

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Senior Leadership Team on an annual basis.

Date the policy was last reviewed and agreed	SLT		SLT	
	Name	Signature	Name	Signature
February 2026	Natasha			

This policy is due for review up to 12 months from the above date

Safeguarding Children Achieving Positive Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy

CONTENTS

1	Introduction
2	Strategies With Children Who Engage In Inconsiderate Behaviour
3	Children Under Three Years
4	'Rough And Tumble' Play and Fantasy Aggression
5	Hurtful Behaviour
6	When Hurtful Behaviour Becomes Problematic
7	Bullying
8	Steps Behaviour Management Strategy
9	Teaching Prosocial Behaviour
10	Managing Anti-Social Behaviour
	Appendices

Legal Basis: Related Sub Section in The Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2021)

Managing children's behaviour

3.53. Providers are responsible for managing children's behaviour in an appropriate way.

3.54. Providers must not give or threaten corporal punishment to a child and must not use or threaten any punishment which could adversely affect a child's well-being. Providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by any person who cares for or is in regular contact with a child, or by any person living or working in the premises where care is provided. Any early years provider who fails to meet these requirements commits an offence. A person will not be taken to have used corporal punishment (and therefore will not have committed an offence), where physical intervention (where practitioners use reasonable force to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damaging property.) was taken for the purposes of averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary. Providers, including childminders, must keep a record of any occasion where physical intervention is used, and parents and/or carers must be informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

1 INTRODUCTION

Our setting believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Children need to learn to consider the views, feelings, needs, and rights of others, and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin

how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within the programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development.

Our SENCO has overall responsibility for our programme for supporting Personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour. Daily implementing is shared between all staff.

We require the named person to:

- keep herself up-to-date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support;
- access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.

We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of and respect those used by members of the setting.

We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.

We familiarise new staff and volunteers with our guidelines for behaviour management.

We expect all members of our setting - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.

We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

2 STRATEGIES WITH CHILDREN WHO ENGAGE IN INCONSIDERATE BEHAVIOUR

We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.

We ensure that there are enough popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.

We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.

We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.

We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.

We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.

When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.

We do not 'tell off', shout, or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.

We never send children out of the room by themselves, nor do we use a 'naughty spot' strategy that excludes children from the group. We may remove a child from a situation to allow them to calm down, with a sand timer (2 or 3 minutes depending on age) and with adult support, then talk to them about their actions.

We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.

We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.

We use physical restraint, such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property. Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of our manager and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.

In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.

3 CHILDREN UNDER THREE YEARS

When children under three behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.

We recognise that very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.

Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, hitting, biting, or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.

If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause - such as a change or upheaval at home, or frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of "separation anxiety".

We focus on ensuring that a child has an attachment figure in the setting and that this key person is building a strong relationship to provide security for the child.

4 'ROUGH AND TUMBLE' PLAY AND FANTASY AGGRESSION

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play. Some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

We recognise that rough and tumble play is normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.

We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.

We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies - blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to “goodies and baddies” and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.

We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of “teachable moments” to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

5 HURTFUL BEHAVIOUR

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as “bullying”. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without awareness of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.

We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.

We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.

Therefore we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child be able to manage his or her own feelings.

We do not punish a young child’s rage as that will have the opposite effect.

Our way of responding to very hurtful behaviour is to remove the child from the situation by gently leading them away by the hand, we sit them down with a sand timer and give them time to calm down while comforting the child who has been hurt, once the children are calm, we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.

We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. “Adam took your car, didn’t he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn’t like it when he took it, did you? Did

it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit him?” Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour.

We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others’ feelings. “When you hit Adam, it hurt him and he didn’t like that and it made him cry.”

We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. “I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn’t crying any more. Let’s see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one.”

We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.

We support social skills through modelling good behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.

We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child. We do not force children to say sorry, as saying ‘sorry’ because the adult has told you to or as an automatic response when you’ve hurt someone does not teach children what it means to be truly sorry. We encourage apologies where it is clear that the child is genuinely sorry and wishes to show this to the person they have hurt.

6 WHEN HURTFUL BEHAVIOUR BECOMES PROBLEMATIC

We work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:

- they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs – this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting;
- their parent, or carer in the setting, does not have skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger;
- the child may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated;
- the child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse;
- the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
- Where this does not work, we use other strategies, such as ABC charts, to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to ISL where necessary.

7 BULLYING

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

A child who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress in another.

Bullying can occur in children five years old and over and may well be an issue in after school clubs and holiday schemes catering for slightly older children.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- we show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them;
- we intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children;
- we explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable;
- we give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied;
- we help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions;
- we make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour;
- we do not label children who bully as “bullies”;
- we recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstance causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others;
- we recognise that children who bully are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we do not insist that they say sorry unless it is clear that they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the bullied child as the original behaviour;
- we discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour;
- we share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

8 STEPS BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

We follow the Hertfordshire Steps therapeutic approach to behaviour which prioritises the prosocial experiences and feelings of everyone in the dynamic.

The main objectives of the STEPs approach are:

1. **All staff know how to promote prosocial behaviour and manage antisocial, difficult, or dangerous* behaviour, and to have an understanding of what behaviour might be communicating.**
2. **All staff should focus on de-escalation and preventative strategies rather than focusing on solely on reactive strategies.**

**‘Dangerous’ behaviour is quite extreme, we are more likely to experience ‘difficult’ behaviour in Early Years.*

Prosocial behaviour definitions:

- Happens when a person considers how their behaviour impacts on the lives of others.
- Relates to or denotes behaviour which is **positive, helpful, and intended to promote social acceptance.**
- Prosocial behaviour is characterised by a concern for the rights, feelings, and welfare of other people.
- Behaviour which benefits other people or society

- The absence of antisocial behaviour (see below)

Anti social behaviours

- Cause harm to an individual, the community, or environment
- Are likely to cause injury, harassment, alarm, or distress
- Violate the rights of another person

Unsocial Behaviours

- Not enjoying, or making an effort, to behave sociably in the company of others, but not to the detriment of others.

STEPS aims to promote the inseparable link between teaching, learning, and behaviour. STEPS supports settings with developing a therapeutic approach to behaviour (see Appendix 1), improving staff confidence and safety, supporting the inclusion of those with difficult or dangerous behaviours, reducing exclusions, supporting consistency within services, and supporting senior leadership teams in the development of quality policy and planning.

9 TEACHING PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

We teach positive behaviour by

- Building positive relationships with our children and their families and understanding them well.
- Role modelling positive behaviour, adults do what children are expected to do, we show them how to play and interact with each other.
- Consistency, all staff use the same approach when dealing with antisocial behaviour.
- Using scripts and routines, adults use the same words and do the same things so that children know our expectations.
- Positive phrasing, staff say what they want the behaviour to be rather than what they don't want to see e.g. walk rather than don't run.
- Planning, having policies in place and ensuring that policies are followed by all staff and volunteers.
- Reward and positive reinforcement, we praise positive behaviour and ignore low level negative behaviour so that children learn that only positive behaviour will get them adult attention.
- Feedback and recognition, learn from what has happened and move on.
- Comfort and forgiveness, children know that they are forgiven and loved regardless of their behaviour.

Staff analyse difficult or anti-social behaviour rather than making moralistic snap judgements, we know that behaviour is a means of communication, which we aim to understand, explain, and interpret.

We do not try to control behaviour by dominating or imposing e.g. shouting 'put that down and listen!' etc, by demanding obedience e.g. 'Line up! Sit nicely!', by telling children what they must not do e.g. 'Don't run!', or by punishing children, e.g. taking away their toys or isolating them. We do not bribe them, e.g. offering a reward for stopping a negative behaviour, we don't take away pleasurable experiences e.g. losing playtime or missing out on cooking. We do not shame, belittle, embarrass, or humiliate them e.g. naughty chair or thinking chair, adults commenting or tutting as they pass, nor do we exclude them from either the other children or from the setting.

10 MANAGING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Anti-social behaviour for children aged between 2 and 5 years may include (but is not limited to):

- Hitting, pushing, biting, pinching, spitting at, or throwing objects at another child or adult.
- Throwing or purposely damaging toys, resources, or other items or property.
- Ruining another child's work or game, e.g. knocking over brick towers, drawing on or ripping drawings.
- Excluding a child from a group game, name calling or derogatory comments, shouting at another person.

These are normal behaviours for this age group, though they are undesirable, we recognise that they are a form of communication. However, when children display these behaviours there will be a consequence which logically follows the action, e.g. if a child knocks over another child's brick tower, they must offer to help build it back up again.

When a child displays and undesirable behaviour, adults will quickly assess the situation to establish the reason for the negative behaviour.

Our response will be based on the age and cognitive ability of the child.

Staff avoid reacting in a way that may escalate the situation or make things worse. We do not shout at children, we do not shout out (e.g. No! Stop! Don't! Oh Dear! etc, except in extreme cases to prevent a dangerous accident occurring), we do not shame children or make them feel guilt e.g. calling their name across the room, or telling them 'mummy will be sad' etc., we do not threaten children e.g. 'I'll tell your dad'. We do not use body language that may escalate the situation such as being too close to the child, having the child inside outstretched arms, being toe-to-toe or eye-to-eye, blocking a child's path, aggressive gestures, being over bearing. Instead we leave enough space between us, we get down to the child's eye level, we have a relaxed stance and relaxed hands.

Staff use positive phrasing, we ask the child to do something, rather than telling them what not to do. We do not say things like 'be good', 'stop being silly', 'stop running', 'don't speak to me like that', 'calm down'. Instead we might say 'stand next to me', 'walk inside', 'stay seated in your seat', 'roll the car on the mat'.

We give the child a limited choice e.g. 'shall we talk inside or in the garden?'. We disempower the child's negative behaviour by not engaging with it, if a child is refusing to come out from under a table to speak to an adult then the adult might get under the table with the child or be tell the child when they are ready to come out an adult will speak to them then.

There may be a 'Protective Consequence', a removal of a freedom, e.g. if a child is throwing sand, then the sand is taken away.

There is ALWAYS an 'Educational Consequence', the learning, rehearsing, or teaching, so that the freedom can be returned. E.g. if sand is removed because it is being thrown, we teach the child why we don't throw sand and how to play with it appropriately and safely.

Protective consequences maybe increased staff ratio, limited access to spaces or activities, a child being escorted in social situations, differentiated learning spaces etc.

Educational consequences may be completing tasks come out rehearsing how to play, assisting with repairs (only with the permission of the child whose play was interrupted), educational opportunities, conversation and exploration.

All staff follow the same approach when dealing with the most common forms of antisocial behaviour at the preschool:

Antisocial Behaviour	De-Escalation Strategy <i>Positive Phrasing, Limited Choice, Disempowering the Behaviour</i>	Consequence <i>Reflect, Repair, Restore</i>
Physically hurting another person. e.g. hitting, pushing, biting, pinching, spitting at, or throwing objects at another child or adult.	1. Check the hurt child is OK, focus all attention on them, offer them a hug etc. so that the child who hurt them can see that they won't get adult attention, even negative. 2. Get on eye level with the child who did the hurting. Talk to the child about what happened, what is said depends on their age or cognitive ability, • For young children we may say 'gentle hands', or 'we use gentle hands with our friends'. • For older or more able children we ask them 'Why did you hurt X? How do you think that made X feel? Could you do something else next time you feel angry/upset?'	Together with the child, consider how to make the hurt person feel better. Could you apologise? Offer a hug? Talk about how we play with our friends gently. (We don't make children to apologise for the sake of apologising)
Throwing or purposely damaging toys, resources, or other items or property.	We get down on eye level with the child and, depending on their age or understanding, we will: • For younger children we say their name and 'We look after the toys/pencils/resource, tidy up time' • For older or more able children we say their name and ask 'Why did you throw/break X?' Talk to the child about taking care of our things so that we can play with them again another time.	Children are asked to tidy up or help tidy up the mess they have made.
Ruining another child's work or game, e.g. knocking over brick towers, drawing on or ripping drawings.	1. Check the child whose work/game has been damaged is OK, focus all attention on them, offer them a hug etc. Acknowledge how they might be feeling. 2. Get on eye level with the child who damaged the work/game. Talk to the child about what happened, what is said depends on their age or cognitive ability, • For young children we may say 'gentle hands', or 'we are careful with our friends game/work/drawing'. • For older or more able children we ask them 'Why did you break/ruin X's game/picture/work? How do you think that made X feel? Could you do something else next time you feel angry/upset?'	The child should offer to help rebuild or fix what was ruined. (The child whose work was ruined may not want help, this is their choice and should be respected.)
Excluding a child from a group game, name calling or derogatory comments e.g. 'he is naughty', shouting at another person.	We talk to the children about why they are excluding someone or saying things that might upset them and how it might make them feel.	We ask children how we can resolve this. Could they all play together? Could they change their game to include someone else? We remind the children to use kind words with each other.

When a child regularly displays antisocial behaviour, staff will use a variety of resources to help identify the motivation for the behaviour and to put strategies in to place to help prevent the negative behaviour and to promote prosocial behaviour. These strategies may include an Individual Risk Management Plan (Appendix 2), Risk Assessment Calculator (Appendix 3), Anxiety Mapping (Appendix 4), Roots and Fruits (Appendix 5), ABC Charts (Appendix 6). Some children may require an Individual Risk Reduction plan to formalise strategies that differentiate from this policy.

STAFF DECLARATION

I agree that I have read and understood the information set out in this policy, and will abide by it. I understand that if I have any questions about this policy, I will raise them with my manager prior to signing my agreement below.

Staff Name	Staff Signature	Date

APPENDIX 1

Therapeutic Continuum

Least Therapeutic		Most Therapeutic	
Sadistic	Lazy	Healthy	Brave
Purposely causing pain or upset. e.g. purposely embarrassing a child in front of their peers, putting a child on 'time-out', adults giving disapproving looks as they pass, with the aim of making the child feel bad.	Blaming the child. Not being proactive in analysing the behaviour	Applying the tools and skills we have as Early Years practitioners to promote positive behaviour. Thinking about what is motivating the child's behaviour.	Specialist therapeutic approaches.
Warehouse		Greenhouse	

APPENDIX 2: INDIVIDUAL RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Name	DOB	Date	Review date

PHOTO	Risk Reduction Measures and Differentiated Measures (to respond to triggers)

Pro social / positive behaviour	Strategies to respond
Anxiety / DIFFICULT behaviour	Strategies to respond
Crisis / DANGEROUS behaviour	Strategies to respond
Post incident recovery and debrief measures	

Plan co-ordinator..... Date.....

Parent..... Date.....

APPENDIX 3: RISK ASSESSMENT CALCULATOR

Name	
Date of Birth	
Date of Assessment	

Harm/Behaviour	Opinion or Evidenced? O/E	Conscious or Subconscious? C/S	Seriousness of Harm A 1/2/3/4	Probability of Harm B 1/2/3/4	Severity Risk Score A x B
Harm to Self					
Harm to Peers					
Harm to Staff					
Damage to Property					
Harm from Disruption					
Criminal Offence					
Harm from Absconding					
Other Harm					

Seriousness Score	Foreseeable outcome is...
1	...upset or disruption
2	...harm requiring first aid, distress, or minor damage
3	...hospitalisation, significant distress, extensive damage
4	...loss of life or permanent disability, emotional trauma requiring counselling, or critical property damage

Probability Score	
1	There is evidence of historical risk, but the behaviour has been dormant for over twelve months and no identified triggers remain
2	The risk of harm has occurred within the last twelve months, the context has changed to make a reoccurrence unlikely
3	The risk of harm is more likely than not to occur again
4	The risk of harm is persistent and constant

Risks which score 6 or more (probability x seriousness) should have strategies listed on an Individual Risk Reduction Plan.

APPENDIX 5: ROOTS AND FRUITS

Name	
Supporting Staff	
Date	
Review Date	

Anti-social / Difficult / Dangerous Behaviours

Pro-social behaviours

DEFAULT

Anti-social / Negative Feeling

Pro-social / Positive Feelings

Anti-social / Negative Experiences

Pro-social / Positive Experiences

APPENDIX 6: ABC CHARTS

ABC (Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence) Chart for Monitoring Behaviour

NAME _____

DOB _____

[illegible]