**Achieving Positive Behaviour**

*General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children’s Welfare:*

*Children’s behaviour must be managed effectively and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and particular individual needs.*

**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.

We aim to promote equality and diversity, and believe that 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 requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example.

**Procedures**

We have a named person who has overall responsibility for our behaviour management policy and procedures.

We require the named person to:

* Keep up-to-date with legislation, research and thinking on supporting and promoting positive behaviour and on handling children’s behaviour where it may need additional support.
* Check that staff have in-service training on promoting positive behaviour.

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

We familiarise new staff with the setting’s behaviour policy and guidelines for behaviour.

We expect all members of the setting to keep to these guidelines and require that they are applied consistently.

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

**Strategies for discouraging inconsiderate behaviour**

* We require all staff, students and volunteers to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour. This is achieved by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children’s stage of development. These might include; acknowledgement of the child’s feelings, an explanation as to what was not acceptable, and supporting the child to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.
* We ensure that there are enough activities and resources available so that the children are engaged in meaningful activity without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing or waiting for turns.
* We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness, helpfulness or willingness to share.
* We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
* We avoid creating situations in which children only receive adult attention in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
* When children behave in inconsiderate ways we help them understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately
* We never send children out of the room by themselves, nor do we use a ‘naughty chair’ or a ‘time out’ strategy that excludes children from the group.
* 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 do not use words such as ‘naughty’ and ‘silly’ and make sure that we refer to the behaviour and not the child when talking about inconsiderate behaviour.
* 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, who was present) are brought to the attention of the manager and are recorded in the child’s personal file. The parent is informed on the same day.
* In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes by means of explanation.
* We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening manner in response to children’s behaviour.

**Children under three years**

* When children under three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that the strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
* We recognise that babies and 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.
* If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause.
* We focus on ensuring a child’s key person is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.

**Rough and tumble play**

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play. This does not necessarily mean that they will engage in inconsiderate or hurtful behaviour, although it may need addressing at times using the strategies outlined above and below.

* 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 problematic or aggressive.
* We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable boundaries to ensure that children are not hurt.
* We recognise that fantasy play may contain violently dramatic events such as blowing up, shooting etc. And that themes often refer to ‘goodies’ and ‘baddies’ and as such offer opportunities for exploring concepts of right and wrong.
* We recognise the importance of tuning into the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of ‘teachable moments’ to encourage empathy and explore alternative scenarios for conflict resolution.

**Hurtful Behaviour**

For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without full understanding of the feelings of the person 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.
* We will help the children to manage these feelings by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt. By helping the child return to a normal state, we are developing the response system that will enable the child to manage his or her own feelings.
* Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them by holding or cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we will also offer an explanation and discuss the behaviour with them at their level of understanding.
* We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help them to recognise their emotions by naming them and helping children express them, making a connection between the event and the emotion. “Adam took your car and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn’t like that did you, did it make you feel angry?”
* We help young children to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others’ feelings. “When you hit Adam it hurt him and he didn’t like it, it made him cry.”
* We help a child to understand the effect their hurtful behaviour has had on another child. We do not force them to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.

**Bullying**

Bullying involves the persistent verbal or physical abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour. Bullying can occur in children who are five years and over and may be an issue in our After School or Holiday clubs.

If a child bullies another child or children:

* We show the child who has been bullied that we are able to listen and respond to their concerns
* We intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child
* We explain to the child doing the bullying that the behaviour is not acceptable
* We give reassurance to the child who has 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 topractise and reflect on considerate behaviour
* We do not label children as ‘bullies’
* We recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves
* 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. We may also liaise with the school.
* 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.

**Strategies for Promoting Positive Behaviour**

* Praise the positive and ignore the negative if possible
* Be discriminate in your praise; identify the behaviour you are praising: “Well done for using your walking legs inside.”
* Be clear about the behaviour that is expected
* Try to always use a positive and avoid the word ‘no;’ “We can play that game, but perhaps we should wait until we go outside.”

**Managing inconsiderate or disruptive behaviour**

* Ensure that children are sufficiently challenged and engaged
* Join in with the children’s play if they have lost focus or need a new direction
* Keep calm and use a quiet and low voice (deep rather than shrill!)
* Don’t raise your voice to gain attention, use different strategies; doing actions for children to copy, singing, clapping
* Try to follow the children’s interests: if a young child is watching the sand as he drops it on the floor, find him a bucket to let it fall into rather than telling him to stop
* Communicate with colleagues – if you are finding a situation too demanding, hand it over
* Thinking time: it may be necessary at times for children over three to sit quietly in order to calm down and reflect on the effect of their behaviour on others. It is important when we employ this strategy that we are not publicly segregating or humiliating the child, but dealing sensitively with the situation, giving them the appropriate support to manage their emotions.

**How can practitioners promote positive behaviour?**

* Be good role models
* Come down to the level of the children when talking to them
* Do not discuss the children or their behaviour over their heads
* Think of a positive way to present a negative!
* Say what we **do** want, not what we don’t; “I’d like you to sit nicely on the chair” rather than “don’t stand on the table”
* Use effective observation to plan for the children’s interests and ensure their developmental needs are being met
* Present the children with choices and opportunities for self-direction
* Create ‘golden rules’ with the children to empower them (again, focus on behaviour we do want, not what we don’t)
* Give the children the appropriate language to manage conflict
* Recognise and name the children’s emotions and allow them time to work them through
* Respond to the environment and be flexible, allowing the children to lead the way with activities where possible
* Have reasonable expectations and be aware of developmental stages
* Have clear communication between staff and a consistent approach
* Enjoy your job and be smiley and enthusiastic!!!

Behaviour management co-ordinator: Aimee-Louise Thomson

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