



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Achieving positive behaviour

Providers must have and implement a behaviour management policy and procedures

Achieving positive behaviour policy statement

Coaley playgroup aim to provide a positive and consistent environment in which children are able to play and learn. We also work in partnership with parents by communicating and offering advice and support, especially when dealing with behaviour issues.

It is recognised that all children behave in different ways and that changes in behaviour are usually a result of a change in their environment or a developmental stage. For example, biting is common amongst the 18 months to 2 years 6 month olds.

Introduction:

All staff are responsible for ensuring that the 'Achieving Positive Behaviour policy' is understood and is consistently implemented and shared with parents.

A safe, caring and happy environment enables maximum learning to take place.

Within Coaley village playgroup, the role of the Early Years practitioner is to explain, model and ensure all children understand the expectations of the setting with regards to behaviour by promoting emotional, social and cognitive skills in young children. The key person has a particularly important role to play within the team, ensuring that there is excellent communication with parents and other members of the team about any issues, which may arise with individual children. Coaley playgroup must make provisions for the development of these skills.

Coaley playgroup encourages the development of 'positive behaviour' such as:

- **Emotional Intelligence:** promoting the management of feelings and behaviour.
To help children develop emotional intelligence, you have to a) recognise their emotional needs and b) acknowledge them by articulating them.
- **Social skills:** Encouraging infants to form positive, respectful relationships
Social development will happen every day through the use of structured group play to encourage positive and respectful relationships. Young children learn by playing, listening, watching, asking questions, and doing.
- **Cognitive skills:** increasing self-confidence and self-awareness
To develop reasoning and problem solving (i.e. cognitive skills), practitioners must plan and make use of activities, which are structured as well as free play, and plan games that encourage curiosity.

Staff will try to prevent unwanted situations occurring by intervening before they happen.

Encouraging good behaviour

Positive behaviour is promoted through:

- Praise, rewards and encouragement, i.e. thumbs up, a pat on the back, smiles, stickers positive language.
- Using it as an example to others to promote desired behaviour.
- Modelling and developing social skills such as: sharing, manners, hygiene and taking turns.
- Encouraging children to take responsibility for their own behaviour and that of others, i.e. supporting a child to tell another child 'please don't do that, I don't like it'.

We have a variety of strategies that we use to deal with unwanted behaviour.

These vary according to the age and stage of the child, the situation and other factors such as tiredness.

These include:

- Verbal warnings with explanation
- Removal of equipment
- Distraction
- Removing of child from situation



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- Reminders
- And if appropriate time out.

However, our focus is always on promoting positive behaviour and the prevention of unwanted behaviours. If a child is showing persistent behaviours that are not typical to their age/stage we will then take the following steps.

- Begin to observe both positive and negative behaviours over a given period using the ABC sheet and longer focussed observations.

In the Early Years observing children is key for assessment. The following questions must be taken into careful consideration as children below the age of 5 are still developing their prime areas.

Important Information regarding behaviours can be gathered such as:

1. When does it happen?
2. How often does it happen?
3. How do people respond when it happens?
4. When does the child not behave like this?
5. What is the child trying to communicate?
6. Have I discussed this with the parents/carers?
7. Have I got the full picture whether/when this happens at home?
8. Have we agreed on behaviour strategies, which are consistent amongst staff?
9. Have we agreed ways forward?
10. Are there child protection concerns?

- Share, discuss and change strategies with all staff on the best way to support challenging behaviour.
- Share and discuss with parent/ carers the unwanted behaviours from the week.
- If the situation has not been resolved your child's keyworker will:
- have a meeting with the parents and draw up an action plan, which will include behaviour strategies (record minutes of meeting).
- Further advice from partnership agencies will be sought if necessary i.e. health visitor, EY SEN advisor, community nursery nurse, speech and language team, EP etc. 4

Dealing with undesirable behaviour

Our starting point is to take into account child's age and stage of development:

Unacceptable behaviour includes:

- Bad language and derogatory language
- Not complying with turn taking sharing and other social skills.
- Physical harm of the other children/self or staff.
- Repetitive damage of nursery property or of that belonging to another child.
- Persistent bullying.

Strategies for dealing with different types of challenging behaviour:

Biting

Biting is reasonably common in toddlers up to two and a half years old, but it is a behaviour that causes lots of concerns amongst adults and needs to be discouraged. It is important to try to understand why the child is biting and teach alternative solutions.

Strategies for when children bite

-Try to divert or distract the child if you think that they are going to bite (i.e. Jon come and play with the trucks, let's ask ... (Staff or child) for those Peppa pig pots if she has any)



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- Saying 'ouch, it hurts' with an appropriate facial expression
- Encouraging the child to help looking after the hurt child
- Saying 'stop' firmly with an accompanying hand signal
- Regular input on using gentle hands-to be modelled through playing with toys or musical instruments
- Some children might need alternative things to bite on-especially if they are teething
- Use resources to look at what mouths are used for (laughing, smiling, kissing) and look at mouth shapes in the mirror
- Praise the child when they are using their mouth to do the right thing.
- Play 'pull a funny face' (song from the Gruffalo story) or 'brush your teeth' from British Council Kids
- Circle time

Hitting, Kicking, Pinching or Scratching

Many children arrive at a setting and display these behaviours-directed to peers and adults. These behaviours can cause strong feelings amongst the adults who have to deal with them including annoyance, frustration, anger, embarrassment and upset. These feelings are normal.

Strategies when children hit, kick, pinch or scratch:

- Establish and teach clear group rules, eg: "We are nice to one another"
- Lead small group activities focused around gentle hands, feet, etc.
- Model to children how to play in different situations and model language of sharing (pretend to be a child)
- Regular reinforcement of positive behaviours (praise, attention, etc)
- Ensure that there are real consequences in place, for example, if we kick, we sit quietly for a short time (timer) away from other children.
- Try distracting and diverting the child-intervene early. (If you watch him/her dealing with a difficult situation, voice out positively how well he is going to share the toys or letting other person getting on the bike)
- Provide activities where children can express their feelings (puppets, animals, circle time, quiet areas)

Refusal

It can be very frustrating when a child refuses to do what is expected of them. Some children are so excited by all the activities around them that they find it difficult to stop. Others are not quite used to doing as asked by an adult. Staff need to decide how important their request is and decide what "battles" they are going to have and which as best left.

Strategies when children refuse to follow instructions:

- Giving plenty of warning of change
- -sand timers or visual timetables.
- Using when... then; when you finish then you...
- Choose activities that they like to build up a habit of compliance.
- Shortening the length of time of the activity.
- Change the activity or social grouping.
- Making sure that the activity is appropriate to them.
- Giving lots of positive attention when child participates in adult-led tasks.

Tantrums

Tantrums are normal part of development for most children between the ages of 18 months to 3 years. Often referred to as "the terrible twos" children want things and get very frustrated if they are not given what they want immediately. This often results in them throwing themselves on the floor, kicking, screaming and banging their heads in the hope that this will get them their own way. If adult give children what they want when they have a tantrum, then the children quickly learn that this approach is effective.

Strategies to use:



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- Diversion/ distraction-if the tantrum can be spotted early. Swapping with another adult-a fresh approach.
- Ignore the tantrum until it is over and the child has calmed down. Keep reassuring them: "It is ok"
- Provide a special place where the child can go and calm down or a special toy to hold and cuddle.
- Teach the child words they can use to express their feelings and encourage them to use them. Get another child to come and play with them.

Physical intervention should only be used when there is a risk of damage to the child, other children or property. Any intervention will be recorded.

Inappropriate language

When toddlers swear or use bad language they are usually copying someone they might have heard at home or elsewhere. They do not usually understand what the words mean, but may have noticed the reactions that they get when using them. The more attention they get for using these words, the more likely they will continue using them.

Strategies to use:

- Selective deafness and the occasional "We don't use those words here" ensuring that the same strategy is used at home at the same time.
- Maybe both parties can choose to ignore inappropriate language for a week-but give lots of attention for an agreed alternative behaviour.
 - Offer the child alternative words they can use to express themselves.
- Activities around "Words are not for hurting" by Free Spirit publishing.

Using thinking time or calm down chair in Early Years:

- In playgroup thinking chairs should not be used, unless the child is in danger of hurting others and needs a space to clam down. Adults will need to ask the children to play alongside them (inside or outside) until the child is calm.
- The main aim of all staff is to avoid getting to this point in the first place.
- An adult should speak briefly, clearly and firmly to the child to tell them that what they have done is not nice and is the wrong choice; "what you did was not nice and the wrong thing to do, you now need to be with me until you are ready to join in sensibly"
- The child stays by the key person's side for a few minutes (3 years old= 3 minutes) No talking, they need to know that they are missing out on whatever they were doing before. They are not having a "chat" with the adult... speaking at this time would be considered as a reward.
- Once that thinking time is finished, the adult speaks to child about playing nicely and models the apology together for the child. "I am very sorry that I hurt you, I will not do that again" (do not insist in the first child saying sorry)
 - Adults should look out for any opportunities for the first child doing the right thing and praising them for it.

Ways to refocus the child's attention

Focus children on another activity and then praise immediately.

- Focus on activities and routines that encourage sharing, negotiation and co-operation
- Encourage responsibility in caring for others, animals and the environment (helping with tidying/watering plants/setting out activities/handing out drinks, snacks and equipment)
- Encourage positive behaviour through play and learning activities (circle time/stories/role-play/puppets)
- Model appropriate behaviours in different contexts and set good examples
- Consult with the children to draw up rules for behaviour within our setting
- Demonstrate that the child is still valued even if his/her behaviour is unacceptable



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- discuss with children what is acceptable behaviour in all areas of learning and experiences
- encourage the children to express openly their feelings/likes and dislikes
- help the children to understand the consequences and effects of their behaviour on others
- have a strong pastoral element to our work in playgroup continually reinforce the golden rules during the school day
- support the children to resolve conflicts with other children

Teaching Young Children How To Resolve Conflict

Conflict between young children in any childcare setting is inevitable. There will always be tension arising from negotiations over toys, friendships, roles and so on, and sometimes that tension will escalate. This can be challenging for childcare workers to deal with. But when children are supported to resolve conflict in a positive way, it can also lead to fantastic learning experiences.

Learning how to resolve conflict can help children to:

- Improve their [communication](#) and listening skills
- Understand how to evaluate a situation
- Foster creative problem-solving skills
- Develop greater empathy for others
- Build self-confidence

Here are some strategies to help childcare workers deal with conflict effectively, as well as supporting children to learn from the process.

1. Prepare the way

First of all, it's helpful to set some clear rules for your nursery, so that everyone knows a) what is acceptable (and unacceptable) [behaviour](#) and b) what will happen if conflict arises. Keep the rules simple and make sure that all of the children understand and buy into them. Rules could include things like 'each child will get a turn to give their side of the story' and 'everyone must listen when another person is speaking' It goes without saying that staff should model respectful behaviour – to each other and to the children – and try to establish a calm environment throughout the nursery. It can also be a really useful exercise to identify some relevant picture books, in which the characters deal with conflict positively, and read them together in groups, discussing them afterwards with the children.

2. Learn when to step in (and when not to)

Even very small children are capable of resolving their own conflicts, and if possible should be left alone to do so. That will give them the best learning experience of all. However, if a child is being hurt, or getting particularly upset, or the conflict is spiralling out of control in some other way, then obviously intervention will be necessary. Before it gets to that point, just try to watch and wait – the children may well manage to avert the crisis by themselves. In that case, you might decide to reinforce the learning outcome by asking them to describe what just happened and praising them for the way they dealt with it

3. What to do when adult intervention is necessary to resolve conflict

Here are some general guidelines to keep in mind:

- Step in calmly
- Physically protect any child who is getting hurt
- Remove any contentious objects (e.g. toys being fought over)
- If practical/necessary, move the children away to a quiet space
- Briefly remind them about the playgroup rules, so they know what to expect (i.e. "remember that everyone will get a chance to speak")
- Model good communication skills by talking calmly, asking simple questions and listening carefully



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- Let each child have a turn to speak so you can piece together what happened (but try not to let them get too bogged down in the details)
- Acknowledge everyone’s point of view and feelings
- Don’t apportion blame or take sides
- Once you feel you’ve got to the bottom of the incident, briefly summarise it and check that the children agree with your description
- Ask them for ideas about how to resolve the situation (again everyone gets a turn)
- Explore all of the ideas with the children (even the impractical ones) and agree on a solution
- Praise them for resolving their conflict

4. Debrief and evaluate

After the conflict has been resolved and everyone has calmed down, you might decide that a quick debriefing session would be useful to help reinforce the learning experience. Gather the children together again and recap what happened; get the children to describe it in their own words. Ask them to come up with some ideas about how they might be able to a) avoid that particular conflict happening again and b) resolve it by themselves next time.

5. Dealing with on-going issues

If you find yourself dealing with recurring conflicts – perhaps related to a particular child or over particular toys/spaces – you might want to put some specific strategies in place to manage them more effectively. There are all kinds of reasons why some children are more likely than others to get into conflict on a regular basis. These children may need extra support, for example by reinforcing their positive behaviour (through descriptive praise, reward charts and so on), but also through more vigilant observation. If there are particular triggers that lead to conflict in your nursery – for example, a toy that all of the children want to play with – then talk to your colleagues about how this could be avoided. Perhaps try moving that toy into a different setting, encouraging the children to play with it in a different way, or buying more similar toys.

In compliance with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, the following documentation is also in place at Coaley Village Playgroup setting:

- SEND policy
- Equal opportunities policy
- Complaints procedure.
- Record of complaints.
- Developmental records of children.

This policy was adopted by _____ *name of provider*
 On _____ *(date)*
 Date to be reviewed _____ *(date)*
 Signed on behalf of the provider _____
 Name of signatory _____
 Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) _____