

## **BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

### **Purpose of Policy**

- To promote positive behaviour, helping children's social development and emotional wellbeing.
- To ensure that all children feel safe and secure in the nursery school.
- For all staff to have consistent expectations and approaches to children's behaviour.
- To enable staff to support children to behave appropriately.
- To help children develop an awareness of our expectations and know/learn how to behave appropriately.
- For parents to know there is a consistent and fair approach.

### **A strong network of relationships**

We work consistently to ensure that each child has a strong relationship with their key person. In turn the key person can help the child develop a wider network of relationships with other children and the wider staff team. Warm, caring, emotionally-attuned relationships set a very positive climate for children's social and emotional development and help to promote good behaviour.

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### **Key people will:**

- Work closely with each key child, starting with the home visit and settling-in procedure, to help each child feel safe, secure, valued and feel that someone knows about them as a unique child.
- Be aware of and seek out children who don't approach them.
- Relate positively to each key child every day.
- Make time to listen to and take an interest in each child every day.

### **All staff will:**

- Strive to be "emotionally attuned" to children, valuing and accepting their emotions e.g. "I can see you're sad about that, shall I help you for a moment" rather than "don't cry, you're a big girl now".
- Praise good behaviour
- Praise good efforts
- Show disapproval of the behaviour, *not* the child e.g. "That was a rude thing to do" not "You rude child".
- Model how to deal with and sort out difficult situations
- Show empathy towards children and each other e.g. "I understand you feel..... but ....." ... "Are you feeling?"

### **Key boundaries which all staff manage consistently**

This is an overview of some key behaviour boundaries, and not a complete list. We do not allow:

- Physical hurting – hitting, biting, scratching, pushing
- Emotional hurting – using unkind words against another child, swearing, racist or any other prejudiced comments, mocking another person's appearance, clothing, home, family, or (dis)ability
- Spitting

Where a child crosses one of these boundaries, staff respond by taking the child away from the incident and saying clearly "there is no [hitting...spitting,,,swearing...] in the nursery. You can't go back to playing unless you can keep to that rule."

Further actions and responses will depend on the professional judgement of the member of staff. If you are concerned or not sure what to do, please liaise urgently with the deputy headteacher or senior member of staff in the nursery school.

## How Staff Deal with Conflict

Experiencing and managing conflict is an important part of growing up and early education. Our aim is to help children to learn the skills they need to manage conflicts, through guidance and modelling.

- Encourage children to be assertive and to say/sign “no” clearly, say “I don’t like that”, etc. Where a child appropriately asserts “no” and the other child responds, it is not usually necessary for an adult to get involved.
- Think developmentally: if a child is at an early stage of development, then sharing resources will be very challenging. Ways to support include making sure that we have enough resources for everyone; setting up experiences for 2 or 3 children, to avoid large groups crowding round; model language/approaches like “me next”; “can I have a turn”; “you can have it next, when I’ve finished”.
- Model sharing and learning. Show children that we actively listen to the ideas, needs and wants of others. Show simple approaches to sharing like “I’ll do one, you do the next.” Support and promote open-ended experiences that promote collaboration, e.g. blockplay.

If a conflict needs adult intervention to be resolved, our approach is:

- Listen to both children.
- Encourage children to say how they feel (“it hurt” ... “I’m sad” etc)
- Ask the children how they could solve the problem and try to find a solution based on their ideas. If necessary, impose a solution and explain why.
- If a child has hurt another, ask them to find a way to help the other child feel better. This could involve saying sorry, comforting the other child or agreeing to be friends. Avoid a situation where a child expresses a grudging “sorry”.
- If a child has been hurt or is distressed, then initially focus attention on that child rather. Deal with the behaviour of the other child next.
- If necessary, state a clear boundary. “Remember, no hitting in nursery.”
- If necessary move one child away from the other’s play.
- It is important to spend time settling the children back into positive play – don’t deal with an incident and walk away too soon.
- Where possible, notice positive behaviour shortly afterwards and praise it. “I can see you are playing nicely now, that’s good to see you sharing.”

Bilingual staff play a key role in helping with incidents where children are at early stages of learning English.

## **Involving parents**

It is important to involve parents because:

- They know their own children best. They may be able to help us to understand why their child is finding a particular situation difficult, and help us to manage it.
- Parents need a clear picture of how their child is managing in school. It is important to talk to parents about difficulties their child might have. But, please be clear that the reason is to share information, and not because we want them to tell their child off again, or because we are blaming them.
- Working with parents to support their child's positive behaviour is an ongoing and collaborative process that depends on regular and open communication over time.
- We offer a range of Early Help services to support parents, including our popular workshops and the Triple P Parenting programme. All parents are encouraged to join in with these.

## **Sexualised play**

The NSPCC advise that from infancy to 4 years:

Even at this stage, sexual behaviour is beginning to emerge through actions like:

- kissing and hugging
- showing curiosity about private body parts
- talking about private body parts and using words like poo, willy and bum
- playing "house" or "doctors and nurses" type games with other children
- touching, rubbing or showing off their genitals or masturbating as a comforting habit.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/healthy-sexual-behaviour-children-young-people/>

So this type of play should not in itself raise undue concerns. However children do need to learn that this type of play is not appropriate, without being made to feel they have done something bad, wrong or shameful. It is also important that children are empowered to feel confident in saying "no" when they do not like someone else's actions or play.

Staff should respond to sexualised play in a low-key and matter-of-fact way, following the general guidance in this policy. Of course, this won't be easy for everyone, especially if the child's behaviour seems shocking or morally wrong to a member of staff. But staff should try to keep calm. Body language and tone can make a difference.

If it is important to describe a body part, we use the correct term like a doctor would, not another term. So for example, "penis" rather than "willy".

It is important to respond to children's direct questions but not to offer information which the child might yet be ready to understand.

If a member of staff feels any concerns about the play, then they should talk over those concerns – however small – with one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

### **Controversial and challenging play**

All sorts of play can pose a dilemma in terms of whether it is children's natural exploratory play or something more concerning. Staff often have to make judgements about the nature of the play and whether they should be supporting and scaffolding it, whether to intervene or whether to observe and report concerns.

#### **Weapon play**

It is understood that however we respond to weapon play, we will always ensure that every child feels safe and protected. Children are not allowed to use forms of play to intimidate other children in any way.

We are tolerant of weapon play and believe that children should be able to extend their imaginative play in this direction. Staff will join in to support and extend the play, however, we will not actively help them to make weapons as props. We will support them to understand that, while this type of play is harmless, real weapons are not.

Any member of staff that does not feel comfortable with weapon play should feel able to express this to children and decline to enter into such play. However, they should make their position clear to their room leader.

### **Keeping children safe**

It is a core responsibility of the nursery school to ensure that children are safe and secure. Challenging behaviour and difficulties with social situations are an ordinary part of child development – our job is to help children work some of these problems through in a supportive atmosphere, where there are clear boundaries, so that they develop positive attitudes to each other and to learning.

The majority of our work is around helping children's social development and supporting their emotional wellbeing. We want children to be strong, connected to other children and to adults, and to be self-motivated and self-regulating.

Sometimes children may present with severely challenging behaviour and may seek to hurt other children regularly. It is very important that steps are taken quickly, with the involvement of the SENCO and wider services, to help children with this level of difficulty, and to ensure that other children are kept safe. We are an inclusive school and we will work positively with every child and every family.

## **Positive handling**

With a very young age-group of children, physical holding and guidance are often needed, e.g. when a small child is very angry and about to hit out at other children, or runs to the gate during an unsettled episode whilst settling-in.

Staff are trained to use safe techniques, which are called 'positive handling'.

We judge that an incident is "physical restraint" if the child has to be fully restrained from movement for more than a few seconds because the child wants to hurt another or to hurt her or himself. Restraint is then needed in order to keep the child or other children safe.

If a child's behaviour results in a need for restraint, as defined above, then there will be a specific plan to manage behaviour and set clear boundaries. This plan will be drawn up by the SENCO working with wider services, and with the involvement of the child's parents. This plan will outline when restraint is needed and how it is to be implemented. All instances of restraint will be recorded by the SENCO and the information will be shared with the parents.

We have a system for planning this type of behaviour support via our provision map and recording all instances, and sharing the information with parents.

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Purpose**

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will children be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school. In order to achieve this:

- All staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.
- Children must be encouraged to tell a trusted adult about bullying.
- A key person is often in a good position to notice a change in a child's emotional wellbeing or confidence and to look for and ask about reasons behind this change. Sometimes that may lead to the judgement that the child is experiencing bullying, which can then be acted on.
- Parents must be informed about what is happening at school and have the opportunity to discuss it with the head teacher or deputy head teacher.
- All staff have a common approach to bullying and deal with incidents consistently.

## **What is bullying?**

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, taking things off another child)
- verbal (e.g. saying unkind things, name calling, racist, sexist or homophobic remarks)
- indirect (e.g. excluding someone from play or other social groups)

## **The outcomes of bullying**

Children in nursery who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as signs of low emotional wellbeing, low confidence, becoming shy and nervous, not engaging in play and becoming preoccupied in look around, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults.

The bully, or potential bully, may also be experiencing problems which are a cause of his/her anti-social behaviour. Staff must be alert for behaviour or comments which may highlight that the child needs help to deal with their concerns.

## **Teaching about bullying**

It is important to raise awareness of the nature of bullying and teach children how to respond if they are involved in, or witness, an incident of bullying. It is also essential that children learn to identify what bullying is, and how it differs to normal disagreements between friends. This can be done through our play-based curriculum, using suitable stories, and using group time for discussions.

## **Implementation of the policy**

The following steps must be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the head teacher.
- The head teacher/deputy head teacher will record the incident.
- Class teachers will be kept informed.
- Parents will be kept informed.
- Parents are asked to support us by encouraging their children to talk to staff and not telling their child to hit back.

In ways which are appropriate to the child's development:

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their key person or member of staff of their choice.
- Reassurance and continuous support.
- Encourage the child to be assertive and strong, say "no", and say when there are things happening which they do not like or want
- Help to restore self esteem and confidence.

Children who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing the events and their behaviour with their key person.
- Discovering why the child became involved.
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change.
- Informing parents/guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

Strategies to prevent bullying

- Ensuring that children feel valued and respected.
- Listen to what children say about their emotional state and value it. Acknowledge when children are sad or shy and offer them help, without contradicting their emotional state (e.g. avoid saying "don't cry, it's alright"; plan to say things like "I can see your really sad, how can I help you with that" – "I can see you are very angry with her, let's think what you could do").
- Giving children time and encouragement to talk about and resolve any disagreements they might have. Where appropriate allow children to sort out disagreements themselves and to be strong and assertive, e.g. shouting "no" or saying "I don't like that".
- Good supervision.
- Awareness and sensitivity on the part of staff.
- Support children's communication and their social development.
- Clear expectations of behaviour.
- Consistent and fair approach.

**Updated February 2022.**