

ACHIEVING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Policy Statement

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.

Children need to learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task and requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within the programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development, as well as within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (U.N.C.R.C).

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 require the named person to:

- Keep 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 within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development; and
- Check all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour, and keep a record of staff attendance on this training.

The Named Person is: **CLARE RAWLINGS**

- We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of and respect these within 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, courtesy and respect.
- 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, 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.

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 an awareness of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

We use the following strategies with children who engage in hurtful or inconsiderate behaviour.

- We help the children manage these feelings through giving recognition of the feelings they are expressing by using the feeling faces each member of staff carries and using simple descriptive words.
- This will help the children 'let go' of the feelings, perhaps resulting in a brief increase in their intensity before their feelings subside. This 'emptying out' is important to do before the child can think clearly about solutions.
- When children show inconsiderate behaviour we help them to understand this was not the right thing to do and help them achieve the right behaviour. This may be achieved by a period of time in our calm area with an adult. Children will only be separated from other's if their behaviour threatens their own or other children's safety.
- We may use ignoring strategies, but only when it is safe for the child, staff and other children. Openly giving praise to other children using positive language, for e.g. Emily, I can see you are ready for our story, well done.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness, willingness to share and respecting each other's rights.
- We support each child in developing their self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
- We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.
- We use physical restraint, such as holding only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of the Leader and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as radical or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over again before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.
- 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 the 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 at home and it may also be in the setting;
- Their parent or key-person does not have the 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 may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated;
- 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.

Where this does not work, we use the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to a Behaviour Support Team where necessary.

Rough and Tumble and Fantasy Aggression Play

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 strategies as below:

- We recognise that teasing, 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 help the children decide on the promises of their play.
- We will help develop strategies and promises of play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violent dramatic strategies, for e.g. 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 are able to tune in to the context 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.

Bullying

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characteristic 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 in 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 and explain that all children who come to Pre-school have the right to be safe;
- We explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable;
- 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;
- We 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.

Biting Policy

Many children go through stages in their development, where they exhibit behaviour that others find unacceptable. Biting in particular is a very unpleasant form of behaviour that is particularly prevalent in children whose language skills are only just developing and can often be an expression of frustration that they have not yet acquired the skills to express what they are feeling. We will always follow the same procedures below:

- We comfort the bitten child and administer appropriate first aid;
- We explain to the biting child why biting is unacceptable, that it hurts the other child and show the mark, saying that all children who come to Pre-school have the right to be safe.
- We remove the biting child from the circumstances that provoked the biting for a short period of time;
- We will always inform the parents of both the bitten child and the child that has bitten.

June 2018

This policy was adopted on: _____

June 2019

Date to be reviewed: _____

Karen Richardson (Treasurer)

Signed on behalf of the Committee: _____

