



St Pauls Nursery School and Children's Centre Promoting Positive Learning Behaviour Policy

Rationale

We believe that everyone at the Centre has a right to feel valued, respected and safe (see Vision Statement). For this to happen in practice, we have a responsibility to behave in ways that enable all of us to feel free to explore and learn without fear of being hindered or hurt. This policy provides guidelines on how to support this vision; it recognises that learning self-regulation and socially appropriate behaviour is a developmental process and that through modelling positive behaviour at all times and managing challenging behaviour appropriately and competently, we can provide for the needs of the individual as well as ensuring the safety and well being of everyone at the Centre.

Aims

We aim to listen to, and acknowledge the views of everyone in the centre, embracing who we are and where we have come from. In recognition of this, our expectations of behaviour are underpinned by the following values which were agreed by all staff:

- **RESPECT AND RECOGNITION:** to value and celebrate our own and others' contributions and uniqueness, and to show consideration for our own feelings and the feelings of others.
- **FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY:** to enable children and adults to explore and express themselves freely in an environment which supports decision making and opportunities to consider the consequences of our words and actions.
- **INCLUSION:** to provide access to learning for all, taking into account everyone's needs, background and ability, working together to share the same vision and work towards the same goal.
- **HONESTY:** to empower everyone to communicate openly and honestly in their interactions with each other.
- **SAFETY and TRUST:** to help everyone to feel able to express their concerns and fears in an appropriate way and to thrive physically and emotionally in their learning.

These are linked to British Values

Democracy ♥ The Rule of Law ♥ Individual Liberty ♥ Mutual Respect

Guidelines

At this age children are learning how to behave appropriately. Many of the things they do are normal for their stage of development and we help them to learn when something is dangerous or harmful to themselves or others, and to make positive choices in their behaviour.

We do this by:

- Noticing and acknowledging positive behaviours.
- Using clear and consistent boundaries across the Centre.
- Explaining the consequences of some behaviours and offering choices.
- Involving the children in problem-solving by using the conflict resolution steps (see Appendix 1)
- Sharing information with parents/carers about their children's behaviour both in the centre and at home (see Appendix 2)
- Providing strategies to support turn-taking e.g. using a sand-timer.
- Communicating and modelling positive behaviour, using a variety of strategies and props e.g. makaton, gestures, visual timetables and puppets
- Recognising and acknowledging feelings to encourage empathy
- Creating an environment that minimises conflict e.g. ensuring there are sufficient resources
- Providing planned opportunities to discuss behaviour and feelings e.g. at PSE circle time (see PSE Core Offer).

Challenging Behaviour

Adults at the centre will intervene when behaviour is persistently disruptive or difficult to manage.

We do this by:

- Being clear about the behaviour that is unacceptable.
- Supporting the child to think of solutions to put things right.
- Providing time away from the situation to calm down and reflect before talking things through.
- Use of personalised Social Stories
- Working together with parents/carers and families to share strategies and ensure we are giving a consistent message.
- Using a 'Solution Circle' to generate ideas for support.
- In some cases, involving the SENCO in setting up an individual education plan (IEP) with specific targets related to behaviour.
- Liaising with other agencies e.g. health visitor, behaviour improvement team, to access further support and advice.

Some behaviours are extremely concerning e.g. racist remarks, inappropriate touching, verbal aggression, persistent harming (of themselves or others), and intentional damaging of property. Incidents such as these will be managed on an individual basis and in a non-judgemental and appropriate way.

This may include:

- Removing the child from the situation.
- Seeking immediate support from other staff members.
- Contacting the parent/carer and request the child is taken home.
- On rare occasions: using positive handling techniques for the child's own safety and the safety of others (see Health and Safety Policy).
- Convening a meeting the same day, including a member of the Senior Management Team and the parent/carer, to identify ways forward.

Referring to other agencies e.g. Educational Psychology Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service for further guidance and support.

Behaviour is a Safeguarding Issue

All staff recognise that children are capable of harming their peers. It is important that peer on peer harm should be considered as a safeguarding issue.

- We recognise that it is important to respond proportionately and in a timely way to all incidents with consideration to the children's age, understanding and experience.
- We recognise that a child's behaviour is a form of communication and that they may be being impacted by the peer-on-peer harm being experienced by older family members.
- Our aim is to consider the vulnerabilities of whole family when responding to incidents of peer-on-peer harm.
- We recognise that older family members may be vulnerable to the harms detailed below and we aim to sign post to appropriate support agencies.
- These harms can include (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

refer to [St. Paul's Nursery School and Children's Centre Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2021-2022 Section 2.7 Respond to incidents of peer-on-peer harm, p. 18 - 20](#)

“Children when given support are capable problem solvers and solution finders. Conflicts are occasions for hope; the children and adults learn together that diverse points of view need not lead to unresolved frustration and anger. Instead, conflicts and disputes can actually be a starting point for honest exchanges that lead to stronger and gratifying relationships.

Conflict situations contain rich possibilities for learning, including respect and understanding difference. We need to come from the premise that children don't 'misbehave' but make mistakes. If we see children's explorations of the world as 'mistakes' not 'willful misbehaving' then we can respond more constructively.

To respond to children's social mistakes as opportunities for new learning not events that require punishment.'

You Can't Come to my Party Conflict Resolution with Young Children Betsy Evans 2002

'Out beyond the ideas of wrongdoing and right doing, there is a field. I will meet you there.'
Rumi

Further Reading:

The National Strategies Early Years Guidance for Practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage (2010)

- Supporting Children with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties
- Supporting Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs
- Supporting Children on the Autistic Spectrum

Supporting Children in Resolving Conflict High/scope curriculum for preschool and kindergarten *High/scope Press*

You Can't Come to my Party Conflict Resolution with Young Children Betsy Evans 2002

Nonviolent Communication A Language for Life Marshall B. Rosenberg, PH.D. 2003

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Conflict Resolution Steps

- 1. Approach calmly and with an open mind**
Walk over and get down to the child's level.
- 2. Acknowledge feelings**
Say "I can see you're feeling hurt/cross/upset/angry"
- 3. Gather information from *both* sides**
Say "What's the problem?"
- 4. Restate the problem**
Say "so the problem is..."
- 5. Ask for solutions and choose one together**
Say "I wonder what we can do to solve the problem/help you feel better?"
- 6. Be prepared to give follow-up support**
Keep an eye out for what happens next and give further support if needed.

With acknowledgement to Rachael Underwood and the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

Appendix 2 – Parent/Carer Involvement

Working in partnership with our parents/carers is integral to the success of this Behaviour Policy. In order for it to work in practice, their contribution is vital.

We will achieve this by:

- Sharing the expectations of behaviour at the centre, through informal and formal discussions with individuals and groups of parent/carers.
- Talking to individual parents/carers about all aspects of their child's behaviour on a daily basis, as well as at regular parent/carers conferences.
- Being fair, non-judgemental and consistent when discussing children's behaviour with parents/carers.
- Providing extra support for parents/carers to help manage children's challenging behaviour e.g. through Family Support Services and outside agencies

We hope parents/carers will feel able to:

- Inform us of any relevant changes to their circumstances which may affect their child's behaviour e.g. new baby, moving house, bereavement, divorce, separation or hospitalisation.
- Re-enforce expectations of positive behaviour by talking to their child at home.
- Actively support staff at the Centre in implementing positive behaviour strategies.
- Be a positive role-model for their child



Appendix 3

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S POSITIVE LEARNING BEHAVIOURS

At whole centre training day we explored practice and ideas to support our response to a range of behaviours. These suggestions were made in conjunction with our:

- ❖ **Behaviour for Learning Policy**
- ❖ **Personal, Social and Emotional Curriculum**
- ❖ **Inclusion Practice**
- ❖ **Fundamental Five Values**

Central to our discussion were the questions:

“What is this child trying to communicate by this behaviour?”

“How can we respond effectively to this commutative intent?”

“How can we support this child to move towards positive behaviour that promotes their emotional well-being and learning opportunities?”

“How can we minimise the negative impact of certain behaviours on the emotional well-being, physical safety and learning opportunities of others?”

Scenarios

Child seeking to overly control behaviour of other children or adults

Do they understand what they are being asked to do and why?

Are they seeking to control the situation because they are unsure or worried about what is happening next?

Ensure consistent adult behaviour and give time for response.

Offer limited choices that you are happy with e.g. you either sit with us for group time or sit there and read a book e.g. I wonder how you could move to the come to story time - giant steps or fairy steps?

Give lots of opportunities for choices and control at appropriate times and where those choices do not impact negatively on others.

Short, simple instructions e.g. “It’s time to go to the garden” (take their hand and lead them rather than instructions phrased as questions if there is no choice)

Sometimes give responsibility for that child to lead i.e. child leading review, asking questions and deciding on order.

Notice and comment on child’s positive actions in context.

Give explicit positive praise that highlights learning behaviours using BLP language.

Talk about feelings rather than negotiating action when there is not a choice.

Pick your battles- minimise the number of rules to things that are really important for safety, well-being and equality of learning opportunities.

A child who spits

Why are they spitting?

- ❖ Sensory need?
- ❖ Something unpleasant in mouth?
- ❖ Copying adult actions?
- ❖ Expressing anger?

Explain that it's not OK to spit on the floor at nursery, depending on their understanding (germs, unpleasant for others)

Redirection: if you need to spit, spit in the sink.

If angry, acknowledge feelings and offer acceptable ways to express anger i.e. hitting pillow, using words, finding angry sign/ picture. Revisit reasons for anger and possible solutions.

A child throwing inside or an inappropriate object

- Intervene to stop the throwing.
- Talk about it not being OK. It might hurt someone or break something and explain that we need to look after our friends and our things and be safe.
- Encourage to pick up object and then support child to move on to next activity
- Redirect to garden to throw a ball
- Distraction by supporting child to become absorbed in play/learning by introducing new idea/resource/focus

A child demonstrating defiance towards an adult

For example ... lying on the floor refusing to do something an adult has asked

- Stay outwardly calm. Ask yourself "What is this child wanting to communicate?" Establish intention if possible.
- Remain objective and don't take it personally.
- Try to keep the emotional energy low.

Check out:

- Do they understand what is being asked?
- Give gestures, symbols, demonstration
- Give time for children to think and respond
 - Are they scared, worried, can't see the point?

Acknowledge feelings, concerns and explain way we are going to do something in simple non-judgemental language.

- Do they want/need to do something else first?
- Sequencing (coat → outside, group time → water) : NOW and NEXT board to reinforce "Now it's story time then outside"
- Giving closed choices that you are equally happy to happen
- Give them a way back in – "Would you like to join group time now?"
"Would you like to sit next to me?" "I can hear you saying no lots of times – I wonder why?"

Coat and outside.

- Does he / she need a coat on? Are they too hot whilst running?
- Offer choice of coats -thick/ thin, different colour, texture?

Motivating thing for next activity – “coat on then chase”, zip and poppers/buttons to lessen temptation to ‘slip’ out of it.

A choice that is win: win – not losing face

- Revisit when calm
- Giving children opportunities to be cross in a safe environment where they can learn to self-regulate
- Providing consistent boundaries
- Trust each other
- What is this child trying to communicate through their behaviour? Respond to what they are communicating.

A child who runs away from adult

- Stand still, don’t chase
- Tell the child “I’m not going to chase you.”
- Always follow situation up using conflict resolution steps.
- Enlist another staff member
- Why are they running away?
- What is the child feeling?
- Revisit issue at group time with group raising issues of safety and missing exciting opportunities
- Offer opportunities for chase games at more appropriate times

A child who hurts another child or adult

- Conflict resolutions steps
- Feelings cards – fans
- PSE group times – acting out scenarios with puppets for children to think of solutions
- Stories reflecting emotions / social stories
- Labelling clearly : we don’t hit our friends /children/people
- Adults modelling being kind
- Allowing children to think how it would feel – empathy
- Gentle hands peer massage
- Special cushion – noticing children when they are kind/ gentle/ solve conflict appropriately.
- Encouraging children to say “stop, I don’t like it”
- Talk with an adult to support child/child situations
- Solution circles – helping to problem solve capitalizing on whole staff teams knowledge/experience.
- Observe any possible patterns i.e. particular times of day/ activity and plan additional support for child
- Thinking of where to place children at adult lead times using positive terms
- Discuss with SENCo re possible further advice from outside agencies CAMHs and educational psychology

A child who breaks things

Wonder with the team why and is there any noticeable pattern? “What are they trying to communicate and respond to that communicative intent.”

- Explorative
- Tactile
- Curious
- Frustration
- Not knowing how to use it
- Testing boundaries

Respond calmly

- Find out what happened
- Look for a solution

Knowing the individual child’s needs

- Distraction
- Model appropriate play
- Valuing things together

Puppet and small world role play

- Taking care of resources
- Environment and waste

Help to mend broken object (being aware that this does not become a motivating activity)

Provide appropriate opportunities to dismantle and cut things.

A child who swears

Respond Calmly

- Consider are they expressing negative feelings (frustration, anger, upset)?
- Are they trying to negotiate in play, taking turns or joining in?

Take the ‘power out’ of the words

- Use the specific word when talking to the child
- Tell the child “We don’t say... f*** off at Nursery”
- Keep the emotional response and energy low

Model feelings or conflict resolution

Appendix 4

The **Crucial C's** are a construct developed by Lew and Bettner (1996) to explain how Individual Psychology views the needs of the individual. They can be used to explain human behaviour.

The Crucial C's are necessary to Mental Health. Feeling that we **connect**, that we are **capable**, that we **count** and have **courage** will go a long way to enhance a positive attitude about life and make it worth living.

THE CRUCIAL C'S

If I have the Crucial C's		If I don't have the Crucial C's...
I feel secure. I can reach out, make friends. I co-operate.	CONNECT I believe I belong	I feel insecure, isolated. I'm more susceptible to peer pressure: I seek attention.
I feel competent. I have self-control and self-discipline. I assume responsibility. I am self-reliant.	CAPABLE I believe I can do it	I feel inadequate. I try to control others or prove "You can't make me." I become dependent. I seek power.
I feel valuable. I can make a difference. I contribute.	COUNT I believe I matter	I feel insignificant. I may try to hurt myself or others. I may seek revenge.
I feel hopeful. I am willing to try. I am resilient.	COURAGE I believe I can handle what comes	I feel inferior. I may give up. I use avoidance.

Responsibility in the Classroom. A teachers guide to understanding and motivating students- Amy Lew Ph.D, Betty Lou Bettner Ph.D. Ph.D Connexions Press Newton Centre MA 2012 OPEN CIRCLE

The Crucial Cs and Rudolf Dreikurs' Short-Range Goals of Misbehavior

Amy Lew and Betty Lou Bettner

Child's belief	Child feels	Child's negative goal	Adult feels	Adult's impulse	Child's response to correction
I only count when I'm being noticed	insecure alienated	ATTENTION	irritated annoyed	REMIND What, again?	"temporarily" stops
My strength is in showing you that you can't make me and you can't stop me.	inadequate, dependent others are in control	POWER	angry challenged	FIGHT I insist that you do as I say.	misbehavior intensifies
I knew you were against me. No one really likes me. I'll show you how it feels.	insignificant	REVENGE get back get even	hurt or wants to punish	PUNISH How could you do this to me? us? them? I'll teach you a lesson.	wants to get even, makes self disliked
I can't do anything right so I won't try. If I don't try, my failures won't be so obvious.	inferior useless hopeless	AVOIDANCE display of inadequacy	despair I give up. hopeless	GIVE UP It's no use.	passive, no change, more hopeless, displays inadequacy

Crucial Cs	Constructive Alternatives	Child's belief	Child feels	Child's positive goal
CONNECT	Replace negative attention with positive attention. Plan activities together. Don't ignore the child; ignore the misbehavior. Teach self-sufficiency.	I belong.	secure	COOPERATION
CAPABLE	Don't try to win. Give opportunity and choices so child can display power constructively. Maintain friendly attitude.	I can do it.	competent self-control	SELF-RELIANCE
COUNT	Avoid anger and hurt feelings. Maintain appreciation in relationship. Offer chances to help. Seek support and help in identifying positives. (Don't give up.)	I matter. I can make a difference.	significant valuable	CONTRIBUTION
COURAGE	Notice only strengths and ignore the negative. Set up steady exposure to manageable tasks that have a guarantee of success. No criticism.	I can handle what comes.	hopeful willing to try	RESILIENCY

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