**Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy**

At Rainbow Nursery we believe that children flourish best when they know how they and others are expected to behave. Children gain respect through interaction with caring adults who act as good role models, show them respect and value their individual personalities. The nursery actively promotes and encourages positive, caring and polite behaviour at all times and provides an environment where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their surroundings.

As children develop, they learn about boundaries, the difference between right and wrong, and to consider the views and feelings, and needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. Children need to have set boundaries of behaviour for their own safety and the safety of their peers. 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 recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of, and respect, those used by families in the nursery.

Within the nursery we aim to set these boundaries in a way which helps the child to develop a sense of the significance of their own behaviour, both in their own environment and that of others around them. Restrictions on the child's natural desire to explore and develop their own ideas and concepts are kept to a minimum.

We aim to:

* Promote the development of a sense of right and wrong behaviour by teaching the children the appropriate way to act and discourage undesirable behaviour. Sometimes it is necessary to help children understand their own boundaries in certain situations, explaining why certain behaviour is not suitable.
* Recognise the individuality of all our children and that some behaviours are normal in young children e.g. biting.
* Encourage self-discipline, consideration for each other, our surroundings and property.
* Encourage children to participate in a wide range of group activities to enable them to develop their social skills.
* Ensure that all staff act as positive role models for children.
* Our approach will always be talking things through, encouraging self-control & responsibility and restoring friendships. We will always involve parents and seek to work together for the benefit of the child.
* Encourage parents and other visitors to be positive role models and challenge any poor behaviour shown.
* Work in partnership with parents by communicating openly.
* Praise children and acknowledge their positive actions and attitudes, therefore ensuring that children see that we value and respect them.
* Encourage all staff working with children to accept their responsibility for implementing the goals in this policy and to be consistent.
* Promote non-violence and encourage children to deal with conflict peacefully.
* Provide a key person system enabling staff to build a strong and positive relationship with children and their families.
* Provide activities and stories to help children learn about accepted behaviours, including opportunities for children to contribute to decisions about accepted behaviour where age/stage appropriate.
* Supporting and developing self-regulation and empathy as appropriate to the stage of development.

All staff have responsibility for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour. The nursery management team will work closely with staff and will be responsible for:

* Advising and supporting staff on behaviour issues.
* Keep up to date with legislation and research relating to behaviour.
* Support changes to policies and procedures in the nursery.
* Access relevant sources of expertise where required and act as a central information source for all involved.
* Attend regular external training events, and ensure all staff attend relevant in-house or external training for behaviour management. Keep a record of staff attendance at this training.

Our nursery rules are concerned with safety, care and respect for each other. We keep the rules to a minimum and ensure that these are age and stage appropriate. We regularly involve children in the process of setting rules to encourage cooperation and participation and ensure children gain understanding of the expectations of behaviour relevant to them as a unique child.

Children who behave inappropriately, for example, by physically abusing another child or adult e.g. biting, or through verbal bullying, are helped to talk through their actions and apologise where appropriate. We make sure that the child who has been upset is comforted and the adult will confirm that the other child's behaviour is not acceptable. We always acknowledge when a child is feeling angry or upset and that it is the behaviour that is not acceptable, not the child.

**Staff Training**

* We familiarise new practitioners and volunteers with the nursery’s Promoting Positive Behaviour policy and it’s guidelines for behaviour.
* We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive role model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.

In order to manage children’s behaviour in an appropriate way we will:

* Attend relevant training to help understand and guide appropriate models of behaviour.
* 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.
* Check that all staff have relevant in service training on positive behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.

**Partnership with Parents**

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers in supporting children’s development in all areas, including behaviour and we take into account children’s age and stage of development. We recognise that there may be different expectations for children’s behaviour at home and at nursery. With a good level of communication we can provide consistency for the children and this will help alleviate frustrations and misunderstandings that can lead to behaviours that are unacceptable or unknown.

Where behavioural difficulties continue, parent/carers will be further invited into the setting to talk with the child’s keyworker. By working together home and nursery will explore possible underlying causes and share positive strategies in order to ensure a consistent approach between setting and home. An action plan to be shared by nursery and home will be agreed and reviewed to monitor outcomes.

**Expectations of Behaviour**

At Rainbow Nursery we aim to ensure the individual needs of all children are met by providing clear, consistent and developmentally appropriate expectations for behaviour through:

* Respect - to encourage all children to have respect for themselves, for other people (their feeling, beliefs and values) and for the nursery environment including equipment and property.
* Understanding and compassion - to help children to understand other people’s views and experiences and to be caring and tolerant towards others
* Responsibility - to enable children to have an increasing ability to make choices and take responsibility for their own actions. In particular we help children to develop an understanding of the consequences of their behaviour.
* Fairness and equality - to give children an understanding of how to be fair to all: how to share and give everyone an equal chance (within the context of everyone having different needs). All practitioners will demonstrate this behaviour in their actions also.
* Kindness - to promote acts of kindness to each other and to assist children in ways of being gentle towards each other.
* Support and the use of positive reinforcement - to acknowledge considerate behaviour, reinforcing positive behaviour developing children’s confidence and self-esteem.

**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 adult’s 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 has happened.

**Strategies to Encourage Positive Behaviour**

We help children look after themselves by:

* Praising them: focusing on the positive things they do.
* Helping them to recognise their feelings and express themselves in an acceptable way.
* Encouraging those to ask for help from peers as well as adults.
* Encouraging their attempts and identifying with a view to planning for their interests.
* Building their independence through self-help skills.
* Encouraging them to see the good in others.
* Encouraging them to learn from each other.

We help children to care about others by:

* Using conflict resolution and keeping calm
* Modelling appropriate behaviour
* Working on and reinforcing the understanding of feelings, e.g. in circle time
* Naming and making feelings clear including the consequences of their actions: reflecting back to children
* Being aware of the power of language, i.e. not being confrontational or negative
* Boosting self-esteem
* Giving time to listen and help acknowledging their responses sensitively

We help children to be polite by:

* Saying “Good morning” and where appropriate “Please” and “Thank you” (we model behaviours we want them to copy).
* Encouraging children to wait their turn.
* Talking one at a time: listening to each other without interrupting when someone is already speaking.
* Giving children clear messages and setting an example.

We ask children to look after equipment by:

* Encouraging children to use equipment appropriately
* Teaching them about health and safety
* Encouraging them to help mend broken toys and equipment
* Playing games, e.g. in circle time and considering, “How do we look after this?”
* Washing the bikes, toys etc.
* Reminding them to tell us about breakages
* Looking after the equipment ourselves and therefore modelling it.

We help children to care about the environment by:

* Making it as attractive as possible
* Cleaning tables
* Tidying up together
* Displaying children’s work
* Picking up rubbish
* Providing labelled storage
* Looking after indoor and outdoor plants
* Explaining proper care and use of areas (painting area, home corner, sand pit etc.)
* Noticing, acknowledging and praising ‘careful handling’ and modelling it
* Sharing responsibility

There will also be a regular assessment of the environment to ensure that it is not having a negative impact on behaviour and that all children’s needs are being met.

**Strategies with Children who engage in Inappropriate 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 which are appropriate for the children’s ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanations 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 and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.
* We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
* 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 adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
* When children behave in inconsistent 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, nor do we use a ‘naughty chair’ or a ‘time out’ strategy that excludes children from the group.
* 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.
* We may use physical restraint, 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 the nursery manager and are recorded in the child’s personal file. The child’s parents are informed on the same day.
* 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 old**

* When children under three years old behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that the 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 a 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 and shooting, and that themes often refer to ‘goodies and baddies’ and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concept 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.

(Please Gun Play Policy for more information)

**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 consideration 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 sometime overwhelm them.
* 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 rage 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 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 to 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 other’s 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 and 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 the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish 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 nursery;
  + Their parent, or carer in the nursery, 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.

**Biting**

We understand that children may use certain behaviours such as biting as part of their development. Biting is a common behaviour that some young children go through and can be triggered when they do not have the words to communicate their anger, frustration or need.

The nursery uses the following strategies to help prevent biting: sensory activities, biting rings, adequate resources and staff who recognise when children need more stimulation or quiet times. However, in the event of a child being bitten we use the following procedures. The most relevant staff member(s) will:

* Comfort any child who has been bitten and check for any visual injury. Administer any first aid where necessary. Complete an accident form and inform the parents via telephone if deemed appropriate. Continue to observe the bitten area for signs of infection. For confidentiality purposes and possible conflict we do not disclose the name of the child who has caused the bite to the parents
* Tell the child who has caused the bite in terms that they understand that biting (the behaviour and not the child) is unkind and show the child that it makes staff and the child who has been bitten sad. The child will be asked to say sorry if developmentally appropriate or helped to develop their empathy skills by giving the child who has been bitten a favourite book or comforter. Complete an incident form to share with the parents at the end of the child’s session
* If a child continues to bite, carry out observations to try to distinguish a cause, e.g. tiredness or frustration
* Arrange for a meeting with the child’s parents to develop strategies to prevent the biting behaviour. Parents will be reassured that it is part of a child’s development and not made to feel that it is their fault
* In the event of a bite breaking the skin and to reduce the risk of infection from bacteria, give prompt treatment to both the child who has bitten and the child who has been bitten.

If a child or member of staff sustains a bite wound where the skin has been severely broken arrange for urgent medical attention after initial first aid has been carried out.

**Supporting behavioural strategies and procedures**

Where negative behaviours are recognised or observed practitioners will intervene appropriately, in a clear, calm and positive manner, to support children to reconcile conflict. This will be done in an age appropriate approach.

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 prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damage property
* If “reasonable force” has been used for any of the reasons shown above, parents are to be informed on the same day that 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 which could adversely affect a child's well-being.

**Consequences**

If inappropriate behaviour continues, the practitioners will emphasise that it is the behaviour that is in the behaviour they disapprove of not the child whilst encouraging the children to comfort and make amends for their behaviour, e.g. asked to get a tissue, give it a rub better or offer a comforting cuddle if they have hurt another person.

At no time during disciplining a child would practitioners use physical punishment, e.g. smacking, shaking or slapping. Physical intervention will only be used to manage a child’s behaviour if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, other children or an adult... to prevent serious damage to property, or in what would be reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances. Any occasion where physical intervention is used to manage a child’s behaviour will be recorded and parents will be informed about it on the same day.

If a child is demonstrating a pattern of inappropriate behaviour then the parents/carers will be informed on the day and if this is persistent the parents may be invited in on a regular basis to discuss your child’s behaviour and agree a course of action.

**Date Completed: October 2023**

**Review Date: October 2024**

*This policy will be monitored in line with relevant legislation and good practice guidelines*