

Positive Behaviour for Children in our Settings

Statement of Intent

YMCA Brunel Group believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where they have clear and developmentally appropriate expectations and boundaries both in setting and at home.

Aim

We aim to help children manage and regulate their own behaviours in socially acceptable ways and for them to begin to understand the needs, preferences and the rights of others. The principles that guide the management of behaviour exist within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development (PSED) and this is an integral part of the Early Years Foundation Stage and later in the primary education curriculum.

Each child is unique and we recognise their individual needs which may be affected by having additional or special needs or because of child protection or safeguarding concerns for example.

Methods

All staff members are responsible for implementing our programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including positive behaviour management. We use the High Scope method for managing behaviour. This is detailed at the end of the policy.

We require all staff to:

- Keep up to date with legislation, research and discussion about promoting positive behaviour.
 - Attend regular in-service training on promoting positive behaviour and any courses that are relevant.
 - Identify children who may need additional support, working with the child and informing other relevant staff and agencies.
 - Identify those children whose behaviour is affected by outside factors such as domestic violence, safeguarding concerns and emotional disturbance.
 - Act swiftly to help children and their families understand how to promote positive behaviour and bring concerns to senior staff
- We reflect the British Values in our work and primarily through the personal, social, and emotional aspects of learning which are part of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
 - We recognise that ways of interacting with other people will vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of and respectful of these.
 - 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 respect.
 - We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's positive behaviour management policy and its guidelines.
 - We expect all members of YMCA Brunel Group- children, parents, staff, volunteers and students – to apply the policy consistently.
 - We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the child's communication and to find the best ways of responding together.

- Behaviour issues are shared in a proportionate and consistent manner where we only discuss with those who need to know.
- Our staff know they must report to us when other staff use unacceptable methods of behaviour management through our whistle-blowing procedure as this may be a safeguarding concern which is then reportable to the local authority.

Strategies with children who engage in poor behaviour

- We require all staff members, 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 form a more appropriate response.
- We support children to solve problems and to resolve conflicts through the following steps: the adult approaches calmly; acknowledges the children's feelings; gathers information; restates the problem; asks the children for ideas or solutions and helps them to choose these together and then gives follow up support to the children.
- Adult handling of behaviour is consistent and developmentally appropriate.
- We use visual prompts in supporting children in their acknowledgement of feelings and for giving them visual information such as what is happening next.
- Children must have sufficient stimulation to ensure that they do not become bored and disruptive.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to take turns.
- We acknowledge, praise and promote positive behaviour.
- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging, 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 never send children out of the room by themselves or single out or humiliate them.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking and 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.
- If physical restraint is used, the incident is recorded on the same day, and the parent/carer is required to sign the incident form to acknowledge they are aware/agree to action taken; the incident form is seen and signed by either the manager or deputy.
- 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.
- We do not shout or raise our voices to respond to children's behaviour.

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.
- Inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting; staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.

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.

We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are 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.

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 cognisance 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.

The main reasons for 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 is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing other types of child abuse
- The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave, and this must be understood.
- We use the local authority SEN Code of Practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to a Behaviour Support Team where necessary.

Bullying

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse or lack of dignity 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 to another.

Bullying can commonly occur in children five years old and over

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 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 may 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.

6 Point behaviour management techniques for YMCA. The High Scope Method

Step 1 – Approach Calmly

Approach calmly, kneel to children's level, speak gently and take the item (if there is one) that has caused the row i.e. 'I can see there's a problem here, I'm going to hold the [object] while we talk about what we are going to do.'

Step 2 – Acknowledge Feelings

Adult approaches the child and acknowledges feelings i.e. 'I can see you are feeling upset'. Words associated with feelings, such as 'frustrated, angry, worried and sad all fit with conflict experiences and build a child's emotional vocabulary in a concrete way. Adult must be neutral, no assumptions.

Step 3 – Gather Information

Adult needs to find out what each of the wants and needs of children involved i.e. 'Tell me what is happening?'

Step 4 – Restate the Problem

Help the children focus on the specific problem that needs solving i.e. 'So, the problem is...'

Step 5 – Ask the Children for ideas for Solutions

Ask the children to think about a solution to the problem i.e. 'what do you think we can do about this problem? Listen to all suggestions. Repeat suggestions, 'So your idea is.....' If an unrealistic solution is offered (lets go to the shop and buy a new one) the adult may need to ask, 'Do you think we could do that?'

Step 6 – Offer Follow up Support

To complete the process, it will help the children if the adult acknowledges what has happened. Comments such as 'you did it', you solved the problem'. Let the children know what they have achieved and help bolster confidence in their own problem-solving abilities.

If these steps are used consistently children reach the point where they become either independent problem-solvers, or where they just need a very limited amount of support from the mediator. They

begin to see themselves as capable problem-solvers who can solve the challenges life sends their way.

All other policies relating to YMCA Brunel Group are available for you to read at the childcare setting or on our web site.

Signed on behalf of YMCA Brunel Group
(original signed copy held at registered office)



Mike Fairbeard

Role of Signatory

Chief Executive

Date of Review of Policy

January 2027

Approved by trustees

31st January 2026