



## Promoting Positive Behaviour.

At Little Gulls & Buoy's we believe that as educators we have a responsibility to support children in their learning about behaviour. Children are not born with fixed patterns of behaviour. Children learn ways of behaving. They have a great capacity to learn positive behaviour with the help and guidance of adults. It would be unreasonable to expect children to have done all this learning by the time they enter the pre-school. We seek to reassure parents that our aims for children's behaviour, stated below, are not an expectation, either on entry or after a specific period, but a list of those qualities which we are committed to helping children develop

### **Procedures**

Our behaviour management representative is Lyndsey Bedford. They are responsible for:

- Overseeing behaviour management issues at Little Gulls & Buoy's.
- Keeping up-to-date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support.
- Advising other staff members on behaviour issues.
- Ensuring that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour.
- Liaising with and working with outside agencies.

### *Our beliefs about children's behaviour.*

We have specific aims for developing the children's dispositions, abilities and attitudes to behaviour. We aim for children to begin to:

- Recognise their own feelings and the feelings of others, to know that they have a right to these feelings and are able to find positive ways to deal with them.
- Develop an understanding of self and sensitivity towards others.
- Show respect, kindness and consideration to others.
- Treat their environment with respect, taking care of resources and putting them away carefully.
- Respect their own and other's possessions.
- Co-operate with reasonable requests and follow instructions.
- Share equipment and space amicably and take turns when appropriate.
- Resolve conflicts and problems without resorting to violence or aggression.
- Think about the consequences of their actions and take responsibility for them.
- Respect their own culture and beliefs and those of others.
- Tolerate and value differences.
- Feel confident in seeking help from others where needed. Develop a sense of justice and fairness.

### *How we support and encourage positive behaviour.*

Inappropriate behaviour can be a response to an inappropriate environment. At Little Gulls & Buoy's we are able to avoid many potential behaviour difficulties by providing an appropriate, safe and supportive

environment in which young children can learn, play and interact together. We do this by:

- Allowing the children to make their own choices about the activities they want to explore and be involved in.
- Allowing children to choose whether they want to play indoors or outdoors.
- Ensuring that children are able to self-initiate and self-terminate tasks.
- Allowing the children to set themselves challenges whenever possible.
- Making it possible for the children to access resources independently.
- Ensuring that there are a wide range of activities available indoors and outdoors, catering for a wide range of learning styles and differing abilities.
- Making sure that children do not have to wait too long for their turn, by using strategies such as sand timers or having multiple sets of resources whenever possible.
- Using strategies such as visual timetables to reassure children of the basic structure of the session.
- Ensuring that staff are deployed in a way that enables them to be flexible and leave their focus activity in order to give priority to supporting children's behaviour.

### *The pre-school staff*

Well qualified and experienced staff are crucial to the implementation of this policy. Staff have a sound understanding of child development and realistic expectations appropriate to each child's age, understanding and ability. They are sensitive to the personal circumstances of each child that may impact on their behaviour. Staff will use a wide range of strategies to encourage positive behaviour, including:

- Praising positive behaviour and making clear the aspect of behaviour they are praising (e.g. "well done for waiting your turn and good sitting," rather than just "well done").
- Praising effort as well as achievement (e.g. "I can see that you are trying really hard to build that tower").
- Focussing on what we want the children to do rather than what not to do (e.g. Say "sit on the chair," rather than "don't stand on the table").
- Having clear, consistent and agreed expectations of behaviour in this setting.
- Using clear and simple language about behaviour expectations, reinforced with gesture, sign and body language, appropriate to the children's level of understanding.
- Giving children responsibilities and demonstrating trust.
- Using stories, songs, dolls, puppets and other props to teach the children about behavioural expectations and the consequences of behaviour.
- Teaching the children the vocabulary and signs they will need to manage difficult situations.
- Anticipating problems and taking preventative actions.
- Listening to children and taking what they have to say seriously, avoiding jumping to conclusions.
- Being prepared to apologise to the children ourselves if we have made a mistake
- 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 never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking, to manage behaviour.
- We never use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.

### *Managing inappropriate behaviour.*

By providing an appropriate environment and ensuring that staff create an atmosphere where good behaviour is more likely to occur, we hope to keep incidents of inappropriate behaviour to a minimum.

However, it is only to be expected that children in an early year's setting will encounter problems, difficulties and frustrations which will lead them to sometimes behave in an undesirable way. The following behaviours are undesirable but understandable in nursery age children who are still learning to communicate their needs and feelings in a controlled way: snatching, hitting, pushing, scratching,

screaming, refusing to comply with requests, biting, swearing and tantrums. When children behave in any of these ways, then staff will employ a range of strategies to stop and discourage the behaviour.

- Explain clearly and briefly that the behaviour is unacceptable and needs to stop then use distraction to help children redirect.
- Pre-warn children of what the consequences of their continuing to behave in that way will be - e.g. if you will not take turns then you will have to stop playing with it.
- Move children from the situation.
- Move children to a “calm down place” - this may be a quiet area of the pre-school. It is important that this is presented as a way of helping the child to calm down and not as a punishment.
- Offer alternatives and choices.
- Where there is a disagreement, act as a mediator and employ conflict resolution strategies
- Give children an opportunity to correct their behaviour.
- Always make it clear that it is the behaviour and not the child that we are displeased with.
- Use group sessions to talk about what to do in similar situations without referring to a specific child.
- Take away an object that is being used to hit with or remove shoes if kicking - it is important that this is done calmly and that the child understands it is to stop anyone from getting hurt not a punishment.

Staff will use the strategies which they have identified as being most appropriate to the child’s stage of development and most effective in helping a specific child manage their behaviour and calm down most effectively.

When employing these strategies, staff should always appear calm and controlled, modelling the self-control that we want the children to develop.

Staff try at all times to keep each other informed of any behavioural difficulties a child has experienced and strategies they have used/are using to manage this. Whatever strategy we employ, we always endeavour to leave a child feeling positive.

Staff will never:

- Hit a child or use any physical aggression.
- Shout at a child.
- Prolong criticism or sanctions.
- Refer back to incidents after the event.
- Draw the attention of other children to a child’s negative behaviour.
- Mock, embarrass or humiliate.
- Describe a child as naughty, “silly”, “babyish” or use other negative labels.
- Deal with a child’s behaviour if we are feeling angry or unable to manage our own behaviour.
- Use a ‘naughty chair’ or similar. Children may need to be removed from the situation but ‘time out’ will only be used as a strategy following discussions between key person, senior staff member and the SENCO

### *Bullying.*

At Little Gulls & Buoys we believe that it is not appropriate for a nursery age child, who is still learning what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is and how to manage his or her feelings and express needs in a positive way, to be described as a bully. Such a label is both unfair and unhelpful. However, we acknowledge that children as young as three may exhibit bullying behaviour. It is our intention that the effective implementation of this policy will reduce the likelihood of the children we work with becoming bullies in later life.

### *Physical restraint/intervention.*

We only use physical restraint, such as holding, to prevent physical injury to themselves, other children or adults, and/or serious damage to property. Physical restraint will only be used as a last resort with the minimum force necessary. The following guidelines are adhered to:

- Speak calmly and reassuringly to the child, telling them what you are doing and why. Tell the child what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this will require frequent repetition).
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible - e.g. above the elbow.
- Hold the child in a way that does not restrict blood flow or breathing.
- Relax restraint in response to the child's compliance.
- Involve another member of staff if possible.
- Do not involve other children.
- Do not touch or hold the child in sexual areas.
- Do not force limbs back against a joint.

After such an incident:

- Every effort should be made to reassure the child that they have not irreparably damaged their relationship with the adults or children in the nursery and that they are still valued and cared for.
- The pre-school manager and Behaviour Management Representative should be given details of the incident.
- The parent/s of the child should be contacted and the circumstances and action taken explained openly and sensitively.
- The event is recorded on a child incident form. This is signed by the parent and put in the child's accident file.
- Any staff involved in the incident will have opportunities to talk through their experience and receive support and reassurance.

### *Working with parents.*

Children begin their learning about behaviour at home and at Little Gulls & Buoys we are committed to working in partnership with parents to continue this learning process. Staff will always try to share positive news with parents. We will not draw parents' attention to minor incidents, which have been dealt with effectively as we consider them to be a part of everyday life in the nursery and not a cause for concern. If we do need to talk to a parent about an incident, we will do so sensitively and privately.

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. We advise parents of the strategies we use for managing children's behaviour, offering them support when needed.

We ask parents to share information with us about things that are happening in the child's home life, which may have an impact on their behaviour. We realise that some of these experiences may be painful and difficult for parents to talk about. It is important to reassure parents that any information they share with us will be treated in absolute confidence. Parents should be offered an opportunity to speak in private and without their child present. If a parent shares sensitive information with a member of staff they will ask permission to share the information with other members of the nursery staff and explain why they feel this would be wise. Staff will respect confidentiality and will not pass on information without permission. The only exception to this is in areas relating to child protection. When there is reason to believe that failure to share information may place a child at risk of significant harm then staff must always report this to the designated child protection officer. The safety of children will always be paramount.

### *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 discourage children bringing in toy weapons such as guns and swords. However, we recognise that children may construct their own resources for fantasy play.
- 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.

*The behaviour of adults in the pre-school premises*

Children learn by example, and it is key that they see the adults around them behaving towards each other in a way that sets the standard of positive behaviour for them to copy. We will always endeavour to:

- Greet children, parents, carers, visitors and each other in a friendly way, making them feel welcome.
- Be polite and well mannered.
- Act consistently.
- Convey energy and enthusiasm.
- Communicate honestly with each other.
- Avoid criticising others or behaving in a dismissive way towards them.
- Listen attentively and respond with warmth, sensitivity and compassion.
- Avoid being hurtful, sarcastic or patronising towards others.
- Be prepared to apologise and show some humility when appropriate.
- Avoid making relationships with each other appear so close and collusive that others may feel left out, judged or threatened.
- Respect and celebrate our differences, and value the contributions that each other can make.
- Respect privacy and confidentiality.
- See complaints as constructive and be prepared to look again at how we do things.
- It is NEVER acceptable for any adult to be verbally or physically aggressive to others in the setting.

We ask all adults who visit Little Gulls & Buoys to comply with this policy.

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