



Behaviour Principles Policy

Valid From: September 2025

Next Review Due: September 2026

At The Wharf Nursery, we aim to provide a secure, stimulating and inclusive environment, where adults support children to develop their independence and build relationships.

We have a consistent, positive approach to supporting children and helping them to develop positive behaviours.

Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- *Behaviour and discipline in schools*
- *Searching, screening and confiscation at school*
- *The Equality Act 2010 • Use of reasonable force in schools*
- *Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school In addition, this policy is based on:*
- *Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice.*
- *Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils*
- *Sections 88-94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which require schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate pupils' property*
- *DfE guidance explaining that maintained schools should publish their behaviour policy online*

Our clear framework for learning and behaviour works well, developing well-being and the ability to manage emotions and respect for others- irrespective of ethnicity, disability, gender or background. Safeguarding the children in our care is central to our work at The Wharf Nursery School.

Encouraging positive behaviour

To enable us to achieve our aims we will:

- Ensure that all children are aware of the rules in nursery
- Apply the rules consistently and fairly to all children and adults.
- Develop good relationships with children, parents, carers and colleagues. This includes showing respect for all and maintaining professional boundaries.

- Support children to exercise their growing independence within the safety of a familiar structure and predictable routine. Rules and expectations are clear and realistic and take account of a child's level of understanding.
- Expect high standards of behaviour, which are consistently modelled by staff. Children will be supported to show respect for themselves, others and the environment.
- Teach children about socially acceptable behaviour in a variety of ways, for example, through stories, group discussions, role-play activities and the use of visual prompts.
- Provide activities and routines, which encourage sharing, negotiation and co-operation. Using praise and reward strategies are key. Instructions are in a positive way- e.g. 'Please walk' rather than 'don't run'.
- Support children to develop 'conflict resolution skills'.
- Organise the learning environment to support successful learners and to have a positive impact on children's self-esteem and behaviour (including space to move freely and access resources easily).

Managing inappropriate behaviour

There are certain behaviours we will not tolerate and we view these 'behaviours' as inappropriate rather than the child being 'naughty' or 'bad'. We do not use these terms when talking to children or adults. Children quickly learn expectations, but may need to be supported to follow the 'rules' and to accept the consequences of their actions. These will be appropriate to the 'behaviour' - and a child's level of 'understanding'. We never threaten or use physical punishment.

Unacceptable behaviour includes over-boisterous play; swearing; mistreating equipment; hurting others; intimidation; name-calling and bullying. We recognise that unacceptable behaviour can be a way of children asking for support or attention, particularly where their language may be limited. We always try to understand a child's behaviour and what it is telling us in the first instance.

Bullying

Bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include persistent:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online

We recognise that a child may display behaviours that appear to be bullying in nature, however, although we are very mindful of the possibility of it taking place, actual bullying is rare in the

nursery. Peer on peer abuse and sexual touching are also unlikely to happen in a nursery setting. However, staff know that 'it could happen here' and would always follow correct procedures and teach children to say 'no' or 'stop', if something happens that they don't like.

We take positive action to counter bullying or discriminatory attitudes whenever they occur in any form. In the event of any suspicious comments by a child regarding events at home or marks on their body, or suspicions of abuse (no matter how minor an incident may appear), staff will urgently consult complete a Cause for Concern form and speak to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and appropriate action will be taken. Advice may be sought from the C-SPA team (Children's Single Point of Access). A referral form will be completed, if appropriate. Staff are aware that it is the responsibility of the C-SPA team to decide whether further action needs to be taken.

Staff will:

- Give positive reinforcement of 'good' behaviour rather than giving attention to 'bad' behaviour - 'Catch children being good'.
- Step in to deal with unwanted behaviour at the earliest opportunity.
- Explain to the offending child (ren) what behaviour is not acceptable and explain expectations clearly.
- Model the behaviour we want, remaining calm and listening to a child's point of view. Staff never shout unless a person is in danger.
- Take action if unacceptable behaviour recurs. Consistency of response is important to ensure children are clear about expectations and rules.
- Not tolerate verbal or physical aggression by any child - or adult.
- Be sure of facts and not jump to conclusions or 'label' children.
- Avoid confrontation and humiliation or 'loss of face' to a child and try to give them a way out.
- Recognise that some children are simply immature or socially inexperienced and have not yet developed self-control and regard for others. A child may not yet understand the word or concept of 'sorry'.
- Not over-react if a child swears or uses bad language. They may be unaware of the impact of their words, or be looking for a reaction. It is possible to discourage such language without making an issue of it.
- Explain the school's usual standards of behaviour, if a child misbehaves in front of their parent or carer. However, the parent will be responsible for their child whilst in their care.
- Recognise that changes in behaviour may reflect an underlying issue – anxiety around starting school, family stresses and health issues etc.

- Be aware that a child's behaviour may be result of low self-esteem or they may have witnessed violence or experienced abuse and are aware that this could make peer on peer abuse a possibility.

Actions which result in physical harm:

- If a child or adult is hurt in any way, our first priority is the injured party. We will give minimal attention to a perpetrator, but if necessary remove from the scene.
- Any injury is recorded in the accident book, without attributing it to an individual child (these details may be kept separately, if appropriate). A more serious injury will be reported, in line with SCC procedures. Information will be shared with the parent of the injured child.
- We think carefully about how and when we share information about incidents with the parent of the offending child and issues of confidentiality.
- Once the situation has calmed, the behaviour is discussed with the aggressor. It is made clear that such behaviour is not permitted and what the impact is.
- Staff never allow or encourage retaliation nor will they over-react.
- Minimal physical intervention is used and alternative strategies are put in place where possible. These could include telling the child to stop; enlisting the help of other adults; involving the child in other activities; giving them time to calm down or using a timer. Social stories and visual aids may also be used.
- Physical intervention can be used if appropriate: touching a child gently, guiding or holding them by the hand, arm or shoulders, for example, to encourage compliance and reassure or for reasons of safety.
- As a last resort, physical restraint may be used. This could include holding a child's arms/ legs/body or lifting them, to prevent harm to themselves or others. Minimal force to ensure safety is essential. Such restraint is in the context of the adult's duty of care. (See the 'Positive Handling' policy).
- Adults need to be aware of their own safety and well-being. They may need time away from the classroom to recompose, reflect or discuss with a colleague or member of the senior management team.
- Adults avoid lifting and manual handling of children (see above for exceptions).
- Staff will inform a colleague if withdrawing a child to a quiet place and will keep the door ajar.
- Staff are aware that actions can be interpreted in different ways by others.
- Where persistent or severe problems occur, staff will observe and record details. An ABCC observation may be completed.
- If appropriate, an individual behaviour plan will be drawn up (with a risk assessment), in consultation with parents. This will be to help provide strategies to keep children and adults safe; support a child to change their behaviour and provide accurate evidence of the nature; frequency and context of the behaviour.

- Some children with additional needs may have an individualised approach, where defined use of physical intervention or restraint has been agreed between parents/carers and staff.
- There is a focus on Personal, Social and Emotional development at the start of the year as part of the settling in process, to help children learn routines and expectations. Nurture groups are available for children who may need extra support.
- Guidance for parents is provided through informal meetings with staff. See also: Files for recording injuries (child on child and child on adult); Classroom Behaviour file– includes strategies and resources.; Positive Handling Policy; Intimate Care Policy

Exclusion

We would not exclude any child, and aim to support children to self-regulate, while minimising the risk of harm to the child and others (including staff). We would talk to parents/carers, and put together a Support Plan where we felt a child needed an individualised approach to managing their behaviour. In such cases, these are developed with parents and carers.

Agreed: October 2024 Review date: October 2025