



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.

Aim

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others. The principles guiding management of behaviour exist within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development.

Method

We will meet this aim through the following procedures:

- We have a named person who has overall responsibility for our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour.
- We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by members 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 our behaviour management policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- We expect all members of our setting - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with 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.

We aim to use positive pro-active strategies to promote positive behaviour in children, and set these strategies within our programme for personal, social and emotional development. These include:

- acknowledging considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share
- helping older children set the group's guidelines for considerate behaviour
- providing activities and games that encourage co-operation and working together
- ensuring 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

- avoiding creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour

We do not:

- Send children out of the room by themselves or promote 'Time Out' techniques.
- Use or threaten to use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking.
- Use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children, such as ridicule or sarcasm.
- Remove toys or activities that are the focus of a conflict as a 'punishment' or means of 'teaching children to share'.
- Use physical restraint, such as holding, unless to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
- Shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to children.

Kinds of behaviours that require positive intervention

We make a distinction between three kinds of behaviours that require support or intervention in order to achieve the considerate and socially acceptable behaviour that we expect of children according to their age and developmental maturity or whether they have any special educational need. These behaviours are:

- Inconsiderate behaviour – This includes behaviours such as taking toys from another child, not waiting for a turn, pushing, being uncooperative, disrupting a game, hitting out against another.
- 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' even if the behaviour is worryingly aggressive.
- 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. This is rarely the case for children under five.

Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development.
- Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable, and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.
- Staff offer comfort to both children in a dispute and encourage them to find a solution to their problem.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- We praise children for their efforts and achievements in resolving a dispute or learning a social skill such as waiting for their turn.

Hurtful behaviour

- 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.
- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage as that will have the opposite effect.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings.
- We support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
- We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry 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.
- Where this does not work, we use the Code of Practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to a Behaviour Support team where necessary.
- In cases of hurtful behaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame
- Details (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) of hurtful behaviour incidents that give cause for concern are brought to the attention of our setting leader and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.

Bullying

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.
- Intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children.
- Explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable.
- Give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied.
- Help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions.
- Make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour.
- Do not label children who bully as 'bullies'.
- 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.
- 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.

- We discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour.
- Share what has happened with the parents 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.
- Use the Code of Practice in cases where the above does not work to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to a Behaviour Support team where necessary.
- In cases of bullying behaviour, that is racially motivated or focussed towards a child's disability, or gender, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- Details (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) of bullying behaviour incidents that give cause for concern are brought to the attention of our setting leader and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.

Rough and tumble play, hurtful behaviour and bullying

Our procedure has been updated to provide additional focus on these kinds of play that sometimes lead to inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours.

Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression

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 bullying, although it may be inconsiderate, or even hurtful, at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

- 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.
- 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 and alternatives to blowing up or shooting.
- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Child's Play Pre-School name of setting

Held on (date) _____

Signed on behalf of the Proprietor _____

Role of signatory _____

This policy was reviewed on _____ (date)

continue as necessary _____ (date)