

Behaviour Management Policy

Aim

We aim to provide an environment where children flourish and can learn and play in a safe environment without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone. We promote good behaviour, co-operation and trust. Adults within the setting positively and consistently encourage children to respect themselves and others in a secure, stimulating and positive environment with clear boundaries and expectations.

We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem, where their respect for others ensures everyone knows what is expected of them, and children are free to develop their learning in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

Carol Clarke is the person responsible for behaviour management issues.

To achieve our aims:

- Appropriate methods are implemented to manage children's behaviour including distraction, praise and reward.
- Different ways of dealing with unsociable behaviour are used and this is discussed and agreed within the pre-school, and explained to all newcomers, both children and adults.
- All adults within the pre-school lead by example, and are polite, friendly and courteous. They demonstrate and encourage kindness and willingness to share.
- Desirable behaviour is praised and endorsed.
- The pre-school recognises that children are not born knowing how to share and play co-operatively, but that these are skills that are taught and learned. Children develop at different rates and therefore will acquire behaviour skills at different stages. Sharing can be a hard concept to learn, so 'turn-taking' may be a better description.
- Adults will be aware that some kinds of behaviour stem from a special need. To support this, staff may implement an individual education plan (IEP), which will be put together by the SENCO (Vicki Younis O'Hara) and the child's key person in discussion with the parent. In some cases where other agencies are involved with the child's development, support may be given on a 1:1 basis, working towards a resolution of any behaviour issues, to support additional needs.

In order to manage undesirable behaviour:

- Any problems will be handled in a developmentally appropriate fashion, respecting individual children's levels of understanding and maturity.
- It will always be made clear that it is the behaviour or the action, not the child that is disliked.

- Children are given opportunities to show appropriate behaviour, and to correct behaviour that they have been warned is not ok. If this does not happen, children are removed from their activity and spend time with an adult on a different activity, thus shifting their focus from the unacceptable behaviour to something else to distract them. The adult attention is not meant as reward for unacceptable behaviour, the task will be chosen by the adult, and is meant as a distraction/changing their attention to something different. It will be explained to the child that they have been removed from whatever they were doing because the adult did not like the way they were behaving.
- Where other children have been hurt, the child in question will be shown how their actions have hurt or upset someone else, and that it is not ok to behave like that towards someone.
- In case of serious behaviour such as acts of violence towards another child or a member of staff, an immediate withdrawal from their activity will take place, and the unacceptability of the behaviour will be made clear.
- Physical punishment, or the threat of, will never be used. Nor will humiliation techniques such as a 'naughty chair or corner'.
- Recurring problems will be talked through by the Key Person and Behaviour Management Co-ordinator, and SENCO if necessary, in partnership with the child's parents.
- In cases of serious behaviour, such as bullying, racial or other abuse, the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes will be made clear immediately, but by means of explanations rather than personal blame. Parents of the aggressor and victim would be informed of the event/s.
- A child may need to be restrained if they are having a violent outburst, or if a member of staff feel that they or other children were at risk of being hurt. Occasionally, it may be more appropriate to remove all the other children from the situation, if it is felt that removing the child at the source of the issue would cause more harm by being moved themselves. Parents would be informed if restrictive physical handling had been used, at the end of the session.

Intervention techniques

Structuring the environment

Whether staff sit or stand, and where you choose to speak to a child can communicate the nature of the discussion you are about to have, and this may help the child to change their own behaviour.

Planned ignoring

Minor harmless and attention-seeking behaviours are likely to stop if you don't pay any attention to them. Remember, it is equally important to praise good behaviour.

Prompting

By giving gentle reminders to a child of what they need to stop doing or prepare for, can help the child adjust to a change. Adults may give children an action to do rather than not do, for example, 'Hands down' rather than stop hitting. This can be verbal or sensory prompting. Be careful to avoid nagging

Active listening

Sometimes listening to what a child has to say and exploring and acknowledging their feelings through the use of reflective responses can help a child to feel that:

- Someone else acknowledges the reality of their feelings
- They are not alone
- Someone cares
- Being on their level
- Lowering tone
- Making eye contact
- Using age/stage developmental language

Interpretation and modelling alternatives

Put what has happened into words and ask the child if there was another way that they could have acted. For example, 'You looked like you were really upset before you hit Thomas – was there another way you could have let him know how upset you were?'

Backing away

This is not the same as backing down. You are not giving in, simply giving the child time to calm down before you discuss the situation with them. Staying and continuing to challenge a child who is already angry is likely to make the situation worse. Alternatively, allow the child to back away through offering them a verbal or physical way out.

Reassurance

If a child's behaviour is motivated by fear, anxiety or uncertainty, a comforting or reassuring presence can help to stop inappropriate behaviour. Children do not always appreciate the care that is provided for them on a daily basis and need additional reassurance to understand how much the adults really care for them.

Hurdle help

By providing assistance when a child is stuck, you can help them to overcome feelings of failure or inadequacy but allowing for perseverance and success.

Proximity

Sometimes an adult quietly heading in the general direction of what is going on can be enough to encourage children to do something else.

Involvement and interest

Adults becoming involved in a situation can diffuse things: stepping in, pre-empting, providing alternatives.

Redirecting, refocussing or distraction

Anticipating or pre-empting unwanted behaviour. Try to refocus the child away from what they are doing now and on to something else as a way of avoiding trouble. This can work equally well, when there are a number of children who have become restless and are beginning to be disruptive – try packing everything up, and resettling them with a story, music or outside play.

Directive statement or direct appeal

This is a clear instruction to a child to stop certain behaviours or start something else. Label the desired behaviour 'Hands down', 'Quiet voice'.

Time out

Ask the child to move away to a quieter area to calm down. This should only be used if you use the time to talk to the child about their behaviour. It is not a helpful method to encourage positive behaviour and it should not be used for isolation purposes only. It is most effective when you simply walk up to a child and ask them to come and be quiet. Provide simple explanation and resolution for the time out.

Giving the child a choice to make

If a child is pursuing a line of activity that you would rather the child were not doing, instead of asking the child to decide what they are going to do next, give them two choices. For example, 'You can play with the playdough or you can do a puzzle'. By doing this, the child still feels in control of their decision, even if ultimately, the activity they choose is of your own preference!

The 'First, then' technique

If a child is wishing to do something of their choosing, whilst doing something they'd rather not be doing (e.g... wanting to go and play rather than eat their lunch), use the phrase 'When you have finished your fruit, then you can go and play on the carpet'. This is better than using 'if' as in 'If you finish your lunch nicely, then you can go and play'. This implies that they have a choice over whether they eat their lunch!

Pre-empting change

Children often don't like a sudden change in activity, so if you give a warning that change is about to happen, you can often offset challenging behaviour which occurs when children are unsettled.

Monitoring and review

The preschool manager will monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis with the team, and if necessary, make recommendations for further improvements.

If a pattern of behaviour is identified, staff will employ a method of observation known as A, B, C. This identifies the antecedent (preceding behaviours or conditions – the trigger), behaviour (what was it about the subsequent behaviour that was unacceptable), and the consequences (what changed – the behaviour itself, or the possible impact on another children's wellbeing etc.)

Over a period of time, the monitoring of the A, B, C, should mean that staff can track a child's behaviour patterns, and therefore intervene in good time to help prevent unacceptable behaviour outbursts.

Bullying

Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. We take bullying very seriously.

- We intervene to stop the child harming the other child or children.
- We explain to the child doing the bullying why his/her behaviour is inappropriate.
- We give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied.
- We help the child who has done the bullying to say sorry for his/her actions.
- We make sure that children who bully receive praise when they display acceptable behaviour.
- We do not label children who bully.
- When children bully, we discuss what has happened with their parents and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour.
- When children have been bullied, we share what has happened with their parents, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

Reporting to parents

Most unwanted behaviour is resolved quickly and easily within the preschool and is an ordinary occurrence that doesn't necessarily warrant the involvement of a parent. Occasionally, however, a more serious incident involving perhaps another child, or intentional damage to property, may mean that staff feel it necessary to inform the parents about their child's behaviour. This would usually be a brief chat at the end of the session. If there is an on-going series of behaviours, then parents would be invited to come in to the pre-school to chat things through at greater length with the key person, and possibly the SENCO or Manager.