



Behaviour Management Policy

Noah's Ark

A2

Supporting and Understanding Behaviour

Dolphin School Trust
inc. Noah's Ark Nurseries

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Behaviour Management Policy

Our Values

At Noah's Ark we believe children thrive and are happiest when they feel secure in knowing that there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour. We also believe that children flourish best when their personal, social, emotional and spiritual needs are met and catered for in the context of close and caring relationships with key teachers and in a stimulating and inclusive learning environment.

Our Aims

At Noah's Ark we aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to respect and understand the needs and rights of others. All staff and adults working in the school are expected to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care, courtesy and respect.

At Noah's Ark we believe that a consistent and positive approach is paramount when dealing with all aspects of children's care and behavioural issues are no exception. By establishing goals and boundaries that link to the child's stage of development and understanding, children will quickly learn what is expected of them.

Staff at Noah's Ark help children to achieve acceptable standards of behaviour whilst remembering that each child is an individual and that methods of dealing with behaviour may vary and the child's personal circumstances need to be taken into account.

At Noah's Ark we seek to actively promote high expectations of children's behaviour within the nursery and we strive to create an environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.

Our Practice

- We organize the indoor learning environment so that it has a positive impact on behaviour in terms of space, access and choice of activities.
- We establish clear expectations and boundaries for behaviour, appropriate to the children's level of understanding.
- We take a positive and consistent approach towards managing children's behaviour.
- We handle issues of behaviour in ways appropriate to the child's stage of development and level of understanding.
- We encourage appropriate behaviour in all interactions with children and staff and show that good behaviour is valued.
- We encourage children to be aware of the routines and procedures at Noah's Ark.
- We identify and implement strategies that encourage positive behaviour.
- We deal with negative behaviour at the earliest opportunity.
- We record all significant incidents relating to behaviour.

Encouraging Positive Behaviour

- We use praise specifically related to the children's actions or behaviours.
- If appropriate, we refocus the child's attention on another activity.
- We focus on routines and activities to encourage:
 - o Sharing

- o Negotiation
- o Co-operation
- We encourage responsibility in caring for others and the environment e.g. helping with tidying, handing out drinks, snacks and equipment, and setting out activities.
- We encourage positive behaviour through play and learning activities e.g. assembly, stories, role-play.
- We model appropriate behaviours in different contexts.
- We consult with the children in establishing rules for appropriate behaviour.
- We demonstrate that the child is still valued even if the behaviour is unacceptable.
- We discuss with children what is acceptable behaviour in all areas of learning and experiences.
- We encourage the children to express openly their feelings, likes and dislikes in appropriate ways.
- We help the children to understand the consequences and effects of their behaviour on others.
- We help the children to develop assertive strategies to challenge bullying.
- We support the children to resolve conflict with other children.
- We help to support children's self-esteem by enabling them to be successful in play experiences and activities.

Unacceptable Behaviour

- At Noah's Ark we expect all members of staff to use positive strategies for handling any unacceptable 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.
- Unacceptable behaviour includes bullying, name calling, harassment, causing deliberate harm or intentionally hurting a child.

Strategies used to prevent unacceptable behaviour

- 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 group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.

Strategies with children who engage in unacceptable 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 isolate children 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 or deprive them of food, warmth or comfort.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.
- 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.

Physical Intervention

- We do not use any form of physical intervention, such as holding, unless it is necessary to prevent children from causing harm to themselves, to others or serious damage to property.
- Details of such an incident (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are recorded on Engage. The child's parent is informed on the same day.
- All staff are made aware of the national guidelines relating to any form of physical intervention or restraint in educational settings, and follow these guidelines. (See separate 'The Use of Force or Restraint' guidelines)

Children under three years

- When children under three behave in unacceptable 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 or are still learning 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. 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.

Children with Special Needs

- Reasonable adjustments to expectations and responses to inappropriate or undesirable behaviour will be made to those with Special Needs as required by the Equality Act 2010.

Specific Behaviour Issues

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 (co-regulation) 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 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 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? It made you feel angry, didn't it, and you hit him'.
- 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 is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse; and
 - the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
 - if after all appropriate interventions the behaviour continues to be a problem we would work to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to specialist support where necessary.

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.

Bullying

Bullying has never been an issue at Noah's Ark and most children at the nursery are not at the stage of cognitive development needed to be able to plan to carry out premeditated intent to cause distress to another. However, we need to state that we would take any incident of bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children, which is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

If we had a child who bullies another child or children we would:

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

Partnership with Parents

- At Noah's Ark we always work in partnership with children's parents in all areas of their care and education.
- Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their class teacher.
- 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.

- If it became necessary to exclude a child from Noah's Ark we would be committed to supporting the child and his/her family in order to ensure a smooth transition to another setting/service.

To ensure the above policy is carried out

- We have a named person who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.
 - o At Noah's Ark the named persons with overall responsibility for matters relating to behaviour management issues are Rachael Strachan for West Side and Adam Woodcraft at Dolphin.
- The named person will
 - o keep her/himself up to date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support;
 - o access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the programme for supporting Personal, Social and Emotional development;
 - o check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour. A record will be kept of staff attendance at this training.
- We familiarise new staff with the setting's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- 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 expect all members of our setting - children, parents and staff - to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.