



Dorking Nursery School and Children's Centre

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

At Dorking Nursery School and Children's Centre our aim is to create an environment in which each child feels confident, secure and happy, and is able to reach their maximum learning potential. We place a strong emphasis on promoting the personal, social and emotional development of each child e.g. helping children to understand their own feelings and that of others and to express their feelings in appropriate ways. At all times the safeguarding of children in our care is central to our approach.

To enable us to achieve our aim with regard to behaviour, it is essential that the following aspects of behaviour are consistently promoted by all staff, whilst taking into account each child's level of understanding, we will endeavour to:

- be consistent in our approach (see Staff handbook for guidelines)
- develop good trusting relationships with the children and use praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement at every opportunity
- explain clearly to the child why they are being praised or why their behaviour is unacceptable
- actively teach the children our expectations and routines both individually and during group sessions, and regularly reinforce this teaching
- set an appropriate code of behaviour for the children i.e. any rules will be achievable and relevant to the age of the children
- give instructions positively rather than negatively (e.g. "Please walk" rather than "Don't run")
- use our skills to avoid difficult situations developing, through our organisation of the day and by using sensitive strategies
- provide good role models at all times
- be aware of the children's individual stages of development and circumstances and react in an appropriate manner
- help the children to show consideration for others and for property
- teach children how to deal with conflict
- liaise closely with parents at all times and offer support if there is a particular problem
- be aware that children's behaviour may be as a result of a feeling of worthlessness due to having been abused or having witnessed violence. Our Centres will ensure that the children know that some behaviour is unacceptable but the child is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred. In the event of any case of suspected

abuse, the staff must consult a Designated Safeguarding Lead (see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

Consequences of inappropriate behaviour

There are certain behaviours we do not tolerate. However we view the behaviour as being inappropriate rather than considering the child to be naughty or bad. Therefore we do not use these terms when speaking to children, parents or amongst staff.. We need to be sure we have seen the behaviours and not make assumptions about a child's behaviour. Once the children are taught our rules we expect them to follow them and appropriate consequences will be imposed if they refuse to do so. However it is important to note that the consequences given may vary according to the level of understanding and the development of each individual child. We use the principle that all behaviour is a form of communication and therefore endeavour to find out what the child was trying to communicate.

We have the following code when giving consequences to children

1. We never use physical punishment or threats
2. We ensure that the child understands exactly what unacceptable behaviour has taken place
3. We are consistent in giving consequences

We believe that the consequences should be meaningful to the child and that the child should be encouraged to empathise, think about what he/she has done and how they can rectify the situation. If a child has been hurt, that child can be supported to identify what they would like to happen to make things right.

The actions we will take may include:

1. Discussing with the child the behaviour that is unacceptable and the reasons why at the level of their own understanding.
2. Asking the child to rectify the situation (e.g. replacing thrown equipment) however we do not make any child say 'sorry'.
3. Withdrawal from an activity or a situation
4. Give the child an opportunity to make a good choice.

If a child displays exceptionally challenging behaviour over a period of time we will monitor their behaviour using an ABC chart or other relevant strategy and then where necessary devise an individual behaviour plan based on our observations of the child. In all cases we will discuss and agree this with parents. The plan may involve "thinking time" for specific unacceptable behaviours; but, most importantly, it will also include our response when a child's behaviour is positive. As well as positive praise, we may give physical rewards for good behaviour e.g. a turn on a favourite bike.

At all times each child must know that their behaviour does not affect our relationship with them. In the Centre we aim to create a non judgemental atmosphere where it is fine to make mistakes and learn from them.

Swearing

Sometimes children of this age go through a stage of experimenting with new words and language which may include swear words. Staff will be sensitive to the situation and in some circumstances, particularly if other children are not involved, may ignore this. If it is knowingly directed at another child or adult in an abusive manner then the staff will intervene i.e. discreetly inform the child that the words used are unacceptable in our Centres. If the child persists he/she will be removed from the situation altogether.

Physical harm such as biting, kicking, hitting, scratching

Young children often react quickly and emotively without being able to foresee the consequences of their action. We teach children that these behaviours are not acceptable and give them strategies to develop more acceptable ways to express their frustration. Visual symbols may be used to reinforce a child's understanding of positive behaviour and staff may encourage a child to communicate verbally, model phrases or thinking, e.g. 'Let's think about this', 'let's work this out', 'what else could you have done?'

Bullying

We actively teach the children to respect others. Behaviour which appears to be bullying, whether physical, verbal or emotional is unacceptable and we will investigate any reports of bullying, and, if substantiated, action will be taken. (See also Disability Equality Scheme). Children may display behaviours that appear to be bullying, and we will address these behaviours as stated above, but actual bullying is very rare for children of this age.

At the Centre we have a named member of staff, who takes the lead on behaviour issues, and is able to offer support and advice to staff and parents. The named member of staff to lead on Behaviour is the Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

Please also see associated policies on safeguarding/ child protection and positive handling.

As children respond best to praise, our aim at all times is to give attention for good behaviour.

Approved by the Governing Body: September 2018

To be reviewed by: September 2019

Relevant for:-

Children's Centre: Yes	Nursery: Yes	Parents: Yes
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Conflict resolution

At Dorking Nursery School and Children's Centre we adopt the following stepped approach to resolving conflicts between children.

1. Approach the situation calmly, but stop any hurtful actions
2. Acknowledge the feelings of all children involved i.e. let both sides see you are interested and concerned that they are upset. They need to know it is ok to be upset and/or angry but not ok to hurt someone because of it
3. Gather information about what happened and why. This may include asking any children and adults nearby to explain what they saw and heard.
4. Restate the problem i.e. say back to the children in your own words what they have told you was going on. If it is not possible to ascertain what happened say that you don't know because you didn't see and move on to step 5 without assuming that the child crying the loudest is the one most hard done by.
5. Ask for solutions and choose one that works for both parties. If none are forthcoming be prepared to offer some suggestions of your own e.g. using a timer to take turns, finding a similar piece of equipment if the problem is about a toy, reading a story to cheer everyone up etc.
6. Follow up by checking that the solution is working or the children have happily gone their separate ways and peace has been restored.

With the younger children or those less able to verbalise or explain, the same underlying principles apply but there will be a need for more adult intervention, suggestion and follow up.

These steps allow practitioners to be in control whilst offering a safe and nurturing environment in which children can ultimately learn to resolve their own conflicts. If all members of the team are working in the same way, the children will learn that they are important, that their feelings matter and they have both the right to be heard and to be kept safe.

