



Rawmarsh & Arnold Nursery School Federation

Behaviour Policy

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Health Act 2006
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2013) 'Use of reasonable force'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Behaviour in schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy

“Children need to learn how to interact with other people in ways that build and maintain positive relationships. This includes learning how to co-operate, collaborate, negotiate and build rapport...emotionally supportive environments help +-

(OFSTED, Best Start in Life, part 2. Dec. 23)

This policy will uphold the British Values of:

Respect and Tolerance
Rule of Law
Democracy
Individual Liberty

Welcome and Care

Welcome to our school's behaviour policy which is founded on the principle of holding unconditional positive regard for every child and their family within our setting. We are committed to fostering an environment where all children feel cared for, safe, respected and supported.

We will embrace a culture of unconditional positive regard, where we prioritise the wellbeing of each child and their family. We will recognise and nurture the unique strengths and qualities that each child brings with them. We aspire to cultivate an inclusive and uplifting atmosphere that empowers children to flourish in all aspects of their learning and in their personal, social and emotional development.

How we intend to value and include children:

- Rawmarsh and Arnold Nursery School Federation strives to maintain a warm, caring, welcoming ethos which will establish a safe, secure and stable environments for all children paying due regard to the SEND Code of Practice.
- Our ultimate aim is to work in partnership with parents to lay the foundations from which children will grow into happy and self-confident members of our community.
- We welcome the support of parents to promote high standards of behaviour recognising that they themselves are the first and most important role model to their child.
- Our aim is to support healthy brain development of the young children in our care. We do this by implementing strategies from the Thrive Programme throughout our settings. This will include supporting parent's understanding of their child's brain development and how that impacts upon the behaviour and emotional responses in their child. This will include explaining the Thrive strategies that they can use themselves.
- To be clear about the behaviours that would be typical for children following developmentally expected pathway and also to understand that neurodivergent children may externalise through a range of behaviours that need to be understood and that this may look different for all children according to their individual neuro-divergence.
- To support children to learn to consider the views and feelings, need and rights of others and to be caring and tolerant of them and to learn the impact that their own behaviour has on people, places, creatures and objects.
- Our staff will set an example in their own behaviour and in the kindness they exhibit towards all children. Demonstrating that all children are valued and included.

- We will teach positive, polite, kind and considerate behaviour through a well planned curriculum, and in particular through the prime area of Personal, Social and Emotional Development. This will include curriculum pathways for children who are neurodivergent and may require different learning opportunities and/or approaches to help them meet their own PSED goals.
- To support children so that they have an increasing ability to take responsibility for their actions and to understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Encouraging acts of kindness and thoughtfulness towards one another such as turn taking and sharing resources.
- Help children identify how to keep themselves and each other safe and to give them confidence to express their concerns and fears in the way that it is safe and most appropriate for them to use e.g. communication board, verbal. Children's emotional responses will be acknowledged and soothed so that children are better equipped in future to manage their concerns and fears.
- Establish good relationships between staff, children, and parents/carers.
- Promote effective links with other appropriate agencies.

All staff will communicate the behavioural expectations in the setting with children by:

First and foremost establishing a warm, nurturing and responsive relationship with their key children and employing the same approach when they encounter any other children in the nursery. Using the Thrive philosophy of PLACE:

Playful, Loving, Accepting, Curious, Empathetic

Remembering that all behaviour is a communication and that we have a responsibility to acknowledge and address that communication using a variety of strategies according to what we know about the needs of the child. These may include:

- Accepting and understanding that young children coming from a variety of homes and cultures to the centre do not yet know the rules of the setting and why we have them, the routines that we have and how to 'be' alongside lots of new children and adults all from different home and cultures.
- Making children feel safe and secure through consistent upholding of boundaries and behavioural expectations and the routines of the setting. These may differ according to the individual divergence of each child.
- Anticipating and removing any potential problems (before they happen).
- Interacting – plenty of adult attention, this can help to reduce challenging behaviour.
- Praising specific behaviours in children who demonstrate success in behaving in a developmentally expected way and for children who are neurodivergent recognise that their positive behaviours may be different and need praising as such.
- Supporting children to follow their passions, interests and goals and take part in enquiry based learning to help to strengthen their sense of autonomy and self as what matters to them matters to us.

- Noticing patterns in a child's behaviour and asking questions e.g. do they do x after x has happened? Using these observations to support the child so that they are regulated and feel safe.
- Talking openly about neurodiversity and racial difference in our setting so that all children are supported to develop attitudes of acceptance of all. This will help to ensure that neurodivergence is recognised as an everyday part of life and that everyone's 'normal' is different.
- Providing physically challenging and emotionally satisfying activities for children.
- Role model – positive examples from adults.
- We will use Thrive Inc. (see below for further details) strategies to support children's emotional vocabulary and stability in order that they are able to learn to manage their own emotional responses and behave kindly and respectfully towards others and feel safe and secure.
- Clear instructions, with the right amount of language, keeping in mind what we know about each child's level of understanding of language and the type of communication that they use e.g. communication board, Makaton.
- It is vital that children know and understand that there is a fresh start after unwanted behaviour.

Working in partnership with parents

- Collaborate with parents to support their child's behaviour recognising that it is ongoing process that is reliant upon regular and open communication over time.
- Offer a range of support services including, referral to Outreach and Early Help services, parent groups, parent classes, in-house stay and play days.
- Talking to parents to try and find out why their child may be finding a particular situation difficult and how we can best support their child moving forward.
- Operating an 'open door' policy where parents can come and talk to SLT or middle leaders at any time so that they feel able to talk about any worries they have.
- Providing planned opportunities in the school calendar for parents to meet with their child's key worker and talk about how settled and happy their child is in school and how we are able to continue to support them.
- Promote effective links with parents, involving them in the reviewing of this policy as true co-production.

Ways in which we might support children to develop emotional resilience and wellbeing

Thrive

The Thrive Approach is based on the latest brain research and provides an evidence informed, developmental and trauma-sensitive approach to meeting the emotional and social needs of young children. By supporting the parts of the brain which develop in early childhood and control babies and children's emotional health, well-being and behaviour.

Utilising the Thrive Approach helps us to support children to deal with their emotional responses to anything from saying goodbye to parents at the start of the day to helping children to helping them cope with extreme feelings which can result in challenging behaviours or children being overly passive. We will implementing the Thrive Approach using the Vital Adult and Child regulating functions:

- ❖ **Attune** – Connect with the child and match how the child is feeling.
(Pain, joy, excitement, sadness, anger.)
- ❖ **Validate** – Acknowledge the child's feelings.
(I can see you're upset and angry because ...)
- ❖ **Contain** – Hold the child if necessary to give the message.
(I can manage your feelings. I can keep you safe.)
- ❖ **Soothe** – When a child is dysregulated they need a calm tone, touch, eye contact. A child needs to be soothed to learn how to self soothe.

Children need to be soothed – NOT left to cry.

We will use a variety of Thrive Strategies with children to help them learn to manage their emotional responses once they are regulated. These will include:

Label feelings and talk about the physicality of an emotion e.g. When you are smiling and happy I wonder if your tummy feels all fizzy.

Acknowledge how children are feeling. All feelings that children experience are valid and children must be allowed to feel them. We will support children to manage their behavioural responses to keep them and others safe. We will work hard to 'wonder in' for all our children and find the approach them best suits them e.g. use of sensory circuits.

Supporting children to reflect on moments of dysregulation to think about what caused it and what they think they could do next time that happens e.g. find a special grown up, put angry hands in your pockets, look at a photograph of Mummy, play in the clay, go to an agreed safe space, this could just be under a square of cloth that they keep in their pocket.

The aim for these older children is to help them to insert **thinking** between **feelings** and **action**. This takes time, patience and consistency if the child is to develop strong, positive emotional health and well-being.

Children are encouraged not to retaliate but to tell teachers/parents if they are unhappy at the centre or are being hurt in any way. Parents are asked to reinforce the importance of talking about resolving disagreements and solving problems through the appropriate systems and not by retaliation.

Sometimes we may take a child gently away from a disruptive situation. Adults will remain calm, gentle, in control and consistent in their approach. Staff will share interventions in order to maintain a team approach, particularly at change over of staff.

On rare occasions our interventions may include removing a child from the situation or seeking further support and advice from senior staff. Staff should at all times avoid unnecessary physical contact or actions which could be contrived as Physical punishment. On these occasions we may need to restrain or move a child for their own safety or the safety of others. We will inform parents/carers and ensure that we follow the guidelines and any training we have received. In specific cases if needed children will have physical intervention plans. These are created with parents and shared with all team members to ensure a consistent supportive response.

We will implement safe holding techniques to ensure the safety of both the child and the adult. We will continue to give the message that '*I can manage your feelings and keep you safe*', whilst continuing to sooth and regulate.

Strategies for managing challenging behaviour

Supporting children to manage conflict and 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 they are emotionally dysregulated at the time. **We DO NOT label this behaviour as bullying** as our knowledge of neurotypical brain development suggests that very young children are not truly capable of the pre-meditated thought process and understanding of the cause and effect necessary for this level of action. Hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without the ability to judge how their behaviour will impact on someone else.

We understand that as a Prime area we will devote much of our teaching time to supporting children to learn how to co-exist with one another, so that they feel safe and cared for by adults and one another in our setting. Much of this is achieved through implementing a pro-active approach to behaviour in line with Rotherham Charter Gold four cornerstones. Whenever conflict and hurtful behaviour does arise we may:

- Talk to children once calmed about what has happened and what they could do differently next time. Where necessary we will encourage children to apologise for their behaviour, this could be verbally or by action. We recognise that this requires children to understand their own responses and empathise with others which is part of their development in the early years and they may not yet have developed this or their neurodivergence may mean that they cannot see another point of view. Therefore, we will lend children our words so that the child who has been upset feels acknowledged and reassured.
- Our understanding of children's neurological responses when angry or fearful mean that we will utilise Thrive methods to calm the child who is angry/afraid/sad as well as the one who has been hurt in the knowledge that they will not be able to reflect on the motivation behind their own response whilst their 'thinking' brain is impaired by the stress chemicals that have been activated.
- Encourage children to be assertive and to say/sign 'no' clearly. To say 'I don't like that'. This will help children to feel that they are able to keep themselves safe and usually an adult will not need to intervene.
- We will provide children with 'rules' or 'strategies' to help them manage conflict such as taking turns with a toy, e.g. "*first it is X's turn, then it will be your turn*" this may take lots of modelling and require the adult to stay alongside to support.
- If a child has engaged in a number of incidents of hurtful behaviour we may decide that it is safer for them to stay alongside an adult for a designated amount of time (determined by the adult in response to the incidents) this means that the likelihood of any more incidents is reduced as their attention can be re-directed and supported by the adult.
- We remain calm and non-judgemental, keeping an open-mind, with an aim of helping all children to become emotionally regulated.
- If a child has been destructive towards resources, furniture, walls or flora and fauna in the nursery garden they will be encouraged to repair, tidy or clean this property in so far as they

are able to safely and in accordance with their individual capabilities. We will talk to them and show them how to use and care for resources appropriately.

- We may keep a behaviour log/incredible 5 point scale to help us to pin point potential triggers e.g. transition times, environments that may come before particular behaviours.
- We will talk to parents/carers to inform them of significant behaviour events. This will enable them to reinforce expectations at home, to discuss events with their child or share any information about events at home that may have triggered a behaviour event e.g. parental illness. We will not report every incident where adults work with children to manage behaviour as many are a normal part of children learning that they have to think of others, care for others and resources, develop effective communication methods. We would always inform parents if their child has hurt someone else, used racist or other offensive phrases, sworn, spat, bitten and/or damaged resources/property.

Care and Control – Physical intervention and positive handling

It is important that we ensure the safety and well being of all children and staff in our setting. With very young children, physical holding and guidance are often needed e.g. when a child is very upset and needs reassurance or if they are trying to run away during transition times such as going inside for home time. Staff use techniques known as positive handling e.g. holding a child's hand rather than dragging, using caring 'c's to direct a child.

On the occasion they may need to use methods such as 'squeeze and release' if a child is gripping onto another child or adult in an aggressive manner.

If 'physical containment' is used staff will inform parents/carers and members of SLT, noting it as a behaviour incident on CPOMs system. If required relevant physical intervention plans will be followed/amended and shared.

Positive Handling plan

We may monitor and record persistent and challenging behaviour using ABC method or Incredible 5 point scale, so that we may identify any patterns or triggers for observed behaviour in order that we may identify additional or other needs and have regard to the Code of Practice for Special Needs as appropriate, seeking to find solutions to support the child.

If there is a need for using positive handling above that which would be usual for the children in our setting considering their stage of development and/or neuro-divergence. There will be an individual positive handling plan that sets out clearly how we would plan to use positive handling plan, when certain behavioural responses occur. This would be agreed with parents and shared with all teaching team members working with the child. This would be reviewed regularly by SLT and shared with parents/carers.

Biting

Occasionally children will bite. Babies and young children bite to explore. Young children sometimes bite as an instant reaction to a frustration or in anger. In these instances we draw from the range of approaches detailed in the previous sections e.g. working with parents, talking to children about their behaviour in accordance with Thrive approach. We would reflect closely using the ABC (antecedent, behaviour, consequence) format in order to determine any potential triggers e.g. over stimulated by transition times.

For some children their neuro-type might mean that they have particular sensory traits that mean they seek the feedback that biting provides. In these instances we would work alongside parents

to complete sensory questionnaires to determine the specific sensory need and utilise sensory circuits as necessary to re-direct sensory seeking behaviours e.g. providing 'chewelery'.

Reduced timetable, suspension and rescindment of place

(In accordance with Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools guidance, Sept. 23)

We work very hard to support children's needs and investigate all avenues of support both internally and from external agencies as part of our commitment to meet the needs of all of our children.

In very limited circumstances we may feel that it would support a child to follow a reduced timetable for a short period. This would be discussed and agreed with parents/carers and reviewed regularly.

In very limited circumstances, we may ask parents/carers to collect their child earlier than usual as they may pose a danger to other children, themselves and/or staff.

We reserve the right to rescind a place in our setting if we feel that a child is consistently a danger to other children, themselves and/or staff.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher and senior mental health lead on an annual basis; they will make any necessary changes and communicate these to all members of staff and relevant stakeholders.

This policy will be made available for Ofsted inspections and reviews by the lead inspector, upon request.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2026.