

Egerton Nursery & out of School Club

Behaviour Management Policy



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4	08.09.2022	Now including dealing with parents-see highlighted

List of Abbreviations Used

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
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Behaviour Management Policy

'As a registered childcare provider, we aim to offer a quality childcare and education service for parents and children.

We recognise the need to set reasonable and appropriate limits to help manage the behaviour of children in our care.

We do not recognise any form of physical punishment and endorse positive discipline as a more effective way of setting boundaries for children'.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Personal, social and emotional development in the earliest years needs to be supported to give children a chance to explore and identify their concept of themselves and their place in the world, interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, the rules of society and developing a positive approach to new experiences.

There are a range of factors that can affect a child's behaviour at any time and the practitioner's role is to develop a safe emotional environment which will support children in understanding and identifying their own emotions, building a positive self-image, developing good relationships with others and being able to follow the rules of the setting.

The first step in this process is in developing secure attachments with children and positive relationships with their parents. If children do not feel comfortable and secure in a setting, they are unlikely to be able to start to explore, make friends and be ready to learn.

Through everyday conflicts children will begin to learn about rules and boundaries, feelings and empathy and begin to understand the impact and consequences of their behaviour.

To reduce the opportunities for conflict you will need to have a pro-active approach rather than being reactive to behaviours.

Having a pro-active environment will support adults as well as the children, both parties will have the support of fair, consistent rules and boundaries, and clear procedures that will be followed.

In this factsheet we will discuss how to be pro-active with your positive behaviour strategies and how to provide an emotionally secure environment.

Working with Parents where a child may have a behaviour challenge

It is important that you discuss any behaviour that challenges with parents it happens.

Parents may be able to tell you about external factors that are having an impact on their child's behaviour.

This will help you to understand the emotional impact on their child and how you can best support them.

It will also give you opportunities to discuss strategies with parents so that you can develop a consistent approach to any issues and support the parents.

Approaching parents to discuss any particular behaviour, needs to be done in a sensitive and professional manner, ensuring that throughout the discussion you stick to the facts, refer to the behaviour and share both positive and negative elements of any situation.

Speaking to parents can be a daunting prospect but you must consider the best interests, of the child and work together to develop acceptable social habits for the future.

Your good relationships with parents are vital in developing and supporting consistent strategies.

Parents should feel able to approach practitioners working with their child to instigate discussions and share their perspective on behaviours that are happening in the home.

Talking to parents about challenging situations, involving their child, can be very emotive for them and you need to plan your feedback carefully, find a quiet private place to talk and ensure you have enough time to spend with them so that they can work through their thoughts and emotions without being hurried.

Parents may feel anger, distress, a refusal to believe, blame individuals or the setting, threaten to withdraw their child or refuse to work constructively with the setting.

When in this situation you should remain calm, acknowledge, and accept their feelings and give them time to talk/calm down/think about what you have said.

Presenting clear facts, avoiding blame or negative statements will show parents that you wish to support them in providing what is in the best interests of their child through working together.

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Reassure parents that a variety of behaviours that challenge us, are a natural development process for young children.

Offer to get together and discuss the progress and any insights they may be able to give (having had time to go away and think about what you have told them).

Key points of working with parents

- Be honest with parents at all times
- Avoid negative language
- Keep a positive attitude
- Acknowledge parent's feelings and deal sensitively with issues they may face
- Provide support systems and advice for parents, i.e. Gingerbread (group to support single parents) www.gingerbread.org.uk, Citizens Advice, local health visitor
- Find quiet, private spaces to talk through events with parents
- Plan time into your day for parents to feedback and share their concerns
- Work together to plan a strategy/plan that can be implemented consistently
- Create effective communication methods to ensure information is shared with parents, i.e. daily diaries, telephone calls, emails, texts
- Invite parents into the setting to take part in activities and events.

At **Egerton Nursery and Out of School Club** we believe that we have a strong partnership with our parents* and an open-door policy to discuss any matters arising.

If, as a parent, you have any concerns or issues you wish to raise with the nursery then please follow the complaints procedure.

In the case of a parent emailing, calling or using social media to complain the nursery will direct them to the correct procedure for raising a complaint.

We have a zero tolerance on abusive calls, emails, social media contact and face to face confrontation.

Calls of an aggressive/abusive manner

The call taker receiving a call leading to abusive/aggressive will remain calm and professional and ask them to follow the complaints policy. If the abuse continues the call taker will end the call. Any abusive calls will be logged with an outline of the conversation.

Emails of an aggressive/abusive manner

The responder will ask the parents to come into the setting to speak in person, as per our complaints policy. If the emails persist the manager may seek legal action. All emails will be kept as evidence until the matter is resolved.

Social Media

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If slanderous or abusive messages appear on any social media sites, we will address these immediately with a request to follow our complaints procedure. We will endeavour to resolve any issue raised through our complaints procedure. If slanderous/abusive messages continue we will seek legal action against the complainant.

In the event that any person inside the nursery starts to act in an aggressive manner at the nursery, our policy is to:

- Direct the person away from the children and into a private area, such as the office (where appropriate)
- Ensure that a second member of staff is in attendance, where possible, whilst continuing to ensure the safe supervision of the children
- Remain calm and professional in order to calm the aggressive person, making it clear that we do not tolerate aggressive or abusive language or behaviour
- If the aggressive behaviour continues or escalates, we will contact the police in order to ensure the safety of our staff team, children and families
- If the person calms down and stops the aggressive behaviour a member of staff will listen to their concerns and try to resolve the issue
- Following an aggressive confrontation an incident form will be completed detailing the time, reason and any action taken
- Any aggressive behaviour from a parent could result in the withdrawal of a place for the children. Parents will be informed, by the management team, in writing within 3 days of any incident that involved aggressive or threatening behaviour to their staff
- Management will provide support and reassurance to any staff member involved in such an incident
- Management will signpost parents to organisations/professionals that can offer support if applicable.

This policy will be followed in the event of any other visitors/member of the public displaying this type of behaviour either by phone, email, social media or in person.

* For the purpose of this publication the term 'parents' will be used to describe all types of primary caregivers, such as biological and adoptive parents, foster carers and guardians.

Being consistent

Providing a consistent approach to behaviours that challenge is an essential element. Each member of your staff team needs to understand and be working towards your vision for creating a harmonious environment that lessens the conflicts and has clear procedures and routines for dealing quickly with disputes with minimal fuss.

Practitioners need to understand and acknowledge their own feelings towards certain behaviours (biting, swearing, and aggression) and to appreciate that their own particular feelings of certain behaviour types need to be placed on one side so

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they can act in a professional capacity to deal with these issues according to their workplace practice and policies.

Your behaviour policy/strategy should be regularly reviewed at staff meetings so that all are part of the evaluation process, you can then look at your policies reflect upon how you share your practice with parents.

As a team, you can then decide on any changes that may be needed.

This process will allow individual practitioners to raise concerns or share problems that they may be having with a particular type of behaviour.

It may be that there is a particular area/resource that is a 'hotspot' for conflicts, and you can reflect on why this is and decide on measures to minimise it in future.

Make flowcharts of each step of your behaviour strategy and keep these around the rooms; laminate them for longevity.

As well as supporting the staff team, it will support parents and reassure them that you have clear, open, consistent, positive behaviour strategies in place around your setting.

Clear and consistent rules and boundaries for children are critical for supporting their personal, social, and emotional development. Throughout life, we are expected to live within society's rules and laws, and it is important that we support children from an early age in developing these skills and understanding.

Explain to children the reason for the rule and why the rule is in place, i.e. 'We should not run indoors because we have lots of toys on the floor you might fall over the toys and hurt yourself, then you would feel very sad.'

This will help children to understand why you are asking for certain behaviours and to help them understand the consequences that may come from such actions.

Put your rules into a positive framework, instead of lots of 'do not' have 'remember to... walk in-doors.'

Revisit your rules regularly and ask, 'Who can remember why we need to walk (not run) indoors?'

Draw up the rules in consultation with the children and include these within your behaviour policy.

Top tip

Include 'positive behaviour' as a permanent agenda item for your staff meetings.

This will enable you to share best practice, advice, support, and ideas within the team and will ensure that no subject is taboo.

It will support staff in understanding different behaviours and identify possible solutions/strategies.

It will also help individual practitioners to acknowledge their own feelings around certain types of behaviour.

Providing this support network and open approach to behaviour should mean that no member of the team is left to struggle with managing particular incidents of behaviour that is challenging.

Dealing with biting

Biting can be a response to teething, natural exploration or may be to communicate a message.

Have a consistent approach to any incident of biting:

- Respond immediately
- Focus your attention on the victim
- Acknowledge the victim's feelings
- Calmly remove the biter from the situation telling them that you cannot let them hurt their friends. Redirect their play away from the victim
- Administer any first aid treatment necessary and complete the necessary paperwork
- Reassure parents that biting is a normal part of development and that you have strategies in place to deal with cases of biting.
- Considerations for ongoing biting
- Look at the environment
- Who; where, when is it happening?
- Talk to parents about what is happening at home
- Change around your daily routine to stop biting opportunities
- Provide relaxing transitions that calm the children
- Develop emotional language with the child that bites
- Shadow the child who bites, try to intervene before the biting occurs to promote a non-biting response.

Praising children

Think carefully about giving praise to children. What are you praising, is it clear to the child? Is it meaningful praise?

Praise should be specific, genuine, and brief i.e. if a child shows you a picture that they have created the praise should centre on the process involved, rather than the end product.

Best practice in assessment for learning would suggest that it is better to centre praise on the learning process rather than completion of the task and the practitioner's response to it.

In 'How Children Learn' Nancy Stewart 2012 writes: "Dweck's advice for supporting a mastery orientation and growth mind set in children is to focus on the goal of learning, rather than on the level of outcome of their performance...we can avoid telling children they are clever or good at painting as if that is a fixed attribute, and instead focus on the process of what they are thinking and expressing." (page 42).

Offering specific positive praise can help children, especially those with behaviour that challenges, stay focused and will help them to understand the appropriate behaviour they need to apply in a given situation.

Acknowledging feelings

Expressing emotions and giving emotional language helps children to understand the way they feel and why.

Introduce/give children chances to talk about how they feel each day.

Find an area in your room where you can put up pictures/photos of a range of facial expressions portraying happy; sad; tired; surprised; excited; upset; amazed; shy etc. on the walls, so even children who cannot yet articulate their feelings can identify with a range of different emotions.

Have mirrors available next to your emotions board so that children can practice making facial expressions and identify their own feelings.

Talk about your own feelings with the children, e.g. 'I am happy that it snowed today because I can build a snowman, but I am sad because I couldn't come on my bike'.

After any incident of aggression from a child it is important that you acknowledge the emotions i.e. 'Hitting/biting has made *A* very sad because it hurt them.'

This will enable the aggressor to understand/begin to understand the consequences of their actions and start to develop empathy.

Saying sorry

Asking a child to say sorry after an unacceptable behaviour incident is pointless unless the child understands why they are saying sorry.

Children should never be forced to say 'sorry' as this is not achieving anything but satisfying the adult asking for the apology.

Children should only be asked to consider apologising if they have already developed an understanding of cause and effect.

Role modelling empathy will enable children to understand and learn how to be considerate individuals.

By providing a happy well managed environment, the children in our care will be encouraged to develop social skills to help them to be accepted in society as they become young adults.

Problem solving (offering choices)

Offering choices can be used to take conflict out of the situation.

If you need a child to sit down, and they are refusing, offer them a choice, i.e. 'You can either sit down here on the chair or on the cushions next to me. Which one are you going to choose?'

This will help a child to feel as though they have some choice and control in the situation and should de-fuse any outright confrontation.

When offering choices ensure you only offer two choices so that you do not overload the child.

Avoid a long dialogue during this choosing stage, clearly repeat the choices and give the child some thinking time.

Problem solving is a life skill that we practise as part of our daily routines, i.e. how to get from one place to another or how to fit everything we need to do into our schedules.

In early years settings we can begin to support our youngest children in developing the necessary skills they need for later life.

As children come over to you and tell you what their problem is, do not rush in to give them a solution; repeat back what they have told you; acknowledge how they feel about the situation; then ask them, 'How are we going to solve this?'

Support the children through their ideas until they have reached a decision that is acceptable to them.

If this is consistent then you will see a change in the time children spend asking adults to solve their problems, and you will begin to witness them discussing and solving their own issues together.

Reward systems

Having a consistent behaviour strategy is vital to successful behaviour but it is also important to be flexible with your reward systems.

Some children will not be motivated by stickers for very long, so as a team, you should decide upon a range of reward systems that you can move between as the child's motivation changes.

Think about individual children and what their interests are, then try to find an incentive from their particular interests.

Link up with parents to see what rewards systems they use at home.

Avoiding negative labels

Children with behaviour that challenges can often be wrongly identified as the culprit by their peers even when they are not even involved in an incident.

As a whole staff team, you must develop an environment that does not proportion labels and negative identity.

Research in America showed that children with ADHD received nine negative comments for every one positive comment, which had an impact on their self-esteem.

To avoid negative labels, you must also work with parents and use your good relationships with them to share an understanding of behaviour and the strategies you use to solve any incidents quickly, fairly and appropriately to the child's level of understanding.

All incidents should be investigated fairly and decisions about the incident should not be reached until they have been thoroughly investigated.

Observation is crucial to understanding what a child may be trying to communicate through their behaviour.

Once the message/cause of the behaviour has been identified then practitioners can decide upon the best approach to helping the child communicate in a more acceptable way.

Safeguarding

Working with behaviour that challenges on a regular basis can be stressful for practitioners. There are a number of external factors that can impact on your own energy levels, tiredness, teething baby at home or any other change in the home environment.

Ensure that you share any emotional demands that may impact on your practice so that you can receive the support of your team.

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It is essential that practitioners are always a good role model to children and that they can approach any situation in a calm and fair manner.

If you feel, at any time, that you cannot do this, then you must ask another colleague to take over.

Having open discussions at staff meetings around promoting positive behaviour will allow you to put these support strategies in place for the team, so each member feels able to seek the same level of support that is given to the children.

When dealing with the aftermath of an incident, children involved should never feel embarrassed or humiliated by a practitioner.

Each situation must be dealt with in a calm and professional manner. If you are concerned by any treatment a child in your setting receives from a member of your team, then you must report this to the relevant person.

Protecting children is the responsibility of all the staff in the setting, so you must report any action that you think is inappropriate or harmful to a child. If you do not feel this is being taken seriously by the designated person, then you must follow your escalation process and report this on.

The environment

When you have any incidents of behaviour that challenges, one of the first things you should do is to review the environment and look at what is happening in each area.

You may be able to identify a cause for the conflict, i.e. not enough resources in the area, and put in measures to prevent this from happening in future.

Considerations for Creating an Emotionally Safe Environment

- Do all practitioners understand your settling in and transitions practice?
- Are all families welcomed into your setting and know who their child's key person is?
- Do you have lines of communication with all the families attending your setting? If not, how can you develop these?
- Do you have good relationships with the schools in your areas, and other childcare providers?
- Do you work with outside professionals, i.e. speech and language therapist, health visitors?
- Do all your staff team understand your behaviour policy and is it implemented consistently across your setting? How do you know?
- How often do you discuss behaviour strategies at staff meetings?
- What methods do you use for communicating behaviours that challenge with parents?

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- In what ways do you work together with parents/other carers/settings to provide consistent support to a child with behaviour that challenges?
- Do you have a quiet/private area to speak to parents about concerns?
- What ways do you support children in identifying and understanding their emotions? How do you provide emotional language and acknowledge feelings?
- Do you have enough resources in each area to stop conflicts arising?
- Do you have any 'hotspot' areas in your setting where conflicts seem to be more common, e.g. the construction areas? What have you/can you do to prevent this?
- Are children given opportunities to solve problems without practitioners giving the answers?
- What do you do to promote a positive approach and avoid negative labels of individuals?
- Do you identify flexible reward schemes to adjust in line with a child's motivational level?

Named person: *Kerry Hurst*