

Behaviour Management Policy

Statement of intent

Our setting believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

"Providers are responsible for supporting, understanding and managing children's behaviour in an appropriate way"

(EYFS Statutory Framework 2024 - 3.59)

We understand that the indoor, outdoor and emotional environments can affect the way children behave. If children are bored, over-excited or anxious their behaviour will change. We also recognise that when children have consistent boundaries for behaviour, it helps them feel confident as to what, and what is not acceptable.

Aim

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others by:

- creating an environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour,
- defining acceptable standards of behaviour - see our 'Golden Rules'.
- encouraging consistency of responses to both positive and negative behaviours at all times making it clear that we are rejecting the behaviour, NOT the child.

Methods

The named person for behaviour management is

Jean Catley

We require the named person to:

- provide support and advice to staff / parents in managing children's behaviour,
- keep herself up to date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support,
- access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour,
- ensure all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour. A record of staff attendance at this training is kept as part of this policy.

We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and ensure staff are aware of - and respect - those used by all members (children, staff, parents & carers) of the setting.

We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.

We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.

We expect all members of our setting - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, applying them consistently with regard to the individual child, being mindful that how a particular type of behaviour is handled will depend on the child and the circumstances.

We work in partnership with children's parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

Behaviours that result in concern for the child and/or others will be discussed between the key person, named person and the nursery SENCO. The nursery will record incidents using the ABC system (see appendix A) or other systems as appropriate. Records must be promptly completed by the staff member(s) directly involved in / observing the incident.



Unless previously agreed with the named person (or deputy), children are not to be taken to their key person or to the office when exhibiting inconsiderate behaviour, but should be dealt with appropriately by the staff member(s) directly involved in / observing the incident.

If necessary, parents / carers will be kept informed of their child's behaviour by the named person solely, unless previously agreed with the named person that another member of the team may do so. Conversations should take place in a confidential environment. It is not the place of other members of staff to become involved in such conversations unless they have been given specific authority to do so.

Promoting positive behaviour

In order to promote positive behaviour, strategies will be used which include:

- Providing positive attention by playing, listening and talking to the children. This supports and fosters their self-esteem.
- Reducing incidents of frustration and conflict so that children are able to try to bring their activities to an agreed end where possible allowing children to return to the same activity at a later stage.

Praising positive behaviour by:

- Offering positive verbal feedback to praise good behaviour as it occurs,
- A smile or thumbs up
- Thanking individuals or groups who have worked together well, and explaining to others what they have achieved,
- Displaying children's work and / or sharing the children's work with other members of staff,
- A note to parents or comment via ClassDojo app.

Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, initially by using a consistent problem solving intervention. This type of approach will involve an adult approaching the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions, acknowledging the feelings of those involved, gathering information and supporting the children to reflect, regain control of the situation and resolve it themselves.

Staff, volunteers and students will help children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development.

Strategies to be used by staff, volunteers and students will include:

- redirection of play to another activity, in a different area of the play room/nursery if necessary,
- acknowledgement of feelings,
- explanation as to what was not acceptable,
- supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response,
- we ensure that there are enough popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns,
- we acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.,
- we incorporate verbal warnings of change, such as 'five minutes to tidy up time' in partnership with visual sand timers to support all children in preparing for change,
- we reiterate and remind everyone of the nursery's "Golden Rules" and are consistent in their implementation,
- we use language to support positive behaviours such as 'walking inside please' or 'walking feet please' instead of 'don't (or stop) running',
- we support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome, initially by using our self-registration cards,
- we avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour,
- we never send children out of the room,
- we do not label, humiliate, criticise or shout at children,
- we never use physical punishment, such as slapping, smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with any kind of physical punishment.

Before forbidding a child from doing something, we try to pause to ensure that it's important enough to enforce - this is particularly true of activities where there is some form of risk involved. Children need to be supported to take risks and decisions regarding such risk-taking must be taken based on the individual child's age and abilities.

Raised voices (and the words 'stop' and 'no') are only to be used when a child is deemed to be in immediate danger of either hurting themselves or others, and when the staff member is unable to intervene safely.

The word 'No' can be used when calming situations, provided it is used in conjunction with 'thank you' and a brief, age-appropriate explanation as to why the behaviour is unacceptable.

When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we will attempt to redirect their play, and only when they have re-engaged in acceptable behaviours, we will try to help them to understand the outcomes of their actions and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.

We support each child in developing their self-esteem, confidence and sense of belonging. All children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control.

Positive behaviour is rewarded by a combination of verbal praise and positive body language directed specifically to the individual child. We do not use stickers in the form of reward charts as we have found through experience that these can become counter-productive and in general, children (even those in the older groups) do not find the process easy to understand.

In cases of serious misbehaviour, which could be deemed dangerous, anti-social, racist or bullying, a much more immediate response will be required. In partnership with parents / carers we will make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.

Use of physical intervention

The term physical intervention is used to describe any forceful physical contact by an adult to a child such as grabbing, pulling, dragging, or any form of restraint of a child. Where a child is upset or angry, staff will speak to them calmly, encouraging them to vent their frustration in other ways by diverting the child's attention.

Staff will not use physical intervention - or the threat of physical intervention, to manage a child's behaviour unless it is necessary to use "to avert immediate danger of personal injury to any person including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary." (EYFS Statutory Guidance 2024)

Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, together with the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of the named person and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.

Children under three years

When children under three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.

We recognise that very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.

Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.

Rough play

We believe that 'appropriate' rough play is important for young children's health and development. The physical interactions involved in this type of play enable children to learn the 'give and take' of social interactions.

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes - such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using previously stated strategies.

We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or 'aggressive'.

We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.

Staff are supported to recognise the differences between rough play and fighting or aggressive behaviour.

In particular;

- in rough play children smile and laugh whereas fighting causes frowns and tears
- in rough play children are willing participants. They will join in readily and remain there as long as the play sustains. In fighting, one child is usually dominating another,
- in rough play children keep returning for more. In fighting, the unwilling participant tries to move away.

We consider rough play to include running, jumping, grabbing each other, wrestling and chasing.

We consider fighting or aggressive behaviour to be hitting, kicking, snatching or pushing each other over.

We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies - blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.

We endeavour to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, take the opportunity to use 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking through our use of language and open questioning to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

Hurtful behaviour

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without understanding of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.

Staff will not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage as that will have the opposite effect.

We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they may experience. We help children recognise these feelings by naming them and helping children to express them.

We realise that children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.

We support the development of social skills by modelling behaviour, through a variety of activities including role play, social stories and the use of persona characters. We build self esteem and confidence in children, recognising their

emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.

We try to help children understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child or adult. We do not force any child to say "sorry", but encourage this **only** where it is clear that they are genuinely apologetic and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.

When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together.

The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:

- they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs - this may be in the home and/or in the setting,
- their parent, or carer in the setting, does not have skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger,
- the child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse,
- the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave,
- they are trying to tell / show us something that may be happening in their lives.

We will support the child and family by getting together with parents/carers to discuss the situation and possible next steps, and if necessary making any appropriate referrals to relevant external agencies.

Biting

In the event of a child being bitten:

- the child with the injury is immediately comforted and attention to the affected area is carried out by a trained Paediatric First Aid member of staff.
- if the skin has been broken, the area will be cleaned with a sterilised wipe and the parents/carers informed immediately, as medical advice may need to be sought.
- the bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.
- the biter will be told in a firm voice that, "We don't bite, biting hurts" and that biting makes the staff and the child that has been bitten, sad.
- while the bitten child is being cared for, the child who bit will wait with an adult.
- they will either verbally if developmentally appropriate, or with actions, be asked to apologise to the child that has been bitten.

Bullying

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

A child who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress to another.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- we show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them;
- we intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children;
- we explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable;
- we give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied;
- we help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions;
- we make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour;
- we do not label children who bully as 'bullies';
- we recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstance causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others;

- we recognise that children who bully are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we do not insist that they say sorry unless it is clear that they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the bullied child as the original behaviour;
- we discuss what has happened with the parents / carers of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour;
- we share what has happened with the parents / carers of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.



Signed : *Steve Catley* - Page 6 of 7
Date : reviewed January 2024

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Policy ID : 1.13

APPENDIX A

The ABC system of recording instances of inconsiderate/ unacceptable behaviour.

This system allows us to focus on the reason for the behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself.

Behaviour serves one of four purposes (or functions). It occurs;

- to allow us to escape an activity or situation,
- as a means to get attention,
- so that we can get tangible items,
- for self-stimulation / sensory.

Examples include:

| I don't want to do this! (Escape) | I want attention! (Attention) | I want this! (Tangible) | I like doing this! (Sensory) |
|--|--|------------------------------------|---|
| Difficult tasks | From parents | A toy | It feels good |
| Prolonged work | From practitioners | An object | It looks good |
| Social demands | From peers | A food or treat | It sounds good |
| Be in this place! | From siblings | An activity | It tastes good |
| Be with this person! | From anyone | A privilege | It's a habit |

We follow the ABC method which uses key observations to identify:

- A) an event or activity (antecedent) that occurred immediately before a particular behaviour,
- B) what behaviour was observed and recorded at the time of the incident, and
- C) what the consequences were following the behaviour.

The forms must be completed, with the support of the named person, by the staff member(s) involved / witnessing the behaviour as promptly as possible. Unless otherwise advised, all incidents involving the particular child being monitored must be recorded as this information will be required in the event of referral to external agencies / support services.

Once analysed, focused intervention should help determine the cause (eg. ownership of a toy or fear of a situation) and the function of the behaviour (to obtain the toy or avoid the situation), and suggest suitable support and strategies.