

# **Behaviour Management policy (including bullying)**

Version: 1

Author: Nick Shepherd    Reviewer: Helen O'Neill    Approved: Andrew Lucas

## **General Policy Statements**

We encourage children to find their own solutions to conflict and to respect themselves and other people and their property. Discipline in the nursery involves reinforcing good behaviour. Age-appropriate explanation is given. Any correction of a child's behaviour is done in such a way that personal integrity is maintained without humiliation. Our aim is to show the child that it is their behaviour that is unacceptable and not him or her personally.

Physical intervention will only be used to prevent physical injury to the child, other children or an adult, to prevent serious damage to property or in what would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances.

A positive approach to all behaviour is the best approach. We should affirm good behaviour in children at all times and not only when preceded by challenging behaviour. Children need to know that they are conducting themselves in an acceptable manner and need constant approval and praise. A positive attitude by adults may help to prevent some of the challenging behaviour that is presented to us.

Children in the nursery should know that the agreed boundaries are to be respected. We do though wish to avoid words like 'naughty' and 'bad' and aim to adopt a positive approach to managing difficult behaviour by clearly describing what we would like the child to do. Further, difficult behaviour is best managed by avoiding situations where it might occur. This can be achieved through observing and offering support where early signs of frustration are noticed and providing distraction when difficult behaviour first happens.

Volunteers have a role to play in helping children engage positively in activities through encouragement and praise of good behaviour. However, as outlined in the volunteer guidelines, volunteers are asked to defer to staff when difficult behaviour cannot be simply resolved. This is because staff will be aware of particular circumstances and strategies appropriate for children within their unit.

If a child continues to display difficult or anti-social behaviour, parents will be informed. Staff will use positive language; discouraging the use of labels and making it clear that it is the behaviour of the child that is unacceptable, not the child personally. When feeding back to parents whose child has been involved in the incident staff should be positive letting them know it was dealt with at the

time. Potential solutions will be discussed and strategies for managing and moving the child on from this particular behaviour pattern agreed.

## **Guidelines for dealing with challenging behaviour**

1. Always remain patient and calm
2. Always use the child's name
3. Gain eye contact with the child
4. Give simple instructions – this could be to complete a task or a request to change behaviour (see appendix to this policy on useful statements)
5. If the child does not follow the instruction through, ask them again, using their name and gaining eye contact again.
6. If the child still does not follow the instruction then give him/her the choice of completing the task or changing the behaviour by themselves then offer help in completing the task or changing the behaviour.
7. If the situation does not improve, then a warning should be given that they will be moved to an alternative situation in order to think about their behaviour.
8. If the child is removed from the situation, then after 1 minute he/she should be given the chance to do as they had been asked and return to the situation.
9. The chance should be given at regular intervals (after 1 minute allow 3 minutes) until the situation is resolved. When the child is calm then approach them and talk to them about their behaviour. If they are not ready then leave them a little longer, then go back again. Do this until they are ready to talk, remembering to praise positive responses.
10. **In a situation where aggressive behaviour is endangering the safety of them, other children, adults or the property the child can be removed without warning, or other children who are in the immediate area moved (See physical intervention below).**
11. Always give praise when the instruction is followed through. If you feel unable to deal with the situation call another member of staff

## ***Guidelines for physical intervention***

In the event where physical intervention is deemed necessary

1. Picking up or carrying the child away from the point of danger is acceptable to prevent harm to self and others or serious damage to property.
  - a. The child should be moved to a safe space and if possible allowed to calm down without further physical restraint.
  - b. The guidelines for resolving difficult behaviour above should then be followed
2. Continual restraint is exceptional, but may be employed where the child continues to demonstrate behaviour that puts themselves or others at risk of injury, or where serious damage to property is likely.

- a. Restraint should be firm, holding the child round the trunk and arms, keeping legs away from the adult.
  - b. This action should be undertaken with re-assurance, talking to the child and encouraging them to calm down.
  - c. Staff may need to re-assure other children in the nursery and should communicate that the child has been removed so that they can calm down. Normal activities for other children should be continued.
  - d. As soon as possible the child who has been restrained should be allowed to continue to calm down without restraint.
  - e. The nursery manager (or deputy) will contact the child's parents and asked them to come to the nursery in the highly unlikely event that the child is not able to alter the behaviour and further instances of restraint are required
3. Any instances of physical removal or restraint will be communicated to parents and discussed. This needs to be recorded and signed by staff and parents in the child's welfare record.

## **Bullying and anti-social behaviour**

### ***Definition of bullying***

Bullying is not the same as isolated incidences of conflict or disagreement between children but where a child is frequently picked on by another child or group. Such behaviour may include nasty or unpleasant language; threats of or actual physical harm and intimidation of other forms (such as being locked in a room, repeatedly being excluded from groups and games). Children who are bullied often feel helpless and may not disclose or seek help to remedy this. Bullying is highly unusual in an early year's context, but we recognise that it may occur.

### ***Definition of anti-social behaviour***

Anti-social behaviour, for the purpose of this policy, is behaviour which mirrors that of bullying, but which is not directed specifically at other children. It is frequent and repeated incidences of unpleasant language; threats of or actual physical harm and intimidation of other forms directed at adults and children. It also includes frequent and deliberate damage to property.

### ***Guidelines for dealing with bullying and anti-social behaviour***

Prevention of bullying, by seeking to alter negative patterns of behaviour before these become issue of bullying is a key aim of our general behaviour management. In addition, all children in the nursery should be encouraged to respond appropriately to conflict.

1. Children should be encouraged to learn to appropriately assert their desires and frustrations to each other, to share items or resources and to apologise for poor choices in actions.

2. Children should not be discouraged in asking for assistance or in bringing problems to the attention of adult helpers.
3. Adult helpers will respond by helping children to resolve conflict themselves where possible or by helping to provide for resolution by provision of alternative activities and intervening to manage unacceptable behaviour as previously described.

Where patterns of behaviour indicate that bullying or anti-social behaviour may be occurring or developing

1. The key worker will discuss their concerns with the nursery manager and agree to implement and monitor specific strategies to help children to not form persistent behaviours of this type.
2. In the event that such strategies are not deemed to be effective, the nursery manager or key worker will approach the parents to discuss their concerns. These concerns should be related to specific incidents not to a general concern that a child is seen to be a 'bully' or 'anti-social'.
3. In rare cases where ongoing behaviour is deemed by the manager to be of significant detriment to the welfare of children or staff, the disciplinary procedure below will be followed.

Children who experience bullying may also require additional support:

1. Isolated incidents of conflict may result in children feeling distressed or result in reduced confidence in particular activities. Workers will encourage children to re-engage in relationships and activities, listening and responding to their concerns.
2. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have about their child's experience of nursery with their child's key worker or the nursery manager.
  - a. Specific concerns over children's behaviour will be listened and responded to as appropriate.
3. In the event where a child is perceived to be on the receiving end of behaviour which might be defined as bullying, key workers will discuss concerns with the nursery manager. If agreed, this matter will be discussed with parents relating to the particular incidents which have occurred. Only in exceptional circumstances would this be addressed as being as a result of a bullying relationship.
  - a. Parents will be encouraged to discuss any ongoing concerns and will be informed of what actions are being taken with the other parties concerned

## **Disciplinary procedure for children attending nursery**

The positive management of behaviour is an ongoing activity which may require both informal conversation and agreement on formal strategies with parents.

However, in the event that continued difficult behaviour is experienced this disciplinary procedure will be followed.

1. All reasonable measures will have been taken, by staff and parents/carers, to agree and implement a strategy to alter the child's behaviour. This strategy may include a temporary removal of the child.
2. In the event of continued behaviour which has required repeated physical intervention to prevent harm to self and others or damage to property or that which is deemed by the manager to be of significant detriment to the welfare of children or staff
  - a. Written notification will be given to parents that continued behaviour of this type will result in a request that the child be removed from the nursery and additional support (internally or from other agencies) will be sought to appropriately re-introduce the child.
  - b. Parents will be asked to withdraw their child from nursery in accordance with the notification given where such additional support has not facilitated a change in behaviour
  - c. Temporary exclusion without prior warning may be required in what would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances. The reasons for such exclusion will be communicated in writing; which may include notification of potential permanent exclusion.
3. Appeal against a request to withdraw or permanent exclusion may be made to the nursery manager (in writing) and will be considered on a case by case basis in consultation with appropriate external agencies. The decision of the nursery manager in these matters is final.

## Appendix 1: 'I statements' – helpful phrases for behaviour management

### 1. Communicate feelings or concern and give a reason why

**I feel** (name feeling, concern worry)...**because** (describe the behaviour or object of concern rather than address the child)

Examples

*Nathan, I am worried that you are going to hurt someone waving those scissors.*

*Susie, please don't run down the slide, you might fall over and hurt yourself*

*Ezra, I don't want you to push Ivan. It's not fair; he was playing with the train set first.*

### 2. State what you want the child to do and give appropriate choices

Different issues require different solutions, but these need to be clearly communicated.

- State clearly what is expected or required (please do this, please stop that)
- Give limited choices (you can either....or.....)
- Ask the child how they might solve this problem

Examples

*Nathan, I am worried that you are going to hurt someone waving those scissors, please put them on the table.*

*Susie, please don't run down the slide, you might fall over and hurt yourself. You can either use the stairs or play on something else*

*Ezra, I don't want you to push Ivan. It's not fair; he was playing with the train set first. Do you think you can ask him if you could share?*

### 3. Follow up positive behaviour with positive statements in similar language

*Nathan, I'm really pleased you put the scissors down. What do you want to start making next?*

*Ezra, thank you for asking Ivan: Ivan, well done and thank you for sharing.*