



Behaviour Policy

Little Star Nursery has an underlying principle of being a setting where “**every child can shine**” and in order to achieve this we aim to set up a positive learning environment where all children can progress and experience success; of mutual trust, respect and acceptance and inclusion of all. To achieve this we ensure a range of strategies and procedures are in place.

Our Aims

- To encourage children to be considerate of others and exercise self-discipline.
- To provide children with the skills to manage their own behaviour, self regulation and solve their own problems and conflict through talk.
- To ensure children respond to boundaries with encouragement and support and understand the shared behavioural expectations of the Nursery
- To appreciate the different learning styles of each child (which may include culture, SEN, physical or other behavioural needs) that may affect or prevent them from full engagement and compliance with behavioural expectations.
- To allow children to grow and be recognised as individuals but also to consider and accept the needs of others around them, which includes children and adults.
- To safeguard children’s emotional development and well-being by establishing a safe and caring environment that supports and protects all children’s right to grow and learn.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers in managing their child’s behaviour at home and at Nursery

In order to encourage the youngest of children to share our philosophies and to create an inclusive, caring environment, we share very simple but key ‘**golden rules**’ with the children. These are in line with those used as part of the ‘Theraplay’ ethos and strategy. These are displayed in the nursery at child appropriate level (for example in the book corner) and are reiterated throughout the nursery day and at circle/ focus times and in particular during our ‘sunshine circles’. Corresponding pictures are used for easy identification and learning.

The Golden rules are:

NO HURTS

WE STICK TOGETHER

WE HAVE FUN!

Through reinforcement and application of the Golden rules we explain the following behaviour as unacceptable to children:

- Name calling and teasing
- Deliberate exclusion of any child from their play
- Intentional physical injury
- Discrimination over colour, gender, culture, beliefs, disability.

Strategies to promote positive behaviour :

The role of the adult Practitioners will:

- Provide a positive role model for the children with regard to friendliness, care, understanding and courtesy in the way they respond to the children, each other and parents/carers.
- Demonstrate and model positive behaviour especially when playing alongside children.
- Take positive steps to avoid a situation in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour (for example ensuring that those displaying frequent unwanted behaviour have positive time spent with their key person or other members of staff, see comment below)
- Avoid shouting or raising their voices in a threatening way.
- Be confident to pre-empt problems that may arise and take steps to deescalate possible conflicts to limit their occurrence
- Help children to understand the effects of their behaviour on others by praising good behaviour, such as consideration for another person, taking turns, sharing, and helping others
- Will ensure all individuals feel respected and included, regardless of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, background, family or social circumstances.
- Ensure children are free from judgements, whether based on previous behaviour or the behaviour of other family members
- Make themselves aware of, and respect, a range of cultural expectations regarding interactions between people.
- Never humiliate, label, make fun of, or talk negatively about children under any circumstance.
- Respect that children will make mistakes and ensure that children learn from them.
- Be willing to listen to children sensitively and allow time for this in the daily routine.
- Ensure adequate supervision and interaction with children at all times to limit stressful situations

- We recognise that everyone has 'off days', for a number of reasons. We also recognise that children do need their own time and space and that it is not always appropriate to expect a child to share. It is important to acknowledge children's feelings and to help them understand how others might be feeling. The environment

- We aim to create an environment in which all individuals can feel safe and free from stress and pressures.

- We provide areas where they can express all emotions: be loud or find a quiet place on their own.

- We adapt the environment to the individual needs: for example plan to spend a lot of time in the outdoors with children who respond well to the freedom this environment offers.

Routines and transitions

- All staff are aware of the consistent routines of the setting.

- Transition times are supported in a sensitive way: for example giving warnings of change ("In 5 minutes we need to be thinking about tidying up").

- If children are engrossed in an activity then they will be allowed sufficient time to finish and reassured that they can return to it, and the specific resources may be tidied away somewhere safe.

- We use strategies such as a "tidy up song".

Use of 'Theraplay' techniques and sunshine circles Sunshine Circles ® are adult-directed and structured, but rather than talking, the adult leads playful, cooperative and nurturing activities. Sunshine Circles are 99% interactive and create an atmosphere of fun, caring, acceptance and encouragement that leads to better social, emotional and even cognitive development.

Realistic expectations

- We are aware of having age appropriate limitations and expectations; we set realistic limits for children according to their age and stage of development, for example we adjust the length of time they are expected to sit according to age.

- Children need choices and opportunities to succeed

- Use positive but limited choices: "would you like to tidy away the bricks or the cars?"

- Any waiting time should be kept to a minimum. Strategies in response to unwanted behaviour

Practitioners will:

- Be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a child's special needs.

- Make themselves aware of any particular circumstances that may result in unwanted behaviour (eg changes in family circumstances)

- Shadow a child or spend quality time playing and building a positive relationship with a child who has been displaying unwanted behaviour.

- In any cases of misbehaviour, adults will always reject the behaviour, not the child. They will never label children as bad or naughty either to them, or to someone else in their hearing. It will be made clear that certain actions are unacceptable, but the child is still loved and cared for.

- There will be no physical punishment, ridicule, sarcasm, shouting or humiliation.

- If it has been deemed appropriate (in consultation with the family or other agencies) to use a method of “time out”, the child will be given clear explanation of why, how and for how long they are to have time out. They will be left unattended and it will never be referred to as “the naughty chair” or as “time out”. It will be used as a positive time for thinking and reflection, whilst feelings and tempers may be diffused.

- Children who misbehave will be given time to try and resolve the problem and work towards ways of avoiding it in the future

- Children are always encouraged to apologise if their words or actions have hurt another – whether physically or emotionally, yet this will be managed in appreciation of their age and understanding of the situation. They will never be forced to say sorry if they do not understand what they are apologising for. If a child cannot or refuses to apologise for what ever reason, then the adult will apologise on their behalf to the injured child (eg “I am sorry that X hurt you, we have explained that you are hurt now and he must never do it again”)

- In serious misbehaviour such as racial or physical abuse, the unacceptability of the actions will be made very clear, firmly but fairly, issuing no blame but explaining to the child why such behaviour was inappropriate. Such instances will be logged on the incident form (non CP) and shared with parents

- Serious incidents of unwanted behaviour when another child has been hurt will be documented on the incident form. We recognise that there is not a clear “one size fits all” method of dealing with all manners of behaviour, which is why we initially seek to determine the cause of the behaviour and deal with this. We recognise that a display of unwanted behaviour can stem from a state of stress in the child so it is our role to help self regulate their stress and feelings by imposing the following ‘Five to Thrive’ rules

1. RESPOND: Physical presence, wait and see, verbal, non-verbal

2. CONNECT: Touch, eye contact, voice, common third

3. RELAX: Two year olds respond to how the adult is, not to what they say

4. PLAY: Maintaining a playful attitude is at the heart of the relationship

5. TALK: Language development underpins all later learning.

Conflict

If children have become involved in any form of conflict, practitioners at Little Star Nursery follow the High-scope six steps for conflict resolution;

1 Approach Calmly - Stopping any hurtful language or actions. A calm manner reassures children that things are under control and can be worked out to everybody's satisfaction. If an object is causing the conflict the practitioner holds the object until the issue is resolved.

2 Acknowledge Feelings – Children need to express their feelings before they can let go of them and think about possible solutions to the problem. A practitioner makes simple statements like; "You look cross" or "Yes you want the bike".

3. Gather information - Adults are careful not to make assumptions or take sides. We ask open-ended questions to help children describe what happened in their own words. Practitioners may ask; "What happened?" or "What is the problem here?"

4. Restate the problem - Using the information provided by the children, the adult restates the problem, using clear and simple terms and, if necessary, rephrasing hurtful words.

5. Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together - Adults encourage children to suggest solutions, helping to put them in practical and concrete terms. We accept their ideas, rather than impose our own, thus giving children the satisfaction of having solved the problem. Adults may need to model how to make the situation better.

6. Give follow-up support as needed - Adults help children begin to carry out their solution, making sure that no one remains upset. If necessary, we repeat one or more steps until all the children return to their play.

Children and biting

At Little Star we recognise that whilst biting may be common behaviour in young children it is still most distressing for both the children and parents involved. This is why we adopt the following approach and strategy in dealing with biting.

Recognising the causes of biting

Exploration In the very young babies and toddlers they are always exploring and one means of doing so is with their mouth. We accept that not all children of this young age know the difference between gnawing on a toy and biting a person. This can also be true of young babies teething.

Cause and effect

Around the age of 12 months, babies become interested in finding out what happens when they do something. When they bang a spoon on the table, they discover that it makes a loud sound. When they drop a toy from their cot, they discover that it falls. They may also discover that when they bite someone, they get a reaction.

Attention

Older toddlers may sometimes bite to get attention. When children are in situations where they feel that they are not receiving enough attention they often find a way to

make others take notice. Being ignored is not fun and biting is a quick way to become the centre of attention, even if it is negative attention.

Imitation

Older toddlers love to imitate others. Watching others and trying to do what they do is a great way to learn things. Some children see others bite and decide to try it out themselves.

Independence

Toddlers are trying so hard to be independent, "mine" and "me do it" are favourite words. Learning to do things independently, making choices and needing control over a situation are part of growing up and biting is a powerful way to control others. If you want a toy or want a playmate to leave you alone or move out of your way, it is a quick way to get what you want.

Frustration

Young children experience a lot of frustration and growing up is a struggle. Drinking from a cup is great, but sucking from a bottle is also wonderful. Sometimes it would be nice to remain a baby. Toddlers do not always have good control over their bodies and cannot always express themselves. A loving pat sometimes turns into a push and they sometimes experience difficulty in asking for things or for help. They have not yet learned how to interact with others. Children of this age have not learnt to self regulate – to become able to tolerate a feeling of distress and so at times, when they are unable to find the words to express their feelings, they resort to hitting, pushing or biting.

Stress

A child's world can be stressful. A lack of interesting things to do or not enough interaction with adults is a stressful situation for children. Children also experience traumatic events in their lives, such as bereavement, moving to a new home or even starting a new nursery. Biting is one way to express feelings and relieve tension. Young children are not always able to fully understand what they are feeling so they just act up.

In an instance of one child biting another

- The member of staff witnessing the event will immediately separate the children and comfort the injured child, giving them their full attention and administer any first aid treatment if necessary. A second member of staff may be called upon to stay with the child who has been bitten whilst the second child is addressed
- The member of staff will adopt a calm but firm tone as they explain to the child that biting is not OK and that it hurts: addressing how their actions have made the other child feel.
- The child will be asked to apologise (if age and development appropriate) and to make amends in some way: to help get a damp cloth, a tissue or teddy for comfort. The child will then be asked to play in a different area of the nursery.

- An accident report will be completed for the child who has been bitten and shared with the parents.
- An incident report will be completed for the child who administered the bite and will be shared with the parent. This should include details of who was involved, when and where the biting occurred, what happened leading up to the incident and how the situation was handled. This can serve to provide information to help prevent further incidents.
- The key person of the child who did the biting will be informed and asked to monitor their behaviour, recording any unacceptable behaviour in the behaviour log. They should also bear in mind any changes or particular circumstances taking place at the home of the 'biter' that may give cause to such behaviour.
- Any patterns of behaviour should then be dealt with accordingly: for example if it happens when teething, the child could be given alternative teething toys, or if it happens only with a certain group of children then the key person should actively be involved in being a positive play partner with those children to guide them to develop healthy relationships.
- If the biting continues then the parents will be consulted and a behaviour management plan devised and agreed upon.
- Incidents of biting will be shared at regular staff meetings to ensure that all staff employ the same strategy in dealing with such cases.
- When there is a consistent case of biting, the issue should be dealt with by members of staff during circle times and employment of other PSED strategies, that focus on how to correctly deal with and respond to our emotions and feelings. These might include stories and role play with puppets and reinforcement of positive behaviour: pictures and stories of children being caring and kind.
- Staff should be positive role models as they help children set simple limits: how to negotiate or take turns.
- When a child is showing positive behaviour this should be noted and praised by members of staff. It can be recorded by photos that may later be used to reinforce good behaviour with the children.
- Sufficient toys should be available for babies who are teething.

Any other concerns that a parent may have will always be listened to and acted upon accordingly.

In the case of persistent behaviour problems:

Should we have cause for particular concern over consistent bad behaviour this will be discussed with the parent, key worker and managers and an action plan specific for the individual child devised and implemented. This will be a signed agreement between the parents and the nursery. We will suggest methods such as using an observation chart to try and identify the triggers of such behaviour. If the behaviour

still persists we will look into referring to an outside agency, eg health visitor or outreach worker, with the co operation of the parents. In such a case we will continue to work alongside the child and the family to ensure collaborative help for the child.

Physical Punishment.

We at Little Star Nursery will never use, nor threaten a child with any form of physical punishment. If a child's behaviour warrants physical restraint the course of action will be documented and explained and discussed with both the children involved and parents/ carers.

Behaviour Management co-ordinator Kate Wilson is the designated member of staff who acts as our behaviour management co-ordinator who is responsible for overseeing this policy, its implementation and for dealing with any concerns parents or carers have over their child's behaviour – or of another child in our care. Obviously all members of staff are on hand to talk to at all times.

Staff Training

- All staff have the behaviour policy fully explained to them and will be expected to implement it.
- As part of their induction training all staff will be briefed on the appropriate behaviour management techniques
- All staff will be encouraged to participate in any available training in behaviour management
- The Behaviour policy will be reviewed annually, or as appropriate – for example following a training course. All members of staff will be encouraged to contribute ideas.

Working with parents

We respect that all aspects of our work with your children is a continuous extension of their home life. Thus, to this effect we ask the parents/ carers:

- To communicate any significant changes in circumstances, eg. New baby, separation, divorce, hospitalisation, bereavement
- To reinforce expected behaviour
- To support staff in implementing the behaviour policy
- To signpost the parent to any external support they may need.

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