

Behaviour Management Policy



PARKWAY PRE-SCHOOL

We believe that children and adults flourish best in a caring and nurturing environment in where children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being bullied, hurt, unfairly treated or hindered by anyone else.

Aims

We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behaviour and where children 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. 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. We aim to provide a stimulating, calm and inclusive setting.

Methods

- The Pre-school Manager and the SENCO (special needs co-ordinator) have responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.
- Staff will be aware that some behavioural issues may arise from a child's special needs or simply represents communication.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inappropriate behaviour, by helping children to find solutions in ways which **are** appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development.
- All new staff, volunteers and students will be expected to familiarise themselves with the Pre-school's Behaviour Policy and its rules for behaviour.
- All adults in the pre-school will ensure that the rules are applied consistently.
- Adults in the pre-school will praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share, and support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence, as well as a sense of belonging so they feel valued and welcome.

Children under three years in terms of age or level of development

- When children under three struggle with behavioural issues, we recognise that strategies for supporting them need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
- We recognise that very young children are often unable to self-regulate and will require sensitive adults to help them do this.
- Staff will be calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and promote understanding. Emotions will be explored within the setting.

All children

- If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try and find the underlying cause, such as change or upheaval at home, change of carer etc. We help them to understand their own behaviour and how to cope more appropriately.
- We aim to help the children understand that it is the behaviour and **not the child** that is unacceptable.
- Physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking, will be neither used nor threatened.
- Children will never be sent out of the room by themselves.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes will be made clear immediately, but by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- Adults will not shout or raise their voices in a threatening way.
- Recurring problems will be tackled by the whole pre-school, in partnership with the child's parents, using objective observation records to establish an understanding of the cause and how to respond appropriately.
- A Behaviour Plan (IBP) will be written if considered necessary.

Rough & Tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes, such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear preoccupied with these themes, but this does not necessarily mean it will turn into bullying or hurtful behaviour.

- We recognise that rough and tumble play is normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We do not regard them 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 do not get hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play containing shooting, 'baddies and goodies' offer opportunities for exploring concepts of right and wrong.
- We observe the children to understand the content of their play and can suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines - making the most of 'teachable moments'.

Hurtful Behaviour

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without the knowledge of the feeling of the person whom they have hurt.

- We recognise that young children can behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage the feelings that sometimes overwhelm them and we will help them to manage these feelings.
- We will support the process of self-management of emotions by calming the angry child as well as the one who has been hurt.
- We understand that young children need help in understanding the range of feelings they experience and help children with this by naming the feelings.
- We help young children empathise with others and develop social behaviour such as resolving conflict.
- We support social skills through activities, drama and stories.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together.

Specific methods

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 children is to calm them using the information provided by parents, as to how a child likes to be helped when in distress. Many respond well to holding and cuddling. We offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding, even if they are not verbal. We use pictorial representation and Makaton.

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. "Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You did not 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 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. "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. "I can see you are feeling better now, and Adam isn't crying any more. Let us 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 repeatedly 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 and through activities, play 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.

Where all the above and risk management plans do not work, we use the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice to support the child and family.

Persistent Abusive Behaviour

Any persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children is taken very seriously.

If a child disrespects another child or children, we:

- Intervene to stop the child harming the other child/ren
- Explain why their behaviour is inappropriate
- Give reassurance to the children who have been disrespected
- Encourage the child who has behaved unkindly to show they are sorry for their actions
- Make sure that children who behave inconsiderately receive praise when they ARE considerate.
- Do not label children as 'bullies'

When children behave inconsiderately, we discuss what has happened with the parents and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour.

When a child has been on the receiving end, we share what has happened with their parents and explain that the child who behaved unkindly is being encouraged to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

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