

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Managing behaviour

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

UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOUR AND POSITIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY (February 2020)

Policy statement

Children need opportunities to develop the characteristics they need to enable them to live happy, productive lives. In particular, the characteristics and skills of self discipline, responsibility and problem solving. These will enable children to feel a greater sense of belonging and significance, which will manifest through positive behaviour.

Children deserve the opportunity to develop these life skills in an atmosphere of kindness and firmness, where they are treated with dignity and respect at all times.

Our approach

Riding Mill Outdoor Preschool uses a 'Positive Discipline model,' based on the Adlerian approach, which comes from the philosophy and teachings of Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs, and is based on mutual respect, co-operation and focussing on solutions. (Jane Nelson, 2006). Children are active participants in this process, being supported to think through situations with adult support when needed and using basic guidelines to find solutions. This enables children to make better choices about their behaviour as it makes sense to them and as it feels good to be treated with respect and to treat others with respect. We believe children are more willing to follow rules they have helped to establish.

This approach to behaviour is not permissive, or punitive. Often people think that if you don't use punishment it means you are permissive ie let children do whatever they want. Although punishment often works in the short term, but it is disrespectful to children and damaging in the long term.

Positive discipline encourages children to be self disciplined - to be motivated to behave appropriately because they are self -motivated to do so - ie from within themselves. Systems of behaviour management based on reward and punishment rely on external motivation ie the adult being in control. Children do not therefore learn to be in control of their own behaviour.

Children need opportunities to feel needed and significant - this enables them to develop into capable and responsible people. It is vital for children to have opportunities to feel belonging and significance in meaningful ways by being able to contribute responsibly. They don't develop responsibility when adults are too strict or controlling; nor when adults are permissive.

These opportunities help to develop:

- feeling capable
- feeling significant - 'I contribute in meaningful ways and am genuinely needed'

- feeling of personal power and influence - 'I can influence what happens to me'
- understanding of personal emotions and development of self -discipline and self -control
- the ability to work with others and develop friendships through communicating, negotiating, sharing, empathising, listening
- the ability to respond to the limits and consequences of everyday life with responsibility, adaptability, flexibility and integrity
- the ability to use wisdom to evaluate situations according to appropriate values

The above enables children to develop healthy self esteem - based on the belief that they are capable. This is not developed by adults doing too much for children, being overprotective, not spending enough time with children, buying too many things for children, nagging children etc. Children gain self confidence from dealing with disappointments, solving problems and lots of opportunities to learn from mistakes.

What is misbehaviour trying to tell us?

Misbehaviour is a code. What is the child trying to tell us? Underlying misbehaviour is almost always that the child doesn't feel they have significance and belonging. The behaviour is often based on mistaken beliefs about how to achieve this:

- 'I only belong when I have your attention' - **Undue attention** -- likely to cause the adult to feel irritation, annoyance - when asked to stop, the child will be likely to keep returning to their annoying behaviour (or another) to get your attention.
- 'I only belong when I am the boss - or at least when I don't let you control me' - **Misguided power** - likely to cause the adult to feel threatened, challenged, provoked, defeated - when asked to stop, the child is likely to keep misbehaving and may verbally defy or passively resist - a power struggle develops
- 'I don't belong, but at least I can hurt back' - **Revenge** - adult is likely to feel hurt, disappointed, disbelieving, disgusted - when asked to stop, the child is likely to retaliate by doing something destructive or saying something hurtful - often develops into a revenge cycle
- 'It is impossible to belong, I give up' - **Assumed inadequacy**- adult is likely to feel inadequate, despair, hopeless, helpless - the child is often passive, hoping the adult will give up and leave them alone.

Procedures

- We appoint a member of staff as behaviour coordinator to oversee and advise on the team's approach to encouraging healthy behaviour. This is Ruth Brown.
- Staff also attend relevant training, including in house training, to develop their understanding of behaviour, including their own. This supplements their understanding of what behaviour is developmentally appropriate that they gain through their basic training in child development.

Methods we use to encourage positive behaviour in both children and adults

We undertake a regular audit of the provision to ensure the environment and practices supports healthy social and emotional development. Findings from the audit are considered by management and relevant adjustments applied. (A useful guide to assessing the well-being of children can be found at www.kindengezin.be/img/sics-ziko-manual.pdf)

Each child has a keyworker who is responsible for developing a close relationship with that child and their parents/carers. They will take the lead in understanding their child's behaviour issues.

Some methods for supporting children seeking undue attention:

- redirect behaviour to 'contributing behaviour' - helpful behaviour that supports the group
- give a hug
- ensure spend special time with the child regularly - set up times for this if need to
- give reassurance and show faith - 'I know you can sort this out yourself'
- ignore the behaviour but not the child eg put a hand on their shoulder in caring manner whilst continuing an adult conversation that is being interrupted.
- act rather than talk - eg don't keep trying to coax a child to do something - take their hand and lead them

Some methods for supporting children seeking misguided power:

Withdraw from the power struggle to enable cooling off - then:

- admit you can't make the child do anything and ask for their help to find a solution that works for both of you
- express understanding for child's feelings
- show empathy (not necessarily condoning) for their perception - could possibly share a time that you felt like that
- share your feelings and perceptions - hopefully the child may be willing to listen by now
- invite to focus on a solution - do they have any ideas to avoid the problem. If not, try and offer some ideas and reach an agreement
- try and redirect child to use power constructively not destructively
- decide what YOU will do (not what you will try and make the child do). (eg I will continue when everyone is sitting down) - do kindly and firmly
- plan regular special times
- get child involved in creating routines - then let the routine dictate, be the boss
- offer limited choices - but do give a choice

Some methods for children seeking revenge:

Children cover up their hurt feelings, which make them feel powerless, by seeking revenge (control).

- withdraw from the cycle - avoid retaliation
- show empathy - validate their hurt feelings (you might need to guess what they are)
- use reflective listening and curiosity questions - avoid sharing your point of view - understand the child's

- if you caused the hurt, recognise this - 'I made a mistake' and apologise - and work together on a solution

Some methods for children with 'assumed inadequacy':

- take time for training - make steps as basic as needed to experience success
 - demonstrate a small step the child can copy - eg draw half a circle and they finish it
 - ensure opportunities for anything you know they can do
 - acknowledge any attempts
 - don't give up
 - regular special time
- Don't try and sort issues whilst adult or child is angry or upset - see 'positive time out'. You don't need to deal with the problem at the time - this is often the worst time! (brain is in 'fight or flight' mode - and therefore power struggles or withdrawal and failure to communicate are likely)

Use of curiosity questions: don't impose consequences on a child for a behaviour issue - don't tell, ask eg

- how do you feel about what happened?
- what were you trying to do?
- what do you think caused that to happen? (don't ask 'why' as sounds accusing)
- what ideas do you have for how to sort it out?

Use of effective encouragement (not praise) : a very important skill:

It is very difficult, when a child is misbehaving, not to react negatively and try and punish - we are conditioned to think punishment improves behaviour. Encouragement invites self-confidence. This is different from praise - which invites dependence on others. The child may be just doing something to please the adult - their self-concept will then be based on another's opinion. Others may rebel against praise as they don't want to live up to the other's expectations or they feel they can't compete with others who get praise easily.

To be genuinely encouraging, an adult has to be interested in the child's point of view and to desire to provide opportunities to children to develop life skills that will lead to self confidence and independence:

- focus on improvement - not perfection
- build on strengths
- ensure have special time
- encourage a positive attitude to making mistakes - they are good as we learn from them
- recognise effort
- ensure you are not being patronising or manipulative

Use of positive time out - not as a punishment

The aim of positive time out is to enable a child or adult to regain control, calm down and feel better if they have been angry or upset. They will then be in a state to constructively sort an issue out.

- introduce this at a time when the child is calm and happy - 'when you feel upset or angry it might be helpful to go somewhere to make yourself feel better - eg to read, be comfortable, listen to music - this is NOT rewarding to negative behaviour.
- create personal 'time out' areas where child can choose to go - not where they are sent to. For Under 3s, go with them. Create these areas together.

Use of rewards and sanctions

- All children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and self-control.
- Rewards such as excessive praise and stickers may provide an immediate change in the behaviour but will not teach children how to act when a 'prize' is not being given or provide the child with the skills to manage situations and their emotions. Instead, a child is taught how to be 'compliant' and respond to meet adult's own expectations in order to obtain a reward (or for fear of a sanction).
- Children should never be labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, or shouted at. However, if necessary children can be accompanied and removed from the group in order to calm down. This is not a punishment. It is a 'positive time out' and should enable a child or adult to calm down. 'Positive time out' spaces are developed with children and include things that help children to calm down. This may include books or music, or resources known to calm a particular child.

Use of physical intervention

- The term physical intervention is used to describe any forceful physical contact by an adult to a child such as grabbing, pulling, dragging, or any form of restraint of a child such as holding down. Where a child is upset or angry, staff will speak to them calmly, encouraging them to vent their frustration in other ways by diverting the child's attention.
- Staff should not use physical intervention - or the threat of physical intervention, to manage a child's behaviour unless it is necessary to use 'reasonable force in order to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damage property '(EYFS).'
- If 'reasonable force' has been used for any of the reasons shown above, parents are to be informed on the same day that it occurs. The intervention will be recorded as soon as possible within the cause for concern file, which states clearly when and how parents were informed.
- Corporal (physical) punishment of any kind should never be used or threatened.

Challenging behaviour/aggression by children towards other children

- Any aggressive behaviour by children towards other children will be closely monitored by staff to prevent escalation. The feelings of all children involved are acknowledged and affirmed. However, it is made clear that aggressive behaviour is not acceptable. All involved will work to find a solution.
- If the behaviour has been significant or may potentially have a detrimental effect on the child, the parents of the child who has been the victim of behaviour and the parents of the child who has been the perpetrator should be informed.
- The designated person will contact children's social services if appropriate and will consider whether notifying the police if appropriate.
- The designated person will make a written record of the incident, which is kept in the Cause for concern file; in line with the Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy.
- The designated person should complete a risk assessment related to the child's challenging behaviour to avoid any further instances.
- The designated person should meet with the parents of the child who has been affected by the behaviour to advise them of the incident and the setting's response to the incident.
- Ofsted should be notified if appropriate.
- Relevant health and safety procedures and procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints should be followed.
- Parents should also be asked to sign risk assessments where the risk assessment relates to managing the behaviour of a specific child.

N.B. All incidents and intervention relating to challenging behaviour by children should be clearly and appropriately logged – always in the Cause for Concern Folder, and where appropriate, elsewhere, eg SEND folder.

Behaviours that result in concern for the child and/or others will be discussed between the key person, the behaviour coordinator and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or/and manager. During the meeting, the key person will use their knowledge and assessments of the child to share any known influencing factors (new baby, additional needs, illness etc.) in order to place the behaviour into context. Appropriate adjustments to practice will be agreed.

If behaviour continues to be of significant concern:

- The key person and SENCO and/or setting leader should liaise with parents to discuss possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps, which may involve starting an Inclusion Pathway (Northumberland County Council). The views of the child relating to their behaviour should always be sought and considered to help identify any issues.
- Support for the child will be developed and an action plan put in place, using the Inclusion Pathway guidance and documentation. If relevant, recommended actions for dealing with the behaviour at home should be agreed with the parent/s and incorporated into the plan. Other

members of the staff team should be informed of the agreed actions in the action plan and help implement the actions. The plan should be monitored and reviewed regularly by the key person and SENCO until improvement is noticed.

- It may be agreed that the Early Help process should begin and that specialist help be sought for the child - this support may address either developmental or welfare needs. If the child's behaviour is part of a range of welfare concerns that also include a concern that the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, follow the Safeguarding and Children and Child Protection Policy (1.2). It may also be agreed that the child should be referred for an Education, Health and Care assessment. (See Supporting Children with SEN policy 9.2)

Challenging unwanted behaviour from adults in the setting

- Settings will not tolerate behaviour from an adult which demonstrates a dislike, prejudice and/or discriminatory attitude or action towards any individual or group. This includes negativity towards groups and individuals living outside the UK (xenophobia). This also applies to the same behaviour if directed towards specific group of people and individuals who are British Citizens residing in the UK. (see Equality Policy)
- Allegations of discriminatory remarks or behaviour including xenophobia made in the setting by any adult will be taken seriously. The perpetrator will be asked to stop the behaviour and failure to do so may result in the adult being asked to leave the premises and in the case of a staff member, disciplinary measures being taken.
- Where a parent makes discriminatory or prejudiced remarks to staff at any time, or other people while on the premises, this is recorded on the child's file and is reported to the setting manager. The procedure is explained and the parent asked to comply while on the premises. An 'escalatory' approach will be taken with those who continue to exhibit this behaviour. The second stage comprises a letter to the parent requesting them to sign a written agreement not to make discriminatory remarks or behave in a discriminatory or prejudiced manner; the third stage may be considering withdrawing the child's place.

Further guidance

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE 2014)
- We ensure that EYFS guidance relating to 'behaviour management' is incorporated into relevant policy and procedures