



## EYFS: The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

3.52 – 3.53

### Managing Behaviour

#### 3g.2 Achieving Positive Behaviour

##### Policy Statement

- It is central to the philosophy of Auden Place Community Nursery that all staff should be very positive at all times towards the children, towards each other and towards the nursery.
- We believe that children behave well when they feel good about themselves and about those around them. To achieve this we need to foster patterns of positive behaviour, using lots of praise for children when they behave well, and showing an interest in the things they are doing.
- We believe that children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.
- Behaviour management is not just about discipline, it is about managing behaviour and promoting good acceptable behaviour, i.e. making sure the children do not get bored and that they are stimulated mentally, not just physically, at all times.

##### Our understanding of children's behaviour

- 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.
- When children under three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and will need to differ from those for older children.
- 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 recognise that all children need to explore all emotions in order to understand them and then be able to learn to manage them appropriately.
- 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.



- 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. For example: "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? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit him?" Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through the feelings that motivated the behaviour themselves.
- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings. For example: "When you hit Adam, 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. For example: "I can see 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 both 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 patient adults and clear boundaries.

### **Procedures**

This policy is a step-by-step guide for all staff, volunteers and students on behaviour management and is designed to provide help and support for any eventuality or situation that might arise.

- We have a named person who has overall responsibility for our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour. In small settings this may be shared between co-staff. Our named Behaviour Coordinator is:  
**Nicola Aherne**
- We require the named person to:
  - keep themselves 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.
  - check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour.
- There is also a designated member of staff in each of the three rooms named as support who will take any issues to the main co-ordinator.
- 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 familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- We expect all members of our setting – children, parents, staff, volunteers and students – to keep to the guidelines, and require these to be applied consistently.



### *The role of the Behaviour Co-ordinators*

- The room co-ordinators will be first point of call for key-persons to take their concerns to as they are based in the room and can see the child's behaviour themselves.
- If they feel that the child's behaviour needs monitoring then they need to take this to the main co-ordinator who will then decide if they are to be put on behaviour monitoring so that we can begin to see if there are any triggers or patterns to the behaviour.

### *Behaviour Monitoring*

- Parents are always informed if a child is to be put on behaviour monitoring.
- All staff are to be involved in filling out the monitoring form with EVERY incident they see.
- The key-person will meet with the main co-ordinator weekly to look at the monitoring and see if there are any patterns etc. Next steps will be agreed at these meetings. These could include stopping monitoring, further monitoring, or further strategies being put in to place, e.g. shadowing (see below).
- These meetings are also recorded and when a child stops being monitored these records are moved into their personnel file.

### *Shadowing*

Shadowing is one of the ways we deal with persistent negative behaviour. There are three stages to shadowing and if the first one doesn't work, we move up to the second stage following discussion with the Behaviour Co-ordinator.

- Stage 1 The child in question is allowed to play on their own with a member of staff keeping a close eye.
- Stage 2 An adult will follow the child in the room. Please note, that if they are not in arm's reach during this stage, they are not been shadowed effectively.
- Stage 3 A meeting between behaviour support, parent/carer & senior room member to discuss moving forward.
- Stage 4 The child stays with the adult and is not necessarily able to choose their own play.

Remember staff need talk to other staff in the room, so that if the staff shadowing the child needs to do something or takes their lunch break etc. they must verbally and physically hand the role of shadowing over to another member of staff.

### *Top Tips*

- We employ the 'touch and praise' response. From research, we believe that children need physical praise as well as verbal, and we ensure that each child receives the excitement of physical as well as verbal praise. For babies, this may include cuddling and/or kisses, while for older children, this could simply be a 'high five' or pat on the back. We believe this to be important so each child feels special, as well as receiving visual and verbal praise.
- We look for occasions when children are being good and give them lots of attention when they behave well.
- We keep rules simple and clear.
- If a child needs reminding, we use a clear No with a visual aid, i.e. 'No hitting' or 'No



pushing', so as to give the child maximum opportunity to understand the language, and maximum emphasis on boundaries.

- If the child/children show signs of being disruptive, encourage them to do something else.

### **Distraction works far better than confrontation.**

- Use the positive and not the negative, i.e. say what you want them to do rather than what you don't want them to do. Instead of "stop throwing that on the floor", we say "shall we put that away together?"
- Think on your feet and if you see that a child is about to be disruptive, call them in a nice way and ask them to do something for you. Children love to help adults and feel important carrying out a task for you.
- If this doesn't work and you do need to step in, remember that it is possible to be firm and say 'No' in a gentle way without being cross or unkind, using a visual aid as well as verbal reinforcement, i.e. the Makaton sign for 'no'.
- Always follow through with an explanation of why you are saying no
- Children like to have some level of control, which may be why they are being disruptive.
- Give children some control through the day by letting them choose activities, or what story they want to hear, or where they want to sit, etc. It is also important to encourage them to do things by themselves, e.g. serving themselves during lunch time, putting their coat on, or getting a tissue to wipe their nose. This practice will encourage children's positive self-concept development and self-esteem.
- A child's stage of development has to be considered when establishing boundaries, rules or routines. Younger children might need different implementation of some of them, e.g. babies or toddlers will not yet be ready to wait at the table for their lunch as the older children do, so we have to adjust to their time.
- Monitor your own stress levels – take a deep breath before responding. We are all part of a team, so remember to use the resource of your colleagues around you.

#### *Give an immediate verbal response to the action*

- Call the child /children by their name (no shouting) to gain their attention.
- Make your way over to the child/children concerned (where possible).
- Assess the situation for health and safety, i.e., accidents and potential hazards.
- Get down to the children's/child's eye level before speaking to them.
- Always ask for the children's/child's explanation before giving your verbal response.
- Use clear and positive language in a non-humiliating way, always putting the negative onto the action rather than the child, e.g. "That's not nice" rather than "You're not nice". Avoid using derogatory expressions such as naughty or silly. This kind of approach can have a serious negative impact on children's self-esteem and development.
- Remember to praise the child next time they show that they can behave in the way that we have demonstrated, using touch and verbal, visual and physical praise.

#### *A gentle explanation to the children/child as to why the behaviour was unacceptable, for example*

- That's not nice because .....
- That's not a nice thing to say because .....



- That's unkind because .....
- That is not acceptable at nursery because .....
- If we do that to someone it might hurt them.

*Remember that if the child/ren laughs in response to being told off, this doesn't mean that they are dismissing you. Children may be laughing for these reasons:*

- To try and cheer you up or stop you being cross.
- They might be enjoying your reaction and be interested in the funny faces that you make when you are cross.
- They may be pleased that you are showing them attention, in which case, transfer the attention to a child that is behaving well. (Remember to return your attention to the original child when they do something nice.)
- Because they are frightened.
- They may simply not understand what they have done to upset you, so you need to explain in a gentle and simple manner.

#### *Time Out*

Time out/reflection time should not be used as a punishment. This is a procedure that we put in place when a child is putting themselves or somebody else at risk, physically or emotionally, in order to make the child take a step back from the situation and calm down. The children will always be with an adult who will interact with the child gently. The reflection time must not last more than 1 or 2 minutes according to the child's age.

#### *The threat of not being given food must NEVER be used*

Children will always be given their dessert whether or not they have eaten their main meal, and will never be left out of snack time or mealtimes due to being disruptive, so this is an empty threat and should not be used.

#### *Working with parents*

- 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:
  - 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 may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express themselves 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 abuse.
  - the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
- Where these practices do not work, we use the Code of Practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to the Early Years Intervention Team where necessary. This is always done in conjunction with parents.
- Any issues or problems arising with children, other members of staff or parents should be discussed in private with the nursery manager.
- Making negative comments about parents, other staff or children is never acceptable.



- Remember, before informing the parents/carers we always:
  - have observations of their child's behaviour.
  - build up a full picture of the child in general.
  - seek advice from the behaviour coordinator and nursery manager.
  - keep behaviour co-ordinator and nursery manager up to date at all times.

*Nursery staff and parents/carers will work together to promote acceptable behaviour*

- Follow plan of action at all times.
- Always give feedback at the end of the day, and always follow negative with positive.
- Don't always focus feedback on behaviour, remembering activities and 'Wow' moments as well.
- Use positive pictures and role play around the rooms.
- Positive behaviour must be demonstrated by staff at all times.

*Superheroes and weapon play*

- Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes, such as superhero and weapon play. Some children appear particularly preoccupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using the strategies outlined above.
- We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We do also understand that some degree of conflict will be a learning experience, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.
- Staff continue to train in physical play and are constantly coming up with ideas and activities as to how we can bring these themes of play into activity-based learning.
- Regarding fantasy play we acknowledge that it might contain many violent and dramatic actions, e.g. blowing up, shooting etc., but it is in a symbolic way children will develop representational skills, exploration of different roles, imagined scenes, and the symbolic manipulation of objects and language. To make sure that it is the source of a positive learning experience, 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. These strategies are learning experiences itself for children.

*Bullying*

- Bullying involves the persistent and intended 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.
- Bullying might start occur in children five years old and over, as the child 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.
- At the light of the above understanding, we think it is not helpful to title any kind of hurtful behaviour as bullying as we understand it does not correspond to children at the stage of development we have at the nursery.
- Any child perceived to be bullying, or being bullied, is closely monitored, by both the setting and the parents, in order to understand the behaviour and work out strategies to help.



*Unacceptable behaviour from children in the nursery, and exclusion statement*

- We recognise that children will pick up speech habits from their parents, and may use speech which is inappropriate (for example racist comments) without realising this to be the case. If this happens the parent must be contacted immediately and the problem pointed out. The parent will be requested to work with their child to show them that the comments they have made are not acceptable within the nursery. Where the parent refuses to accept that the child has made these comments, or seeks to justify the comments on the grounds that they are valid, or just 'child talk', and that the child 'doesn't really mean it' the nursery manager must insist that action is taken to stop the child behaving in this way, and that such justifications or excuses are not acceptable.
- Unacceptable verbal behaviour includes any form of racist comments, verbal bullying, verbal aggression, and swearing towards other children, staff or parents. Unacceptable physical behaviour will be dealt with in the same way.
- All incidents must be written down and recorded in the child's folder.
- If the child shows no sign of improvement in behaviour the child's parents must be sent a written warning, explicitly stating what the child is saying or doing that is unacceptable, and warning the parent that the child could be excluded from the nursery if the behaviour does not stop immediately.
- If the behaviour is not resolved, the nursery reserves the right to exclude the child.

*Everybody, nursery staff and parents/carers, must be consistent in their approach to behaviour management*

- Staff working in the nursery must ensure that they regularly return to this policy for support and ideas when dealing with children and their behaviour.