

# Behaviour Guidance Policy

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Issues of behaviour are ever in the public eye; the media delight to inform that children are worse than ever before. We must remember that young children are experimenting and learning. Inappropriate behaviour may be learned from siblings, peers, parents... The issue is much more complicated than we are often led to believe. Our task will be to guide children and give opportunity for genuine learning and development.

## **Child involvement**

Involvement is the most important key to good behaviour. If children are engaged in what they are doing they will generally behave well. If there is unacceptable behaviour we must look at the levels of well-being and involvement; if these levels are low we must consider the environment, activity, etc., and see if it can be made more appropriate. This is not about blaming the adult, but fostering involvement that will satisfy the needs of the child.

## **Pedagogue involvement**

Behaviour is an aspect of education, and education is about relationships. Young children will generally want to please, and will readily follow guidance given by the adult who is a trusted friend. As we 'live with our children', sharing in their world, they want to be a part of *our* world with the values and behaviour patterns that we live out before them. To be aloof and a mere observer and director of children in the name of managing behaviour, is likely to be counter-productive. To be the constant friend of children will win them.

## **Celebration of achievement**

Involvement will be encouraged by the use of celebration of achievement. Praising the child is almost meaningless and potentially harmful to healthy development, but celebration teaches the child to value his own achievements, to enjoy them and strive for them. We celebrate achievement by

- what we say
- display of work
- taking photographs
- sharing with other children
- informing parents

## **Appropriate response to inappropriate behaviour**

When children behave inappropriately too easily the pedagogue may react and *respond* inappropriately. She may be tired and frustrated and immediately think of the child as 'naughty' and a 'nuisance'. She may speak angrily or, at least, loudly. The emotions need to be kept under control and outward response to conduct should be informed by intelligent and thoughtful assessment of what the child is expressing. The question 'why?' should always be asked: "Why is the child behaving in this way?" Consideration should be given to the child's health and wellbeing, and attachment and schema theory.

Direct response to the child should, wherever possible, be by the key person of the child.

## **Gentleness and clarity**

Dealing with inappropriate conduct should always be with words that are spoken quietly, gently, clearly and reasonably. The only time when the voice should be raised is when danger requires it and the child would not be alerted without it. Generally, it is better to get close enough to the child to be heard speaking *more* quietly than normal. What is appropriate and inappropriate should be explained with clarity. It is better to engage in shared sustained thinking than to issue

dictates. Dictates may for the moment control behaviour but do not contribute to the character development of the child or his learning process.

### **Discreet support of colleagues**

The pedagogue should never feel alone in dealing with children. *Eg:* the one 'fronting' an activity or presentation should never feel that it is left to her to 'control' behaviour. Others should quietly guide children whispering to an individual – "Let's listen and find out what happens next in the story", etc. A presentation should never be interrupted by the 'discipline' of a would-be supportive practitioner issuing directions to children to "Listen to the story!"

### **Modelling appropriate behaviour**

Pedagogues should always model appropriate behaviour. Children will learn much from what they see in adult conduct. *Eg:*

- Courtesy towards colleagues, parents, and children. Courtesy towards fellow practitioners can usefully be quite exaggerated as they are addressed with titles, 'please' and 'thank you'.
- Total respect for the 'presenter'. Children are not expected to speak over or interrupt the presenter and neither should colleagues.
- Speaking quietly and never being aggressive with others.
- Never speaking critically of colleagues in front of children.

### **Appropriate reporting to parents**

Reporting to parents should normally be done by the key person. It should not be done by an adult who happened to be involved.

Reporting should always be measured and proportionate. If there is one incident of inappropriate behaviour during a session it should not be reported as if it were the only thing that happened during a session in which there was much of value achieved by the child. Equally, the pedagogue should not *only* report to parents when there is inappropriate behaviour, but should normally report when there are positive achievements.

Reporting inappropriate behaviour should be in terms that are accurate, sympathetic and constructive. The object of reporting is to ensure that information is shared and that the care and education of children is in partnership with parents. It is not in order to secure a parent punishment and certainly not for the practitioner to 'get it off the chest'!

Parents need to know what happened, what was done about it, and how they can best support their child.

Any physical intervention that might rarely be necessary for the protection of the child himself, others or property must be reported to parents in writing and signed by parents.

### **Behaviour Management support**

Members of staff must be supportive of each other's guidance to children and never giving contradictory indicators.

Members of staff are given training in guiding young children's behaviour and theory and practice allied to behaviour guidance.

Staff may seek and expect support from the Director (Peter Michell).

This policy was adopted on:  
Signed:

19<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Role of signatory  
Date policy to be reviewed not later than

Director  
July 2022

