Chatham Nursery School Birth to Five Behaviour Policy

At Chatham Nursery School we are committed to establishing a kind and caring learning environment that promotes positive behaviour and relationships, where children treat each other with care and respect. We have an inclusive setting that supports all children as they take increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions and consider the welfare and wellbeing of others. We encourage children to talk about their feelings and learn how we support the feelings of others. We promote an environment that helps children to understand their own behaviour and that of others.

Children's angry and challenging behaviour can sometimes create problems for other children and the adults who are engaging with them. We have to remember though that through all their behaviours, children are trying to communicate with those around them.

We want all our children to be confident, capable and competent when engaging in relationships with other children and the adults in their lives.

Chatham Nursery School's Behaviour Policy recognises the need for adults to intervene and support children in their times of conflict. This is done in a respectful and supportive way that promotes learning for all of the children involved.

Chatham Values

We use our Chatham Values to help encourage positive behaviour, set boundaries and provide clear rules for adults and children. These values are incorporated into our weekly plans and are taught in our weekly whole school gatherings known as Together Time.

Our practice

➢ We organise and adapt the indoor and outdoor learning environment so that it has a positive impact on behaviour in terms of space, access and choice of activities.
➢ We take a positive, proactive and consistent approach towards managing children's behaviour.
➢ We liaise with families to understand the child's perspective and enlist their support where appropriate.
➢ We handle issues of behaviour in ways appropriate to the child's stage of development and level of understanding. This may be time away from the immediate situation with support or comforting.
➢ We encourage appropriate behaviour in all interactions with children and staff and show that good behaviour is valued.
➢ We teach children our nursery routines and rules.
➢ We establish clear expectations and boundaries for behaviour, appropriate to the children's level of understanding.
➢ We record significant incidents relating to behaviour.
➢ We identify and implement strategies that encourage positive behaviour.
➢ We deal with negative behaviour at the earliest opportunity.

Encouraging positive behaviour

➢ We work with the children to create rules that focus on the behaviour we want to see e.g. rather than saying "don't run", we say "we walk inside, we can run outside"
➢ Rather than saying "Good boy/girl" we use praise specifically related to the children's actions or behaviours, e.g. " I like the way you gave Salma a turn with the swing". If appropriate, we refocus the child's attention on another activity. We focus on activities and routines to encourage:
  • sharing
  • negotiation
  • co-operation
➢ We encourage responsibility in caring for others and the environment – tidying/setting up activities/gardening etc.
➢ We encourage positive behaviour through play and learning activities circle time/stories/role play/puppets etc.
➢ We model appropriate behaviours in different contexts.
➢ Stickers - we prefer not to use stickers in a behavioural context as the focus is then on the sticker and not the appropriate behaviour.

All staff will:

➢ Strive to be "emotionally attuned" to children, valuing and accepting their emotions e.g. "I can see you're sad about that, shall I help you for a moment", rather than "don't cry, you're a big girl now".
➢ Praise good behaviour
➢ Praise good efforts
➢ Show disapproval of the behaviour, not the child e.g. "That was an unkind thing to do" not "You rude child!".
➢ Model how to deal with and sort out difficult situations
➢ Show empathy towards children and each other, naming and recognising emotions.

Key People

All children at Chatham are allocated a Key Person. The key person has particular responsibility for working with a small number of children and families, supporting effective communication. This is vital when dealing with areas of difficulty. Using the key person approach enables practitioners to get to know their children really well, meeting their needs and responding sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour. Close working between practitioners and families is vital for the identification of children's learning needs and to ensure a quick response to any areas of difficulty, but especially when children are having problems with their behaviour.

Dealing with Conflict

Experiencing and managing conflict is an important part of growing up and early education. Our aim is to help children learn the skills they need to manage conflicts, through guidance and modelling.   Ways   to   support   children   include:

> Encourage children to be assertive and to say/sign "no" clearly, say "I don't like that", etc. Where a child appropriately asserts "no" and the other child responds, it is not usually necessary for an adult to get involved
> Thinking developmentally, so if a child is at an early stage of development, then sharing resources will be very challenging, so two of something may need to be provided.
> Making sure that we have enough resources for everyone e.g. by setting up experiences for 2 or 3 children, to avoid large groups crowding round
> Modelling language and approaches like "me next"; "can I have a turn?"; Using a 2, 3 or 5 minute sand timer for visual representation of the time to wait for their turn. At Chatham we encourage older children to use the sand timers independently to solve sharing issues with their friends.
> Show children that we actively listen to the ideas, needs and wants of others.
> Show simple approaches to sharing like "I'll do one, you do the next."
> Support and promote open-ended experiences that promote collaboration, e.g. block play.

If a conflict needs adult intervention to be resolved, this is our approach:
> We listen to both children.
> We encourage children to say how they feel ("it hurt", "I'm sad" etc.)
> We ask the children how they could solve the problem and try to find a solution based on their ideas. If necessary, we impose a solution and explain why.
> If a child has hurt another, we ask them to find a way to help the other child feel better. This could involve saying sorry, comforting the other child or agreeing to be friends. We avoid a situation where a child expresses a grudging "sorry", and might instead model an apology by saying sorry to the injured party.
> If a child has been hurt or is distressed, then we initially focus attention on that. We then deal with the behaviour of the other child next.
> If necessary, we state a clear boundary, "remember, kind hands in nursery."
> If necessary, we move one child away from the other's play.
> It is important to spend time settling the children back into positive play– we don't deal with an incident and then walk away too soon.
>Where possible, we notice positive behaviour shortly afterwards and praise it e.g. "I can see you are sharing now, well done."

Whole School strategies for supporting children with challenging behaviour

Strategy 1 Give three verbal indications to the child that their behaviour is not acceptable - Firstly - quietly discuss it with the child, secondly - remind them again and thirdly - indicate through your tone of voice.
This communication needs to be developmentally appropriate, Signalong and PECS may be used in children with limited verbal understanding.

Strategy 2 Remove the child to another activity within the room - give the child a reason for doing so. Staff should give time to the situation and be at the child's eye level.

Strategy 3 Time away: In some situations, "time away" will be used where behaviour is repeatedly challenging in order to give time for reflection and calming down. This may be used if behaviour continues after verbal interventions and other strategies have been used. Provide "time-away" for the child in their own room. A member of staff should sit quietly with the child for 1 - 3 minutes (depending on the child) giving space for the child to reflect on their behaviour or to give the child time to regain control of his/her emotions. After the "time-away" period, briefly discuss what happened and then positively ask the child what they would like to do next to have fun.

Biting

Children bite for various reasons – small children naturally use their mouths as a means of exploration, they may bite because they are experiencing teething pain, some lack skills to cope with situations, some children use it as a way of saying "No" when they do not have the language to do so, and some use it as a defence mechanism. Some children may bite because they feel threatened by situations such as a new baby or a new partner in mum's life, the death of a family member or a mother returning to work.

Biting is anormal stage of development in young children and is usually a temporary

> The biter is told that it is unacceptable (tailored to his/her age and understanding) and distracted/redirected to another activity.
> As with other behaviours, explain to the child that it is the behaviour, not the child that is unacceptable.
> Whatever the reason for the biting, the bond between child and practitioner should be as warm and reassuring as possible.
>   Look at the context of each biting incident for pattern, in order to prevent further biting.
> Take the time to look for patterns in the biter's environment and emotional state at each episode. Does the child always bite the same individual? Is the biter simply exhausted, or hungry? Be ready to intervene immediately, but carefully. Teaching children age-appropriate ways to control themselves encourages the development of confidence and self-esteem. We can guide children towards self-control and away from biting.
> If a pattern emerges, inform the parent/s, and work together to help the child through this period. Work as a team – practitioners and parents may identify possible reasons for a child's biting - and respond accordingly. While practitioners may be more familiar with positive behaviour techniques, parents are experts on their own children's behaviour.
> When informing the parent of the bitten child, the confidentiality of other children involved will be maintained
> Explain to parents that they should not 'bite back' a child for biting.
> If a pattern emerges, follow the same steps as below in "Procedure if a child's behaviour is causing concern".
> For those practitioners working with older children who bite, it is important to assess and perhaps work intensively on the helping the child to express his/her wants and

needs if they cannot verbalise, rather than focus alone on the biting, as often they bite due to frustration at not being able to express themselves.

> The bitten child will be comforted and First Aid administered as required.

Bullying

The DfE document "Preventing and tackling bullying" states: Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. For very young children other types of bullying, including cyberbullying via text message, social media and gaming are less relevant. Nursery aged children may direct inappropriate behaviour to one specific child. However, this is more likely to be because:

> they have a fixation with a toy that the other child likes to play with
> there is something about the other child that they like or want e.g. coat, shoes
> they wish to establish a relationship with that child but don't have the skills to do this in a friendly way

The motivation behind their behaviour is usually not to intentionally hurt the child but to achieve something else and may be related to a child's special educational need. This behaviour will be addressed in a way that supports both children, using strategies already described above.

Procedure if a child's behaviour is causing concern:

1. If the Key person/SENCO and/or family identify a behaviour that is causing concern above what is normally experienced in a typical Early Years Classroom, staff will then implement a graduated response through observing the child closely, planning appropriate experiences to support the children, reviewing progress after a designated time and taking further action if necessary.
2. If there is no improvement, staff and families will work together using the strategies described above to reduce incidents of unwanted behaviour.
3. A behaviour plan may be written with support from the SENCO, so that everyone can follow a consistency of approach.
4. If there is little or no improvement in the child's behaviour, with families' permission, other professional help will be sought (possibly Health Visitor, Community Paediatrician, Speech and Language Service, Educational Psychologist).

Monitoring and review

- This policy was agreed and implemented on 5th July 2023 and is due for review July 2024