



Positive Behaviour Policy

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: 1 st June 2026
Last reviewed on:		
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It is the responsibility of the nursery to provide a consistent environment so that children and practitioners can make the best use of time, interaction and quality care.

We also recognise that there will be children who need a personalised approach to their specific behavioural needs.

In some cases, this will mean that the sanctions, stages and rewards are not the most appropriate means of dealing with their behaviour and other programmes of intervention and support may be used in conjunction with specialist and external agencies. The importance of taking a multi-agency approach to behaviour management is central. We, as a nursery, recognise the lead we may be required to take in consulting and communicating with other agencies. We also use the Five to Thrive model which supports healthy brain development and enables a child to build resilience. The model ensures that practitioners always: Respond, Engage/Cuddle, Support/Relax, Play and Talk with children. It helps to build attachment which enables a child to make sense of their feelings and experiences through words and gestures.

Aims

This policy ensures:

- Our staff have a good understanding of Early Years development in relation to behaviour and communication and aim to support children who display unwanted behaviour through supportive and positive strategies.
- Roles and responsibilities of members of the nursery community are clear in encouraging and promoting good behaviour and discouraging unwanted behaviour.
- The maintenance, encouragement and promotion of good behaviour wherever possible.
- The shared and agreed identification of what we consider to be unwanted behaviour.
- Agreed sanctions where rules are broken.
- A firm, consistent approach across the nursery.
- An opportunity at every stage for children to understand that they can correct their behaviour and move on positively.
- The involvement of parents at every stage.

Promoting Good Behaviour

It is important to remain as positive as possible at all times. Oldhill is a supportive day care nursery with a caring ethos. It is expected that staff will reward and celebrate achievement and good behaviour, and at times, use methods of distraction to focus on positive behaviour. Staff use their knowledge of child development to:

- Ensure that there are activities planned and provided to engage and interest children, based on observations of their needs, learning styles and interests.
- Support children to take part and explore the environment and activities, staff interact positively with children to narrate, explain and support them to problem-solve.
- Ensure that there are enough resources to avoid conflict, and waiting times are limited in accordance with stages of development.
- Act as role models for children.
- Model positive social skills using activities that are developmentally in line with the children's ages and stages – e.g. turn-taking games are introduced with very small groups with short waiting times; sharing is planned with concrete examples (timers/hourglasses etc.) and with staff on hand to support.
- Provide circle times and key times to discuss feelings and emotions to assist children to verbalise their feelings and reduce physical responses to conflict.
- Be consistent in implementing the behaviour policy to avoid mixed messages to young children.

Structures and systems to support positive behaviour management

- Staff modelling positive behaviour, communicating with children

- Toddler rooms and preschool rooms use traffic light systems to support behaviour
- Staff use stickers and charts to reward children's behaviour in the toddler room and preschool room
- Photo cards and picture cards to support behaviour
- Positive re-enforcement with verbal praise
- Children helping to develop the nursery rules
- Staff training to ensure the policy is consistently applied/implemented – working with children to prevent and resolve conflict

Reinforcing good behaviour

We will always reward children for good behaviour: smiles, hugs, praise and thanks convey appreciation. We aim to ensure all children receive positive attention from staff to ensure more time is spent praising good behaviour and initiating positive communication. Teaching children how to behave is an important part of taking care of them – keeping them safe and making sure they respect others and know right from wrong. Staff will always act as role models for the children. Positive discipline assumes that children will behave well, focuses on good behaviour, expects it, makes sure children understand what it is and why; and rewards children for it. Positive discipline takes account of the child's feelings and encourages a child to take as much responsibility as they are developmentally able for their behaviour. Making children feel good about themselves works far better than making them feel bad. Humiliating a child makes them too upset or too angry to be sorry for what they've done.

Modelling good behaviour

We will always:

- Encourage our children to behave sensibly and considerately
- Share reasons for rules and ask children to join in rule-making as appropriate
- Give children the security of clear, fair rules which are applied in a consistent manner
- Use activities to support our children in developing respect for themselves and others
- Respond to the child rather than reacting to the emotion. A calm, positive, supportive approach from staff will aid emotional development and self-control
- Encourage children to understand why certain modes of behaviour are unwanted and offer acceptable alternatives to resolving a situation
- Encourage children to use polite phrases and actions as part of social interaction by speaking to them politely and offering explanations and narration

Unwanted Behaviour

In very young children unwanted behaviour is common and there are some developmental behaviours that should be addressed but not necessarily sanctioned. Though some behaviours are more typical at certain ages, it is important to understand that such behaviours may be seen in all ages.

Typical Behaviours

Baby and Toddler Room

High energy levels. Toddlers have lots of energy. This is a period of rapid motor growth. Children are learning to walk, run, climb, throw and feed themselves. Toddlers are very interested in how the world works. The children will want to explore everything in their environment.

- **Impulsivity.** Toddlers begin experiencing impulses and do not have control over them. Remember children need guidance and modelling in areas such as safety, manners and empathy.
- **Frustration.** Toddlers only know how to use a limited number of words and may get frustrated because they cannot express themselves.

- **Tantrums.** There may be anger in the form of outbursts, typically called "tantrums," during this age. Normally outbursts peak from 16-24 months and then decline. The children may need extra help in calming down.
- **Independence.** Toddlers want to do things by themselves. It is important to be patient and allow enough time for them to practice everyday tasks such as getting dressed or feeding themselves. "Mine." Children may become possessive at this age and "mine" is a word you may hear often.

Preschool Room

The three-year-old

- May enjoy having things the same way all the time
- May be clumsy; spills and falls could be more common
- May find sharing difficult

The four-year-old

- May hit and kick more often
- May be impatient
- May become frustrated
- May find it difficult to explain truthfully what has happened

The five-year-old

- Enjoys playing age-appropriate games but may be more competitive and want to win.

Problem-solving difficult situations. We aim to observe the child for indicators of why they may present unwanted behaviour. Discussion with the team, written observations and advice from parents will provide further insight into the child's behaviour.

"Time in." Make sure the child has at least 15 minutes a day of the key worker's complete attention. This reduces "attention-getting" behaviours.

Levels of Consequences

When a child demonstrates any unwanted behaviour as practitioners we have levels of consequences. During these levels, we always **stay in control**. We are emotionally neutral and matter-of-fact. We NEVER use physical contact as a means of punishment. We DO NOT shout at children and they should be calmly spoken to. A firm voice may be used to alert any dangers or unwanted behaviour. All children are listened to and staff do not make any assumptions based on the child's past behaviours. We regularly observe the child's behaviour and track their progress in order to eliminate the unwanted behaviour. The tracking of their behaviour will help us to identify when or what may trigger the child. We use the ABC method to track and understand what happened before the behaviour occurred, to describe the behaviour objectively and assess the impact.

Level 1

Ignore mild behaviour. If a child does not get attention for a behaviour, they will often stop doing it.

Level 2

Use distraction. Try redirecting the child to another behaviour, toy, or activity. Humour can also be used as a distraction tool. **"Calming time."** Giving the child a quiet activity can calm them better than simply setting a time-out

Level 3

Warnings, when an unwanted behaviour is observed the child is given a clear warning. The behaviour is spoken about and explained with the child at their level, so that they understand that their behaviour is not acceptable and, what the consequences will be

Level 4

Time-out. This involves sitting the child in a quiet area for no longer than 2-3 minutes (this is not done in the baby or toddler room). The child should not be isolated and a staff member will always be present. This is to allow them the chance to calm down. For older children, this will be a time to think about what they have done.

Staff are to talk to the child at a pace and level appropriate to their development. Never undermine a child's self-esteem or confidence. Give a quiet activity and reintroduce it to the group at a given time i.e. when they have calmed down. When giving the child an alternative activity, make sure the activities are rotated so children do not associate one activity with their behaviour.

Procedures to carry out the levels

- Always praise positive behaviour.
- Do not jump in as soon as you have observed unwanted behaviour, approach calmly.
- Do not only focus on unwanted behaviour because of the child's history of behaviour.
- If a child is being chastised, find a positive to praise them on, avoid affecting their self-esteem. E.g. It's not nice to throw our toys, but this morning I saw you putting all the toys away so beautifully.
- Use words such as kind/ unkind/ sad/ happy. We do not use the word naughty.
- When giving a warning to the preschool room, we use the traffic light system to identify this and ensure that all staff are aware of the behaviour.
- Time-out should be the last resort unless the behaviour is serious.
- We encourage children to show respect for other people and the environment in which they are. We do not accept discrimination towards staff and children. We discuss and celebrate diversity through planned and spontaneous play and discussions.

Working with parents and carers

Parents and key partners are our best allies; we aim to always keep them informed about their children. If we need to inform parents of negative behaviour it should be done without an audience. Public praise and private criticism are useful reminders. Parents can be contacted by phone or personally at the beginning and end of each day. We maintain confidentiality and do not inform parents about the other children involved in any incidents reminding them that we also will not share their child's details with other parents. A written record of an incident may be kept which parents are required to read and sign.

If behaviour is ongoing, we will invite parents in to have a meeting with their child's key worker to establish what methods may best suit their child and to find out any background information as to what may have caused the unwanted behaviour.

If parents have any concerns regarding their child being bullied at nursery, then they can speak to the day care leads immediately who can advise of the procedure we follow to ensure that all children are kept, happy and safe whilst in our care.

We will support parents and carers by:

- Working together with parents, particularly in cases of prolonged challenging behaviour
- Work with specialist organisations
- Offer support and advice, particularly in relation to developmental norms for behaviour
- Research and provide a wide range of written information regarding behaviour management approaches
- Offer outreach support tailored individually to a family's needs