

SOMERSET NURSERY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT and POSITIVE HANDLING POLICIES

Updated in April 2016

Reviewed by Governors April 2020

Due to be reviewed in April 2022

At Somerset we respect the rights of the child.

We are proud to be a UNICEF Rights Respecting School, and we aim to uphold the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have identified Articles from the U.N. Convention which link to this Behaviour Policy.

Related Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

Article 3 "The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children".

"States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision."

Article 19 "Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence....and mistreatment byanyonewho looks after them."

"There are ways to discipline children that are effective in helping children learn about family and social expectations for their behaviour---ones that are non-violent, are appropriate to the child's level of development and take the best interests of the child into consideration."

Article 28 "Discipline in schools must respect children's human dignity"

Article 29 "Education.... must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment".

Article 37 "No one is allowed to punish children in a cruel or harmful way".

(Quotations taken from summaries of the Articles)

We believe that:

Children's behaviour is an expression and reflection of their experience, including their encounters with adults and other children. We believe that children learn good behaviour and respect through positive role models and need to be guided in that learning by sensitive supportive adults.

Children should be allowed to develop in an environment which is safe but stimulating, and gives freedom to experiment and take risks.

(Article 3)

It is our responsibility as adults working with young children to be aware of children's behaviour, to ensure their safety, and to use all our resources to understand the processes that result in that behaviour.

Where behaviour is particularly challenging, e.g. when others, or the child him/herself, are at risk of harm, or a lack of respect is consistently shown, we need to consider how we can intervene in a way which supports the child's social and emotional development. We need to offer a considered, consistent approach, working with parents or carers to provide a united, supportive, rewarding strategy. (Article 29)

Observation is the key to understanding and it is our policy to carefully observe and record children's behaviour and learning. In this way we can learn about the factors that can affect behaviour, such as tiredness, hunger, emotional distress, fear, interruption of deeply involving play.

We need to recognise that we may need to change our own behaviour, e.g. by changing the physical environment to remove obstacles, to give warning before it is time to clear away an activity, by phrasing requests so that the child understands the reasons for them.

As adults working with young children we need to understand how developmental phases can affect behaviour, and ensure that our expectations are appropriate.

We seek to help children to change their own behaviour, in order to improve their quality of life and learning rather than to make life easier for ourselves.

Bullying

The term bullying cannot be applied to all unacceptable behaviour from young children. "Bullying" describes any behaviour which is **deliberately** intended to hurt, intimidate, frighten, harm or exclude others, carried out in a systematic way. A pattern of bullying can emerge at a very young age. While we recognise that bullying is a particular behaviour, our approach to intervention is the same as that taken to other kinds of unacceptable behaviour, and underpinned by the same principles.

Intervention

If a child's behaviour is causing concern:

- We will gather together all the information that we have including observations, records and information from parents/carers to try to understand the causes of the behaviour.
- We will meet with parents/carers to exchange ideas and discuss possible interventions.
- We will consider the possibility of unidentified special needs which need to be addressed (e.g. checking for health problems, developmental checks).
- We will observe carefully to try to identify triggers resulting in the unwanted behaviour.
- We will develop a plan of action with the parents/carers which will reinforce positive behaviour, provide strong models of positive behaviour, and provide a consistent approach to behaviour.
- If circumstances at home seem to be resulting in behaviour that challenges us we will discuss with parents/carers how things can be improved and offer routes for support if possible, e.g. a referral to the Education Welfare Officer.
- We will consider ways of avoiding triggers, and try to intervene by distracting the child before the unwanted behaviour is triggered (e.g. making suggestions for cooperative play with bricks before the child resents intrusion from other children, giving plenty of warning before a change of activity).
- **In the case when a child causes 'harm' to another child, we will help them recognise the impact of their behaviour by exploring causative factors behind the incident for both children.**

- We will intervene to prevent a child being harmed by another child's behaviour. **(Article 19)**
- We will give reassurance to any child who is distressed or hurt by another child's behaviour.
- We will support the child to begin to self-regulate and **BE MOTIVATED THEMSELVES** to behave with consideration. Encouraging this by recognizing and describing the good behaviour and its consequence.

Physical Intervention

See policy on Positive Handling and Physical Intervention (attached)

We will only intervene physically to manage a child's behaviour if it is necessary to prevent injury or damage. We act in accordance with the Authority's "Guidelines for Positive Behavioural and Physical Intervention".

Care must be taken at all times to ensure that any physical contact is welcome, and does not give cultural offence or apprehension of harm.

Staff at Somerset work as a team and will support each other in management of challenging behaviour. Staff experiencing difficulties should discuss them with their line manager.

Any incident involving physical intervention by staff must be recorded (see Wands-worth Guidelines)

Rewards

'Intrinsic' (Of itself- by or in itself, rather than because of its associations or consequences) rewards through learning and the child's experience are promoted. Teachers are therefore encouraged to use 'descriptive' praise rather than 'evaluative' praise, i.e. describe and clarify rather than examine and judge, e.g. when a child creates a painting an instinctive response by an adult could be "I like your painting, it's wonderful". While this could be a genuine response, nevertheless it could lead to the child doing things to please the adult. We want children to be proud of their achievements, not because it pleases the adult, but because it pleases them.

We will consider using rewards, as a tool to reinforce learning. When used it will be as part of an IEP. They will be appropriate (not all children respond to the same rewards), consistent (given every time the appropriate behaviour is demonstrated, immediately), and must be very clear to the child. A poorly managed reward system can be counter-productive. A tangible reward should always be paired with 'descriptive' praise, so the child build an understanding of the desired learning.

Punishment

Punishment can have a damaging effect on our relationship with a child. Teaching about behaviour should be positive, aimed at helping the child to learn, and not about our own responses to a behaviour. Sometimes a child may need to be removed from a situation in order to keep them, or the other children safe. We do not use physical punishment, or threaten any punishment which could harm the child's well-being.

(Article 19, 28, 37)

Contacts for Advice: www.kidscape.org.uk
www.antibullying.net
www.parentscentre.gov.uk

Policy for Positive Handling and Physical Intervention

Legal Background:

(from “Policy and Procedure on the Use of Control and Restraint by Staff” [Wandsworth,2002])

The LEA policy is based on the Education Act 1997 (Section 4) which was constituted by adding Section 550A to the Education Act 1996 and additional guidance circulated by the DfEE in April 2001. It is recommended that schools use this policy as a basis to either draw up or update their own policy and that the policy is formally adopted by the Governing Body.

This Section restates the principles derived from common law and statute which have, in the past been misunderstood. For example there is a common misconception that, since the Children Act 1989, any physical contact with a child is in some way unlawful. This is not true. Where necessary reasonable force can be used to control or restrain pupils. Physical contact with pupils may also be appropriate or necessary in other circumstances (see paragraph 5.8)

Section 550A allows teachers, and other persons who are authorised by the Headteacher to have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility);
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property);
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during teaching sessions or elsewhere.

The provision applies when a teacher, or other authorised person, is on the school premises, and when he/she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere, e.g. on a field trip or other authorised out of school activity.

Corporal Punishment (or threat of it)

The law forbids a teacher to use any degree of physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a pupil, or which is primarily intended to cause pain or injury or humiliation (Sections 548 to 550 of the 1996 Act).

Any act, or threat of an act, such as hitting, kicking, slapping, punching, poking, prodding, biting, throwing an object, rough handling etc. which causes or threatens harm or the expectation of harm to a user is strictly forbidden and constitutes gross misconduct. Staff indulging in such behaviour render themselves liable to dismissal and the possibility of prosecution.

Under section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, all school teachers were granted the power to use "reasonable force" in order to:

- Maintain discipline in schools
- Prevent criminal offences from taking place
- Prevent children and others from sustaining injury

In 2011, additions were made to the Education and Inspections Act 2006, making it necessary for all head teachers to inform parents of cases when reasonable force has been used against their children. It is now a legal requirement that all incidents are communicated to parents in writing as quickly as possible after the event.

Normal, Positive Handling of Children:

We want all children at Somerset to feel secure and valued. Physical contact is a part of our normal interaction with children, and is used so long as it is welcomed by the child and does not give offence culturally, or cause a child any kind of anxiety. Contact which could arouse sexual feelings would be considered as gross misconduct, and would constitute an offence under the law. Some examples of the use of physical contact at Somerset would include:

- A comforting arm around the child if separation from the parent worries them
- A hand-hold
- A guiding hand to steer a child in the right direction
- A brief hug to show approval or praise
- Comfort if the child is hurt or distressed

At all times we would wish to act as a “wise and caring parent”. (Wandsworth Guidance)

Where any Physical Intervention has been required we would inform the parent(s) and the reasons this had to be used.

Aims

- To help children to develop behaviour that is calm, considered and conducive to learning and the establishment of happy relationships with adults and peers.
- To have a shared approach to dealing with behaviour that is difficult to manage.
- To ensure a safe and happy environment for all children and adults.
- We will always aim to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned.
- We will always aim to help the child to regain self-control through the use of calming dialogue.
- In accordance with our Behaviour Management Policy, we aim for all interactions with children to be positive and to help the child to learn.

Using Physical Control or Restraint

- Physical intervention will only be used to prevent children from injuring themselves or others, from causing damage.
- Any physical force used will be commensurate with the gravity of the situation, and will only be used as a last resort.
- Physical force will never be used in anger. It should always be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- We will try to ensure that any physical intervention is witnessed by another member of staff.
- If a child’s behaviour consistently causes concern and needs restraint we will act in accordance with our Behaviour Management Policy to resolve issues and meet the child’s needs.

Before any physical intervention to restrain a child we will:

- Attempt to calm the child using a calm, quiet, slow voice
- Offer choices and time for the problem to be resolved
- Attempt to distract the child in potentially dangerous situations
- Use clear verbal instructions and warnings of consequences

We will never:

- Deliberately cause pain, injury or humiliation
- Use physical force to punish
- Isolate a child in a room alone
- Use prolonged physical restraint
- Deprive a child of normal food or drink
- Threaten a child with harm
- Use any sanction that could degrade a child, such as on cultural gender or racial grounds

Physical intervention that we might use:

- Physically interposing between two children
- Blocking a child's path
- Holding
- Leading a child by the hand
- Guide a child by placing a hand in the small of the back
- (in exceptional circumstances) Using a more restrictive hold, for a brief time only. For example if a child is trying to attack another child

In an emergency any member of staff must do whatever is needed to prevent the child from coming to harm.

Recording

Incidents which require restraint should be recorded in the child's records and if they become common will be discussed with the SENCO.

Serious incidents where the safety of children has been an issue should be recorded, and discussed with the Headteacher. If they should become a regular feature of the Centre the Head will carry out a review and reconsider both this Policy and the Behaviour Management Policy with staff.

Criteria for monitoring these policies

- Are staff still in agreement with our stated aims?
- Have there been changes to Government policy (Statutory guidance or legal requirements), or to LA guidance?
- Are staff happy that our policy is followed in all parts of the Centre?
- Have there been any incidents that have caused concern? Does the policy need to be altered to reflect concerns?
- Have records been kept appropriately?
- Is there positive feedback from parents/carers?
- Have there been any complaints from parents/carers relating to our management of children's behaviour?
- Is feedback from OFSTED positive?
- Is the policy clear and concise? Does the format or language need to be changed