

Mrs Bonds Village Nursery

Behaviour management policy

Statement of intent

Our nursery believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmental appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Aim

We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behaviour and where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their environment.

Methods

- We have a named member of staff who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour, this is Mrs. Lisa Owen.
- We require the named person:
 - To keep themselves up to date with legislations, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support;
 - Access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour
 - Check that all staff have relevant in-service training on handling children's behaviour, and keep a record of staff attendance at this training.
- 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.
- 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 nursery.
- We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the settings behaviour policy and it's guidelines for behaviour as part of their induction, when joining the nursery.
- We expect all members of the nursery - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- We work in partnership with children's parent's, parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person, we work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately. 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 child's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable, supporting children to gain self-regulation skills so that they can learn more appropriate response.
- We acknowledge and praise 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 within the group, so that they feel valued and welcomed.

- We avoid 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 never send children out of the room by themselves.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. 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 any such event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of the nursery managers and are recorded in the child's personal files. The child's parents are 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.

Rough and tumble play, hurtful behaviour and bullying

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, acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violent 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 heroins, making the most of teachable moments to encourage empathy and lateral to explore alternative scenarios strategies for conflict resolutions.

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 regulation 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 anger 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 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 experienced. 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? It made you angry didn't it, and you hit him'.
- 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 it, it made him cry'.
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. 'I can see that 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 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 patients 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 children 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 hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with the parents to identify the cause and work together to find a solution. The main reason 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 may also be in the nursery;
 - their parent, or carer in the nursery, 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 is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse; Where this does not work, we use the code of practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals where necessary.

Calm Corner - If we feel a child is struggling with their emotions we encourage them to use the calm corner this is an area where children have the space they need to re-regulate using adults, fidgets, books and breathing techniques.

Bullying

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent or hurt, often planned, and accompanied by 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 to another.

Please see our Anti-Bullying Policy for more information.

Policy reviewed on 25.9.25