

# Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy Prompt for Early Years Settings

## Early Years, Childcare & Business Development Service

LBWF Early Years, Childcare & Business Development Service have written this document to help you write a promoting positive behaviour policy for your setting. This document is for reference only and you must adapt it to reflect the service your setting offers. To download guidance on other policies and procedures go to <https://thehub.walthamforest.gov.uk/>

Whenever we say parents in this document we mean parents and carers and whenever we say child we mean children and young people aged 0 to 19 years old (up to 25 years old for young people with SEND).

Statutory documents that must be followed by Early Years providers and referred to throughout a behaviour policy are:

- Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage 2017 (Section 1 and Section 3)
- SEND Code of Practice 2014 (Section 5)
- The Early Years and Childcare Registration Handbook 2016 (Annex C)

### Points to consider – General

- Ensure you use age appropriate terminology and strategies throughout the policy.
- Describe and define specific terms and interventions – the purpose of this document should be that any person can read the policy and understand how behaviour is managed and promoted in the setting.
- Attach any documentation referred to in the policy as an appendix (e.g. blank behaviour logs, behaviour plans, other policies etc.).

### Points to consider – Aim

- Do you have a short paragraph that summarises the aim of your behaviour policy or could you list this in short bullet points?
- How do you aim to achieve this? Could you list this in bullet points?
- Do you believe in creating a positive environment where adults consistently manage and encourage positive behaviour that promotes children's welfare and development?
- Consider if your staff positively and consistently encourage children to respect themselves and others in a secure, challenging, stimulating and positive environment with clear boundaries and expectations.
- Do you allow children to flourish and enjoy developing, learning and making a positive contribution?

### Points to consider – Positive environment

- How do you create a positive environment?
- Think about suitable, age related and challenging opportunities and activities for the children.
- Do you focus on rewarding positive behaviour and modelling positive behaviour? How are these achieved at the setting?

- How do you promote and encourage British Values?
- How do you encourage positive behaviour in all children, depending upon their ages and stages of development?
  - Using praise and positive reinforcement
  - Encouraging sharing and negotiation
  - Staff, volunteers and students being good role models and setting good examples.
  - Consulting with children when you are creating rules/boundaries (age dependent).
  - Helping children understand the consequences of their behaviour.
  - Helping children challenge bullying, harassment and name-calling.
  - Encouraging children to be responsible, for example, tidying up (depends on your setting type) and creating their own rules.
  - Reassuring children that they are valued as individuals even if their behaviour may sometimes be unacceptable.
- When you are creating ground rules/boundaries for your staff and children, do you ask the children what they think?
- How are the rules shared and displayed with children and parents in the setting?
- How often do you review these ground rules/boundaries?
- Have you thought about asking the children to make a contract for the parent/carer to sign? This could include: parent/carer having to give 10 minute warning if they arrive early and not just stopping the child's play? It may also include the child not getting into trouble if their clothes are messy.

### **Points to consider – Intervention**

- Do you have consequences for breaking each rule? Who makes these up?
- How do you make sure all staff maintain a consistent approach?
- What steps are followed if initial intervention techniques (see end of this document) do not work?
- You may want to include: 'We do not humiliate, segregate, withhold food or use a naughty chair in managing children's behaviour, as this is detrimental to their self-esteem'.
- You may want to include: 'We do not use physical punishments or the threat of them'.
- You may want to include: 'Staff do not use any form of physical intervention unless necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, other children, an adult or serious damage to property and as an absolute last resort'.
- How do you proactively promote positive behaviour rather than just challenge incidents as they arise? This maybe through drama about bullying, group discussions or anti bullying campaign activities.
- Do you create an action plan to deal with a child's unacceptable behaviour? Who is the member of staff who leads on this action plan?
- Are parents included in making joint decisions about their child?
- After which incident or at what stage are parents informed of any behaviour instances concerning their child?
- What procedure do you follow when involving parents?
- What behaviour constitutes as a serious incident? What next steps do you take?
- At what stage do you consider consulting with external agencies, making sure you ask parents for consent before you approach an external agency.

### Points to consider – Staff expectations

- What are your expectations of all staff with regards to behaviour management? For example, do all staff have to:
  - Read and understand your promoting positive behaviour policy.
  - Be consistent in their use of techniques to encourage positive behaviour.
  - Be consistent in their use of intervention techniques.
  - Be good role models and set good examples for the children.
- How do you share and/or provide a copy of your promoting positive behaviour policy?
- Do all staff, volunteers and students go through an induction process that covers behaviour management when they start working for you? Think about how you make new staff aware of who has responsibility for behaviour management in your setting and the methods and intervention techniques they can use.
- How do you make sure all of your staff are aware of the intervention techniques they can use?
- Have members of staff been to behaviour management training?  
(<https://thehub.walthamforest.gov.uk/training-events>)
- Make sure that where a member of staff cannot attend the training, the training is disseminated within the setting.
- Which member of staff is responsible for behaviour management in the setting (most likely the SENCO or DSL)?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of this member of staff? For example, supporting staff and sharing of information, accessing expert advice, involving parents in the review of your policy.

### Points to consider – Keeping records

- You must record any incidents where physical intervention is used. How do you do this?  
Consider recording:
  - The name of the child
  - The name of the staff member(s) who used physical intervention
  - Previous intervention techniques used before the incident
  - The date, time and place of the incident
  - The circumstances of the incident and the factors leading up to the incident
  - The nature of physical intervention used
  - The names of any witnesses
  - Any injuries that may have occurred during the incident.
  - Any further action taken and parents' signatures.
- Consider adding a blank example of your incident record form to the policy.
- Where physical intervention is used to manage a child's behaviour you must record this and tell the parents on the same day.
- Where do you record and store this information? This information needs to be recorded in a bound book, not loose leaf and kept with safeguarding information for at least three years or after the next Ofsted inspection whatever is the longest.
- How do you tell parents about an incident and how do you ask for their signature?
- Do you take into account confidentiality when sharing information with parents? For example, where this information is shared.

## Points to consider – Bullying

- You may want to include: ‘We do not tolerate any form of bullying by either member of staff or child’.
- You may have a separate anti-bullying policy if so refer to this in your behaviour policy.
- What is your definition of bullying?
- What procedure do you follow if bullying does happen? Is this different for children and staff? (You may have a separate policy regarding staff behaviour)
- Do you support victims of bullying? Consider the use of external agencies.

## Intervention techniques

### Structuring the environment

Whether you sit or stand and where you choose to speak to a child can communicate the nature of discussion you are about to have and this may help the child to change their own behaviour.

### Planned ignoring

Minor, harmless and attention-seeking behaviours are likely to stop if you don’t pay any attention to them. Remember, it is equally important to praise good behaviour.

### Prompting

By giving gentle reminders to a child of what they need to stop doing or prepare for, can help the child adjust to a change. This can be verbal or sensory prompting. Be careful to avoid nagging.

### Active listening

Sometimes listening to what a child has to say and exploring and acknowledging their feelings through the use of reflective responses can help a child to feel that:

- Someone else acknowledges the reality of their feelings
- They are not alone
- Someone cares

Sometimes this can be enough for a child to stay in control.

### Interpretation and interference

Put what has happened into words and ask the child if there was another way that they could have acted. For example, “it looked like you were really upset before you hit Gemma – was there another way you could have let her know how upset you were?”

### Backing away

This is not the same as backing down. You are not giving in, simply giving the child time to calm down before you discuss the situation with them. Staying and continuing to challenge a child who is already angry is likely to make the situation worse. Alternatively, allow the child to back away through offering them a verbal or physical way out.

### Affection

If a child’s behaviour is motivated by fear, anxiety or uncertainty, a big injection of affection, verbal or physical, can help to stop inappropriate behaviour. Children do not always appreciate the care that is provided for them on a daily basis and need additional affection to understand how much the adults really care for them.

### Hurdle help

By providing assistance when a child is stuck, you can help them to overcome feelings of failure or inadequacy.

### **Proximity**

Sometimes an adult quietly heading in the general direction of what is going on can be enough to encourage children to do something else.

### **Involvement and interest**

Adults becoming involved in a situation can diffuse things.

### **Redirecting or distraction**

Try to refocus the child away from what they are doing now and on to something else as a way of avoiding trouble.

Directive statement or direct appeal

This is a clear instruction to a child to stop certain behaviours or start something else.

### **Time out**

Ask the child to move away to a quieter area to calm down. Children must remain supervised. This should only be used if you use the time to talk to the child about their behaviour. It is not a helpful method to encourage positive behaviour and it should not be used for isolation purposes only. The general guide is one minute for each year of the child's age, i.e. six minutes for a six year old.

### **Useful resources and website**

- ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) aims to improve organisations and working like through better employment relations. [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk) 08457 474747
- Kidscape, a charity devoted to keeping children safe from sexual abuse and bullying. [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) 020 7730 3300
- Directgov <https://www.gov.uk/>
- Unicef [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)
- Childline [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- Bullying information [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)
- Managing Behaviour in the Early Years by Janet Kay
- Dealing with Bullying in Schools. A Training manual for teachers, parents and other professionals by Mona O'Moore and Stephen James Minton.

### **Links to legislation**

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Conventions on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF 1989
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Employment Equality (Religion of Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Every Child Matters – Change for Children 2004
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- The Human Rights Act 2000.