



Behaviour Management policy

A unique child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping Safe 1.4 Health and Well being	2.1 Respecting each other 2.3 Supporting learning	3.2 Supporting every child	

Statement

The Village pre-school E17 believes that children flourish best when they know how they are expected to behave and should be free to play and learn without fear of being hurt or unfairly restricted by anyone else.

We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behaviour and where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their environment.

Methods

We have a named person – **Kelly Girling (Manager)** - who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.

We require the named person to:

- keep her/himself up-to-date with legislation and research on handling children's behaviour;

- access relevant sources of expertise on handling children's behaviour; and

check that all staff have relevant in-service training on handling children's behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.

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 require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any conflict by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development - for example, distraction, praise and reward.

We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the pre-school's behaviour policy and its rules for behaviour.

We expect all members of the pre-school - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to adhere to the policy, and apply them consistently.

We praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.

We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and we require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by members of the pre-school, subject to our policies and procedures.

When children behave in unacceptable ways, we help them to see what was wrong and how to cope more appropriately in similar situations.

We never send children out of the room by themselves.

We never use or threaten physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking.

We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children. Staff, volunteers and students use positive language to encourage acceptable behaviour. We do not use demoralising words or actions.

We only use physical restraint, such as holding, in extreme cases to prevent physical injury to 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 pre-school manager and are recorded in our Incident Book. The parent/s are informed on the same day and signs the Incident Book to indicate that they have been informed.

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 behaviour.

We handle children's unacceptable behaviour in ways which are appropriate to their age and stage of development - for example, by distraction, discussion or by withdrawing the child from the situation for time out. However, under certain circumstances, where there is a serious problem with a child's behaviour, he/she will be removed with a member of staff from the group and they will return only when the situation has calmed down, and the child has been spoken to in a way appropriate for their age and development. In

extreme situations, we will work with a child one-on-one for a maximum of 30 minutes. If on returning the child to the group the situation recurs, we will contact his/her parents.

The Village Pre-school E17 endeavours at all times to follow a positive behaviour reinforcement policy and staff will always act in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy (Equal Opportunities Policy).

We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. Should unacceptable behaviour persist, we use observation records, tracking observations and tally charts to help us understand the cause, and work with the parents to decide the appropriate response.

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 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 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. "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 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'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.

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 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 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 intervene to stop the child harming the other child or children;
- we explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is inappropriate;
- we give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied;
- we help the child who has done the bullying to say sorry for her/his actions;
- we make sure that children who bully receive praise when they display acceptable behaviour;
- we do not label children who bully;

When children bully, we discuss with their parents what has happened and construct a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and

When children have been bullied, we explain what has happened to their parents, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaviour.

Policy reviewed and updated **September 2021**