

Wingate Community Childcare Ltd

Behaviour Policy

Achieving Positive Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Policy statement

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

Children need to learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within the programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development.

Links to the EYFS

A unique child	Positive relationships	Enabling environments
Is aware of others' feelings, for example, looks concerned if Hears crying or looks excited if hears a familiar happy voice.	Help young children to label emotions such as sadness or happiness, by talking to them about their own feelings and those of others.	Choose books and stories in which characters help and support each other.
Growing sense of will and determination may result in feelings of anger and frustration which are difficult to handle, e.g. may have tantrums.		
Begins to learn that some things are theirs, some things are shared, and some things belong to other people.	Reduce incidents of frustration and conflict by keeping routines flexible so that young children can pursue their interests.	Duplicate some materials and resources to reduce conflict, e.g. two tricycles or two copies of the same book.

Procedures

All staff have a responsibility for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour.

We require the named person to:

- Keep her/himself up to date with legislation, 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 within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development; and check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.
- We recognise the codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of – and respect – those used by members of the setting.
- 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 and kindness.
- We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the school's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- We expect all members of our school – children, parents, staff, volunteers and students – to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- We work in partnership with children's parents; 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 children's ages and stages 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 popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group so that they feel valued and welcomed.
- 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.

- We never send children out of the room by themselves, nor do we use a “naughty chair”.
- 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/serious damage to property.
- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the name of witnesses) are brought to the attention of our Manager and are recorded in the child’s personal file. The child’s parent is 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.

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 of older children.
- We recognise that babies and 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 young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort 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 try to find out the underlying cause – such as a change or an upheaval at home, or frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of “separation anxiety”.
- We focus on ensuring a child’s attachment figure in the setting, their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.

Rough and tumble play, hurtful behaviour and bullying

Our procedure has been updated to provide additional focus on these kinds of inconsiderate behaviours.

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, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently 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 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-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that takes 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 their own feelings.
- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage 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 an 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 they experience. 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. Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour.
- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others feelings.
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy.
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn taking develops. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient 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 a child 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 have hurt.

When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with the parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons 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 it may also be in the setting
- Their parent or their carer in the setting may not have the 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 may have insufficient language or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated.
- The child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse
- The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave

Where this does not work, we use the code of practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to behaviour support team where necessary.

Bullying

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

Bullying can occur in children five years old and over and may well be an issue in after school clubs and holiday schemes catering for slightly older children.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- We show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them;
- We intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child/ren
- We explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable
- We give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied
- We help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions
- We make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practice and reflect on considerate behaviour
- We do not label children who bully as "bullies"
- We recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstance causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others
- We recognise that children who bully are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we do not insist that they sorry unless it is clear that they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the bullied child as the original behaviour;
- We discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and
- We share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

Children's "behaviour" includes everything they do – their approach to work and play; the ways they relate to other people; their responses to all the experiences they encounter within our setting, at home and in the wider community.

Young children have to learn about appropriate behaviour in the same way as they learn other things in their lives, and as adult carers and educators it is important that we are clear about the kinds of behaviour we want our children to learn. In behaviour, as in all other areas of learning, the children's own parents are the key source of information and insight about their children, and the key to their children's development in this area in particular.

Parents and staff together must be clear of the **Long term aim for our children:**

- To have the motivation which will enable the children to reach their full potential in all areas of development.
- To treat themselves and other people, both children and adults, with respect.
- To be able to give and receive friendship and affection.
- To be able to express their feelings in ways which are acceptable to others.
- To contribute positively to the groups of people with whom they live – their family, the Nursery and the wider community.

For our babies and young children, this is the first step into the wider world beyond home. This unfamiliar situation offers many new **challenges** to children's behaviour skills. There may be conflicts for children between behaviour which is expected or accepted within the childcare. We provide **support** for both parents/carers, the children and the staff. The safe and stable environment, with adults to guide and monitor their behaviour, offers children support within which to build for themselves patterns of group behaviour which will serve them all well in the future, in school, at home and beyond.

The organisation of the environment means that:-

- Children know what is expected of them.
- Each child can enjoy his/her own freedom without threatening the freedom or enjoyment of the other children.
- The familiar structure and routine creates a calm, purposeful atmosphere.
- Sensitive and observant adults ensure that each child's needs are met.
- Mutual courtesy and kindness make it easy for everyone, children and adults, to play and work together.
- Children may develop their own self-control and self-discipline.

The Positive Approach

We are committed to a positive approach to behaviour and the prevention or avoidance of unwanted or inappropriate behaviour. Desirable behaviour which we aim to encourage among the children includes:

- Respecting themselves and other people.
- Helping to care for the Nursery environment and property, indoors and outdoors, including all living things.
- Accepting the authority of the adults in Nursery, and of their parents.
- Observing the rules of the Nursery, especially those relating to safety.
- Being willing to share and take turns.
- Showing kindness to others, especially younger, less able or smaller children.
- Participating fully in play and learning opportunities that interest them.

Strategies to support and encourage desirable behaviour.

- The most effective strategy for reinforcing desired behaviour is to **reward** it. The most successful reward is **adult attention, positive attention** – smiles, hugs, verbal approval at a time.
- **Limit negative attention.** Lots of children prefer negative attention to nothing, and this will reinforce the behaviour which triggers it and reward children for behaving in undesirable ways.
- Describe to the child very clearly and simply the undesirable behaviour we do not like and will not accept using appropriate language that the child understands.
- Babies will begin to understand rules by being taken away from situations that they should not be in. As they begin to understand and become more expressive, very clear one-two word language can be used.

and simultaneously,

- Describe clearly and simply what we **do** want to see and hear.
- Make changes in behaviour in small steps, praising and encouraging even the slightest progress in the right direction all the time. Anticipate potential problem situations and eliminate or reduce practical difficulties before we can avoid it happening in the first place. It may be as simple as one child sitting next to another particular child.

The skills children need

- **Taking Turns**
- **Sharing**
- **Politeness**
- **Making Choices**
- **The Routine of the Session**
- **Handling Conflict**

Babies and young children will try out various behaviours to enable them to get a response. Even from a very young age behaviours that are acceptable need to be encouraged and unacceptable behaviour needs to be discouraged.

It is very important that we are aware of the:

- Appropriate use of language and what the child understands
- Model the correct behaviour
- Take the baby or child away from the situation, always explaining in very clear language what it is your doing and why.

In order for children to gain skills practitioners within the setting have to be role models.....

The practitioners have a critical role to play, not only enforcing rules, but also in providing the role models for the kind of behaviour we want to encourage among the children.

Adults demonstrate by their behaviour towards each other how people within childcare are expected to interact. If adults are generous and thoughtful, support and help each other, they create a model for children to copy.

By the way they handle equipment and care for childcare resources; adults demonstrate how they value it. In a group where **everyone** picks up books and returns equipment to the right place, and leaves activities tidy, ready for someone else, attitudes of care and respect are encouraged.

In an environment in which kindness, politeness and sharing are the norm, children can be supported in developing the skills and attitudes which will help them behave in ways which are acceptable to other people and satisfying themselves.

Practitioners need to be aware of behaviour management strategies so that a shared, consistent approach applies across the whole setting, avoiding confusion for the children in our care.

CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

1. **Immaturity and inexperience** can make some "good" behaviour difficult to conform to.
 - Babies and very young children are learning about rules and behaviour and it is crucial that we model desirable behaviour from this very early age.

- Children who do not yet have a clear grasp of number and volume find it hard to estimate and take their “fair” share of e.g. playdough, snack or dominoes.
- The language used to describe acceptable behaviour in childcare may be different or unfamiliar in style, vocabulary, and accent, tone of voice or even different language. A child used to hearing “no” when he/she behaves inappropriately may be confused by a complicated explanation of “why” we don't do things in a certain way.
- A complex series of instructions is also bewildering to a child whose comprehension is at a very early stage.
- Very young or immature children **cannot** sit still and pay attention for 20 minutes or more during a story session; it is developmentally not possible and only teaches them not to concentrate.
- Children instinctively want to learn through personal experience and exploration, but this gets them into trouble. When there are lots of opportunities for legitimate explorations and children know clearly what they are and are not permitted to do, they should be able to direct their energies elsewhere.
- Young children's behaviour can often be thrown off course by the need to adjust to unfamiliar people, environment and expectations. Children react to stress in different ways – some become timid, others may “show off”. Children who are used to “rough and tumble” at home may need help to learn that there are other ways of enjoying friends. The large space may make some children shy while others may be over-excited.
- When they come to Nursery, children may find that activities that are not allowed at home, like playing with water, finger-paint or clay are encouraged. At the same time other rules, like not hurting people or not standing on the furniture still do exist. It can be very confusing.

2. Children's co-operation vs. independence

Some children can cause problems for some adults sometimes. If children are exuberant, active, full on fun, seeking new challenges and excitement everywhere, their energies need channelling into demanding challenges, both physical and intellectual. Some adults who are not very confident of their own authority feel challenged and uneasy when faced with children who are reluctant always to conform to their requests, but a balanced must be achieved. Whilst the behaviour of children cannot be allowed to spoil the pleasure and learning of others, total unquestioned obedience is not always a good thing. We want our children to grow up with the judgement and independence to consider request and commands and sometimes to say “no”, as there may be times in their lives when they need to resist invitations and inappropriate approaches from peers or adults, and have the confidence to refuse. Sometimes it is appropriate to discuss rules and behaviour with all the children together and invite their comments so that they feel a sense of responsibility for the whole group.

3. Behaviours which cause concern

Some kinds of behaviour may indicate that the child has a problem, in which case plenty of clear, accurate information through objective observations is needed to make considered judgements about the reason for the behaviour. Several kinds of behaviour may give adults cause for concern:

- **Age inappropriate behaviour** e.g. tantrums, biting, sexual awareness.
- **Disruption or damage to other children's activities** caused repeatedly and deliberately.
- **Deliberate and considered damage to property**, as opposed to accidental damage as a result of excitement, carelessness, clumsiness or inquisitiveness.
- **Physical or verbal abuse** – whilst the immediate priority must be given to supporting and comforting the victim, the child who habitually displays this form of behaviour will give rise to great concern.
- **Quietness** is sometimes overlooked as a problem, but a child who is too quiet and withdrawn or passive needs to be given extra attention.
- **Attention seeking** – children who constantly seek attention are generally not getting enough of it for some reason, but adults need to find ways of giving it in response to desirable behaviour, rather than rewarding behaviour that is clearly just for attention.
- **“Aggressive” play** is often not actually aggressive, but acting out violent scenes, maybe involving weapons, which children have seen on television, and which is **about** aggression. The children may even be co-operating together in recreating a shared experience, allocation roles and agreeing the action.

4. Supporting change

In an atmosphere of support and encouragement, children can be helped to change their behaviour.

- It must be clear to the child who is behaving in an unacceptable way that it is the **behaviour that is unwelcome, not the child**.
- A child's achievements must be recognised and praised to boost self-esteem and self-confidence, before helping him to move onto the next stage and change.
- We must leave the door open for children to change and not label them, as this may create self-fulfilling assumptions.
- Children need to know that if things go wrong, an adult will always intervene – this forms part of the security of the group.
- Being positive and helpful and helping children to believe in themselves can bring out the best in them, e.g. positive “Try doing it this way” instead of a negative “Don't do that”.
- If an activity is abused or deliberately spoilt e.g. water spilled or blocks scattered, children must put things right, with help. This is learning about cause and effect – if a mess is created, it has to be cleared up.
- If a child is very angry and upset, a short period away from the other children and activities, “time out” with an adult who can give space,

calm and maybe a cuddle, will help the child come to terms with the situation.

5. Working with parents

If some aspect of a child's behaviour is of serious concern to the staff, then the manager will discuss it with the parents, as experts in their own child's background and behaviour. When parent's insights are added to those of the staff, the combined picture of the child's behaviour both at home and at Childcare may lead to a joint parent/Childcare strategy to help the child. Such strategies must always be carried through and regular supportive progress reviews held with parents.

6. Additional help

Sometimes the combined efforts of staff and parents may not be sufficient to help a child to make the necessary changes. In this case, if the parents are agreed, outside help may be necessary. The childcare has good relationships with all support services – nursery school, health visitor, school doctor and nurse, educational psychologist, social worker, who could be approached for help. We also have the benefit of the Family Centre, who can work individually with parents if required. Seeking outside help is not a failure, but a responsible approach by adults to ensure that support which is available in the community is used to benefit a child who needs it.

CONCLUSION

Childcare exists to help all babies and young children to develop to their full potential in all areas. This includes opportunities to build up social skills and to learn behaviour that will enable each child to go out into the wider community with confidence.

In our care, children are learning what they **can** do, and are encouraged to feel that this is **their** environment where they are individually valued and to which they each make their own special contribution. Within this secure and nurturing framework, both children and adults are free to grow and develop happily, with high self-esteem, confidence, independence and emotionally strong.

Agreed on: (date)

Signed on behalf of the Directors:

Manager:

Deputy Manager:

Review Date:

