Behaviour Policy - Supporting and Understanding Children's Behaviour

Policy Statement

We believe that children flourish best when given opportunities for play and learn within a safe, caring environment which ensures developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour. We understand that all behaviour is communication and that unacceptable behaviour is a sign that the child is upset and that something is not right for them.

- Young children often engage in rough and tumble play. Through their peer and adult interactions children learn about boundaries, the difference between right and wrong, the impact of their behaviour and to consider the feelings of others including consent.
- 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.
- The key person can help identify and address triggers for behaviour and help children reflect, regulate and manage their actions.
- Positive behaviour strategies and reinforcements such as praise, stickers or being a helper are used to encourage the expected behaviour in a developmentally appropriate way.

Policy Aim

- We will ensure that EYFS guidance relating to 'supporting and understanding children's behaviour' is incorporated into our practice.
- In order to support, understand and manage children's behaviour in an appropriate way we will:
    - Listen to what the child is trying to communicate through their behaviour.
    - Have high expectations for children's behaviour and conduct.
    - Ensure that all staff are supported to address issues relating to behaviour.
    - Ensure staff are knowledgeable of, and apply the setting's procedures for, promoting and supporting positive behaviour.
    - Attend relevant training to help understand and guide appropriate models of behaviour.
    - Have the necessary skills to support other staff when dealing with behaviour issues and to access expert advice, if necessary.
    - Act as positive role models.
    - Act consistently.
    - Ensure children feel listened to.
    - Support children to manage their own feelings and behaviour (self-regulate).

Behavioural Expectations

- Everyone feels safe in our setting.
- Relationships in the setting reflect a positive and respectful culture
- Everyone has the opportunity to be listened to.
- Bullying is not acceptable under any circumstances and will be dealt with immediately.

Role of the Staff:

- Model, set and maintain high expectations of behaviour.
- Have developmentally (age/stage) appropriate expectations.
- Build positive relationships with our families and other members of staff.
- Teach children about consent which includes their personal boundaries, respect for others and also recognise other children have the right to make decisions about their bodies and person space.
- Use a variety of strategies, activities and resources to encourage and teach positive behaviour.
- Create an enabling environment which promotes positive behaviour with sufficient resources to avoid conflict and enough space for children to play.
- Teach children to respect their environment and the equipment provided for them.
- Never punish a child by hitting, smacking, shaking, frightening or humiliating them. It is not acceptable to pull or drag a child, or shout loudly at them. These are examples of gross misconduct of a safeguarding nature. Providers must not give or threaten corporal punishment or any punishment which could negatively affect a child's well-being (as stated in the EYFS).
- Take proportionate action if a child is about to do something which could result in harm to themselves or another child. Examples of this would be if on an outing and a child is about to walk in front of a moving car, or in setting and a child is about to throw a toy at another child, or bite another child, it is acceptable for the child to be stopped.
- Only use physical intervention or restrain a child if they pose a danger to themselves or others.
- Recognise that sometimes children may use words with violent imagery and ‘act out’ scenes that involve ‘shooting’ and ‘killing’, ‘goodies’ and ‘baddies’ because of their awareness of the outside world. We realise that this gives us opportunities to discuss right and wrong, real and pretend with children.

Working with Parents

Parent partnership is central to managing children's behaviour. We ask parents to:

- Communicate changes occurring in their child or family's life which may impact on their child's behaviour.
- Be aware of the expectations for behaviour within the setting and support their child to follow the setting's behavioural boundaries.
- Accept responsibility for their child's behaviour and liaise with / support the setting's approach.
- Teach their child to respect their environment and the equipment provided for them. Any persistent and deliberate destruction of toys, equipment or property may be charged to the parent.
- Staff are always available to offer advice and support to parents about their child's behaviour.

Procedures

- To promote positive behaviour, staff set realistic boundaries and consistent goals.
- Diversion, praise and quiet discussion are techniques used to encourage and support wanted behaviours.
- We make the most of 'teachable moments' to work with children on understanding their emotions, self-regulation, empathy, problem solving, negotiation and conflict resolution.
- By creating a stimulating environment we aim to keep each child occupied and happy.
- With adult consistency we aim to avoid confrontation, empower the children, raise their self-esteem and maintain excellent communication.
- We acknowledge and reward positive behaviour.
- Staff respect children's need for time and space.
- Hurtful behaviour, whether physical or emotional, will be addressed using clear, consistent adult intervention.
    - The adult will approach the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions
    - Acknowledge the feelings of the children involved
    - Gather information and restate the issue to help children reflect and regain control
    - Ask the children for ideas to resolve the situation themselves.
    - If a child's behaviour continues to be unacceptable, they are told what is wrong and what is expected of them. If behaviour is persistent the child will be given an opportunity for further reflection with their key person or a suitable practitioner.

- Children's unacceptable behaviour is addressed in a developmentally appropriate way to match the child's level of understanding.
- Guidance for dealing with biting is provided in Appendix 1, which can be discussed with parents.
- Incidents involving unacceptable behaviour are recorded on an Incident In Setting form and shown to the parent of the child concerned. A signature is requested as acknowledgement that they have been made aware of the incident and how it has been dealt with.
- If three similar incidents are recorded we follow the **ABC** method which uses key observations to identify:-
    - **A**ctivity or event (**A**ntecedent) that occurred immediately before a particular behaviour
    - **B**ehaviour that was observed and recorded at the time of the incident
    - **C**onsequences following the behaviour

  Once the cause/trigger has been determined suitable alterations will be made or support put into place to minimise the likelihood of the event reoccurring.
- If the same behaviour continues, parents will be invited to meet with the setting manager and the child's key person to discuss the child's behaviour and actions to be taken if the behaviour continues. This may include sharing strategies to ensure consistency.
- If appropriate additional help may be sought from the SENCo, Health Visitor or Early Years Team, and if necessary through a MyPlan.
- If a behaviour compromises the safety of other children or adults, a phone call may be made for parents to collect their child immediately e.g. physical violence, biting or spitting. The reason the child leaves early must be recorded on the register marked with an "I" to indicate an "Incident" has occurred. The incident record form must be completed and filed in the child's registration / safeguarding / SEND file as appropriate.
- In very exceptional circumstances exclusion of a child from the setting may take place for an agreed period.

Physical intervention

- Staff must not use physical intervention or the threat of physical intervention, to manage a child's behaviour.
- Restraint or physical intervention will not be used unless unavoidable.

If restraint or physical intervention is absolutely necessary to avert immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child), the staff member sits behind the child with arms across the child's body to stop their limbs from harming others and to allow the child time to regulate their emotions.

- If “physical intervention” has been used, parents are to be informed on the same day that it occurs (or as soon as reasonably practicable). The intervention will be recorded on an Incident in Setting form and shown to the parent. A signature is requested as acknowledgement that they have been made aware of the intervention and how it has been dealt with.
- Corporal (physical) punishment of any kind **must** never be used or threatened.

Reasonable Adjustments

We are an inclusive setting and recognise the need to ensure a safe environment for all children and staff. If necessary, we will gather additional information through parent discussions, additional observations, individual child provision mapping and risk assessments. Our evaluation may lead to reasonable adjustments being made to cater for children’s individual needs and support their positive behaviour. These include:

- adaptations to provision
- working on a reduced ratio (if staffing allows)
- offering a calm space or sensory room/area

Behaviours which disrupt learning for other children or cause harm to others, in spite of the above reasonable adjustments, may lead to:

- a reduction in session hours or days
- discussion and decision on the suitability of the setting for the child at the present time.

Appendix 1 – Dealing with biting

Biting is not unusual among young children. It is not usually premeditated or malicious, but part of a process of learning about socially appropriate behaviour. It can be painful and frightening for the child who is bitten and upsetting for parents on both sides. Information given here may be used to reassure parents, in addition to the normal procedures being followed. Persistent biting will be investigated.

Biting may happen for different reasons:

•Exploration	Mouthing and tasting is something all children do. Young children don’t always understand the difference between gnawing a toy and biting a person.
•Cause and effect	Children may bite because they know they will get a reaction.
•Attention	Older toddlers may bite to get attention even if it is of a negative kind.
•Imitation	Older toddlers may copy biting behaviour they see in other children.
•Independence	Toddlers are trying hard to become independent. Biting can be a powerful way to control others.

- Frustration — Toddlers do not always have control over their bodies and cannot always express themselves. Hitting, biting and pushing can become a way to express upset/excitement or because they are over tired.
- Stress — Biting can be a way to relieve stress and express feelings.
- Oral health — Biting can be a way to relieve the pain and discomfort of emerging teeth or tooth decay.
- SEND — Biting can be for sensory processing or a self-regulatory mechanism for children with additional needs.

When an incident of biting occurs:

- Staff will approach calmly and comfort the child who has been bitten first.
- Staff will ensure the child has stopped biting and say “mouths are for eating and talking, we use our mouths to talk to our friends.” Explain the hurt caused and if appropriate, encourage the child to apologise.
- The child who has bitten will receive no special treatment, to show that biting is not rewarded with attention.
- The incident will be recorded using normal procedures.
- The parents of both children will be notified.

If a child continually bites:

- Staff will carry out observations to determine a cause/trigger for the behaviour.
- Staff investigate resources and activities to support the child who bites e.g. sensory chewing toys; crunchy snack such as carrot, apple and peppers.
- Discussions will take place between staff and parents to help identify any underlying causes/triggers.