

Bognor Regis Nursery School

Behaviour Policy

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1. Introduction

In partnership with parents, the School aims to support each child to develop a growing understanding of what is right and wrong and why, as well as learning about the impact of their words and actions on themselves, others and the environment. We believe that positive behaviour and attitudes to learning need to be planned for and taught actively and that if we acknowledge positive actions we will encourage them. Parents and carers are valued as equal partners and have an important role in promoting positive attitudes.

2. Expectations of adults and children in the Nursery School

We have created a behaviour policy that relates to the whole School community. The policy supports our positive and inclusive ethos and we expect that every member of the community should:

- treat others with consideration and respect;
- care for resources and the environment;
- listen actively to each other;
- work together to resolve problems;
- acknowledge that others are there to support and help;
- demonstrate developmentally appropriate behavior;
- understand the need for rules and boundaries;
- learn to recognise the impact of our actions and reactions on others;
- develop a sense of right and wrong.

3. Strategies to promote children's positive behaviour

We recognize that children's emotional well being is closely related to their behaviour. Successful personal, social and emotional development is critical for children's positive interactions with others and their environment. The Personal, Social and Emotional Development Policy closely supports this Behaviour Policy and should be referred to.

We also recognise that language needs are often central to behavioral, emotional and social difficulties and we try to address these needs throughout the School.

- **Role models:** Good adult role models are vital. Children watch and learn from staff's interactions with other children, parents, colleagues and the environment. Adults act as positive role models and play alongside children, supporting their interactions.
- **Use of language:** An adult's language should be clear, simple and, if possible, supported by Makaton. Children need to understand an instruction in order to be able to follow it.
- **Listening to each other:** Adults make time to listen to parents and children. Early intervention and open communication with parents / carers is crucial to ensuring that behaviour patterns do not escalate. Everyone's views are listened to and considered fairly. Staff should always keep the needs and developmental stage of the child firmly in mind, taking into account their cues as necessary.

- **Working together to resolve conflict:** Staff use the six step approach to problem solving (Highscope). *The conflict resolution skills help children to be more co-operative and have enhanced academic achievement and school performance* (DFES 2001).
- **Keeping calm:** Staff need to recognise that younger children may become very distressed when they lose control/have tantrums. These children may need comforting and calming before any unwanted behavior can be addressed.
- **Support and help:** Children (and adults) are encouraged to seek help when necessary, knowing that others will be supportive. We work together as a team to discuss and decide on appropriate interventions. Some children may need specific targeted support with developing self confidence and self esteem or with learning social interaction skills. This may take the form of small group support or individual support within the environment. Approaches will take into consideration children's additional needs, interests and schemas.

In some circumstances alternative physical activities will be provided for children to release their tension and emotion, e.g. programmes recommended by the Occupational Therapist (e.g. brushing, stroking, massage).

- **Use of praise:** Adults will verbally praise positive behaviour as appropriate for children's level of maturity and developmental stage. Praise needs to be specific and relevant to the child (describing the behaviour) e.g. 'well done, you waited for your turn'. Praise is most effective at promoting the behaviour when it is used immediately and shared with parents.
- **Sharing expectations:** Adults will involve children in discussions about expected behaviour, sharing expectations and listening to children's views. A range of resources will be used to support children's understanding, e.g. puppets, role play, stories. Parents / carers are involved in discussions about strategies used with their child. This will help to develop a consistency of approach between home and the School. Where a specific strategy is used all staff will be made aware of it through staff meetings and the production of a One Page Profile.

4. Minimizing and responding to inappropriate behaviour

The School acknowledges that young children can demonstrate unacceptable behaviour. The staff seek to minimize this through the cultivation of a caring and supportive ethos (section 2 above).

Staff discuss any incidents of inappropriate behaviour with the child, explaining why it is unacceptable and that it must stop. If such behaviour persists, an explanation is given to the child about what will happen if he/she does not stop. The most common strategy is withdrawal from an activity or workshop area. In exceptional circumstances staff may consider restraint (see related section p. 6).

When a child or a group of children are regularly causing concern, behavioral issues are discussed with the team and with parents / carers. Further information will be gathered through observations and tracking children in the environment. Strategies to promote positive behaviour are used and shared with the child and parents.

If inappropriate behaviour persists then the following strategies may be implemented:

- sharing of video observations;
- STAR Behaviour log;
- production of a One Page Profile;
- group interventions;
- serious incident procedures;
- involvement of outside agencies;
- Bullying Policy (in Resources file linked to Behaviour Policy).

Staff seek partnership with parents / carers actively, not only in promoting good behaviour, but also in addressing any difficulty. The School recognises that children's behaviour can be linked to family situations, both influenced by them and influencing them. The relationship between staff and parents / carers is based on trust and understanding. The School endeavors to support parents / carers sensitively, acknowledging their role as primary educators of their children. Some parents / carers may lack confidence in their own ability to support their children's development: in such circumstances the staff's training in children's holistic development enables the School to offer support. Emotions play a central role in the regulation of both individual and interpersonal behaviour. Part of the children's Key Workers' role is to make themselves available to parents / carers and work in partnership to develop strategies to support individual children's behaviour in school or home. It may be appropriate for additional staff members, such as the Family Support Worker, to become involved if parents / carers would like additional support. Where necessary, advice is sought from other sources.

The School encourages parents / carers to share concerns about children's behaviour with staff and staff will do likewise. Several conditions may precipitate children's problems, for example, difficulty in communicating with his / her peers or adults. When difficulties are identified a staged intervention programme is initiated following consultation with parents / carers. The Behaviour Logs and the One Page Profile are useful tools for recording behaviour and developing an appropriate plan for individual children.

Children are cared for and educated in accordance with the School's Single Equalities Policy, taking into account variations in expectations for children from different cultures: for example, in some cultures it is considered disrespectful for a child to look an adult in the eye. In such situations staff are careful to avoid forcing change.

5. Bullying

While actively promoting good behaviour the School recognizes that incidents of bullying may occur. These are very unusual in children of this age but are taken seriously if they do occur. Victims of bullying can be adversely affected, as can other children and the perpetrator.

Bullying is viewed very seriously and discouraged firmly. The staff identify, where possible, factors that predispose individual children to bully, or to become victims, or potential victims. They look also for symptoms suggesting incidents of bullying that may have escaped notice (e.g. reports of unwillingness of "victims" to come to the School, changes in sleeping pattern, wetting, becoming withdrawn, lacking confidence, becoming aggressive). Such children often differ from fellow children in some way, and lack close friends.

Guidelines (categorizing both bullies and victims) and specific strategies for resolving individual bullying incidents, together with strategies for supporting children in the longer term are found in the Resources file associated with this policy.

With respect to specific bullying incidents staff:

- intervene immediately if the incident is still in progress;
- ask both the bully and the victim what happened (allowing adequate time for response);
- consider whether the child has bullied before;
- establish from the child why he/she bullied and what alternative actions might have been open to him/her (suggest if appropriate, alternative strategies);
- explain the difference between aggressive and assertive behaviour;
- establish with parents whether anything is troubling the child; if possible resolve problem;
- reassure the child that he/she is still liked but that his/her behaviour is not acceptable; and that you will work together to improve it;
- explain what is expected of the child in the School;
- set short term goals – with support from the staff. Inform all staff, at planning meetings, of decisions taken to ensure consistency of approach;
- avoid requesting an apology (potentially confrontational). However, it may help to explain that saying “sorry” may help the victim to feel better;
- praise good behaviour and achievement, enhancing self-image;
- act as a role model to empathise with the victim or to work out alternative ways of behaving;
- support the child in developing negotiation skills. In so doing explain that he/she can always leave a situation if it is becoming out of control.

N.B. There is additional information about dealing with bullying in the staff library including the “no blame”, “shared concern” approach.

Similarly, staff work with the “victim” to reduce future susceptibility to victimization. The linked Resource file presents strategies aimed broadly at improving self-image, achievement, communication/negotiation skills, assertiveness, initiative, assurance of support and removal (together with parents / carers) of factors which can precipitate victimization.

Children who observe a bullying incident will be affected in some way (e.g. feel worried, helpless or guilty). They are encouraged by the staff towards an “it’s alright to tell” attitude e.g. during discussion at group-time when their self-esteem can be increased and good behaviour, kindness to others and helpfulness praised.

All incidents observed by other staff are immediately reported to the children’s Key Workers. Serious incidents are reported to the Headteacher as soon as practicable. The information is also shared with parents / carers.

6. Physical Restraint of Children in Exceptional Circumstances (Positive Handling)

The School, drawing upon both the guidance in the DfES circular relating to Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and the West Sussex Education Authority’s “Model Policy on the Use of Reasonable Force to Restrain Pupils, recognises that designated staff may have to resort to physical restraint of pupils in certain exceptional circumstances and within carefully prescribed limits appropriate to very young children. This Behaviour Policy should be read in conjunction with the School’s “Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy”. All staff understand clearly that the School’s Policy, in accordance with the law, forbids them to resort to physical contact deliberately intended to punish a child by causing pain, injury or humiliation. Physical restraint is a last resort to be employed when other corrective measures have failed; and then only with the minimal force necessary.

Staff may employ physical restraint (other measures having failed):

- in self-defense;
- if a child commits (or is about to commit) what would have been a crime had he/she reached the age of criminal responsibility;
- if there is imminent risk of injury;
- if there is a developing risk of injury or significant damage to property;
- (noting LA advice that particular caution should be exercised) a pupil's behaviour compromises good order and behaviour.

Examples that may be seen at the School could include:

- a child hitting a member of staff or another child;
- fighting;
- misuse of potentially dangerous materials or objects e.g. scissors or bricks;
- a child running inside or behaving in a way that could injure him/herself or others;
- a child trying to leave the school building without supervision;
- a child persistently refusing to leave an activity/work area when requested after inappropriate behaviour.

In the absence of a legal definition of "reasonable force", the School follows the following precepts:

- physical force is not justified for trivial misdemeanors or situations that can be resolved without force;
- the degree of force used must be proportionate to the circumstance/incident; it should always be the minimum required to be effective; and it should take into account the age and understanding of the child together with any individual physical vulnerability.

Thus authorised personnel, using the minimum necessary force, may, in conformity with LA Policy:

- physically interpose themselves between children;
- block a child's path;
- push a child (to remove a child from immediate danger if safety is compromised);
- pull a child (to remove from immediate danger if safety is compromised);
- lead a child by the hand;
- shepherd a child away by placing a hand in the center of the back;
- hold (but not lift) a child, in a manner intended to avoid injury to the child or to others in the vicinity;
- in exceptional circumstances, where there is immediate risk of injury, staff may take any necessary action consistent with the concept of reasonable force (e.g. in preventing a child running off a pavement into a busy road).

If staff use any form of physical restraint they complete a restraint form (in linked Resource file) which is given to the Headteacher and shared with parents / carers. This will result in the negotiation of a Positive Handling Plan.

The DfE circular and LA Policy list a number of actions considered to be unacceptable (as they could lead to injury). Although the long-standing ethos of the School precludes any such actions, the staff take note of them and recognize that actions other than those designated above are forbidden.

Detailed procedural guidance is available in the Resource file.

7. Complaints Procedure

If parents / carers are not satisfied with the way in which an incident has been addressed they are requested first to consult with the child's Key Worker and later the Headteacher. If still dissatisfied, the complaint can be taken to governors for complaint procedure consultation. If this does not resolve the situation a written complaint can be addressed to the LA Education Officer / Ofsted:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Daycare enquiries Tel: 0300 123 1231
Education enquiries Tel: 0300 123 4234

8. Evaluation

Governors and the Senior Management Team monitor children's behaviour routinely using direct observation, the evidence available from the ongoing record keeping process and the separate reporting of bullying and incidents of inappropriate behaviour necessitating exceptional action. From the analysis of this information and after whole School team discussion, the degree of success of this Policy is established and modifications to procedures introduced where appropriate.

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