

# **North Islington Nursery School & Children's Centre**



## **Behaviour Policy**

**Signed on behalf of Governing Body:**

**Date: 02/09/2020**

**Review Date: March 2022**

## **Introduction**

At North Islington Nursery School we aim to provide an environment in which all children and adults respect, value and care for each other. We accept that children are born with unique personalities, yet learn their behaviour from their surroundings and experiences. It is acknowledged that young children are learning to deal with a complex range of emotions and at times require adult help and support. We believe that in order to implement any steps to achieve or maintain positive behaviour in children, effective communication and cooperation with parents is vital.

The development of social skills is paramount to teaching positive behaviour with young children. The Personal, Social and Emotional (PSED) area of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage outlines the following aims for practitioners to support children working towards:

- Helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others
- To form positive relationships and develop a respect for others
- To develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings
- To understand appropriate behaviour in groups
- Have confidence in their own abilities.

## **Encouraging Positive Behaviour**

We believe that staff, parents and the entire school community must work together to set a good example of behaviour whilst allowing children to experiment and explore. Staff can aid this learning process by being consistent in supporting agreed boundaries and applying agreed procedures. We believe that even our very youngest children appreciate explanations and suggestions of other ways to act so we will always offer a reason for saying 'no' and offer an alternative.

We believe that children need their energies for trying out new behaviour, not for worrying about past inappropriate behaviour so we will deal with difficult situations as they arise, and not postpone the problem to a later time.

From experience we know that children will begin to realise that adults mean what they say when problems are addressed in a consistent way

Staff are encouraged to use a problem solving approach to behaviour management. This approach is explained to staff during the induction process and to parents when staff conduct home visits.

## **The ways in which we encourage positive behaviour include:**

- Involving children in setting the boundaries of acceptable behaviour
- Praising and reinforcing good behaviour
- Treating everyone in the school community with respect
- Valuing individual beliefs, contributions, opinions
- Encouraging children and adults to help each other and accept help from others
- Helping children to recognise, understand and accept their feelings
- Supporting children in finding appropriate ways of dealing with their emotions

## **Responsibilities of staff**

- To create a calm, caring environment where children are treated with respect
- To ensure consistency, staff have agreed what is unacceptable behaviour and will share this with parents at home visits and children during the settling in period
- Ensure that our expectations of children's behaviour are consistent with their level of understanding
- Help children to understand their feelings and find acceptable ways of dealing with them
- Ensure that any sanctions used are appropriate and understood by the child
- Make it clear to all that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable NOT the child
- Help children learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour
- Help children to develop sensitivity to the needs of others and understand the consequences their behaviour may have on others
- Encourage collective and individual responsibility in our care for the nursery environment and everyone in it
- Be consistent in our expectations, taking into account any additional needs
- Where appropriate, use distraction or re-direction to avoid the start of, or escalation of a conflict situation

- Encourage children to take turns, cooperate with each other and share resources as appropriate
- Take time to explain to children why certain types of behaviour are unacceptable or dangerous
- Help children develop the skills and confidence to sort out difficulties or disagreements amongst themselves
- Be prepared to help children to find solutions to disagreements and conflict through negotiation and cooperation but recognise when to “sit back” rather than intervene too quickly
- Discuss with the children any routines or routine changes which may affect their behaviour i.e. 3 mins warning for nappy change

**There are many ways in which we can try to avoid conflict between children, and staff will implement these strategies, such as:**

- Resources, spaces and activities will be organised in a manner that avoids conflict
- Assuming time allows, staff should explain to children that to take part in certain activities they need to wait their turn (use Makaton symbol for “wait” where appropriate). In other cases we try to have multiples of popular equipment and staff will help a child find “another one”.
- Staff should be ready to intervene, if necessary, to role model behaviour that either avoids conflict or finds a peaceful resolution
- Establishing a consistent balanced routine
- Supporting children’s interests and choices
- Planning for transitions
- Keeping waiting periods short and active
- Accepting behavioural differences
- Using observation and planning the moment

### **What is unacceptable behaviour?**

A child’s age and stage of development will always be taken into account when deciding what is unacceptable behaviour is. A 2 year old will respond very differently in social situations to a child who is almost 5. Very young children are ‘egocentric’ which means that they put their own feelings before others, and even the most considerate child will have the occasional outburst due to frustrations or anger. We acknowledge that this is a developmental area that needs to be nurtured and supported and that very young children do not intentionally wish to cause hurt.

#### **1) Behaviour that hurts others:**

**Physical:** Hitting, biting, shaking, kicking, scratching, pushing, pinching, tripping, poking, slapping, throwing things at people

**Verbal:** Name calling, racist remarks, shouting, swearing, argumentative answering back, squabbling

**Emotional:** Emotional threat such as ‘I won’t be your friend’, manipulation or putting down

#### **2) Disrespect for others property:**

- Invasion of a child’s space or privacy such as when using the toilet
- Not waiting for a turn and taking items from others during a game
- Taking items from others which prevent shared use
- Deliberate damage to equipment and books

#### **3) Bullying**

Although the term bullying cannot apply to all unacceptable behaviour from young children, it can develop from a young age. Bullying is a stage beyond not knowing, understanding or being able to carry out acceptable behaviour. **Bullying is deliberately setting out to hurt or undermine another person in a systematic way over a period of time.** It is not the result of a one off quarrel or conflict over a toy.

**Bullying and discriminative behaviour will NOT be tolerated at North Islington Nursery School.**

**Should instances of unacceptable behaviour arise staff will:**

- Approach calmly
- Stop the behaviour using a calm but firm voice – using Makaton sign for stop
- Acknowledge the feelings of child/children “I can see that you are upset....”
- Gather information – we won’t assume that we ‘know’ what happened
- Try to gain eye contact and explain that it is important that the child listens
- If necessary, make gentle, physical contact such as holding hands as this may help the child concentrate on what you are saying
- Restate the problem – for example, “Your friend is hurt“, “You have thrown the toy”
- In clear, simple phrases, remind the child of what behaviour is acceptable
- If age appropriate decide upon a solution together or offer a solution. “Perhaps we could find another train” “Perhaps we could move to a quiet space and calm down”
- Be sure to support and comfort the victim if a child is hurt by another child as this supports the development of empathy
- Be prepared to give follow up support – engaging a child in a new activity, distracting for a short period, modelling acceptable play
- Be quick to praise ‘good’ behaviour such as, “I like the way that you shared that car”

**Positive behaviour strategies are taught in more general ways too and not always after a conflict or incident. Such ways are:**

- Reading stories that highlight feelings, being caring and consequences
- Supporting children to have the confidence to say ‘no’ and say what they ‘do’ want, how to walk away, how to listen to others, how to negotiate and also, how to seek support from an adult
- Provide children with alternative language
- Using group times to discuss examples of unacceptable behaviour and discussing rules which keep us safe
- Talking about differences in people by using stories and puppets – knowing that it is ok to be different and to celebrate this
- Being honest with children in an age appropriate way

**Children under the age of three years**

- 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 and require sensitive adults to help them do this
- Common behaviours may include: biting, hitting and tantrums. During these ‘episodes’ staff will remain calm and will comfort the child as much as possible, acknowledging feelings and talking about them to promote understanding
- If tantrums or biting are frequent types of behaviour observed, we try to find out the underlying cause – such as change or upheaval at home, change of carers etc.
- We focus on ensuring that a child’s key person is building a strong relationship which provides security and reassurance

***“Corporal punishment (smacking, slapping or shaking) is illegal in maintained schools and should not be used.....It is permissible to take necessary physical action on an emergency to prevent personal injury either to the child, other children or an adult or serious damage to property.” The Children Act 1989/2004.***

Such physical action that we may use would be:

- Physically removing a child by carrying them away from the incident
- Gently restraining by holding a child firmly from behind whilst sitting
- Resting hands gently on a child’s knees to keep them still
- Pulling a child back from a dangerous situation such as running into the road

Parents will always be informed at the end of the session when physical restraint has been used.

Persistent inappropriate behaviour which is often linked to a child with additional needs will be recorded on a separate incident sheet and shared with the parent.

Some children may have a Behaviour Plan which is drawn up between the key person, SENCO and parents.

**If the behaviour of a particular child is causing concern, staff will:**

- Discuss the behaviour at a Child Focus Meeting and agree a strategy
- Inform all members of staff about what has been agreed
- As appropriate, discuss with the child's parent(s), explain agreed strategy and ask for support
- Avoid discussing the child's behaviour in front of him/her or other adults unless this is a strategy agreed in advance with the parent e.g. giving the parent a daily update in front of the child
- If after a reasonable period of time there is no improvement in the behaviour, discuss with the SENCO and decide whether a referral to other professionals might be appropriate (note: referrals may only be made with parental support)

**Where staff are concerned that a child is displaying inappropriate behaviour resulting from abuse or neglect, they may seek advice from other professionals or make a referral to Children's Social Care. Staff will always inform parents of this decision and will try to obtain consent. However, where staff believe a child is at risk of significant harm, consent is not required to make a referral to Children's Social Care.**

**Parents are expected to:**

- Familiarise themselves with and support our behaviour policy
- Arrive on time at the beginning and end of your child's day as to do otherwise may cause behavioural difficulties
- Be open to discussing with staff any difficulties that arise concerning their child's behaviour
- When taking part in outings/educational visits or helping out in the school, agree to abide by the expected conduct as outlined by the outing leader or room coordinator
- Refrain from using physical punishment or threatening language when disciplining their children (Note: Under no circumstances may parents use such chastisement on the school premises)
- ALWAYS speak to a staff member regarding any incidents that may occur between children. Please refrain from approaching other children or their parents.
- Treat staff, visitors to the school, other parents & children with respect (We will not accept any form of aggressive or threatening behaviour towards any member of staff)
- Never use school or individual members of staff as a threat to get your child to do what you want

Our **Behaviour Policy and Procedures** have been written in consultation with parents, staff and governors.