

Meppershall Pre-school

Behaviour management policy

Statement of Intent

Our pre-school believes that children flourish best when they know how they are expected to behave and should be free to play and learn without fear of being hurt or unfairly restricted by anyone else.

Aim

We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behaviour and where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their environment.

Methods

- Our nominated person, who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour is Ella Carey-Butler, supported by Lisa Bland.
- We require the nominated person to:
 - keep herself up-to-date with legislation and research and thinking on handling children's behaviour;
 - access relevant sources of expertise on handling children's behaviour; and
 - check that all staff have relevant in-service training on handling children's behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.
 - Ella has attended Triple P Training.
- 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 require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any conflict by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development - for example distraction, praise and reward.
- We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the pre-school's behaviour policy and its rules for behaviour.
- Staff receive the support of the Committee in matters concerning behaviour. Often problem behaviour is discussed at staff meetings to find the best solution for the setting and any child concerned.
- We expect all members of the pre-school - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the rules, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- We praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.
- Each key person will build a strong and positive relationship with and the child and his/her family.
- In any case of misbehaviour, it will always be made clear to the child or children in question, that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome.
- If any form of manual or physical contact is required in a situation where a child's behaviour is deemed as unsafe to themselves and/or to those around them we will follow the guidance in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2023 which is reinforced in our Staff Code of Conduct.
- 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 pre-school.
- When children behave in unacceptable ways, we help them to see what was wrong and 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. Children are never threatened with

these.

- We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.
- When a child's behaviour causes concern staff will ensure that if a child needs to release their emotions the surrounding area is made as safe as possible to prevent the child injuring themselves or a staff member. Other children will be removed from the vicinity and offered activities at a safe distance.
- We only use physical restraint, such as holding, 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 pre-school leader and are recorded on a communication with parents sheet. A parent is informed on the same day and signs the sheet to indicate that he/she has been informed.
- 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 our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's behaviour.
- We handle children's unacceptable behaviour in ways which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development - for example by distraction, discussion or by withdrawing the child from the situation.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key worker. We work with parents to address recurring unacceptable behaviour, using objective observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately. Incidents will be recorded on an Information Exchange sheet and the parent/carer asked to sign it each time an incident occurs. Sometimes a 'home/school book' is started to help staff and parents to communicate more effectively.
- Staff are willing to take on board any specific behaviour worries that a parent may have and will offer advice to parents with suggestions on how similar behaviour would be tackled in the setting.
- The children are encouraged to clear up after their own play. Tidying up is a group activity, with staff encouraging all children to tidy up something from their play.
- Consistency is essential to ensure fair treatment and an equality of 'rules' within the setting. All staff are aware of what is acceptable and will follow the guidelines laid down in the Behaviour Policy.
- Adults will be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child's special needs.

Children Act Regulations – you must not give corporal punishment to a child in your care, or allow any other person looking after children, or living and working on the premises to do so.

Bullying

We believe that children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. We take bullying very seriously.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- we intervene to stop the child harming the other child or children;
- we explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is inappropriate;
- we give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied;
- we help the child who has done the bullying to say sorry for her/his actions;
- we make sure that children who bully receive praise when they display acceptable behaviour;
- we do not label children who bully;
- when children bully, we discuss what has happened with their parents and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and
- when children have been bullied, we share what has happened with their parents, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.
- Keep accurate and detailed records of all reported bullying in our incident book.
- Increase staff awareness of the issue

Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks

- These are unacceptable in the Pre School.

- The response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.

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.

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 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, rather we will deal with them in a calm verbal manner or by cuddling and 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. For example, acknowledging that a child may have become angry because another child snatched away their toy. 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. For example, if a child hits another child, we will explain that if the role was reversed, it would have upset the child who had hit.
- 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 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.
- Where this does not work, the Manager will consider an action plan and make the appropriate referrals to external agencies as appropriate.

Date approved by Pre-school committee	
Signed by Pre-school leader	
Signed by Pre-school chair	
Signed by Pre-school staff	