ACHIEVING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Policy

We aim to provide a warm caring environment where every child and adult feels valued and respected. We acknowledge the importance of encouraging others to recognise the importance of this and reflecting this in our daily practice as we work with children and families.

Positive behaviour is actively promoted through the use of consistent and positive re-enforcements as we are rewarding children through recognition of their efforts, enabling them to develop a sense of responsibility, and a positive self-image. In this way, every child can enjoy his or her play without fear of being hurt or unfairly restricted by anyone else.

We believe that an environment that enables children and adults to respond effectively is one that is honest, open and supportive. This can only be achieved where there are clear, consistent goals and boundaries are clearly set and communicated to all involved in the care of the child. Working in partnership with parents/carers as well as staff, provides the necessary security that children need to maintain an emotional well-being. Information will be maintained between the home and Stepping Stones to ensure that there is a consistent approach to children's behaviour and their development. Children may be encouraged to join in the process of setting codes of behaviour for the Centre where it is considered appropriate.

Physical punishments, or threats of them, must never be used.

Aim

- We aim to ensure that all children:
- Develop high levels of self-respect and self esteem
- Are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions
- Learn to treat others with empathy, consideration and safety in accordance with their level of development.
- Are supported and encouraged in an environment where mistakes are accepted as an opportunity for learning
- Take appropriate care of the play equipment and the environment
- Learn appropriate behaviour in a range of situations

We will work to a Code of Behaviour which is inclusive for all: be kind and friendly, be helpful and thoughtful, and keep yourselves and others safe

Procedure

The Manager at Stepping Stones along with the Early Year's Team is responsible for behaviour management. The team will work with individual children and their families if issues of unacceptable behaviour arise and will seek out additional support if the need arises.

These people are required to:

- Keep up to date with legislation, research and good practice in regard to behaviour management
- Consult with and support staff in working with parents to implement shared strategies to improve individual children's behaviour
- Access relevant sources of expertise such as the SENCO, Area SENCO and Health Visitor, working with parents, within a multi-agency approach
- Ensure that all Centre staff are kept up to date on the behaviour management policies and procedures during their initial induction and then ongoing at staff meetings or training events
- Ensure that all staff are supported in the management of children's behaviour on a day to day basis as well as dealing with specific issues

Dealing with Behaviour

Staff are not permitted to use any form of corporal or physical punishment. Any staff member using any form of physical or corporal punishment, including the use on their own child where applicable at any time will be considered a child protection issue and managed under our Safeguarding Children policy and procedure. Staff who observe such practice must report the matter to the Manager immediately. In some exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to physically restrain a child in order to prevent:

- Personal injury to the child
- Personal injury to another child or adult
- Immediate danger of death to the child
- Immediate danger of death to another child or adult
- Serious damage to property

It is only under these circumstances where it is the judgement of staff to restrain a child as a result of a real or potential danger. The child will only be restrained by holding them until the danger has passed and will be released as soon as it is safe to do so. The child will be given an explanation in relation to their stage of development and understanding, as soon as is practicably possible either during the period of restraint or as soon as the child is released. Staff will ensure the child is reassured as appropriate to the child's individual needs and encouraged to return to play activities as soon as possible. The member of staff involved will complete a Restrain Record Form and including witness details and signatures. Parents are to be informed as soon as possible and asked to sign the Restrain Record Form to confirm this.

The manager will be informed of the incident and asked to sign the form along with the parents. The form will be stored in the child's confidential file.

Staff Guidance

All staff are expected to act in an appropriate way towards children and adults and treat them with the same respect and dignity that they would expect to be treated themselves. All individuals whether child or adult should be spoken to appropriately; it is unacceptable to shout or make inappropriate comments to or about any individual. Giving consideration to the following areas may help to promote positive behaviour in a practical way, as well as helping to prevent instances of unacceptable behaviour.

Staff, Volunteers and Students will:

- Provide a positive role model by treating all children, parents and one another with respect and courtesy.
- Promote children's positive behaviour by recognising and acknowledging care for others and their belongings, kindness and willingness to share, through the appropriate use of positive re-enforcements
- Provide children with ways of dealing with their own frustrations and those of others and to stand up for themselves so that adults and children listen to them e.g. discussion and distraction, or some quiet thinking time with adult support

The Environment

We will give thought to how the area is organised:

- Are there any large open areas that encourage children to run around at appropriate times?
- Are the specified play areas clearly identified, located in the right place and fit for purpose?
- How is the furniture arranged and does it allow children to work alone, in small groups and in large groups?
- Older children can set their own behaviour code for their room and of the group with adult support
- Are the children aware of the Codes of Behaviour that apply to particular resources, e.g. only four in the sand/water at one time or two at the painting table?
- Are the play areas organised to allow children to work quietly and thoughtfully when they wish to e.g. the book corner. Is this organised in a way that allows children to concentrate effectively on what they are doing? What about the need to let off steam?
- What about deployment of staff? Are the adults aware of the children's needs in certain areas?
- Can the children share when feel ok to do so?

The Day

We will give thought to the day:

- Are the planned opportunities for the children to work on their own and with others as required by their individual needs?
- Are there opportunities to be quiet and calm, e.g. rest periods, sleep, stories
- Are there physical play opportunities for the promotion of physical skills and also to allow children to use their excess energy
- Are there opportunities for indoor and outdoor play? Are indoor activities taken outdoor and offered on a larger scale?
- Are children given the sufficient time to make free choices and access play equipment and activities that interest them?
  Are children encouraged to make use of routines in an interesting way e.g. tidying up as a sorting game, wiping tables after lunch
- Are children informed ahead of time about changes in the routine e.g. giving them advance warning of when the tidy up is
- Is the routine flexible enough to allow children to follow their interests should they wish to

Planned Activities

We will give thought to how activities, both adult directed and child initiated are undertaken within the EYFS.

- Are activities stimulating, interesting and sufficiently challenging? Are they suitable for the child's level of development?
- Have you considered the children's current interests and included these into planning, as well as appropriate activities for the current theme
- Have you thought about children's individual needs? Have you ensured that all children can easily access the activities?
- Have you prepared resources sufficiently well in advance so that they are ready for use or are children waiting for you to gather what you need for the activity?
- Do you have enough resources?
- Do the activities make use of real, first hand, practical experiences? Are they fun?
- Do you offer the opportunity to be involved in 1-2-1 activities, as well as small and large group activities? Is the size of the group appropriate to the activity being offered?
- Are activities at the start and end of the day easily managed to enable you to conduct discussions with parents at arrival and when collecting?
- Are the adults deployed appropriately?
- Are adults aware of how to use the activities to support children's learning and to encourage positive behaviour and care of others?
- Do you evaluate the activities to determine how effective they were and how best they could be adapted for future use?

Free Choice Times

- Are the resources freely accessible to all children?
- Are there sufficient and appropriate resources for the number of children?

- Is there sufficient flexibility to enable children to change the resources as long as they put the existing ones away?
- Is the choice of activity stimulating, interesting and challenging?
- Is there an interesting range of activities available?
- How are the adults deployed? Is this effective? Are the adults aware of when to intervene and when to stand back and observe?
- Free flow opportunities to use inside – outside learning

Circle Times

Thought needs to be given to the organisation of circle time or small group circle time.

- How long and how are they expected to sit/lie etc?
- Is the size of the group appropriate?
- Is there consideration for specific individual needs and special educational needs e.g. the differences in individual children's ability to concentrate and previous experience of circle time
- Is the time used effectively to discuss behaviour, goals and boundaries with children, e.g. through stories, role play, acting or the use of puppets?
- Are children encouraged to take turns to speak?

Other Points to Consider

- Are children given praise at the appropriate time?
- Is praise being used to control behaviour rather than to encourage positive behaviour and highlight the benefits of positive behaviour to children?
- Are children thanked when they tidy up rather than told they have been good for tidying up?
- Do children clearly know and understand the goals and boundaries that are placed upon them?
- Is it appropriate to reward children who are meeting normal expectations of behaviour that are appropriate for their stage of development?
- Are children asked to carry out tasks with a please and thank you used?
- Do adults treat each other in the same way and demonstrate appropriate behaviour to the children?
- Are children rewarded when they exceed normal expectations placed upon them?
- Are the children treated with the same respect and dignity and spoken to in a way that you would give to any other adult and expect yourself?
- If children do not want to speak or sit they are not forced to take part.

Behaviour Management Strategies

- Distraction
- Diversion
- Bring to child's attention

- Choices and consequences
- Thinking time when age appropriate
- Restraint

Distraction

Distraction is particularly important strategy with infants because it places attention on the behaviour and not the child. Distraction acknowledges that young children are curious about their environment by offering an alternative to the negative behaviour in a warm but firm manner e.g. if a child pushes another child over, offering a car or pushchair to push with an explanation stating that we push a car and not people, the child's attention has been directed to an equally appealing activity and an explanation of what can and cannot be pushed has been given.

Diversion

Diversion is similar to distraction and is a useful tool when children are not easily distracted from the inappropriate behaviour. The adult needs to decide what behaviours are unacceptable and what alternatives they can offer instead. For example, where a child wants to join a particular activity but there is no space for them to participate, knowing from experience that this may present a problem; the adult diverts the child's attention to another activity, informing them that they can join the activity once there is space.

Bring to Child's Attention (adult focussed)

When a child has behaved in an inappropriate way, it is the adult who needs to discuss this with the child (age appropriate) by talking about what they have done and why the behaviour is not acceptable to them.

Choices and Consequences

It is important that children are given daily opportunities to make choices and decisions. It is part of becoming independent and taking responsibility, skills they need to develop as they progress through school and into adult life. Making choices and decisions always has consequences, sometimes this is positive and sometimes this is negative. By allowing a child to make choices, they will learn through their own actions:

- The limits and boundaries of behaviour are communicated to the child as unacceptable behaviour occurs
- That they will be given the opportunity to calm down and gain self control
- They will be provided with an opportunity to settle into an activity where they can be rewarded quickly for positive behaviour
- The consequences of their choices and decisions, enabling them to make informed decisions and develop their independence and confidence
- Directing the child into a new activity promptly informs the child that their behaviour is unacceptable and deciding to behave in this way has consequences

When giving choices to children during verbal reprimands, it is important that:

- The choices are realistic and can be easily followed through e.g. if you repeat the behaviour once more you will have to do another activity
- The consequences flow from the choice e.g. where a child is told that they need to change their behaviour and don't, that the carer carries out the consequence such as remove them from the activity
- The child may need support to complete what they are doing and to move to the new activity that the carer has identified
- A calm, firm but kind approach should be used
- The choices are never threatening e.g. if you continue the behaviour I will tell your mummy
- Children should be provided with the opportunity to change their behaviour and return to the activity after a few minutes with a clean slate
- It is not appropriate to keep reminding the child of their previous negative behaviour. Further, it gives them the opportunity to be rewarded for positive behaviour within a short time scale.

Thinking time

This means a short spell away from other children and activities in the company of one adult who can provide space and calm to enable the child to come to terms with the situation. Here, the child needs to know:

- that such behaviour will always be stopped
- why it is unacceptable to behave in such a way
- that the child is still wanted and valued
- that adult help will be available to help the child avoid such behaviour in the future
- that if the unacceptable behaviour arose from strong feelings of anger or frustration, there is nothing wrong with the feelings themselves, only the way in which they were expressed.

We also need to recognise that a child who has 'lost control' (by, for example, swearing, or throwing things) is demonstrating that they may be feeling any of a range of painful emotions. They may be scared, hurt, confused, angry, anxious. It is important to confirm their feelings and let them know that it is our job to help.

Sometimes the extreme behaviour of children can raise powerful feelings within the adult. For example, we may find it very hard when a child swears, but we must remember that children are 'learning', and our job is to support them in learning how to manage their behaviour, rather than provide a knee-jerk reaction of horror.

Restraint

Restraint should never be used with children unless it is an absolute emergency situation that may result in physical harm to the child or their peers. For example, during an outing a child lets go of the adults hand and runs towards the road. The adult catches hold of their hand

saying “hold my hand and walk with me as there are cars on the road and you could get hurt”. This may be sufficient to promote the child to walk nicely with the adult.

The adult must give careful consideration to the use of restraint because attempting to restrain a child may result in injury to themselves as well as the child. When a child is in a rage or tantrum, it is impossible to reason or discuss with them what has made them angry. For example, where a child becomes angry because they have been asked to help tidy up and they start to pull things from the shelves and start to throw them across the room. The child does not respond to the key person’s request to stop and they continue to throw toys; the other children and staff are in danger of being injured.

There are two options, remove the child to another area so that they calm down or remove the other children and allow the child to calm down where they are. Wherever possible, it is always easier to remove the other children and adults from the situation.

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 and 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 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 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 practice and reflect on considerate behaviour
- We do not label children as bullies
- We recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstances that 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

- We share what has happened with the parents of the child that has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

Children under Three Years

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

We recognise that very young children are unable to regulate their emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to do so.

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.

If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause – such as a change of upheaval at home, or a frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be a result of separation anxiety.

We focus on ensuring a child's attachment figures in the setting, their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.