



## **Equality of opportunity**

### **ED3 Promoting Positive Behaviour**

#### **Policy statement**

We believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are understood, supported and met and where there are clear, fair and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

As children develop, they learn about boundaries, the difference between right and wrong, and to consider the views and feelings, and needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. The development of these skills requires adult guidance to help encourage and model appropriate behaviours and to offer intervention and support when children struggle with conflict and emotional situations. In these types of situations key staff can help identify and address triggers for the behaviour and help children reflect, regulate and manage their actions. We appoint a member of staff - Joanne Gregory - as behaviour coordinator to oversee and advise on the team's responses to challenging behaviour.

#### **Procedures**

In order to manage children's behaviour in an appropriate way we will:

- attend relevant training to help understand and guide appropriate models of behaviour;
- implement the setting's behaviour procedures including the stepped approach;
- have the necessary skills to support other staff with behaviour issues and to access expert advice, if necessary;

## *Stepped approach*

### **Step 1**

- We will ensure that EYFS guidance relating to 'behaviour management' is incorporated into relevant policy and procedures;
- We will be knowledgeable with, and apply the setting's procedures on Promoting Positive Behaviour;
- Ensure that all staff are supported to address issues relating to behaviour including applying initial and focused intervention approaches (see below).

### **Step 2**

- We address unwanted behaviours using the agreed and consistently applied initial intervention approach. If the unwanted behaviour does not reoccur or cause concern then normal monitoring will resume.
- Behaviours that result in concern for the child and/or others will be discussed between the key person, the behaviour coordinator and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or/and manager. During the meeting, the key person will use their knowledge and assessments of the child to share any known influencing factors (new baby, additional needs, illness etc.) in order to place the behaviour into context. Appropriate adjustments to practice will be agreed and if successful normal monitoring resumed.
- If the behaviour continues to reoccur and remains a concern then the key person and SENCO should liaise with parents to discuss possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps. If relevant and appropriate, the views of the child relating to their behaviour should be sought and considered to help identify a cause. If a cause for the behaviour is not known or only occurs whilst in the setting then the behaviour coordinator will suggest using a focused intervention approach to identify a trigger for the behaviour.
- If a trigger is identified then the SENCO and key person will meet with the parents to plan support for the child through developing an action plan. If relevant, recommended actions for dealing with the behaviour at home should be agreed with the parent/s and incorporated into the plan. Other members of the staff team should be informed of the agreed actions in the action plan and help implement the actions. The plan should be monitored and reviewed regularly by the key person and SENCO until improvement is noticed

### **Step 3**

- If, despite applying the initial intervention to de-escalate situations and focused intervention approaches, the behaviour continues to occur and/or is of significant concern, then the behaviour coordinator and SENCO will invite the parents to a meeting to discuss external referral and next steps for supporting the child in the setting.
- It may be agreed that the Early Help process should begin and that specialist help be sought for the child – this support may address either developmental or welfare needs. If the child’s behaviour is part of a range of welfare concerns that also include a concern that the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, follow the Safeguarding and Children and Child Protection Policy (CP2). It may also be agreed that the child should be referred for an Education, Health and Care assessment. (See Supporting Children with SEN policy ED2)
- Advice provided by external agencies should be incorporated into the child’s action plan and regular multi-disciplinary meetings held to review the child’s progress.
- If a review determines a statutory assessment may be needed then all relevant documentation must be collected in preparation for an Education Health and Care Assessment which may lead onto an Education, Health and Care Plan.

#### *Initial intervention approach*

- We use an initial problem solving intervention for all situations in which a child or children are distressed or in conflict. All staff use this intervention consistently.
- This type of approach involves an adult approaching the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions, acknowledging the feelings of those involved, gathering information, restating the issue to help children reflect, regain control of the situation and resolve the situation themselves.

#### *Focused intervention approach*

- The reasons for some types of behaviour are not always apparent, despite the knowledge and input from key staff and parents.
- Where we have considered all possible reasons, then a focused intervention approach should then be applied.
- This approach allows us to observe, reflect, and identify causes and functions of unwanted behaviour in the wider context of other known influences on the child.

- We follow the ABC method which uses key observations to identify a) an event or activity (antecedent) that occurred immediately before a particular behaviour, b) what behaviour was observed and recorded at the time of the incident, and c) what the consequences were following the behaviour. Once analysed, the focused intervention should help determine the cause (e.g. ownership of a toy or fear of a situation) and function of the behaviour (to obtain the toy or avoid a situation) and suitable support will be applied.

#### *Use of rewards and sanctions*

- All children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control.
- Rewards such as excessive praise and stickers may provide an immediate change in the behaviour but will not teach children how to act when a 'prize' is not being given or provide the child with the skills to manage situations and their emotions. Instead, a child is taught how to be 'compliant' and respond to meet adult's own expectations in order to obtain a reward (or for fear of a sanction). If used then the type of rewards and their functions must be carefully considered before applying.
- Children should never be labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by removing them from the group and left alone in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. However, if necessary children can be accompanied and removed from the group in order to calm down and if appropriate helped to reflect on what has happened.

#### *Use of physical intervention*

Staff will already use different elements of physical contact with a child as part of their interaction in the setting especially when they are comforting a child or giving first aid. However, physical intervention to keep a child or other children safe is different and should only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

The EYFS states that physical intervention from a staff member towards a child 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".

Staff must do all they can to avoid using a physical intervention because this is not the preferred way of addressing children's behaviour.

To offer protection to children a range of appropriate graded interventions may be needed before physical intervention is applied. Most single incidents such as a child throwing a book on the floor or

kicking a chair usually only require a verbal intervention from a member of staff. In other situations, an intervention can be applied through mechanical and environmental means such as locking doors and stair gates. This usually stops a situation escalating. However, there will be some situations where a child places themselves or others in danger which requires an immediate need for the use of both verbal and physical intervention. If a single or persistent incident requires a physical intervention such as physical handling from a staff member towards a child, then this is used intentionally to restrict a child's movement against their will. In most cases this can be applied through the use of the adult's body gently and safely blocking the child from access to danger or to prevent danger.

To physically intervene, a practitioner may use "reasonable force" to protect a child from injuring themselves or others. Legally a practitioner may also use reasonable force to prevent a child from damaging property. However, we would expect that in instances of damaging physical property a child would only experience a physical intervention if the broken property presented a risk or is high value.

If a situation arises which requires urgent physical hands-on intervention this is best applied by the staff who knows the child well such as their key person who is more able to calm them or use other known methods for defusing situations without physical intervention.

- If 'reasonable force' has been used for any of the reasons shown above, parents are to be informed on the same day that it occurs. The intervention will be recorded as soon as possible within the child's file, which states clearly when and how parents were informed.

#### *Challenging Behaviour/Aggression by children towards other children*

- Any aggressive behaviour by children towards other children will result in a staff member intervening immediately to challenge and prevent escalation.
- If the behaviour has been significant or may potentially have a detrimental effect on the child, the parents of the child who has been the victim of behaviour and the parents of the child who has been the perpetrator should be informed.
- The designated person will contact children's social services if appropriate, i.e., if a child has been seriously injured, or if there is reason to believe that a child's challenging behaviour is an indication that they themselves are being abused.

- The designated person will make a written record of the incident, which is kept in the child's file in line with the *Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults* policy.
- The designated person should complete a risk assessment related to the child's challenging behaviour to avoid any further instances.
- The designated person should meet with the parents of the child who has been affected by the behaviour to advise them of the incident and the setting's response to the incident.
- Ofsted should be notified if appropriate, i.e., if a child has been seriously injured.
- Relevant health and safety procedures and procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints should be followed.
- Parents should also be asked to sign risk assessments where the risk assessment relates to managing the behaviour of a specific child.

Bullying is a behaviour that both parents and practitioners worry about. Bullying is a deliberate, aggressive and repeated action, which is carried out with intent to cause harm or distress to others. It requires the child to have 'theory of mind' and a higher level of reasoning and thinking, all of which are complex skills that most three-year-olds have not yet developed (usually after the age of four along with empathy). Therefore, an outburst by a three-year-old is more likely to be a reflection of the child's emotional well-being, their stage of development or a behaviour that they have copied from someone else.

Young children are keen observers and more likely to copy behaviours, which mimic the actions of others, especially the actions of people they have established a relationship with. These are learnt behaviours rather than premeditated behaviours because children this young do not have sufficiently sophisticated cognition to carry out the type of bullying an older child can do. Unless addressed early, this type of pre-bullying behaviour in young children can lead on 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. This label can stick with the child for the rest of their life.

#### *Challenging unwanted behaviour from adults in the setting*

- Settings will not tolerate behaviour from an adult which demonstrates a dislike, prejudice and/or discriminatory attitude or action towards any individual or group. This includes negativity towards

groups and individuals living outside the UK (xenophobia). This also applies to the same behaviour if directed towards specific groups of people and individuals who are British Citizens residing in the UK.

- Allegations of discriminatory remarks or behaviour including xenophobia made in the setting by any adult will be taken seriously. The perpetrator will be asked to stop the behaviour and failure to do so may result in the adult being asked to leave the premises and in the case of a staff member, disciplinary measures being taken.
- 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
- Our guidelines to behaviour incorporate three golden rules; we are kind and gentle, we are helpful and we listen.
- Where a parent makes discriminatory or prejudiced remarks to staff at any time, or other people while on the premises, this is recorded on the child's file and is reported to the setting manager. The procedure is explained and the parent asked to comply while on the premises. An 'escalatory' approach will be taken with those who continue to exhibit this behaviour. The second stage comprises a letter to the parent requesting them to sign a written agreement not to make discriminatory remarks or behave in a discriminatory or prejudiced manner; the third stage may be considering withdrawing the child's place.

#### *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.*
- *We ensure 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.*
- *We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.*
- *We support each child in developing 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 avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.*
- *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 do not use the phrase “Naughty” in our setting when dealing with or discussing inappropriate behaviour.*
- *We do not use a ‘naughty chair’ or a ‘time out’ strategy that excludes children from the group.*
- *We do use the ‘time out’ strategy within the group for repeated unwanted or aggressive behaviour so that children are aware of the boundaries within the setting.*
- *We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking; corporal punishment in an early years setting is an offence. 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 our setting 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 racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.*
- *We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children’s inconsiderate behaviour.*

#### *Children under three years*

- *When children under three 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 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 - such as a change or upheaval at home, or frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of 'separation anxiety'.*
- *We focus on ensuring a child's attachment figure in the setting, their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.*

#### *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 hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate 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.*
- *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.*

#### *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 feelings 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 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 be able to manage his or 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. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.*
- *We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. "Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it. Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour.*
- *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 behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. "I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn't crying any more. Let's see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one."*
- *We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over 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 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 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 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 or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress in another.*

*Bullying can occur in children five years old and over and may well be an issue in after school clubs and holiday schemes catering for slightly older children.*

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Little Fishes Pre-School

Held on

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20/9/11

Date to be reviewed

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Reviewed: 16/03/2022

Next Review Date: Spring Term  
2023

Signed on behalf of the management  
committee

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Maggie Mann – Chair

Tracy Parkins – Manager

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#### **Further Guidance**

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE2015)

#### **Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

- Behaviour Matters (2016)