**St Joseph’s Pre-school Playgroup**

**A parents’ guide to managing children’s behaviour**

**You might find some of the ideas here useful for difficult times at home, or you may just be interested in how we encourage positive behaviour at the Pre-school. Please read this short guide and do ask us if you have any questions. Our Behaviour Management Policy has more information; this is available on our website.**

At the Pre-school all staff help to teach the children to behave well. We help children to be kind and polite to each other and to the adults working with them.

**Supporting positive behaviour**

* A very large part of what we do to encourage positive behaviouris praising children. Rather than simply saying ‘well done’ we say something like ‘well done for sharing nicely with your friend’ or ‘thank you for putting the bricks away’. This helps children to know exactly what they have done well.
* We find that the best way of helping children to behave considerately is for all adults to behave considerately. We treat all children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy. We aim to be very consistent in the way we talk to children and deal with any problems, so that they get the same message from everyone who works here.
* We all give lots of attention for behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share, working together, joining in with routine tasks such as tidying up and taking crockery to the kitchen, listening well and joining in at group times. This shows children how we want them to behave.
* We also put lots of effort into making children feel part of the ‘family’ of the Pre-school. This also helps them to feel happy and secure and to be kind and considerate.
* We often read stories, act things out and have group times to help children think about feelings and the effect their behaviour has on other people.

**Dealing with unwanted behaviour**

* We understand that sometimes the same problem may happen over and over again before children learn to share and take turns.
* We try to ignore unwanted behaviour as much as possible. Otherwise, children continue behaving in the same way so they get more attention – nobody wants this to happen!
* If we need to intervene, for instance because a child has hurt someone or done something dangerous, we talk to them about what they have done, explain why we don’t want them to do it and what effect their behaviour has had on others around them.
* We don’t force children to say sorry but, depending on what age and stage of development they are at, we encourage them to say sorry and/or make amends by, for example, making a picture for the child they have upset.
* We help children to learn to control their feelings of anger or frustration.
* We use sand timers to help children to take turns and we sometimes use them for ‘time-out’ if we feel a child needs to sit quietly and calm down for a few minutes before joining in with activities again.
* We have ‘happy’, ‘sad’ and ‘oh dear’ faces in our playroom to support positive behaviour. Each day, all the children start on the ‘happy’ face (all their photos are placed there) and during the day, any repeated unwanted behaviour may result in their photo being moved to the ‘oh dear’ face (e.g. for not listening to others, taking toys, not sharing) and to the ‘sad’ face if the behaviour is repeated. For some unwanted behaviour (e.g. pushing, hitting, hurting) the child may be placed straight onto the ‘sad’ face. Children are encouraged frequently to demonstrate good behaviour so that they can return to the ‘happy’ face.
* We don’t call children ‘naughty’ or ‘bad’ because we want them to know that we care very much for them however they are behaving. We want them to realise it’s the unwanted behaviour we don’t like, not the child.
* We do try very hard to be calm and patient at all times and are convinced that this really helps!
* We will be adding the ‘Just Right’ programme into our day at Pre-school. This programme is built round a scaling system, with four colour 'zones' to help children understand and communicate the emotions they are experiencing and how they can go about positively managing them. It helps them understand what makes them feel 'just right' and when they are feeling this. For example, when they are calm and alert and able to respond positively to whatever is happening in their environment.
* The four colour zones are:
* green is 'just right' - calm, alert and focused
* orange is 'fizzy' - bubbling, not calm, anxious, possibly hyper-alert
* blue is 'floppy or fidgety' - under-stimulated, tired, bored, not alert, possibly feeling ill
* red is 'crisis' - unable to cope, exhibiting challenging behaviours, wanting to run away, shutting down from the outside world

[Just Right Programme (brighton-hove.gov.uk)](https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/local-offer/just-right-programme-0)