

The Lea Nursery School

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Behaviour Policy

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| Approved by | |
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Introduction

The policy is founded on the principle that children's behaviour is intrinsic to their learning. Children's learning is adversely affected if they are unhappy or anxious and similarly if they are unable to control their behaviour. When children are involved and interested in their learning, their behaviour is more likely to be positive and controlled. Therefore, the provision of a stimulating, developmentally appropriate environment where children are supported by adults sensitive to their needs is crucial.

Children should not be labelled or judgements made too soon. Children often make remarkable progress in their learning and behaviour in their early years. We aim to never humiliate, label, make fun of, or talk negatively about children under any circumstance. The School does not give or threaten corporal punishment under any circumstances.

We believe that in dealing with children:

- Do's work better than don'ts (e.g. walk instead of don't run)
- Praise works like magic in reinforcing positive behaviour.
- Empathy helps them to feel understood.

Why we need a behaviour policy

- To promote positive behaviour, helping children's social development and emotional wellbeing.
- To ensure that all children feel safe and secure in the nursery school.
- For all staff to have consistent expectations and approaches to children's behaviour in order to support them in behaving appropriately.
- To help children develop an awareness of our expectations and know/learn how to behave appropriately.
- For parents to know there is a consistent and fair approach.

The role of the adult in supporting children's behaviour

We work consistently to ensure that each child has a strong relationship with their key person. In turn the key person can help the child develop a wider network of relationships with other children and the wider staff team. Warm, caring, emotionally-attuned relationships set a very positive climate for children's social and emotional development and help to promote good behaviour.

Key people will:

- Work closely with each key child, starting with the home visit and settling-in procedure, to help each child feel safe, secure, valued and feel that someone knows about them as a unique child.
- Be aware of and seek out children who don't approach them.
- Relate positively to each key child every day.
- Make time to listen to and take an interest in each child every day.
- Inform parents of any issues, arrange a meeting to discuss positive behaviour strategies, (use judgement about what is important to discuss with parents - avoid bombarding parents with a daily list of bad behaviour, remember to chat to parents about all the positive aspects of the child's day too.)

All staff will:

- Provide positive, clear, consistent instructions to support positive behaviour.
- Use the child's name, get down to his/her level and maintain eye contact when giving instructions or addressing behaviour.
- Not shout at children, or use any language or other form of action which humiliates a child.
- Be effective role models- being kind, tolerant, gentle, patient, supportive and understanding.
- Strive to be "emotionally attuned" and empathetic towards children, valuing and accepting their emotions e.g. "I can see you're sad about that, shall I help you for a moment" rather than "don't cry, you're a big girl now" or "I understand you feel... but ..."
- Praise good behaviour and good efforts.
- Show disapproval of the behaviour, not the child e.g. "That was a rude thing to do" not "You rude child".
- Model how to deal with and sort out difficult situations.

- Where possible involve the children in the setting of rules.
- Discuss concerns about any persistent behaviour problems discretely with team members (as appropriate) but never openly discuss concerns in front of the child or other children.
- Maintain an open mind. Children will not be judged based on previous behaviour or on the behaviour of other family members.
- Pre-empt behaviour problems to limit their occurrence.
- Provide adequate supervision and interaction with children at all times to limit stressful situations.
- Liaise closely with parents, encouraging an atmosphere in which parents and staff can approach each other and work together to support the child's development.
- Signpost parents to the school's behaviour policy through the child's time at Nursery (including on the home visit.)
- Hold discussion groups to help parents understand and manage their children's behaviour and apply the principles and strategies contained within the behaviour policy.
- Maintain high and clear expectations of children's behaviour together with a positive attitude towards children's behavioural difficulties.
- Challenge derogatory remarks including those of a racist or sexist nature.
- Explain and set realistic boundaries for children showing challenging behaviour.
- Maintain children's respect for their parents whilst explaining that some behaviour which is acceptable at home is unacceptable at school. Children can then be helped to understand that behaviour needs to be different in other settings.
- Acknowledge that leadership and support in maintaining these common aims must come from the SLT and Governors.

Staff will ensure that the environment and planning promotes positive behaviour by:

- Creating a well-organised nursery environment that will encompass the full range of children's learning and developmental needs.
- Ensuring the environment is stimulating, extending children's learning, but at the same time providing opportunities for children to be reflective and calm.
- Ensuring that the environment provides choices for the children and helps them achieve their goals.
- Acknowledging that good planning and time management aid constructive learning and positive behaviour.
- Provide planned opportunities for children to discuss feelings and behaviour with an adult.

Code of Behaviour

At Lea Nursery School we have a Code of Behaviour that applies to all children and adults.

We use these words throughout a child's time at Nursery and encourage parents to reinforce these principles at home. These principles are:

We have gentle hands and kind hearts.
 We are thoughtful and helpful.
 We use words to tell others when we aren't happy.
 We keep ourselves and other children safe.
 We always try our best

Adults might also say:

- “We are all friends at Nursery”
- “We listen to others when they talk”
- “We look after others when they are feeling sad”
- “We do good sharing”
- “We take turns.”
- “We can say ‘Stop, I don't like it’.”
- “We do good walking inside.”
- “We help to tidy at tidy up time”
- “We say please and thank you.”

In monitoring positive behaviour we aim to help children develop:

- An understanding of and respect the needs, feelings and views of others, accepting and enjoying our differences as well as our similarities.
- Confidence, a positive self-image and social skills in order to be a responsive and responsible member of society.
- A sense of responsibility for their actions- understanding cause and effect.
- An understanding and respect for the environment in which they live, both within the school and home and in the wider setting.
- The ability to care for, maintain and enhance the environment, understanding the consequences of neglect. (With young children this will apply to their immediate environment.)
- An understanding of actions that could be dangerous to themselves and others and an ability to act safely and with consideration.
- The confidence to anticipate and prevent dangerous acts, alerting an adult if necessary.
- An understanding of and respect for the needs of others for space, quiet and calm in order to reflect and learn.
- The ability to assist others in their learning in a sensitive and constructive manner.

Strategies to support positive behaviour

Rewards that are intrinsic and meaningful to children should be used including:

- Expression of genuine interest in individual children's development and learning.
- Individual care, attention and respect.
- Giving children a sense of responsibility and trusting their judgements.
- Praising children's achievements and positive behaviour.

It would be unrealistic to deny the existence of negative behaviour in children. These behaviours include

- Hurting others with actions such as hitting, biting, scratching, pushing and spitting.
- Hurt others with words. This includes using unkind words against another child, swearing, racist or any other prejudiced comments, mocking another person's appearance, clothing, home, family, or (dis)ability.
- Damaging or disrupting the environment.
- Being a danger to him/herself or towards others.
- Impinging on his/her own ability to learn.

Keeping children safe

It is a core responsibility of the nursery school to ensure that children are safe and secure. Challenging behaviour and difficulties with social situations are an ordinary part of child development – our job is to help children work some of these problems through in a supportive atmosphere, where there are clear boundaries, so that they develop positive attitudes to each other and to learning. The majority of our work is around helping children's social development and supporting their emotional wellbeing. We want children to be strong, connected to other children and to adults, and to be self-motivated and self-regulating. Sometimes children may present with severely challenging behaviour and may seek to hurt other children regularly. It is very important that steps are taken quickly, with the involvement of the SENCO and wider services, to help children with this level of difficulty, and to ensure that other children are kept safe. We are an inclusive school and we will work positively with every child and every family.

Sanctions

Staff employ positive behaviour strategies first. These strategies include:

- engaging the child,
- giving praise for appropriate behaviour,
- setting clear boundaries,
- ignoring inappropriate behaviour but not the child.

When these fail to work then sanctions are used:

- Unacceptable behaviour should be dealt with immediately, by the adult who has witnessed it.
- Try to deal with behaviour incidents quietly to avoid the escalation of a situation.
- Adults should stay calm and reassure the child that it is the **behaviour** and not the child that is unacceptable or disapproved of.
- A three-point strategy can be adopted when unacceptable behaviour is noticed.
 - First time in one session: Explanation that behaviour is unacceptable and why.
 - Second time in same session: Reminder of previous explanation and the need to remove the child from the activity if repeated.
 - Third time in same session: Removal from activity clearly stating “there is no [hitting... spitting... swearing...] in the Nursery. You can’t go back to playing unless you can keep to that rule.” Adults suggests an alternative activity and if necessary takes the child to the activity.
 - If the child keeps presenting with unacceptable behaviour ‘time out’ will be used. During time out children will be given minimum attention with no eye contact in a quiet neutral zone. If necessary hold the child’s hand or sit them on a chair next to you for a short period of time. A sand timer should be used to indicate the passing of time. The time should be relative to the child’s age and development (No more than 5 minutes.) Once time out is finished the child should be redirected and settled at an appropriate activity.
- At each point the child will be helped towards positive behaviour with suggestions and explanations or by the adult joining the play to provide a model.
- A fresh start is made at the beginning of each session, rather than referring to previous negative behaviour.
- Further actions and responses will depend on the professional judgement of the member of staff. If you are concerned or not sure what to do, please liaise urgently with a senior member of staff.
- Behaviour that is causing more than usual staff attention should be discussed at whole staff meetings
- If a child’s behaviour is still causing concern after discussion, the matter should be discussed further with the child’s parents and it may be necessary to seek support from other agencies.

Tantrums

- Children who are having a tantrum are angry, confused and frustrated. Whilst the child should be left to calm down, an adult should stay near throughout.
- The adult should reassure other children within hearing of the distraught child that you understand the anger being expressed by this child and that the child will calm down when ready, then the child will be comforted.
- The child should be given responsibility for saying when he or she is feeling better and comfort and reassurance given.
- Sometimes it may be necessary to remove the angry child to a quieter place to help the child calm down and avoid distressing other children.

Sharing and Turntaking

Experiencing and managing conflict is an important part of growing up and early education. Our aim is to help children to learn the skills they need to manage conflicts, through guidance and modelling.

Staff will think developmentally- if a child is at an early stage of development, then sharing resources will be very challenging.

Ways to support include:

- making sure that we have enough resources for everyone.
- setting up experiences for 2 or 3 children, to avoid large groups crowding round.
- modelling language/ approaches like “me next”; “can I have a turn”; “you can have it next, when I’ve finished.”
- Model sharing and learning like “I’ll do one, you do the next.”
- Support and promote open-ended experiences that promote collaboration, e.g. block play.

When children fight over a piece of equipment

- The adult should stop both children and take hold of the disputed object.
- If children are able to talk about it the adult will discuss with them how the situation can best be resolved.
- If children need support resolving the situation then:
 - Remind both children of the need for sharing and suggest taking turns.
 - Get a sand timer (the duration of the time depends on the age and development of both children.)
 - Explain to both children that it is one child's turn until the timer is finished. When the timer is finished it will be the other child's turn.
 - Encourage the child waiting to hold the sand timer.
 - When the timer is finished support the child with the timer to say to the other child "The timer is finished and now it's my turn."
 - If necessary support the child with the toy to pass it across to the other child.

Dealing with Conflict/ Children who have been hurt

Encourage children to be assertive and to clearly say/sign "no" or "I don't like it", etc. Where a child appropriately asserts "no" and the other child responds, it is not usually necessary for an adult to get involved.

If a conflict needs adult intervention to be resolved, our approach is:

- Listen to both children.
- Encourage children to say how they feel ("it hurt" ... "I'm sad" etc.)
- Ask the children how they could solve the problem and try to find a solution based on their ideas. If necessary, impose a solution and explain why.
- Children who have been hurt by another child's aggressive behaviour need to be comforted. If necessary they need an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with a member of staff or their keyworker.
- If necessary, state a clear boundary. "Remember, no hitting in nursery."
- The aggressor should be helped to explain the reasons for his or her behaviour and alternatives suggested by the adult.
- The child should be asked to think of a way of making the other child feel better. This could involve saying "sorry", comforting the other child or agreeing to be friends. Avoid a situation where a child expresses a grudging "sorry."
- The aggressor should be encouraged to comfort or assist with minor first aid, if needed, whilst an adult soothes and helps restore a positive relationship between those concerned. It also provides the adult with the opportunity to praise and be positive towards what had originally been a negative activity.
- If necessary move one child away from the other's play.
- It is important to spend time settling the children back into positive play – don't deal with an incident and walk away too soon.
- Where possible, notice positive behaviour shortly afterwards and praise it. "I can see you are playing nicely now, that's good to see you sharing."
- Bilingual staff play a key role in helping with incidents where children are at early stages of learning English.

Destructive behaviour

- If a child destroys another child's play, the child should be encouraged to assist in putting matters right.
- It can be helpful to steer the child towards a legitimate "set up and destroy" activity, for example making a tower to knock down.
- Encouraging a child to mop up water he or she has deliberately poured on the floor will help the child understand cause and effect and to acknowledge that he or she is capable of creating order.

Boisterous Play, Superhero Play and Weapon 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.

It is understood that however we respond to weapon play, we will always ensure that every child feels safe and protected. Children are not allowed to use forms of play to intimidate other children in any way. We are tolerant of

weapon play and believe that children should be able to extend their imaginative play in this direction. Staff will join in to support and extend the play, however, we will not actively help them to make weapons as props. We will support them to understand that, while this type of play is harmless, real weapons are not. Any member of staff that does not feel comfortable with weapon play should feel able to express this to children and decline to enter into such play.

- We prefer that no child brings in a toy weapon from home. Any such toy will be kept in a safe place until the child goes home or the parent/carer will be asked to take it home.
- Any representational weapon that is made by a child during the nursery session will be talked about in such a way as to extend the child's thinking and imagination beyond the actual weapon.
- Only children involved in a game can be targeted and the games should remain non-contact if involving pretend weapons.
- Children who do not wish to take part in such games will be taught to say and gesture "Stop."
- Rough and tumble games are allowed to continue as long as everyone involved has consented to being a part of it and as long as the play is still safe. Adults will check that all children are 'happy' with the game.
- The children will be reminded frequently of the boundaries of rough and tumble and superhero play.

Sexualised play

The NSPCC advise that from infancy to 4 years sexual behaviour is beginning to emerge through actions like:

- Kissing and hugging.
- showing curiosity about private body parts.
- talking about private body parts and using words like "poo", "willy" and "bum."
- playing "house" or "doctors and nurses" type games with other children.
- touching, rubbing or showing off their genitals or masturbating as a comforting habit.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/healthy-sexualbehaviour-children-young-people/>

So this type of play should not in itself raise undue concerns. However children do need to learn that this type of play is not appropriate, without being made to feel they have done something bad, wrong or shameful. It is also important that children are empowered to feel confident in saying "no" when they do not like someone else's actions or play.

Staff should respond to sexualised play in a low-key and matter-of-fact way, following the general guidance in this policy. Of course, this won't be easy for everyone, especially if the child's behaviour seems shocking or morally wrong to a member of staff. But staff should try to keep calm. Body language and tone can make a difference.

If it is important to describe a body part, we use the correct term like a doctor would, not another term. So for example, "penis" rather than "willy". It is important to respond to children's direct questions but not to offer information which the child might yet be ready to understand.

If a member of staff feels any concerns about the play, then they should talk over those concerns – however small – with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Use of Stickers

It is acknowledged that for many parents using stickers is a common method of rewarding good behaviour. Lea Nursery have historically used stickers as rewards for good behaviour. For this reason, on occasions it may be appropriate to reward good behaviour with a sticker. However this needs to be considered alongside the following factors:

- While stickers can sometimes be a motivator, it needs to be acknowledged that for some children priming them to expect rewards for good behaviour can harm their social development in the long term.
- Children can come to expect a reward for good behaviour and can become reluctant to behave well without an external reward.

- Offering children tangible rewards in exchange for caring behaviour can erode some children's innate tendency to help others.

Working with Parents

It is important to involve parents because:

- They know their own children best. They may be able to help us to understand why their child is finding a particular situation difficult, and help us to manage it.
- Working with parents to support their child's positive behaviour is an ongoing and collaborative process that depends on regular and open communication over time.
- Parents need a clear picture of how their child is managing in school. It is important to talk to parents about difficulties their child might have. But, please be clear that the reason is to share information, and not because we want them to tell their child off again, or because we are blaming them.
- We are able to offer support to parents through workshops and through partners such as the Children's Centre and Early Help. All parents are encouraged to join in with these.

Restraining children

With a very young age-group of children, physical holding and guidance are often needed, e.g. when a small child is very angry and about to hit out at other children. We judge that an incident is "physical restraint" if the child has to be fully restrained from movement for more than a few seconds because the child wants to hurt another or to hurt her or himself. Restraint is then needed in order to keep the child or other children safe.

If a child's behaviour results in a need for restraint, as defined above, then there will be a specific plan to manage behaviour and set clear boundaries. Staff will use the minimum force needed to restore safety and appropriate behaviour. At Lea Nursery School, Team Teach is the preferred approach to using positive handling strategies. Team Teach remains committed to the term "Positive Handling" to describe a broad spectrum of risk reduction strategies. Positive handling is a holistic approach involving policy, guidance, management of the environment and the deployment of staff. It also involves personal behaviour, diversion, definition and de-escalation. Physical restraint is only a small part of the framework.

The principles relating to the intervention are as follows:

- Restrictive Physical Intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment. It is never used to force compliance with staff instructions.
- Staff will only use it when there are good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary and in the child's and/or other children's best interests.
- Staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention through dialogue and diversion, and the child will be warned, at their level of understanding, that Restrictive Physical Intervention will be used unless they cease the unacceptable behaviour.
- Only the minimum force necessary will be used to prevent severe distress, injury or damage.
- Staff will be able to show that the intervention used was in keeping with the incident.
- Every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff, and these staff may act as assistants and/or witnesses.
- As soon as it is safe, the Restrictive Physical Intervention will be relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control.
- A distinction will be maintained between the use of a one-off intervention which is appropriate to a particular circumstance, and the using of it repeatedly as a regular feature of the setting.
- Escalation will be avoided at all costs, especially if it would make the overall situation more destructive and unmanageable.
- The age, understanding, and competence of the individual child will always be taken into account.
- In developing Individual Education/Behaviour Plans, consideration will be given to approaches appropriate to each child's circumstance. These plans will be drawn up with involvement from the child's parents and if necessary will include input from wider services.
- Procedures are in place, through the pastoral system of the setting, for supporting and debriefing pupils and staff after every incident of Restrictive Physical Intervention, as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times.
- All instances of restraint will be recorded and the information will be shared with the parents.