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Stanford in the Vale  
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## 1.2.1 – ACHIEVING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Revised March 2020

### Statement of Intent:

Stanford Pre-school believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are, understood, supported and met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

### Aims:

As children develop, they learn about boundaries, the difference between right and wrong, and to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. The development of these skills requires adult guidance to help encourage and model appropriate behaviours and to offer intervention and support when children struggle with conflict and emotional situations. In these types of situations key staff can help identify and address triggers for the behaviour and help children reflect, regulate and manage their actions.

We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behaviour and where children can learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. The principles that underpin how we achieve positive and considerate behaviour exist within the programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development.

### Procedures:

- The Behaviour Management Representative: Mrs **Louise Collins**, our staff member, has overall responsibility for behaviour management. The Behaviour Management Representative is required to:
  - keep themselves up to date with legislation and research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour and attend relevant training to help understand and guide appropriate models of behaviour and where it may require additional support;
  - access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour with our program for supporting personal, social and emotional development; and implement the setting's behaviour procedures including the stepped approach.

- Have the necessary skills to support other staff with behaviour issues and to access expert advice, if necessary, and to check that all staff have relevant support and advice on promoting positive behaviour during every termly staff meeting.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of and respect those used by members of the Pre-school.
- We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the Pre-school's achieving positive behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.
- We expect all members of Stanford Pre-school - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the rules, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- We work in partnership with children's parents using a number of different strategies:
  - Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their Key person. We work with parents to address recurring unacceptable behaviour, using objective observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately. Occasionally a home/school behaviour book may be used to help staff and parents work together to reinforce positive behaviours and to talk with children about unacceptable behaviours.
  - We use a dinosaur chart to promote positive behaviours. Children are given warnings if they use unacceptable behaviour and then are placed on amber or red clouds if their behaviour persists. Staff then talk with parents at the end of a session concerning the behaviour and discuss a strategy to work on both at home and at Pre-school to help support the child together.

## **Stepped Approach**

### **Step 1**

- We will ensure that EYFS guidance relating to 'behaviour management' is incorporated into relevant policy and procedures;
- We will be knowledgeable with, and apply the settings procedures on Promoting Positive Behaviour;
- We will undertake an annual audit of the provision to ensure the environment and practice supports healthy social and emotional development. Findings from the audit are considered by management and relevant adjustments applied.
- We will ensure that staff are supported to address issues relating to behaviour including applying initial and focused intervention approaches.

### **Step 2**

- We will address unwanted behaviours using the agreed and consistently applied initial intervention approach. If the unwanted behaviour does not reoccur or cause concern, then normal monitoring will resume.
- Behaviours that result in concern for the child and or/others will be discussed between the key person, the behaviour coordinator and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or/and manager. During the meeting, the key person will use their knowledge and assessments of the child to share any known influencing factors (new baby, additional needs, illness etc) in order to place the behaviour into context. Appropriate adjustments to practice will be agreed and if successful, normal monitoring resumed.

- If the behaviour continues to reoccur and remains a concern, then the key person and SENCO should liaise with parents to discuss possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps. If relevant and appropriate, the views of the child relating to their behaviour should be sought and considered to help identify a cause. If a cause for the behaviour is not known or only occurs whilst in the setting, then the behaviour coordinator will suggest using a focused intervention approach to identify a trigger for the behaviour.
- If a trigger is identified, then the SENCO and key person will meet with the parents to plan support for the child through developing an action plan. If relevant, recommended actions for dealing with the behaviour at home should be agreed with the parent/s and incorporated into the plan. Other members of the staff team should be informed of the agreed actions in the action plan and help implement the actions. The plan should be monitored and reviewed regularly by the key person and SENCO until improvement is noticed.

All incidents and intervention relating to unwanted and challenging behaviour by children should be clearly and appropriately logged.

### **Step 3**

- If, despite applying the initial intervention and focused intervention approaches, the behaviour continues to occur and/or is of significant concern, then the behaviour coordinator and SENCO will invite the parent/s to a meeting to discuss external referral and next steps for supporting the child in the setting.
- It may be agreed that the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or Early Help process should begin, and that specialist help be sought for the child – this support may address either developmental or welfare needs. If the child’s behaviour is part of a range of welfare concerns that also include a concern that the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, follow the Safeguarding and Children and Child Protection Policy. It may also be agreed that the child should be referred for an Education, Health and Care Assessment.
- Advice provided by external agencies should be incorporated into the child’s action plan and regular multi-disciplinary meetings held to review the child’s progress
- We use an initial problem-solving intervention for all situations in which a child or children are distressed or in conflict. All staff use this intervention consistently.
- This type of approach involves an adult approaching the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions, acknowledging the feelings of those involved, gathering information, restating the issue to help children reflect, regain control of the situation and resolve the situation themselves.

### **Focused Intervention Approach**

- The reasons for some types of behaviour are not always apparent, despite the knowledge and input from key staff and parents.
- Where we have considered all possible reasons, then a focused intervention approach should be applied.
- This approach allows the key person and coordinator to observe, reflect and identify the causes and functions of unwanted behaviour in the wider context of other known influences on the child.
- We will follow the ABC method which uses key observations to identify a) an event or activity (antecedent) that occurred immediately before a particular behaviour, b) what

behaviour was observed and recorded at the time of the incident, and c) what the consequences were following the behaviour. Once analysed, the focused intervention should help determine the cause (e.g. ownership of a toy or a fear of a situation) and function of the behaviour (to obtain the toy or avoid a situation) and suitable support will be applied.

### **Use of Rewards and Sanctions**

- All children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control.
- Rewards such as excessive praise and stickers may provide an immediate change in the behaviour but will not teach children how to act when a 'prize' is not being given or provide the child with the skills to manage situations and their emotions. Instead, a child is taught how to be 'compliant' and respond to meet adults' own expectations in order to obtain a reward (or for fear of a sanction). If used, then the type of rewards and their functions must be carefully considered before applying.
- Children should never be labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by removing them from the group and left alone in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. However, if necessary, children can be accompanied and removed from the group in order to calm down and if appropriate helped to reflect on what happened.

### **Use of Physical Intervention**

- The term physical intervention is used to describe any forceful physical contact by an adult to a child such as grabbing, pulling, dragging, or any form of restraint of a child such as holding down. Where a child is upset or angry, staff will speak to them calmly, encouraging them to vent their frustration in other ways by diverting the child's attention.
- Staff should not use physical intervention – or the threat of physical intervention, to manage a child's behaviour unless it is necessary to use 'reasonable force in order to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damage to property' (EYFS).
- If 'reasonable force' has been used for any of the reasons shown above, parents are to be informed on the same day it occurs. The intervention will be recorded as soon as possible within the child's file, which states clearly when and how parents were informed.
- Corporal (physical) punishment of any kind should never be used or threatened.

### **Challenging Behaviour/Aggression by children towards other children**

- Any aggressive behaviour by children towards other children will result in a staff member intervening immediately to challenge and prevent escalation.
- If the behaviour has been significant or may potentially have a detrimental effect on the child, the parents of the child who has been victim of behaviour and the parents of the child who has been the perpetrator should be informed.
- The designated person will contact children's social services if appropriate, i.e. if a child has been seriously injured, or if there is reason to believe that a child's challenging behaviour is an indication that they are themselves being abused.
- The designated person will make a written record of the incident, which is kept in the child's file, in line with the *Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults* policy.
- The designated person should complete a risk assessment related to the child's challenging behaviour to avoid any further instances.

- The designated person should meet with the parents of the child who has been affected by the behaviour to advise them of the incident and the setting's response to the incident.
- Ofsted should be notified if appropriate i.e. if a child has been seriously injured.
- Relevant health and safety procedures and procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints should be followed.
- Parents should be asked to sign risk assessments where the risk assessment relates to managing the behaviour of a specific child.

Bullying is a behaviour that both parents and practitioners worry about. Bullying is deliberate, aggressive and repeated in action, which is carried out with intent to cause harm or distress to others. It requires the child to have 'theory of mind' and a higher level of reasoning and thinking, all of which are complex skills that most three-year olds have not yet developed (usually after the age of four along with empathy). Therefore, an outburst by a three-year-old child is more likely to be reflection of the child's emotional well-being, their stage of development or a behaviour that they have copied from someone else.

Young children are keen observers and more likely to copy behaviours, which mimic the actions of others, especially the actions of people they have established a relationship with. These are learnt behaviours rather than premeditated behaviours because children this young do not have sufficiently sophisticated cognition to carry out the type of bullying an older child can do. Unless addressed early, this type of pre-bullying behaviour in young children can lead on to bullying later in childhood. The fear is that by labelling a child as a bully so early in life, we risk influencing negative perceptions and expectations of the child which will impact on their self-image, self-esteem and may adversely affect their long-term behaviour. This label can stick with the child for the rest of their life.

If a child bullies another child or children:

- we show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them;
- we intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children;
- we explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is not acceptable;
- we give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied;
- we help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions;
- we make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour;
- we do not label children who bully as 'bullies';
- we recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstances causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others;
- we recognise that children who bully are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we encourage that they say sorry if they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the bullied child as the original behaviour;
- we discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour; and
- we share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

### **Challenging unwanted behaviour from adults in the setting**

- We will not tolerate behaviour from an adult which demonstrates a dislike, prejudice and/or discriminatory attitude or action towards any individual or group. This includes negativity towards

groups and individuals living outside the UK (Xenophobia). This also applies to the same behaviour if directed towards specific groups of people and individuals who are British Citizens residing in the UK.

- Allegations of discriminatory remarks or behaviour including xenophobia made in the setting by any adult will be taken seriously. The perpetrator will be asked to stop the behaviour and failure to do so may result in the adult being asked to leave the premises and in case of a staff member, disciplinary measures being taken.

Where a parent makes discriminatory or prejudiced remarks at staff at any time, or other people while on the premises, this is recorded on the child's file and is reported to the setting manager. The procedure is explained, and the parent asked to comply while on the premises. An 'escalatory' approach will be taken with those who continue to exhibit this behaviour. The second stage comprises a letter to the parent requesting them to sign a written agreement not to make discriminatory remarks or behave in a discriminatory or prejudiced manner; the third stage may be considering withdrawing the child's place.

### **Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour:**

- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children to find solutions in ways that are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable, and supporting children to gain control of their feelings, so that they can learn a more appropriate response.
- We ensure that there are enough popular toys and resources (where funds allow) and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns. Where necessary we encourage children to learn how to share through the use of a sand timer.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share. Children are rewarded with the Super Sun and a postcard home.
- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their actions and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- We never send children out of the room by themselves.
- We never use physical or corporal punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
- We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children. However, where appropriate, a 'timeout' strategy may be used to encourage an unruly child to calm down by sitting quietly for a moment. The child is then praised for doing as he/she was asked, this not undermining the child's confidence or self-esteem.
- We use physical restraint, 'reasonable force' such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of our Pre-school Manager and are recorded. A parent is informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable, and signs the record to indicate that he/she has been informed.

- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.

### **Children under three years:**

- When children under three years old behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
- We recognise that babies and very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.
- If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause - such as a change or upheaval at home, or frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of 'separation anxiety'.
- We focus on ensuring a child's attachment figure in the setting, their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.

### **Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression:**

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

- We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.
- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies, e.g. blowing up, shooting, and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.
- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

### **Hurtful behaviour:**

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

- We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.

- Any aggressive behaviour by children towards other children will result in a staff member intervening immediately to challenge and prevent escalation.
- We will help them manage these feelings, as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
- Therefore we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child be able to manage his or her own feelings.
- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's age, as that will have the opposite effect.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. "Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit him?" Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour.
- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings. "When you hit Adam, it hurt him and he didn't like that and it made him cry."
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. "I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn't crying any more. Let's see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one."
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.
- We support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
- We help a child to understand why their behaviour is unacceptable and the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we encourage children to say sorry, but only where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:
  - they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs – this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting;
  - their parent, or carer in the setting, does not have skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger;
  - the child may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated;

- the child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse;
- the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.

### Further guidance

- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of practice (DfE 2014)**
- **Behaviour Matters (Pre-School Learning Alliance 2016)**
- **CIF Summary Record (Pre-School Learning Alliance 2016)**

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Stanford in the Vale Pre-school Committee

Held on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Date to be reviewed \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)