



# Behaviour Management Policy

Date created: January 2021 Reviewed August 2022 CSH

Reviewed August 2023 CSH with some minor amendments.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and practise annually.

At Woodland Nurture we recognise the importance of positive and effective behaviour management strategies in promoting children's welfare, learning and enjoyment.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our policies on anti-bullying; equal opportunities and safe guarding and our code of conduct.

## **Aims**

- To ensure that the learners under our care can play and learn in a safe environment and that they, and all the adults present at the setting are kept safe at all times.
- To develop a community of caring, respectful, confident, self-aware, valued individuals working together to learn and have fun whilst keeping our code.

**Care for yourself. Care for Others. Care for the Environment.**

## **Procedures and Strategies:**

Our code underpins how we want our community to be and is discussed regularly; especially when we have new comers or when unwanted behaviour is witnessed.

All staff, volunteers and students model our code at all times.

New staff and volunteers and parents/carers are familiarised with our code and behaviour policy as part of their induction.

As a staff we function as a team with joint responsibility for the learners in our care. We openly discuss incidents and act collectively and consistently.

We recognise that affirmation of positive behaviour will encourage that child to repeat the behaviour as well as giving other children something to aim for. All participants are actively encouraged to notice and comment on examples of positive behaviour which is praised at the time of occurrence and/or at circle times.

Gun play - Guns and war play are a natural stage and exploration of power and identity. We encourage children to role play different jobs and situations in order to make sense of the world around them. As long as all the participants are happy to be involved in the play, then we feel that gun and war play are completely acceptable.

Joining In - Often children are unsure about how to introduce themselves to play situations. We encourage and model for the children ways of asking other children if they would like to play. This can be asking if their games need an extra 'x', asking if a new child wants to be part of the war game or asking if a child would like to go and start a new type of play together. When children answer any of these questions with 'no', then that needs to be respected. Children may feel upset by being told they cannot play but we can reassure them with the knowledge that it isn't a no forever or a no because they don't like them, it's just how they want to play that game right now. They might change their mind or start a new game very soon.

Feelings are ok - We encourage and value the complete range of children's feelings and emotions. We do not tell children that they can't hate or shouldn't be angry. These are important feelings and emotions which, so long as it doesn't harm people or property, the children should feel free to explore and experience.

We aim not to be intrusive in children's play or to direct it in ways which limit their creativity or development. We believe that children can incorporate elements of risk into their play and in many cases, need an element of risk to develop.

Children need to learn how to negotiate, collaborate and how to get on with a wide range of people. We acknowledge this and use our knowledge of the individual children and observation of situations to determine if and when we deem it necessary to intervene.

If conflict resolution is not forthcoming, or a child is becoming distressed, we will step in to encourage and facilitate mediation to try to resolve conflicts by discussion and negotiation.

### **Handling Unwanted Behaviour.**

A child performing unwanted behaviour is referred back to our code in a calm manner.

Usually a quiet reminder is enough. It may be necessary to re-direct children's energies by offering them alternative and positive options. Staff will be open in stating and explaining non-negotiable issues.

To arrive at solutions and discuss cause and effect of actions, it may be prudent to ask the group ways that we can work together to eliminate unwanted behaviour. In these situations, anonymity will be maintained.

When confronted with unwanted behaviour, it is useful to distinguish between 'disengaged', 'disruptive' and 'unacceptable' behaviour.

'**Disengaged**' behaviour may indicate that a child is bored, unsettled or unhappy. With sensitive interventions, staff will often be able to re-engage a child in purposeful activity.

'**Disruptive**' behaviour describes a child whose behaviour prevents other children from enjoying themselves. Staff will listen to the child or children concerned and hear their reasons for their actions. Staff will then explain to the child or children what was negative about their behaviour and that such actions have consequences for both themselves and for other people.

'**Unacceptable**' behaviour refers to non-negotiable actions and may include discriminatory remarks, violence, bullying or destruction of equipment. Staff will be clear that consequences will follow from such behaviour, including a discussion with parents and ultimately, if repeated, a removal from the session/subsequent sessions.

Staff will make every attempt to ensure that children understand what is being said to them. Children will always be given the opportunity to make amends for their behaviour and, unless it is judged inappropriate, be able to rejoin the activity.

We recognise that it can take a person some time to calm down after a heightened incident. We create safe spaces where they can go to reflect and calm themselves if necessary, such as each child having their own favourite tree.

**Reasonable Adjustments** - we acknowledge that we are all different with differing needs. Some of our participants require reasonable adjustments in the way we tackle unwanted behaviour due to their neurodiversities and capacity to understand. As a general rule, a calm consistent manner is adopted by all staff when dealing with any issues.

**All About Me** - we acknowledge that each child is an individual with differing needs. On their All About Me form that they completed on first attending the setting there may be some useful strategies that work for that individual child if they are at heightened anxiety/upset.

**Care Plans** - in addition to All About Me forms, some children will have Care Plans which outline how we can meet their needs. These will be shared with relevant staff so we are all working towards the same goals.

**Sorry** - We acknowledge that 'sorry' is not a magic word that absolves responsibility. It is not always appropriate or helpful in a long-term context to insist that a child says sorry. Many children are not capable of fully understanding or feeling the emotion of regret until they are much older. Instead we model and encourage compassion for others. When children hurt each other physically or emotionally, we show the responsible child different ways that they can show compassion by helping someone who is hurt. This might be getting them a drink, inviting them to play, or agreeing to change the rules of their game so that the same accident doesn't happen again.

**Non-intent** - Sometimes a child may behave inappropriately without intent. For example, causing offence to another child without realising or using language that we deem unacceptable. We recognise the difference between intent and non-intent whilst acknowledging that non-intentional acts can still be damaging and therefore still need to be resolved. We treat such incidents as learning opportunities in which we compassionately support our learners so that they can recognise why their behaviour was unacceptable and what they could do to modify it.

#### **Next steps:**

If situations remain unresolved, staff will discuss concerns with parents/carers at the earliest possible opportunity in an attempt to help identify the causes of negative behaviour and share strategies for dealing with it.

Staff will explore ways to tackle the issue over subsequent sessions which may include the use of team games, drama, mindfulness or the increase of focused work for targeted children.

If deemed necessary, the incident will be recorded on a Star Analysis Chart which will help to build up a picture of any triggers. These charts have proved very useful in the past, for example, the chart may show us that incidents happen at a certain time of day indicating that the child needs extra support/change of routine/food/drink at that time of day, which will help minimise chances of reoccurring behaviours.

#### **Physical Intervention.**

We never use physical punishment or the threat of it.

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 OR when there is no immediate risk to people or property.

Staff will use physical interventions ONLY as a last resort and only then if they have reasonable grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent a child from significantly injuring themselves or others or to prevent serious damage to property.

Before reaching this stage, staff will have used all possible non-physical actions to deal with the behaviour, such as removing objects or other children out of harm's way, or by dialogue and diversion.

Staff should not feel they need to manage the situation alone but should call for the help of another staff member who will support and bear witness to the situation. (We have Walkie Talkies and whistles for this purpose.)

Sometimes another staff member may succeed in defusing the situation in which case physical intervention will have been avoided.

Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied, for example, by diverting a child or children by leading them away by a hand or by an arm around their shoulders.

A dialogue will be maintained with the child or children at all times, so that the member of staff can explain what they are doing and why they are doing it.

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

The force of the physical intervention will be always appropriate to the age, size and strength of the child or children involved.

Where a member of staff has had to intervene physically to restrain a child, Claire Hughes will be notified and the incident recorded on a Star Analysis Chart . The incident will be discussed with the parent/carer at the earliest convenience, usually on the same day it occurred by telephone or face to face.

If a staff member commits any act of violence or abuse towards a child, disciplinary action will be implemented, according to the provisions of the disciplinary procedures within the Staffing and Safeguarding Children Policies.