

## Managing and Achieving Positive Behaviour

### Introduction

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. We understand that there is always a reason for a behaviour and as professionals it is our role to help and support the children to deal with these emotions appropriately.

### Our Aim

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others. The principles guiding management of behaviour exist within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development.

We aim for all staff, volunteers and learners to be confident in using positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, helping children to find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development.

### Procedures

When responding to or observing unacceptable behaviour, staff will take the following actions:

- Approach Calmly
- Acknowledge feelings
- Gather information
- Re-state what the child has said to you to confirm understanding.
- Dependent on the child's developmental age the staff member would ask the child for a solution and choose one together and be ready to give the child follow up support in their play including re-introducing them to their play.

### Persistent Unwanted Behaviours

In the event that there is a persistent behaviour issue the Manager must be informed.

- All staff will discuss possible strategies to create positive behaviour, staff will be involved in the writing and reviewing of our behavioural policy and procedures.
- In the case of any unwanted behaviours the key person will work closely with that child documenting any incidents on a behaviour form, this is signed by the parents and allows for complete transparency and partnership working with parents. This documentation will be used to identify if there are any triggers to the child's behaviour and to assist staff to put a plan in place to help the child.
- Physical restraint in behaviour circumstances, such as holding, will only be used to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property. In the event of an incident where a member of staff has deemed it necessary to restrain a child, details of this event will be fully documented (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses). Parent/carer of the child involved will be informed and required to sign the document.

- In the case of persistent/harmful/unacceptable behaviours, where there is risk of injury to any individual on the group's premises, the registered person will need to be informed. The registered person will be the authority for all decisions relating to the withdrawal of a place at the setting. Parents/carers retain the right to appeal against any such decision.

### **Preventing Unwanted Behaviours**

As a setting, we acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share. We support each child in developing their self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence. This is promoted in a number of ways;

- We require all staff, volunteers and learners to provide a positive role model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with respect, friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We provide clear, consistent rules and boundaries and encourage all children to behave in an appropriate way, respecting and caring for each other, adults around them and the equipment. We do this through our 'Golden Rules' which are re-visited with the children every session.
- We use positive statements rather than negative for instance instead of "don't run" we ask, "good walking please"
- We also use statements such as "I like it when...." Or "I'm sad when ....." We always make sure the children understand that it is the behaviour we don't like, not the child.
- We strive to give 5 positive statements to 1 negative.
- We use clear, specific instruction, "You need to ....."
- We help the children to voice their feelings, and to be aware of the feelings of others, through emotional literacy activities, often using puppets and discussion with the children depending on age/ability.
- Rewarding good behaviour – we believe that rewards and praise can be constructive and encourage further effort.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their actions and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- We use visual clues i.e. happy/sad faces.
- We do not humiliate children by criticising them or by using a "naughty chair." We move the child to a quieter area and ensure that an adult sits with the child during this period and helps the child understand why they are sitting down. We are aware of the lasting harm that can be done by labelling a child.
- We redirect, and use distraction tactics for very young children.
- At the first sign of aggressive behaviour or bullying tactics, the child is told why his or her behaviour is unacceptable. An alternative way of solving the problem is discussed or suggested using language appropriate to the child's understanding. Communication approaches such as visual pictures or signing is also used to help children to understand the situation.
- 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 setting.

- We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the settings behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- 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 avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- If a child struggles in a certain situation i.e. to sit still on the mat for register we help the child to achieve through giving them graduated targets, building on this gradually until they achieve the wanted behaviours.
- All staff, students and volunteers understand what constitutes a physical punishment. Physical punishment will not be used at Eckington Under Fives Pre-School.

#### **Our Mission Statement**

**Eckington Under Five is committed to providing a safe, caring and stimulating environment to enable children to learn and grow to their full potential.**

**We will encourage children's self-esteem and confidence to achieve the very best foundations and skills to take with them to the next stage of their learning journey.**

We believe at Eckington Under Fives Pre-school that by following our mission statement and giving the children in our care the encouragement to develop their self-esteem and sense of belonging this will have a positive effect on their behaviours.

#### **Children Under 3 years' old**

- 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 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.

#### **Super hero Play**

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.

- 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.

## **Behaviour and Responses**

### **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 conscience 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 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 rage as that will have the opposite effect.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through human touch and reassurance. 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. i.e. 'Adam took your car and you were enjoying playing with

it. I can see you didn't like it when he took it' or 'I can see you are feeling cross, what happened?'

- 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 Harry, it hurt him, and he didn't like that, and it made him cry'.
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. 'I can see you are feeling better now and Harry isn't crying any more. Let's see if we can be friends and find another car'
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing, and turn-taking develop. 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 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 carer in the setting, 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.
  - 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 a Behaviour Support Team where necessary.

## **Bullying**

Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. We take bullying very seriously. 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 or children.
- 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 practise 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 say 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.
- 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.

Even with all our preventions in place unwanted behaviours will still occur. At Eckington Under Fives Pre-school we realise the importance of sharing opinions, and experiences with the team of staff, on such matters as behaviour. If everyone is involved and gets their thoughts across we can come up with workable strategies that everyone believes in.

If it is a recurrent behaviour we will set up a behaviour file for that child, share this with the parent and work together to devise a behaviour plan.

**A written observation of the incident is completed and a behaviour trigger sheet – this identifies any patterns in their behaviour i.e. is the child hungry? Have they just come in from a difficult time at home? By arming ourselves with this information we may be able to prevent incidents in the future.**

The behaviour file includes a chronological summary of incidents and this can be used to identify patterns in behaviour or highlight a possible developmental delay.

We do not believe in the use of a 'thinking chair' as this is not suitable for all children as they do not all understand the concept. Also, it makes a child stand out and may cause them to be labelled by their peers. We believe that if it is felt a child needs time out they will be moved to a quiet area and the adult complete watchful waiting, they would be requested to stay in this area for a very short time (one minute) which is appropriate for their age and stage of development.

<b>This policy was written by Maria Smith and Donna Saunders on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017</b>	
<b>Approved by Eckington Under Fives Committee</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Position:</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>

