



## Behaviour Management Policy

### Statement of intent

Toddington Childcare & Forest School believe that children and adults flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate boundaries and expectations for their behaviour.

### 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.

### Methods

Our Setting Manager, with the support of the Senior Leadership Team have overall responsibility in coordinating our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour. We also believe that all information should be shared between staff.

- Our Behaviour Management team will:
  - 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.
  - Coordinate relevant in-service training for all staff on promoting positive behaviour. Maintain a record of staff training, e.g minuted training at regular staff meetings.
- We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those by members of the setting.

- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive role model of behaviour by treating children, parents/carers and one another with respect, care and courtesy.
- We familiarise new team members and volunteers with the setting's Behaviour Policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- We expect all members of our setting - children, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied constantly.
- We work in partnership with children's parents/carers. Parents/carers 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 self-esteem, confidence and competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group so that they feel valued and welcome.
- 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.
- 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 a child, other children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of our Setting

Manager (Rachel Turner) and are recorded. 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 handle children's unacceptable behaviour in ways which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development - for example by distraction, discussion or by withdrawing the child from the situation.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.

## **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 knowledge 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 to manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand the self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physical 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 and helping children to learn how to regulate their emotions and manage their own feelings.
- We do not engage 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 and provide appropriate comfort e.g holding their hand, a hug. Verbal children will also respond to simple physical contact like hand holding or a hug to calm, however, we offer them explanation and discuss the incident with them appropriate 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 and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? It made you feel angry and you hit him".

- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of the Setting Manager (Rachel Turner) and are recorded. 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 the age of three years**

- When children under the age of three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those of the older children.
- We recognise that very young children are unable to regulate their emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviour 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.

### **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 the 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.

## **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 to another.

Bullying can occur in children five years old and over and may well be an issue in After School Clubs and Holiday Club provisions which include 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 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 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 circumstances 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 their parents and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and
- we share what has happened with their parents, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

This Policy was revised and accepted at a Committee Meeting of Toddington Childcare held in January 2025 and will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed and signed on behalf of Toddington Childcare & Forest School January 2026

Sarah Malcolm

Chair to the committee of Toddington Childcare & Forest School