Positive Behaviour Management Policy

**Statement of intent**

The Ark Nursery believes that children meet their developmental milestones more easily when their personal, social and emotional needs are met. Children also need to have clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

**Methods**

The Manager has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.

Staff will keep up to date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children’s behaviour where it may require additional support.

Staff will all have relevant in-house training on promoting positive behaviour.

We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.

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 behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.

We expect all members of our setting – children, parents, 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 to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

**Strategies**

We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate 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.

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 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 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.

We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children

We use physical restraint, 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 management and are recorded in the incident file. The child’s parent is informed on the same day, and signs to say they are aware. Incidents are also recorded in the child’s file.

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 voices in a threatening way to respond to children.

**Children under three years**

When children under three behave in inconsiderate 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 to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them to do this.

Common behaviour in young children includes 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.

**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. Please see attached individual group room details.

We recognise that fantasy play can also contain violently dramatic strategies blowing up, shooting etc. and 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.

**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. 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 as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.

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 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 the feeling.

We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy.

We are aware that the same problem may happen repeatedly 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.

**Working together with parents**

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 be in the setting; the child may be missing a parent who is often at work or called away for other reasons.

The family routine is disrupted for unavoidable reasons and the child may be feeling confused and anxious

Their parent, 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.

The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.

Where this does not work, we use the Child Protection Code of Practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals where necessary.

**Bullying**

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent 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, so is unlikely to happen in nursery. However, occasionally children will continue to go to nursery until they are rising five.

**If a child 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.

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 her/his 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.

This policy will be reviewed annually

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date | Review |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |