group (see notes)**

**Carry out Coaching Conversation later in day or as soon as logistically possible.**

**If not successful, move to D.**

**D Child given limited choice of space away from class (see notes)**

**Carry out Coaching Conversation later in day or as soon as logistically possible.**

**Only if a child refuses should a Senior Leader be called.**

**Dual purpose: to repair & ensure child can do better next time.**

### FOLLOW-UP FOR PROGRESS

**Follow up with Repair**

**Repair should take place at ALL stages if the young person's actions have had any impact on others around them.**



**Stage 2 Support:  
Quick Coaching Conversation**



**If Coaching Conversation needed 3 times or more**

**Stage 3 Support  
Coaching Time**  
(can be within group)



**If Coaching Time needed 3 times or more**

**Stage 4 Support  
Coaching Programme**  
(with child, teacher, parent & SLT member)

