

Rainbow Pre-school

Rainbow Pre-school Spirit



Behaviour Management Policy

Statement of Intent

Our pre-school believes that children flourish when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Aim

We aim to teach the children to behave in a socially acceptable way, 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

We have a named person who has overall responsibility for our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour.

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; and to check that all staff have relevant training on promoting positive behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.

We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of and respect those used by members of the setting.

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 settings behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.

We expect all members of our pre-school – children, parents, staff, volunteers and students – to keep to the guidelines consistently.

Rainbow Pre-school, c/o Wordsworth Primary School, Victor Street, Shirley, Southampton, SO15 5LH
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We always work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour, which is recorded on an Incident Form (where appropriate) and discussed between staff and the parents/carers, who are then required to sign the form. These forms are retained by pre-school and may in some cases be used to evidence the need for additional support for the child. 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 behavior. Undesirable behaviour is usually the child trying to say something but has yet to understand and find the words to explain how they feel. We help children find solutions in ways that 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 feelings of competence.

We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our setting, 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 permit children to be smacked or shaken on any of our premises, children have the right to feel that pre-school is a safe place. We are on hand to provide advice as to how to best deal with a difficult situation, so please feel free to ask a member of staff.

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 children or adults and/or serious damage to property.

Details of such event (what happened, action taken and by whom, and any witnesses) are brought to the attention of the Manager and recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is also 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 3 years

When children under 3 behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those of older children.

We recognise that it is a developmental norm for very young children to be unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.

Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting are developmental norms. 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, hurtful behaviour and bullying

Our procedure has been updated to provide additional focus on these kinds of inconsiderate behaviours.

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 are 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 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 to explore the concepts of right and wrong.

We are able to tune into 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 5 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 5, 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 these intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the psychological 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 to be able to control his or her own feelings.

We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage 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 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 experienced. We help children to recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and feeling.

We help young children to learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings.

We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. 'I can see that you are feeling better now and Adam isn't crying anymore. Let's see if we can be friends and find another car, so you both can 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 that 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 pre-school.
- Their parent, or carer in the pre-school does not have the skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response that the child has to express feelings of anger.

- 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.

Physical Restriction intervention

Rainbow pre-school's policy on '**Restrictive Physical Intervention & Handling**' provides guidance on circumstances in which physical restraint may be appropriately used, and procedures that should be in place along with the techniques which are considered to be suitable. It is vitally important that the Director, staff, children and parents/carers understand these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Bullying

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by the 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 and carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress to another.

If a child hurts another child or children:

- We show the children who have been hurt that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them.
- We intervene to stop the child who is hurting from harming the other child or children.
- We explain to the child doing the hurting why his or her behaviour is not acceptable.
- We give reassurance to the child or children that have been hurt.
- We help the child that has been hurting to recognise the impact of their actions.
- We make sure that children who hurt receive positive feedback for their considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practice and reflect on considerate behaviour.
- We do not label children who hurt as 'bullies'.
- We recognise that children who hurt may be experiencing hurting themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstance causing them to express their anger in a negative way towards others.
- We recognise that children who hurt 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 a genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the child as the original behaviour.
- We discuss what has happened with parents of the child who did the hurting and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour.
- We share what has happened with the child who has been hurt, explaining that the child who did the hurting is being helped to adopt a more acceptable way of behaving.

In the event that unacceptable behaviour persists, more serious actions may have to be taken, in accordance with the **Suspensions and Exclusions policy**. At all times, children will have explained to them the potential consequences of their actions.

Please note; parents will be notified immediately if their child is bitten, and if the skin is broken, parents will be asked to collect their child and seek medical advice.

The named Behaviour Management coordinator is displayed in the foyer of each Pre-school.

During periods of prolonged shut downs i.e. Covid-19, it is recognised that children's emotional development can be greatly affected and that this may impact on individual children's behaviour. We have strategies in place to support children's emotional wellbeing whilst at pre-school, including; stories, songs and rhymes, encouraging physical play outdoors, listening and promoting yoga and relaxation related activities.

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This policy was adopted at a meeting at Rainbow Pre-school in September 2021

Signed on behalf of Rainbow Pre-school:

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Policy review date: September 2022