**St Joseph’s Pre-school Playgroup**

**Behaviour management policy**

**Statement of intent**

We believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

**Aim**

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others. The principles guiding management of behaviour exist within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development.

**Methods**

We have a named person (Chloe Standing) who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.

* We require the named person to:
* keep her/himself up to date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support
* access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development
* check that all staff have relevant knowledge/training on promoting positive behaviour.
* We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of these.
* 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 inappropriate behaviour, using our observation records and ABC charts to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.
* We have introduced a new system in the mornings to encourage children to be able to communicate about their feelings and emotions. It will still require you to support your children when coming into nursery to put their photos on the relevant coloured jar.
* The idea comes from the story “The Colour Monster”. It’s a story about being confused, and how to sort out feelings with support from a friend. We have a copy for you to borrow or attached is a link if you would like to buy a copy.
* We are hoping the outcome will be that the children will be able to communicate their feelings either by using language familiar to them from the story, or by simply moving their photos from one coloured jar to another throughout the day.
* [The Colour Monster: Amazon.co.uk: Llenas, Anna: 9781783704231: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/aw/d/1783704233/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1676034639&sr=8-3-spons#immersive-view_1676034694233)

**Strategies with children who engage in inappropriate behaviour**

* + We ensure all staff are aware that they need to combat discrimination whenever they see or hear it and include strategies to achieve this in our planning, through the use of persona dolls, stories, group times, role play and puppets.
  + As a staff team we regularly review our provision and consider whether behavioural issues are there as a result of the format of the day, the layout of resources, the deployment of staff etc. and consider ways of revising planning and implementation to improve the situation.
* We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inappropriate 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 of what was not acceptable, and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.
* We try to 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. We will use strategies for example a sand timer to help with sharing and waiting for a turn.
* We praise considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
* We support each child in developing self esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
* 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 inappropriate behaviour.
* When children behave in inappropriate 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 sometimes give children ‘time out’ which involves sitting by a sand timer. This can be effective in removing them from the situation and gives them time to become calm.
* 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 encourage the children to move their own photos back onto the happy face and praise the good behaviour that enabled this.
* We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with physical punishment.
* 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. The child's parent is informed on the same day.
* 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 inappropriate behaviour.

**Children under three years**

* When children under three behave in inappropriate 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 do this.
* Common inappropriate or hurtful behaviours of young children include 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.

**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 recognition 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 an undesired 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 them 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 recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. 'Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? It made you feel angry, didn't it, and you hit him'.
* We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings. 'When you hit Adam, it hurt him and he didn't like that and it made him cry'.
* We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. 'I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn't crying any more. Let's see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one.'
* 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 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.
* 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 is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse; and
  + the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.

Where this does not work, we seek advice and make appropriate referrals to the BHISS Team and/or other professionals as required.

Signed on behalf of St Joseph’s Pre-school Playgroup Limited:

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Name Chloe Standing

Role: Manager

Date 07.09.23