

## **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY.**

**Please also refer to Child protection policy, Special Educational Needs Policy, Code of Conduct and Physical Code of Conduct Policies.**

We believe that children flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and where children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else.

We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop their self-esteem and self-discipline in an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect and encouragement.

All staff have a responsibility for behaviour management but any concerns are referred to the supervisor and SENCO.

### **In order to achieve this:**

1. Rules governing the conduct of the group and the behaviour of the children will be discussed and agreed, within the playgroup and explained to all newcomers, both children and adults.
2. In our playgroup we will ensure that the rules and behavioural expectations are applied consistently, so that children have the security of knowing what to expect at all times and can build up useful habits of behaviour.
3. We will provide a positive model for the children with regard to friendliness, care and courtesy.
4. In our playgroup we will praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to help and share.
5. We will explain what behaviour is acceptable and, where appropriate, what behaviour is not acceptable. We will ensure that children realise it is the behaviour that is not acceptable and not themselves.
6. We will take positive steps to avoid a situation which children receive attention only in return for unacceptable behaviour.

**This policy for unreasonable behaviour includes:** Kicking, biting, hitting, pinching, throwing inappropriately, spitting, bullying, bad language, deliberate destruction of toys/equipment or other children's work/belongings.

### **When children behave in an unacceptable way:**

1. Physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking will neither be used or threatened.
2. Children will never be sent out of the room by themselves.

3. Techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children such as a "naughty chair" will not be used.
4. Children who misbehave will be given one-to-one adult support in seeing what was wrong/unacceptable and working towards a more positive pattern. Where appropriate this might be achieved by a period of "time out" with supervision from an adult.
5. Where possible children should be encouraged to deal with minor incidents themselves because this helps them to solve problems, make appropriate choices, self-regulate, negotiate and foster relationships. Key persons should always offer timely support and intervention if they anticipate a situation escalating or a child becomes distressed or hurt based on their knowledge of the child.
6. A recognised approach such as that used by High Scope can help to calm everyone and achieve a positive outcome when conflict happens. The High Scope Approach uses the following steps
  - Approach the situation calmly and assess the situation.
  - Stop any hurtful actions.
  - Acknowledge the feelings of those involved.
  - Gather information.
  - Re-state the issue to help children reflect.
  - Regain control of the situation and help children resolve the situation themselves.Generally, with this type of intervention and support young children move on quickly from minor conflict.
7. Practitioners use a range of techniques to avoid situations escalating. This includes giving verbal encouragement and guidance to young children during difficult situations, breaking down activities into more manageable steps, exploring and naming powerful feelings and emotions through

activities, using turn-taking resources such as sand timers and visual timetables, calm bags, windmills, bubbles, yoga and breathing exercises and redirecting or distracting children's attention when situations escalate.

8. Adults will not use any form of physical intervention such as holding unless it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, other children an adult or serious damage to property. Any incident is recorded in the Incident Book and the Physical Intervention Record. The Parent/Carer will be informed of the incident on the same day. (See physical code of conduct policy)
9. Adults will not shout, or raise their voices in a threatening way unless it is to stop a child inflicting serious injury to another child or an adult.
10. Adults in playgroup will make themselves aware of a range of cultural expectations regarding interaction between people.
11. Recurring problems will be tackled by the whole playgroup in partnership with the child's Parents/Carers, using objective observation records to establish an understanding of the cause. If there is still no identifiable reason for the behaviour, then the key person should undertake a more detailed observation such as the ABC check to try to identify a trigger. ABC can help the setting identify and analyse the trigger of a specific behaviour in the context of, what events preceded the incident and what actions were taken immediately afterwards.
12. Any incident where a child has deliberately hurt another e.g. biting, throwing a chair, fighting etc. will be recorded in the Incident book which the parent must sign and be informed of on the same day. The child who has received the injury will be recorded in the Accident Book, which the parent must be informed of on the same day.

13. Adults will be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child's Special Needs. Children with SEND Children who exhibit persistent and challenging behaviours are more likely to have an underlying need. If a child has an identified SEND and already has a SEN Support plan in place but their behaviour becomes persistent or challenging, we will invite the parent, local Area SENCO and other relevant professionals to help us review the plan. If necessary, we would make appropriate referrals for specialist support; for example, Educational/Clinical Psychology and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS). These services carry out comprehensive assessments of some or all of the child's development and associated behaviours and can suggest appropriate interventions and support.

### **Physical Intervention (see also physical code of conduct policy)**

Sometimes despite ensuring that all relevant support has been applied a child may place themselves or others in immediate danger because of their actions. In these instances, it may be necessary to physically intervene to keep the child and others safe. We already use different elements of intervention and handling as part of our everyday interaction with children but physical intervention to keep a child or children safe is different from other types of physical contact and should only be applied in the context of immediate danger.

If a physical intervention towards a child is used then the EYFS states that it may be used for the purposes of 'averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if it is absolutely necessary'. Physical intervention must only be applied in exceptional circumstances and is not our preferred way of addressing children's behaviour. However, situations where a child places themselves or others in danger may require immediate verbal and some form of physical intervention; for example, if a child runs away, tries to injure themselves or another child, or break property (such as a window). This can often be applied through the use of reasonable force such as the adult's body gently and safely blocking the child. Before intervening physically to protect a child from immediate harm we consider the following:

What is the immediate risk to this child if I don't intervene now?

What are the risks if I do intervene?

What is the minimum level of intervention that will be effective?

How can I do this gently, for as short a time as possible?

How am I going to stay calm?

### **Physical Intervention procedures**

Any instance of applying reasonable force through physical intervention should be recorded immediately in the physical intervention record log.

### **Children under three years old**

- When children under three years old 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 to do this.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff will be 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.
- When one child bites another practitioners will be composed and will remove the child that has bitten, gently but firmly, telling them not to bite, and comfort the child that has been bitten.
- Any incident where a child has deliberately hurt another e.g. biting, throwing a chair etc. will be recorded in the Incident Record book which the parent must sign and be informed of on the same day.

### **Swearing**

When young children first start to talk it is not unusual for them to occasionally use a term which is socially unacceptable, such as a swear word. In very young children this may be because they are pronouncing a word incorrectly or because they have heard an adult use the term. Most young children will not understand the meaning of the offensive word but may continue to use it if it initiates a response from others. Practitioners should be calm in their response and ignore their use of the term because the child will quickly lose interest if they do not get a reaction. However, if the term is highly offensive and/or is

repeatedly used and if a child can understand that an action or word is hurtful or offensive, then it should be explained that the word is not acceptable. If the child is younger and unable to understand boundaries then the supervisor should consult directly with the parents to agree a consistent approach, at home and in the setting. The strategy could be to ignore the child's use of the word, distract the child and adults to check their own language around the child.

### **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 cognisance 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.
- We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand that self-management of these intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
- Therefore, we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child manage his/her own feelings.
- 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. We also use visual cues and puppets to try to explain the incident. We have regular visits from our persona dolls and we deal with these topics.

- Verbal children also respond to cuddling but we also explain the incident to them at their level of understanding. We name the feelings that children may have experienced e.g. 'Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? It made you feel angry, didn't it, and you hit him.'
- We help young children learn 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 that and it made him cry.'
- We help young children develop pro-social, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. 'I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn't crying anymore. Let's see if we can be friends and use the sand timer to take turns.'
- We are aware that such problems may occur 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 understand the effect 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 that 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 it may also be in the setting;

- Their parent, or carer in the setting, 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 is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse; and
- The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.

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.

### **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/she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress to another. Therefore, this type of behaviour from a three-year-old is more likely to be a reflection of the child's emotional wellbeing, their stage of development or a behaviour copied from someone else. Unless addressed early, this type of behaviour in young children can lead on from pre-bullying actions to bullying behaviour later in childhood. The fear is that by labelling a child as a bully so early in life, we risk influencing negative perceptions and expectations of the child which will impact on their self-image, self-esteem and may adversely affect their long-term behaviour

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical - pushing, hitting, kicking or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality including trans gender issues.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber - all areas of the Internet such as email, text, and chat rooms.

If a child bullies another child/ren.

- 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 other children;
- We explain to the child doing the bullying why his/her behaviour is not acceptable;
- We give reassurance to the child/ren 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 upon considerate behaviour;
- We do not label children 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 as the original behaviour.
- 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; and
- 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.

**Box Pre-School Playgroup**  
Behaviour Management Policy

We work through the child friendly anti bullying policy with the children. This is displayed in the playroom. This is a very simple policy, which uses pictures to explain how we should behave (see attached).