



Managing behaviour
Achieving Positive Behaviour
Policy statement

We are committed to ensuring every child in our setting feels safe, secure, valued and listened to.

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.

Procedures

Karen Locke is our named person who has overall responsibility for our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour.

- Karen Locke is responsible for
 - attending relevant training to help their understanding and implementation of the role;
 - implementing the setting's behaviour procedures including the stepped approach;
 - conducting an annual audit (see step 2);
 - having the necessary skills to advise other staff on how to address behaviour issues and to access expert advice, if necessary;

Promoting positive 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 their age and stage 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 resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.
- We encourage the development of problem solving and negotiation skills by encouraging the children to find solutions to disagreements, promoting the use of sand timers and other equipment to enable children to manage their own turn-taking routines.
- We acknowledge and celebrate considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share, using positive responses and implemented systems, to 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.
- 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 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 younger children may include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort and understanding 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 work with parents and carers to ascertain if there is an underlying cause. We recognise that if a child has not settled-in well, the behaviour may be the result of 'separation anxiety'.
- Our Key Person and settling-in policy ensures a child has an attachment figure in the setting, in order to build 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, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using the stepped approach 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 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 may contain violent and/or 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 running high at the time. We do not and will not label such behaviour as bullying, finding this label both inaccurate and unhelpful. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is usually momentary, spontaneous and often without cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

- We recognise that young children may behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.
- We will support them to 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 supporting and 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, believing that this 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 at a level of their understanding. Children are never forced to cuddle or be cuddled, recognising the child's right to choose.
- We recognise that young children may require help in understanding the range of feelings they are experiencing. 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, did you? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit him?" Recognising that this strategy may only be used when we have witnessed or are clear of the facts of the situation.
- We encourage older children to talk through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour, without reprimand, but with understanding and support.
- 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 it made him cry."
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. "Let's see if we can 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 need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient and understanding adults and clear and consistent 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 children to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry, but encourage them to find ways of helping and supporting the person they have hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we will follow the procedures set out in our stepped approach.

Stepped approach

Step 1

Karen Locke will;

- ensure that EYFS guidance relating to 'behaviour management' is incorporated into relevant policy and procedures;
- be knowledgeable with, and apply the setting's procedures on Promoting Positive Behaviour;
- undertake an annual audit of the provision to ensure the environment and practices supports healthy social and emotional development. Findings from the audit are considered by management and relevant adjustments applied.
- ensure that all staff are supported to address issues relating to behaviour including applying initial and focused intervention approaches (see below).

Step 2

- We will 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 remain a concern then the key person and behaviour coordinator should liaise with parents to discuss possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps. 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 behaviour coordinator, SENCO and key person will meet with the parents to plan support for the child through an Individual Education Plan (IEP 10.9a) at Early Years Action of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (SENCOP). 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 IEP and help implement the actions. The plan should be monitored and reviewed regularly by the behaviour coordinator and SENCO until improvement is noticed.

Step 3

- If, despite applying the initial intervention and focused intervention approaches, the behaviour continues to give 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. At this point, the child will be placed on Early Years Action plus (EYA+).

- It may also be agreed that the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or Early Help process should begin and that specialist help be sought for the child if deemed necessary – this support may address either developmental or welfare needs. (See Supporting Children with SEN policy 9.2) 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 (1.2).
- Advice provided by external agencies at EYA+ should be incorporated into the child's IEP and regular multi-disciplinary meetings held to review the child's progress.

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 the key person and behaviour coordinator 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.
- We believe that extrinsic rewards, such as 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.

- 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

- The term physical intervention is used to describe any forceful physical contact by an adult to a child such as grabbing, pulling, dragging, or any form of restraint of a child such as holding down. Where a child is upset or angry, staff will speak to them calmly, encouraging them to vent their frustration in other ways by diverting the child’s attention.
- Staff should not use physical intervention – or the threat of physical intervention, to manage a child’s behaviour unless it is necessary to use “reasonable force in order to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damage property” (EYFS).
- 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.
- Corporal (physical) punishment of any kind should never be used or threatened which could adversely affect a child's well-being.

This Policy was written by Karen Locke

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Held on

Signed by the manager of pre-school

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Role of signatory

Review date March 2015