

## Seaham Harbour Nursery School



### Behaviour Management Policy and Guidelines

#### Introduction

At Seaham Harbour Nursery School, we are proud to promote a love of learning within a safe and secure environment, in which every child matters. 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. All children gain a sense of belonging within a safe and nurtured environment where they feel confident to develop positive relationships both with adults and children.

Children need to learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within the area of learning - Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

#### Principles

1. At Seaham Harbour Nursery School we believe that a whole school approach to the management of behaviour is essential for effective learning and teaching to take place. The policy refers to all children, staff, parents, carers, governors and visitors to the school.
2. Everyone has the right to:-
  - Feel safe and a responsibility to ensure the safety of others.
  - Feel respected and a responsibility to show respect for others.
  - To be supported both in their learning and everyday life and a responsibility to assist and support others.
  - Be treated fairly and to treat others fairly.
  - Move freely and safely subject to rules.
  - Have property kept safe and a responsibility to care for the property of others.
3. We believe that a positive approach to behaviour has more effect than a negative reaction to it. Good behaviour is best encouraged by positive example, by recognising and rewarding good behaviour, and by the modelling of good behaviour.
4. Children have a right to be treated as individuals and their developmental needs taken into consideration.

5. A consistent approach is adopted towards behaviour management. Strategies include: all policies, a welcoming environment, curriculum development, staff training, induction and appropriate resourcing.

6. A clear evaluation is made of policies and practice using facts to inform future development.

7. Parents, carers and Governors are given reports on children's behaviour and general progress as appropriate.

### **Aims**

We aim to promote the understanding of what constitutes good behaviour, to celebrate and encourage good behaviour, courtesy and politeness, to manage unacceptable behaviour in a clear consistent way.

### **Safety**

Safety is a priority. The use of physical force is not acceptable in nursery. The LA policy on restraint allows for the most minimal level of force to be used to prevent harm to other children or serious damage. Children should be taught strategies to deal with unwanted contact, e.g. calling on an adult for help. Similarly, bullying and threatening behaviour is unacceptable and will be addressed using a system of sanctions.

### **Respect**

Some forms of unacceptable behaviour take the form of verbal attacks, gestures, and looks. No one should be subjected to ridicule or personal insult about their family, race, culture, belief, gender or appearance or indeed about anything. We are required by the LA to monitor and record instances of racist behaviour and to take action to prevent its recurrence. Members of staff have a responsibility to provide a good model to pupils by observing respectful behaviour. Children have a right to be taught in a respectful manner.

### **Access**

Children are allowed open access to all curriculum areas to develop free choice and independence, both indoors and outdoors, under qualified supervision. Children will be actively encouraged to walk at all times inside for safety.

### **Property**

All property must be respected, whether it is that of the school, staff, child or other adult. The school does not accept responsibility for children's property brought into school.

## **Rough and Tumble Play**

All sorts of play can pose a dilemma in terms of whether it is children's natural exploratory play or something more concerning. Staff often have to make judgements about the nature of the play and whether they should be supporting and scaffolding it, whether to intervene, or whether to observe and report concerns. Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as 'Superhero's'; some children appear

pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying. Staff will always ensure that every child feels safe and protected, and children will not be allowed to use forms of play to intimidate other children in any way.

- 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 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.

## **Hurtful behaviour**

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some time 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 understanding 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 recognise that 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. "Sophie took your doll, didn't she, you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when she took it did you? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit her?" Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves, the feelings that motivated the behaviour.
- 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 Sophie, it hurt her and she didn't like that, it made her cry".
- We are aware that the same problem may have 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 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. We also recognise that many children demonstrate that they are sorry through actions, rather than words.

### **Use of physical intervention**

Staff used different elements of physical contact with a child as part of their interaction in the setting especially when they are comforting a child or giving first aid. However, physical intervention to keep a child or other children safe is different and should only be applied in exceptional; circumstances. The EYFS states that physical intervention from a staff member towards a child may be used for the purposes of 'averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if it is absolutely necessary'. Staff must do all they can to void using a physical intervention because this is not the preferred way of addressing children's behaviour. To offer protection to children a range of appropriate graded interventions may be needed before physical intervention is applied. However, there will be some situations where a child places themselves or others in danger which requires an immediate need for the use of

both verbal and physical intervention. If a single or persistent incident requires a physical intervention such as physical handling from a staff member towards a child, then this is used intentionally to restrict a child's movement against their will. In most cases this can be applied through the use of the adult's body gently and safely blocking the child from access to danger or to prevent danger.

To physically intervene, a practitioner may use 'reasonable force' to protect a child from injuring themselves or others. If a situation arises which requires urgent physical hands-on intervention this is best applied by the staff who knows the child well such as their keyworker who is more able to calm them or use other known methods for defusing situations without physical intervention.

### **Physical handling**

We use the principle of applying reasonable minimal force and handling in proportion to the situation. Staff use as little force as necessary to maintain safety. The intervention should only be used for as short a period as possible to keep the child safe and maintain well-being by aiming for:

- Keeping the child's safety and well-being paramount
- A calm, gentle but firm approach and application of the intervention
- Never restricting the child's ability to breathe
- Side-by-side contact with the child
- No gap between theirs or the child's body
- Keeping the adults back as straight as possible
- Avoiding close head-to-head positioning to avoid injury to the child and themselves (head butting)
- Only holding the child by their 'long' bones to avoid grasping at the child's joints where pain and damage are most likely to occur
- Avoid lifting the child unless necessary
- Reassuring the child and talking about what has happened
- Only applying physical intervention on a disabled child if training or preferred methods is provided from a reputable external source eg British Institute of Learning Disabilities [www.bild.org.uk/](http://www.bild.org.uk/)

### **Risks**

There are risks associated with any physical intervention and handling of a child. The younger and more vulnerable a child may be, the greater risk to the child of using physical intervention towards them. However, there are also risks to children associated with not intervening physically; for instance, if a practitioner did not take hold of a child by the wrist, they may have run in to the path of a fast-moving car. Before intervening physically to protect a child from immediate harm a practitioner needs to decision make in a split second, considering the following factors. This is described as dynamic risk assessment.

- What is the immediate risk to the child if I do not intervene now?
- What might the risks be if I do not intervene? If this was my child, what would I want someone looking after them to do in this situation?
- What is the minimal level of intervention that will be effective here? How can I do this as gently as possible for as short a time as possible and how am I going to manage myself to stay calm?

### **Recording**

Any instance of physical intervention is fully recorded immediately and reported to the Headteacher as long as possible, ensuring that it is clearly stated when and how parents were informed. Parents are asked to sign a copy of the form which is then kept on the child's file. The designated person decides who will notify the parent and when, ensuring that the parent signs to say they have been notified.

### **Ways in which we support and encourage positive behaviour**

- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome. Staff role model respectful interactions with children, families and visitors.
- We have high expectations of our children – celebrating their successes and being supportive of their efforts.
- We encourage independence; reflective questioning, problem solving and involve children in making choices. By asking children what they think, and how they feel we show them that their views and feelings are important. Giving children well informed choices, with knowledge of the consequences, enables them to take the responsibility for their own behaviour.
- We ensure there are enough resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns. We offer opportunities for activities where children learn to take turns and share.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as politeness, kindness and willingness to share and reinforce, acknowledge and celebrate it.
- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- As part of our curriculum, we recognise the importance of celebrating the cultures of the home and community, to enable children to express and be proud of their experiences. Through a rich and diverse curriculum, we aim to encourage children to respect and value themselves and each other. We also seek to equip our children so that they can challenge negative misconceptions about themselves and others.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour and use

positive behaviour as an example, acknowledging desired behaviour.

- We support 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.

### **Self Esteem**

There is a high correlation between low self-esteem and poor behaviour. Children need to experience success to grow self-esteem. All efforts and achievements at the children's level should be celebrated. Encouragement and reinforcement are essential but children must know that the adult is being honest in their praise. Each child should be valued as an individual and achievements valued equally. We have high expectations of our children – celebrating their successes and being supportive of their efforts. Displays of children's work, public acknowledgment of success and appropriate praise are tools to support children's behaviour.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Prejudice in our society, whether it is about race, class or gender, will directly affect all children. Prejudice can lead to children having low self-esteem; we will tackle this through positive intervention and imagery.

The fundamental right to respect is directly connected to equal opportunities considerations. As part of our curriculum, we recognise the importance of celebrating the cultures of the home and community, to enable children to express and be proud of their experiences. Through a rich and diverse curriculum, we aim to encourage children to respect and value themselves and each other. We also seek to equip our children so that they can challenge negative misconceptions about themselves and others.

### **Independence**

There are many ways of encouraging independence; reflective questioning, problem solving and setting up situations where children have choices to make. By asking children what they think, and how they feel we show them that their views and feelings are important and stimulate the development of reflective thinking. Giving children well – informed choices, with knowledge of the consequences, enables them to take the responsibility for their own behaviour.

### **Social Skills**

Children rely on adults to model good social skills, which they will need to develop their relationships with others. Practice of these new skills both formally and informally is vital to embed good social behaviour

patterns. In an atmosphere of mutual respect, good social skills are expected of both adult and child.

### **Role Models**

Children model good and bad behaviour from significant adults in their lives. The relationship between adults and children in nursery is friendly and supportive.

The behaviour of the adult is a positive role model for the children at all times. Adults should be aware of their own language both verbal and non-verbal. A calm, quiet approach is preferable in addressing children. Sarcasm, humiliation and yelling are totally unacceptable. Adults should be aware of their own body language and ensure it gives positive messages to children.

When addressing challenging behaviour situations, staff will encourage children to reflect on their own behaviour and acknowledge the feelings and needs of others.

If there is a need to reprimand a child it should be done in an assertive, not aggressive way. It is important that children are listened to respectfully and reasons given for the reprimand. Staff should ensure the support of other team members when handling challenging situations. Even adults can be wrong sometimes – don't be afraid to apologise. Children will also watch and model our interactions with colleagues. Finally, the most important point to bear in mind is that the children must know that it is their unacceptable behaviour we are rejecting not the children themselves.

### **Working with Parents and Carers**

Effective partnership with parents and carers is essential for success in managing children's behaviour. By being welcoming and accessible, we aim to develop a good relationship with parents and carers, as this can be significant in reducing difficult behaviour.

We try to avoid giving parents only bad news, whilst recognising that they have the right to be concerned about their child's progress in nursery. Parents have regular informal contact with the staff who are always accessible to parents at the start and end of every session. Termly staff and parents' meetings also take place to discuss children's progress. When children's behaviour is of particular concern, we will involve outside agencies to develop strategies and in some cases Support Plans.

We give high priority to clear communication within the school and to a positive partnership with parents. Relationships are crucial in promoting and maintaining a high standard of behaviour.

Where the behaviour of a child is giving cause for concern it is important all staff working with the child are aware of the concerns and the steps which are being taken in response. The key professional in this process of communication is the designated worker who has the initial responsibility for the child's welfare. Early warnings of concern

must be shared with the Headteacher so strategies can be discussed and agreed before more formal steps are required.

A positive partnership with parents is crucial to building trust and developing a common approach to behaviour expectations and strategies for dealing with problems. Parental participation in school life is encouraged. This participation assists the development of positive relationships in which parents are more likely to be responsive if the school requires their support in dealing with difficult issues of unacceptable behaviour.

The school will communicate policy and expectations to parents through booklets, discussions and displays. Where behaviour is causing parents will be informed at an early stage, and given an opportunity to discuss the situation.

### **Additional help**

Sometimes the combined efforts of staff and parents may not be sufficient to help a child make the necessary changes. In this case, if parents are agreed, outside help may be necessary. The Nursery school has good relationships with all support services – Health Visitor, Educational Psychologist, Behaviour Support team, SALT, One Point who could be approached for help.

Seeking outside help is not a failure, but a responsible approach by adults to ensure that support which is available in the community is used to benefit a child who needs it.

### **How do we discourage unacceptable behaviour?**

Discipline in nursery is gentle and fair, staff are consistent in their approach and the sanction is not out of proportion to the offence. Physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking will be neither used nor threatened by any adult in nursery.

When staff say “No” they mean it and a “No” never changes to a “Yes”. A reason is always given to the child ensuring consistency and a security of knowing what is expected is applied.

Sanctions range from expressions of disapproval, withdrawal of privileges, referral to the Headteacher, discussions with parents, involvement with outside agencies (e.g. behaviour support, Educational Psychologist, One Point workers etc.) and ultimately and in the last resort, exclusion (following the LEA guidelines).

Most instances of poor behaviour are relatively minor and can be adequately dealt with through minor sanctions. It is important to remember the sanction must not be out of proportion to the offence. In most cases a firm reprimand from a member of staff is seen as being sufficient to correct errant behaviour.

In the first instance children will be given an explanation of their inappropriate behaviour and asked to apologise for behaving in this way. A child may show that they are sorry in a nonverbal manner.

In an event where a child was to repeat the same behaviour, it would be appropriate for the child to be removed from the cause of conflict and give him/her an opportunity to think about his/her behaviour sat to one side next to an adult for a few minutes. This is called Thinking time. If children were to repeatedly show the same behaviour or demonstrate some really challenging behaviour then they will be expected to sit on the floor of the Headteacher's office for a short period of time where one-to-one adult talking about what is wrong and why and how to behave more appropriately is given. After such time there will be a discussion as to why the behaviour was unacceptable and parents would be informed at the end of the day. Children with Special Educational Needs will be taken into consideration when following the above and may result in having more support and intervention from an adult within their play. At all times, it is the behaviour, which is to be challenged and moderated rather than the child being blamed.

A record of incidents will be kept in a behaviour log and in some cases a diary is created for individual children.

Adults should take every opportunity to praise good behaviour and achievements, through verbal praise and recognition treats privileges and stickers. Staff will encourage children to reflect on their own behaviour and acknowledge the feeling and needs of others, thus modelling high standards to all children.

<b>Inside the nursery we accept -</b>	<b>Do not accept -</b>
Walking Talking	Running Shouting Throwing Climbing on benches, tables, chairs
Children to go to the kitchen, office, utility room if requested by an adult.	Children in unsupervised areas.
Children to tidy up.	Children to make a mess. Walk around with scissors. Flit from activity to activity.
Encourage children to try a food and drink at snack time.	

### **We do not accept**

Swearing, physical or verbal abuse, or "fun fighting" anywhere at any time.

<b>Outside we accept</b>	<b>Do not accept</b>
Running Shouting Chasing	Screaming Pulling or pushing Letting go of swing

	Climbing on fences Climbing up the slide
Sand play in the sand pit	Throwing sand Climbing on sand pit cover
Transport children in carts/cars	Transport in prams Climbing or riding on the back of the cosy coupe cars, bikes etc
Riding on back of bikes	Crashing bikes, cars etc.
Tidying up of all equipment	Clearing away slide, planks etc. (without an adult)

**No children are ever allowed in any of the outside storage sheds.**

**No children are ever left unattended or unsupervised in any area of the nursery either inside or outside.**

This policy will be reviewed in line with other school policies.