



GROW LEARN PLAY PROJECT CIC

Promoting positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy **(Self-regulation and relationships)**

Aims

We aim to enable children to manage themselves and their behaviour and encourage them to be independent in every way possible, in line with their age and stage of development.

To do this as practitioners, we need to model and actively encourage the behaviour that we want from the children. We will be working in a respectful environment where the children will be keen to behave in a way that they know will consistently generate positive encouragement from adults.

All staff, children and parents should understand what bullying is. All staff, children and parents should know what the setting's policy is on bullying. If an incident of bullying is reported actions will be taken in accordance with this policy. As an organisation we take bullying seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Importance of Praise

It is well known that children live up to our expectations of them, if we expect them to behave badly, it is likely they will. If we expect positive behaviour and we are actively on the lookout for it, praising every time we see it, however small an event, we will get more of it.

- Praise should be specific (avoid saying good boy/girl). Identify exactly what behaviour or action you are praising and name the child e.g. 'Good listening Maria.' 'I liked the way you drank your milk, Fred.'
- Praise even for the smallest actions, particularly for a child who finds it more challenging to behave in a positive way e.g. listening, taking turns, sharing equipment.
- Use 'proximal praise' - this is praising children who are operating in the way you want other children to behave e.g. sitting ready listening, sharing equipment, returning equipment to the appropriate place. The others will notice the praise and will often behave similarly to get the praise themselves.

If you are unsure how to handle something or see a problem brewing, talk to each other and your supervisor about how you are going to handle the situation. Sometimes we need to take an individual approach on issues e.g. whether to allow children to jump in puddles, you should stay within your comfort zone ensuring that you can retain children's safety. To ensure we have a consistent approach we need to talk to colleagues in other areas of the setting about decisions we make.

How to deal with undesirable behaviour

If undesirable behaviour does occur remember the following principles to help you deal with it:

- Children and adults both respond better to being spoken to calmly and respectfully. Raising voices is only acceptable when used to advertise a potentially dangerous situation.
- Keep language simple and use the child's name, reinforce with simple non-verbal clues e.g. stop & sign (hand palm out).
- Allow the child to say sorry **but do not try to make them.** Help them to see the consequences of their actions e.g. hurt someone /broken something.

- Facial expression and body language should show your 'sadness/disappointment' so that it reinforces clear messages (avoid reinforcing undesirable behaviour with a hug or positive attention as it will confuse the child)
- Make sure that you have identified what was really going on and deal with the incident and children involved appropriately.
- If the behaviour makes you feel cross/sad/ etc. say to the child concerned '**I feel.....when you do.....**' avoid 'you make me feel.....when you.....'
- Deal with the child away from an 'audience' if possible.
- 'Time Out' is only used if a serious situation has occurred e.g. other children have been placed in danger or a child is out of control and needs to calm down. If a child needs 'Time Out' - take them away from the situation, so that they don't have an audience and give a minute for each year of their age, in this period do not make eye contact or talk to them. Talk afterwards and help them to identify why the incident happened, without laboring about it too much.
- Exclusion will be considered as a last resort and to be avoided by all practical means. However, under certain circumstances, the exclusion of a child may be the only option. Reasons for exclusion may be:
 - a) A child exhibits repeated violent and/or uncontrollable behavior.
 - b) A child persistently directs abusive or threatening language towards either a member of staff or to another child.
 - c) Persistent antisocial behavior or problems of an indefinable nature.
 - d) The child through his/her behavior is perceived to represent a physical risk to him/herself, to other children or to members of the nursery staff.
- Permanent exclusion is the most serious outcome for infringement of the setting's Positive Behaviour Policy. It means the child cannot continue to attend the setting unless the Directors reinstate them. It should only be used as a last resort when a setting has exhausted all support strategies to keep the child in the setting and were allowing the child to remain in the setting would seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others within the setting. A permanent exclusion may also be used for a serious, one-off offence.
- If a child has been excluded from the setting, they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision to the Directors. The setting will provide information to the parent/carer on how to make such an appeal. The Directors will be informed of any exclusions from the setting.

Self- Esteem

Self-esteem is feeling good about yourself: feeling confident, accepted, and valued. Older children and adults rationalise criticism or praise from a positive inner strength and confidence in their own ability. Younger children do not consciously link these feelings to an evaluation of themselves. When a young child says, 'I'm a good boy' he is usually responding to some adult who has said it to him. He is not deciding for himself that he is an OK person.

Young children rely on good feelings to help them grow in confidence and emotional stature. Self-esteem for them is a mixture of feeling happy, confident, secure, important, and feeling they fit in.

Observing self-esteem

You can see self-esteem in children's behaviour. Spend time watching your children to find out if they have high self-esteem. A child develops the feelings that make up his/her self-esteem from the responses and interventions by people, adults by which they are surrounded. To build up a child's self-esteem our practitioners need to help the child feel OK in his/her surroundings, to feel accepted, valued, happy and confident. For our practitioners this means:

- Being closely aware of a child's individual needs, abilities, their home circumstances, likes/dislikes, problems, behaviour record, individual plan and strengths and weaknesses.
- Having an attitude of tolerance, patience, awareness, sensitivity, and diplomacy.

- Being alert to one's own emotions, level of self-esteem and emotional response to children.

Developing Good Practice

Discussion and thought should take place to consider how staff will respond to children so that positive support is given to developing self-esteem. Actions that will diminish a child's self-esteem are not acceptable. For example:

- How do you cope with a child who forms a close attachment to a member of staff whose absence may cause the child distress? Staff should be aware of the potential difficulty and prepare the child.
- Feedback should be about what s/he is achieving there and then, without reference to the absent staff member, as part of his coping mechanism might be pushing thoughts of the absent staff member to the back of his mind.
- A Behaviour Policy must take into consideration the possibility that unwanted behaviours are the result of low self-esteem.
- The quiet, withdrawn child may respond to a Buddy System Policy where a more confident child protects, and encourages the child who is unsure of himself.
- Children who display signs of low self-esteem need special concentration and skill. A child who is emotionally fragile will probably sabotage most attempts to boost his self-esteem.
- Typical statements are, 'I'm no good', 'I can't do it', 'Nobody likes me'. Typical behaviours are to tear up or scribble over work, to rubbish other children's work and generally be disruptive.
- These children need one-to-one attention with encouragement, small targets, and lots of praise for the smallest of achievements. Alongside this a strict adherence to the Early Years rules and boundaries should be maintained. This positive, firm attention by a supportive, patient, and sensitive practitioner should win the child over and ease their anxiety.

Bullying

What Is Bullying? Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, or gestures.
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors or teasing.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that s/he is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs, and they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from the setting.
- Begs to be driven to the setting.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to the setting.
- Becomes withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Come home with clothes torn.
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing".
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Has monies continually "lost".
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated. Incidents of bullying are rare in the Early Years due to the ages of the children and the levels of supervision. Any forms of bullying, whether physical or verbal, will be taken seriously. The victims will always be supported, and every effort will be made to find the reason for the aggression/intimidation.

Parents will be informed, and the situation reviewed regularly.

If the setting is unable to find a successful solution, the matter will be referred to outside agencies (e.g. educational psychologist) the setting will then work in partnership with both the outside agencies and the parent.

Rough and Tumble Play

The Pre-School Learning Alliance has acknowledged and highlighted the need to recognise 'rough and tumble play' as distinct from inappropriate or aggressive behaviour. Television or films, which include superheroes, often influence young children or weapon play and they will mimic this behaviour through their play. We endorse the following strategies to manage this kind of play:

- Recognise that this is pro-social play rather than aggressive behaviour.
- Set boundaries for the games to be set out in.
- Use planning opportunities to discuss the concept of 'good' and 'bad'.
- Support the play to find alternative solutions to weapon play, exploring different scenarios.
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Biting

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually temporary and is most common between children aged between thirteen and twenty-four months. The safety of the children at Grow Learn Play Project CIC is our primary concern. Grow Learn Play's Biting Policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

Toddlers bite other toddlers for varied reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. S/he might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the carer or his peers. Toddlers have poor verbal skills and are impulsive without much self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. Grow Learn Play will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs within the setting.

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we don't bite people!"
- Staff will stay calm and remove the offending child from the situation.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed, and a cold compress applied if needed. The parents of both children will be notified of the incident. An Accident Report form will be completed by the Practitioner and reported to the Manager.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be always maintained.
- The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.
- Any recurring incidents should be logged and reported to the Manager.

Adopted by the Directors on:	August 2026
Signed by the Managing Director	
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