



Behaviour Policy

Policy Statement

At Peapod Pre-School, 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.

Children model the behaviour of those around them, and as such the role of the adults at our setting is to support, encourage and offer guidance to the children at all times. As children develop, they learn about boundaries, the difference between right and wrong, and how to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on those around them.

Our Pre-School recognises the importance of positive and effective behaviour management strategies in promoting children's welfare, learning and enjoyment.

The aims of our Behaviour Policy are to help children to:

- Develop a sense of caring and respect for one another.
- Build caring and co-operative relationships with other children and adults.
- Develop a range of social skills and help them learn what constitutes acceptable behaviour.
- Develop confidence, self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

Legal Framework

There is certain legislation and guidance that this policy needs to be based on.

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE 2014)
- Behaviour Toolkit, Norfolk County Council (2014)
- Step On Guidance, Norfolk County Council

Procedures

To manage children's behaviour in an appropriate way we will carry out the following procedures:

- The Managers, Sarah Riley and Fran O'Neill are responsible for Behaviour Management, and are required to:
 - Keep up-to-date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour.
 - Observe and assess children's behaviour where it may require additional support.
 - Attend relevant training to help understand and guide appropriate models of behaviour.

- Implement the setting's behaviour procedures including guidance offered by Norfolk County Council's Inclusion team.
 - Support other staff when dealing with behaviour issues and to access expert advice from Norfolk County Council's Inclusion team.
- We recognise that ways of interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by members of the setting.
 - We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
 - We require all staff, volunteers and students to be positive role models by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy, and to use a consistent and team approach when dealing with behavioural issues.
 - 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.
 - 'Accidents' are recorded at pre-school, and so too are 'incidents.' Staff will record the details of an incident should a child become hurt, either physically, emotionally or both, as the result of another child's actions. These records help staff to find an appropriate solution to support and manage children's behaviour.
 - The managers will use forums such as Staff and Management meetings, including Committee meetings, to discuss any necessary strategies required to support individual children and/or any necessary changes that are required for the setting's policies and procedures.

Initial Intervention Approach

We use an initial problem-solving intervention for all situations in which a child or children are distressed during conflict. A staff member will approach the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions, and will acknowledge the feelings of those involved. The adult will respond to the situation in an age-appropriate manner, helping the children to reflect on the situation, and if possible, allowing the child/children to regain control of the situation and resolve the situation themselves. All staff will use this approach consistently.

Focused Intervention Approach

The reasons for some types of behaviour are not always apparent, despite the knowledge and input from staff, key persons and parents. Where we have considered all possible reasons, then a focused intervention approach should then be applied. This approach allows the key person and behaviour co-ordinator to observe, reflect, and identify causes and functions of unwanted behaviour in the wider context of other known influences on the child.

We follow the 'roots and fruits' method, which looks at the experiences, feelings and behaviours of the child, where we use observations to establish any root causes that may contribute to any unwanted

behaviour. The 'roots and fruits' method should help determine the cause (e.g. separation anxiety, invasion of space, sharing issues) and the resulting feelings (such as upset, frustration) and the behaviour that follows (e.g. kicking, biting). Reflecting on the identified root causes and the ensuing feelings and behaviour allows staff to provide focused support for the child, with the aim of transforming the negative experiences into positive experiences. Parents may be asked to complete a Play Plan with their child's key person that will focus on the child's interests and will include strategies to support them. Refer to our **SEND Policy** for further details.

Use of Physical Intervention

Staff should not use physical intervention – or the threat of physical intervention, to manage a child's behaviour unless it is necessary to use "reasonable force in order to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damage property" (EYFS).

Before reaching this stage, staff will have used all possible non-physical actions, such as dialogue and diversion, to deal with the behaviour.

A dialogue will be maintained with the child or children, so that the member of staff can explain what they are doing and why they are doing it. Staff will make every effort to avoid the use of physical interventions if they are alone with the child or children. Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied, for example, by diverting a child or children by guiding and escorting them away quickly and safely; it will always be appropriate to the age, size and strength of the child or children involved. If staff are not confident about their ability to contain a particular situation or type of behaviour, consideration will be given to calling the Manager/s or another adult.

As soon as it is safe, the physical intervention should be gradually relaxed to allow the child or children to regain self-control.

Where a member of staff has had to intervene physically to restrain a child, the Manager/s will be notified and the incident recorded on an Incident Form. The incident will be discussed with the parent/carer at the earliest possible opportunity.

Staff will use physical intervention as an act of care and control and never punishment. Physical interventions will not be used purely to force a child to do what they have been told and when there is no immediate risk to people or property. If a staff member commits any act of violence or abuse towards a child at the Pre-School, serious disciplinary action will be implemented, according to Peapod's **Disciplinary Procedures**.

Use of Rewards and Sanctions

All children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to be able to manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control. Rewards such as excessive praise and stickers may provide an immediate change in the behaviour but they may not teach children how to act when a 'prize' is not being given or provide the child with the skills to manage situations and their emotions. With this in mind we consider the use of stickers and their functions with the individual child in mind. What works for one child, may not work for another. We also work with parents when using this type of reward system.

Children should never be labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by removing them from the group and left alone in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. However, if necessary children can be accompanied and removed from the group in order to calm down and if appropriate, helped to reflect on what has happened.

Strategies to Use When Dealing with Inconsiderate Behaviour

- Staff will not shout when dealing with behaviour issues, neither is it the role of staff to discipline children. 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 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 inconsiderate behaviour.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we try to help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- 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.

Children Under Three Years of Age

At Peapod Pre-School we recognise the importance of accepting both **the age and the stage** of a child's development when considering any management of behaviour. When children under three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and will differ from those for older children.

We recognise that babies and very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive and supportive adults to help them do this. Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff should be calm and patient, offering comfort to offset such emotions, helping children to manage their feelings. Staff should talk to them in an age and developmentally appropriate manner to help resolve issues and promote understanding.

If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause - such as a change or

upheaval at home, or frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of 'separation anxiety'. We focus on ensuring a child's key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.

Rough and Tumble Play, Hurtful Behaviour and Bullying

Rough and Tumble Play and Fantasy Aggression

Young children often engage in play that have physical and forceful themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily an indication of hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies already mentioned. We recognise that rough and tumble play is normal for young children and acceptable within limits. At Peapod Pre-School we view this kind of play as forming a part of social development 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. If the adults are able to explore the nature of such play, we can encourage empathy and creative thinking from the children leading to child-led alternative scenarios and strategies for dealing with and resolving possible conflict.

Hurtful Behaviour

Children under five can be considered to be 'egocentric' which means that they put their own feelings before others, and even the most considerate child will have the occasional outburst due to frustration, anger or over excitement. We acknowledge that this is a developmental area that needs to be nurtured and supported and that very young children do not intentionally wish to cause hurt; it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without consideration of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt. If hurtful behaviour occurs, our strategies are:

- To recognise that very young children are not always able to manage their own feelings and deliver them appropriately.
- To respond to pre-verbal children by using calming techniques such as holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- To recognise that children, particularly 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: "Elliot took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit him?"

- To help children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings: "When you hit Elliot, it hurt him and he didn't like that and it made him cry."
- To help children develop social skills, 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 find more cars, so we can play together."
- To offer opportunities for the children to learn to manage their feelings and understand the feelings of others, through modelling behaviour, play, story times, group-time activities and using puppets.
- To 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.
- To work with the child's parents/carers should hurtful behaviour become a recurrent issue and establish the root cause/s in order to provide focused support.

Bullying

At Peapod Pre-School we take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. Bullying is repeated behaviour carried out by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child. Bullying is a pre-meditated act, and due to the necessary level of cognitive development to think the process through, it generally occurs in children 5 years and over. However, examples of the types of bullying we may see at Pre-School could be:

Verbal Bullying – Name calling, teasing, taunts, threats

Non-Verbal Bullying – gesture, body language, facial expression.

Physical Bullying – any physical gesture from a push to some form of physical assault.

Social Exclusion Bullying – being left out, isolated.

Extortion Bullying – forcing someone to hand over toys or play resources.

Hiding things – hiding another child's precious items.

Spoiling things – destroying a game.

Anti-Bullying Procedures

The Role of the Managers

It is the responsibility of the Managers to implement Peapod Pre-school's anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.

- The Managers ensure that all children begin to learn that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in Peapod Pre-school.

- The Managers use staff meetings, supervisions and open-door policy to ensure that all staff have an awareness of anti-bullying and are equipped to deal with any incidents of bullying or challenging behaviour.
- The Managers set the Pre-school climate of mutual support and praise for successes, which all staff should follow, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming setting, bullying is far less likely to occur.

The Role of Staff

- Staff in Peapod Pre-School take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. A record is kept of all incidents of bullying that happen in the Pre-school and these are shared at staff meetings.
- If staff witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child or children who are being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Managers, the key person informs the child's parent.

The Role of the Parents

- Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the Pre-School or their child's key person immediately.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the Pre-school's anti-bullying policy and actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the Pre-school.
- Parents are encouraged to help develop their child's social skills at all times, in support of Peapod's ethos of being a safe and secure Pre-School.

Other Related Policies & Procedures

The following policies provide additional information:

- SEND Policy
- Staff Grievance and Discipline Policy
- Appropriate Contact Policy

Authorised by Sarah Riley & Fran O'Neill, Managers and Katie Moore, Chair

March 2020

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