

Reflections Small School - Behaviour Policy

Date: 1.9.16

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Policy note: At Reflections Small School we believe that our curricular approach directly affects behaviour – in short, when children are engaged, have opportunities of authorship, autonomy, independence, a sense of community and opportunities for intrinsic motivation, we believe their behaviour is likely to be more positive. Any reader will therefore find some duplication between our Behaviour Policy and our Curriculum Plans.

Our Image of the child

We see children as:

- Rich in potential, strong, powerful, competent
- Confident in building relationships, having values and respect for others
- Having a curiosity and open-mindedness to all that is possible
- Capable of independent, critical, divergent thinking

This strong image of the child is something we seek to hold as a group of educators and it shapes our expectations of children. In our experience we find that as we hold this image, so children respond by living it.

Child Behaviour Policy Statement

We think it is important that children have set boundaries of behaviour for their own and each other's safety. We set rules and boundaries in conjunction with the children supporting them to understand what is important for their safety and for the benefit of the group.

Negative behaviour can occur when a child's basic needs are not being met and our approach of listening to children means that we pay close attention to their needs – welfare and educational. We monitor educators' practice to identify how our listening approach is impacting on children's behaviour.

The school has a named person who has overall responsibility for guiding staff and parents with issues concerning behaviour. This named person keeps him/ herself up-to-date with legislation and research on behaviour guidance strategies and accesses relevant sources of expertise on handling children's behaviour.

Our aim is to promote positive behaviour and ensure that all children have the opportunity to feel like they are part of a community. Wherever possible we seek to involve children in the practicalities of creating a community – examples such as: choosing what food we grow in our Edible Garden and tending to the plants once selected; looking after the chickens (which the children hatched from eggs); laying the table for their own lunches are examples of experiences which support a sense of mutual ownership and responsibility for their environment.

We also think the following are important:

Love and care - We enable the children to feel loved and cared for and provide them equally with our attention. Listening to them, setting a good example and avoiding favouritism.

Security - We show the children where things belong, provide them with spaces for their belongings to keep their personal items safe, ensure consistent routines and prepare them for any impending changes.

Adequate rest and sleep - We provide areas where children can rest and relax or even sleep if necessary and we accept the use of comfort objects.

Freedom to explore - The children have the use of many indoor rooms and outside play areas, and access to resources and equipment. In addition they access woodland spaces through Forest School and the beach through Beach School.

The importance of self-image - We continually assess the children's needs for example, a child with poor self-esteem may become upset or disruptive. We notice and support children's individuality and there is always lots of time and attention given to the children.

Adults as role models - We make sure as educators and carers that we promote a good image through respectful communication - the way we communicate, tone of voice, manners, tolerance, hygiene, humour and above all, respect.

Consistency in approach - All achievements are noted and celebrated and all children's work is valued and shared through observations and documentation.

Children's voices – We see children as active citizens in the community from birth and as such seek to make children's voices heard at every opportunity, both inside the school and in the wider world. We hold exhibitions of children's work in Worthing and around the UK, we publish material created by children and we make a point of always quoting them accurately.

Boundaries to behaviour - We ensure that the children understand what is expected of them and involve them in creating rules and boundaries. We respect children's rights and acknowledge that with these rights may often come responsibilities – we seek to hold them carefully and thoughtfully to their responsibilities.

Opportunities for self-expression - Children are allowed and encouraged to voice their ideas and work through experiences, i.e. through drama, creative work and physical expression. We believe that children have a hundred, hundred languages of expression and we seek to support their creativity. We believe that to support creativity as an educator you need to find your own creativity and we work with in-house Atelieristas (artists) to support this in the children.

Opportunities for self-directed learning - Through experience we know that busy, involved, children, engaged in driving their own learning experiences, are likely to behave positively.

We do not use sanctions - There will never be any form of physical punishment at Reflections School. Our children will never be subject to humiliation or labelled as 'naughty' and staff will endeavour to never raise their voices.

Child Behaviour Management Policy

At Reflections we value reciprocal, respectful relationships. Whenever possible we demonstrate our expectations of behaviour through good practice and examples.

We never use physical punishment as we believe it can damage the child both mentally and physically. Most often a calm talk about what has gone wrong is the most effective method.

We may occasionally remove a child from a situation that is causing conflict but this is always done calmly and with great care. We would do this by encouraging a child to get involved in another experience and always explain to the child who has been removed how he/she needs to behave if he/she wants to return to go back to the original experience. We also ensure that we keep the explanation simple. However, we do not have 'Time out'.

In times of conflict between children we seek to support the children to resolve the conflict themselves. We often look on a situation of this type as an exciting learning opportunity to learn to negotiate and to learn to listen to the other's point of view. If the situation becomes difficult to resolve we may need to take a child out of the situation which do so as positively as possible. In a case like this an educator would sit with the child and ensure they understand why they are with them. After a short period of time we would support the child to re-join the experience.

Educators are able to recognise when it may be appropriate to let a child calm down 'alone' when their intervention or communications are agitating the child further. At this point the educator would back off and allow time before re addressing the situation.

We avoid the use of phrases such 'don't'; or 'because I said so'. We never use the word, 'naughty' and we only ever refer to a child's behaviour, not the child. Instead we use more positive requests such as: 'let's see if you can show me' or 'let's try to do it a different way,'.

When giving a child an instruction we always explain the reason behind an instruction. We would never say, 'just do it!'

We notice and reward good behaviour with modest praise.

We seek to be consistent with all children and treat children fairly and equally. Educators have realistic boundaries for the children to work towards. And as adults we always seek to admit to our mistakes. We are never afraid to apologise or admit when we are wrong.

General rules:

- we never call a child 'naughty' or 'bad'
- we never alienate a child
- it is the child's negative behaviour we may disapprove of, never the child.

If there is a persistent problem occurring with a child's behaviour we look into the situation more deeply. We check to ensure that the child is not being bullied, discriminated against, is bored or feels ignored. We may use STAR observations or similar tools to support this process. Any observations are discussed with the parent/ guardian in advance and shared with the parent when completed.

We agree a strategy to support improvements in behaviour in advance with the parent/ guardian and develop a programme that is agreeable and workable for both the school and parents. Each time the child attends school we keep a log and check for any patterns or triggers of unwanted behaviour which might become apparent at certain times or during certain experiences.

If a problem continues we discuss with the parents what is still occurring and if needed, and the parents have agreed, we contact the appropriate support team help through the local West Sussex County Council for advice and help.

Child Physical Restraint Policy

The Teachers are aware of regulations regarding the safe use of force by teachers as set out in DfEE Circular 10/98, relating to section 550A of the Education Act 1996: The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils.

This policy covers issues surrounding any exceptional circumstances which might require the physical restraint of a child. The purpose of a physically restrictive hold will only ever be to limit the child's ability to hurt him/ herself or others and will involve only the minimum application of force through limitation of movement. Wherever possible, aid is sought at the earliest stage from other members of staff for assistance, support and presence.

Staff are experienced in the use of a wide range of behaviour management strategies intended to defuse potentially aggressive situations, (e.g. diversion, reasoning, warning) which are always used first. If these fail, and only in exceptional circumstances, one or more of the following approaches may become necessary:

- Holding (e.g. gentle arm around shoulder to reassure)
- Blocking
- Physically moving between children
- Shepherding away (e.g. by placing hand in centre of the child's back)

Restraint can only be justified for the following reasons:

- A child will cause physical harm to themselves or another person
- A child will run away and will put themselves (or others) at serious risk of harm
- A child will cause significant damage that is likely to have an emotional effect

A child must NOT be physically restrained when:

- Staff can restore safety in another practicable way
- Staff are not in control of themselves

- Staff consider it clearly unsafe to do so (e.g. the child has a weapon)
- Staff consider there are not enough adults to restrain the child safely
- Staff are not confident in managing the situation and are unable to restrain the child safely

Staff will consider the following when physically restraining a child:

- Keep calm and controlled and act in a way that absorbs any aggression without retaliating
- Be sensitive about your choice of words, your tone of voice and your pace of speaking
- Convey a genuine willingness to help
- Acknowledge the child's feelings
- Explain to the child why you are concerned and don't use it as a play for power
- Work with and don't compete with the child
- Don't rush the process and let it take as long as is required. However, you should be aware of the child's level of discomfort or restraining them for too long.

In the event that a serious incident has occurred necessitating the use of physical intervention, staff will take the following actions:

- Gradual release of restraint as the child regains control, with adult reassurance
- Child allowed time for calm under supervision
- Checks made for any injuries and appropriate medical aid provided if necessary
- Manager informed as soon as possible
- Member of staff involved to complete an accident form if the child has sustained an injury, to be signed by the Manager and child's parent/guardian.
- Member of staff involved to complete a Significant Incident form, to be signed by the Manager and parent/guardian of the child.
- Room Leader/ Manager to contact the child's parent/guardian to inform them of the incident.

Restraining a child who has Inclusion Requirements - Staff are aware that if a child has inclusion requirements they may not understand the staff's body language, tone of voice or facial expressions. We note too that children with Inclusion requirements may have difficulty with changes to their routine and can be very sensitive to sounds or touch

If it is necessary to restrain a child whose hearing is impaired we will note that the child may not communicate in their accustomed way and may not be able to express their hurt, rage or fear.

We also note that children with certain learning requirements might not be able to understand what is happening to them before and while they are being held. The meaning they attach to what has happened may be very different from the adults' understanding.

Staff will seek to include and consult with the SENCO/INCO wherever possible.