

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Managing Behaviour

The provider must have and implement a behaviour management policy and procedures



7.1 Achieving Positive Behaviour

Policy statement

Nomansland Pre-School believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Children need to learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights of others and the impact that the behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within our programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development.

Procedures

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

- We require the named person to:
 - Keep him/herself up to date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour, where it may require additional support;
 - Access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development;
 - Check that all staff have relevant in-service 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 setting's Achieving Positive Behaviour Policy and its guidelines for behaviour.

- We expect all member of our setting – children, parents and staff, volunteers and students to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- We work in partnership with children’s parents. Parents 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 understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond.
- Children in the setting are taught to use the 4 rules of kindness:
 1. Kind Mouths
 2. Kind Hands
 3. Listening Ears
 4. Slow Feet

Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour:

- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use six steps for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children to find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children’s ages and stages of development. These steps are:
 1. Approach calmly
 2. Acknowledge feelings
 3. Gather information
 4. Restate the problem
 5. Ask for solutions and choose one together
 6. Be prepared to give follow-up support
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share. We do this verbally and with certificates.
- 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.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them understand the outcomes of their actions and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately
- We never send children out of the room by themselves, children may be moved to a quiet area to calm down and discuss emotions and behaviours with an adult.
- We never use physical or corporal 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 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 and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parents are informed on the same day.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour and attitudes, 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 three years

- When children under three years behave in inconsiderate ways, we recognise that the strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
- We recognise that young children are 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. 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 promoting understanding.
- If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause – such as change or upheaval at home, or a frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of 'separation anxiety'.
- We focus on ensuring a child's attachment figure in the setting, their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.

Rough and Tumble Play

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 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 'golden rules' 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 violent dramatic strategies eg blowing up and shooting and that themes often refer to 'goodies' and 'baddies' and such offer opportunities for us to explore 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 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 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. "I know that you are angry that Adam took your car when you were playing with it, but hitting is not the way

to solve your problem”. 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 anymore. Let’s see if we can solve your problem together.”
- 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 and 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.
- An ABC chart will be started if the unacceptable behaviour continues
- If a child displays behaviour that is dangerous to him/herself or another child, the child will be removed from the situation and moved to a quiet area.

- If the specific area of the ABC has been identified, then this should be recorded and an individual behaviour plan with suggested actions and goals to work on should be discussed with the child's parents.
- If concerns continue then the advisory teacher can be consulted for advice
- This can either be with the parent's permission or on a 'no-name' basis.

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 schemes catering for slightly 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 his/her 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 make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour;
- 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 the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and

- We 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.

Behavioural signs of abuse

Children may also show negative behaviour if they are subject to abuse. Detailed below is a list of possible signs through behaviour that a child may be the victim of abuse;

Children who live in an unsafe and unpredictable environment will do as little as possible to provoke abuse. These children will be very skilled at meeting adult's needs at an early age, as they strive to understand what exactly triggers an attack.

Children who are subject to physical aggression often become aggressive themselves, usually towards other children. This maybe because attacking another child releases the frustration and anger a young child can feel, when they are the subject of abuse. It can also be because the child has learnt that this is a way of dealing with another human that is effective in terms of getting his own way. Children who suffer sexual abuse can also become physically and sexually aggressive to other children.

A young child who is sexually abused by an adult may learn to relate to other adults in a sexual way, because this is how they have learnt to please grown-ups. This can be extremely disconcerting for those adults and may well make the child vulnerable to further abuse.

Emotional abuse, which often results from other types of abuse, can lead to a low self-esteem and poor self-confidence. The child may have little sense of self-worth through being denied basic love and care, through being treated as an object, denied the right to have needs, views and options of his own, and perhaps being made to feel that he deserves the treatment he has received. Children who are sexually abused are often made to feel valueless because they are denied the right to make choices about most intimate parts of themselves.

Emotional abuse can also lead to disruptive behaviour aimed at those around the child. This may involve angry, defiant behaviour, refusal to follow instructions, damage to property and attacks on others. Some children, however, may behave differently and become withdrawn, indifferent and depressed. All abuse involves the child in high levels of stress and this may result in strange or bizarre behaviour. Regressive behaviour where the child returns to behaviour patterns of younger children, or self-destructive behaviour where the child attempts to harm themselves.

Further guidance:

- Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (DfES 2001)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DFE 2015)

This policy was originally adopted at a meeting of Nomansland Pre-school

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Signed on behalf of the management committee



Name of signatory Nikola Bishop

Role of signatory Chair

Other useful Pre-School Learning Alliance publications

- The Social Child (2007)
- Reflecting on Behaviour (2010)