

Squirrels Pre-School Rugby Ltd

c/o Paddox Primary School

Fareham Avenue

Rugby

Warwickshire

CV22 5HS

01788 576167

**Achieving Positive Behaviour Policy**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A Unique Child** | **Positive**  **Relationships** | **Enabling**  **Environments** | **Learning and**  **Development** |
| **Keep children safe** | **Consistent in setting clear boundaries** | **Value all people** | **Personal, social and emotional** |

**Statement of intent**

Squirrels believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

**Aim**

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others. The principles guiding management of behaviour exist within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development.

**Methods**

We have a named person, **Nicola Appleyard**, who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.

We require the named person to:

* Keep themselves up to date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children’s behaviour where it may require additional support
* Access relevant sources of expertise of promoting positive behaviour within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development.
* Check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour.
* 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 familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting’s behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour.

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* We expect all members of our setting – children, parents, staff, volunteers and students – to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
* We work in partnership with children’s parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children’s behaviour by their Key Person. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

**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 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, 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 and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need to 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 inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.

We never send children out of the room by themselves.

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**Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour (cont)**

We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these. The setting will take all reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by any person who cares for or who is in regular contact with a child.

We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.

We 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 manager and are documented. The child’s parent is 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. If it is felt this behavior is extreme, staff are aware of their responsibility under the Prevent Duty (December 2023).

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 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 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.

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**Rough and tumble play, hurtful behaviour and bullying**

Our procedure has been updated to provide additional focus on these kinds of inconsiderate behaviours.

**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 – blowing up, shooting etc., 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.

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**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.

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 their 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 and comfort them, offering to hold and cuddle if appropriate. Verbal children may also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.

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**Hurtful behaviour (cont)**

We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings experienced. 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? It made you feel angry, didn’t it, and you hit him’.

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 relationship with them.

We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we encourage children to think how the other child is feeling and how they can help them to feel better; if appropriate helping comfort, or offer a cold compress, reinforcing the learning of right and wrong.

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**Hurtful behaviour (cont)**

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 is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse; and
* The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
* Where this does not work, we make appropriate referrals to outside agencies to support the child and family, where necessary.

At Squirrels, four simple rules are introduced to the children to encourage positive behaviour. They are displayed on the wall in the room and the cloakroom; we talk them through with the children.

Staff have been trained in the use of our behavior script and the use of the thinking cushion. This is shared with parents at parent information evening and twilights. It is used as a moment of reflection for the child and supported by the adult to think of more appropriate actions they can use in the future, enabling them to gain life long skills.

This policy was adopted by the board of directors of Squirrels Pre-School Rugby Ltd on…………………………………………………………

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors…………………………………………………………

13th May 2024

Signed by the Manager…………………………………………………………………………………..

13th May 2024

Date of policy review……January 2025………………………………………………………………

Signed copy held in setting

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