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Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Managing behaviour

Providers are responsible for managing children’s behaviour in an appropriate way

Policy Statement

At Dottie Tots, we 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.

We aim to create an environment where all children are able to thrive within. In order to achieve an environment for all to enjoy, we need to understand that children are active learners in understanding and controlling their emotions. We help to support children going through this developmental stage by providing them with the opportunity to explore their emotions.

At Dottie Tots we do not believe that disciplining children is a positive experience in which children can learn to manage their emotions. We therefore promote a positive outlook, focusing on supporting children through their emotional development and allowing them the opportunity to understand conflict in order to help resolve it with them. For example, instead of telling children why behaviour may have been undesirable, we discuss the situation with the children, to enable them to gain a better understanding of conflict resolution.

Expectations of behaviour at Dottie Tots are appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child. We must not have unrealistic expectations of children. A good knowledge of child development is essential. Children vary in reaching their milestones and managing their own behaviour, is one such milestone.

When looking at children’s behaviour we will always consider the seriousness of the disruption. It is essential for children to have a predictable environment in which they can feel secure. Whilst we always set out to nurture

children in such an environment, it should be accepted the dynamics will change daily due to the mix of children who will have different needs, learning styles and personalities. It is therefore essential we adopt a flexible, spontaneous approach in meeting the individual needs of, and managing children's emotional needs.

This policy is dependent on staff, students and volunteers acting as good role models at all times and being consistent and fair in their approach to children. Failure to challenge behaviours (whether of staff, children or parents) that are not in line with the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs, is not acceptable at Dottie Tots.

Opportunities are taken throughout the day to promote children's sense of self-worth through giving attention and praise. We aim to give children the opportunity to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, to reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions.

Instructions given to children are simple and clear, and explanations are always given of why something should be done. Negative language is avoided as far as possible but, when behaviour is unacceptable, it is made clear to the child that it is the behaviour and not the child that is disapproved of. Children do not wish to be disliked and need sensitive support and reassurance to understand this.

Whenever possible, instances of unacceptable behaviour are used as learning opportunities to engage the child, or a group of children, in discussing what has happened, and what should happen to resolve the situation. This enables the children as a group to become involved in setting the rules and boundaries through fair discussion for behaviour within our setting.

If any child appears to have a persistent behaviour problem, it will be investigated fully to determine the cause and to put in place strategies to address the problem. Parents will be fully involved in this process. See below.

Corporal punishment will not be administered at any time. Children will be removed from the situation that is causing the problem and talked to calmly about their behaviour by a member of staff.

Children need time and support to 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 our teaching of personal, social and emotional development which is evident in our everyday practice.

We appoint a member of staff as behaviour coordinator to oversee and advise on the team's responses to challenging behaviour this is the named SENCo for the setting.

Procedures

We believe that consistency of response is key in achieving positive behaviour at Dottie Tots. Every child has a key person who is responsible for supporting her/his personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour. Our SENCo will take overall responsibility for behaviour management issues. All staff must be consistent when managing children's behaviour, in the way they speak to the children and their colleagues and in modelling manners. Children learn by good role models.

We require our staff to:

- Keep themselves up-to-date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on how to support children's behaviour where it may require additional support.
- Access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour.
- Attend any relevant in-service or external training on promoting positive behaviour.
- We recognise that interacting with other people may vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of this, whilst promoting tolerance and mutual respect, ensuring the behaviour is of an acceptable nature
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive role model.
- 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 socially unacceptable or inconsiderate behaviour. We use our observations and records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

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 property' (EYFS).'
- 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.

Strategies used with children who engage in socially unacceptable or inconsiderate behaviour

- We require all staff, volunteers and students, to use positive strategies for dealing with any socially unacceptable or inconsiderate behaviour. We do this 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 for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns, especially with the younger children. Staff will encourage the older children in particular and support them to develop tolerant behaviour, such as sharing and respecting each other's opinions and feelings.
- 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 she/he feels valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for
- socially unacceptable or inconsiderate behaviour.
- When children behave in socially unacceptable or 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 Hall by themselves, nor do we use a 'naughty chair' or a 'time out' strategy that excludes children completely from the group.
- We never use, or threaten, physical punishment (corporal punishment) such as smacking or shaking. We do not use, or threaten, any punishment which could adversely affect a child's wellbeing.
- 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 the child, other 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 recorded in the child's personal accident and medical book. The child's parent is informed on the same day. Details will also be logged in the Physical restraint file.

- 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 socially unacceptable or inconsiderate behaviour, however the tone will be altered to a low flat tone.
- Certain situations, such as when a child may be about to hurt themselves, or another child
- and they are at a distance from the practitioner, voices may be raised and tone altered, to immediately catch the attention of the child.
- Children will often benefit from time away from the hustle and bustle of a busy room or activity. A quiet time with a familiar adult, to listen to a story or music whilst their emotions settle down is often all that may be required. We should remember young children’s emotions can become all consuming.

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 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 socially unacceptable, 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. They may spend a few minutes away from the hustle and bustle, a quiet time with their key person, to listen to a story or music whilst their emotions settle down.
- 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.
- We read lots of stories depicting kindness, sharing, understanding, different cultures etc to engage our youngest children.

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 socially unacceptable, 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. Children being involved in rule making helps form an understanding of ownership and tolerance in their play.
- 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, promoting fundamental British Values.
- 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.
- Staff are aware of the need to have due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Listening to young childrens’ play, may be the first indicator of radicalisation and of what they may have exposure to at home.

Hurtful behaviour

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most young children of five or under 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 of five or under, 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 those of anger, happen when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes. These 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 child who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are aiding the brain to develop the physiological response system, which will support the child in being 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 them down, but we offer them an explanation and

discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding. Quiet time for a few minutes with a familiar adult to read a story or listen to music whilst they calm down is often effective.

- 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. For example, “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 cross? Is that why you hit him?” Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, by talking through the feelings, that initially 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, it made him cry. He is now very sad.”
- 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, it is embedded in our every day practice. 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 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 is 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 within our setting;
 - Their parent, or key person, does not have skills or is not 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 abuse either from an adult or a sibling;
- The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
- If there are significant emerging concerns we will develop a targeted plan or action plan to support the child. This will be based on a graduated response with four stages of action: assess, plan, do, review.
- If, despite our efforts, the behaviour continues and/or is of significant concern, then the manager and SENCo, will work in conjunction with the child and family by making the appropriate referrals or seeking advice from the local area Inclusion helpline. An assessment is likely to be carried out to determine any causal factors such as an underlying learning or communication difficulty. Advice will be acted upon and followed from the agencies involved.
- It may also be agreed in conjunction with the local area helpline, that the Early Help process, should begin, and that specialist help be sought for the child if deemed necessary – this support may address either developmental or welfare needs. (See Supporting Children with SEN policy).
- Advice provided by external agencies will be incorporated into the child’s action plan and
- regular multi-disciplinary meetings will be held to review the child’s progress.
- 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, we will follow the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.

Bullying

Bullying is a behaviour that both parents and practitioners worry about. Bullying is a deliberate, aggressive and repeated 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 is more likely to be a 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 behaviour 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.

We take bullying very seriously. Bullying involves the persistent physical or verbal abuse of another child or children. It is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour.

If a child bullies, or is unkind or hurtful to another child or children:

- We show the children who have been hurt or bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them;
- We intervene to stop the child who is verbally or physically hurting, or bullying, from

harming the other child or children;

- We explain to the perpetrator that the hurtful or bullying behaviour is not acceptable;
- We give reassurance to the child or children who have been hurt or bullied;
- We help the child who has committed the hurtful or bullying behaviour to recognise the impact of his/her actions;
- We make sure that children who verbally hurt or bully receive positive feedback for
- considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practice and reflect on considerate behaviour;
- We do not label children who are unkind, verbally hurt or bully, as 'bullies';
- We recognise that children who act this way may be experiencing bullying themselves, or be subject to abuse or other circumstance causing them to express their anger in negative
- ways towards others;
- We recognise that children who act in such ways are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we do not insist that they say sorry, unless it is clear that they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the hurt or bullied child, as the original behaviour;
- We discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who has been verbally or physically unkind, or bullying and work with them to devise a plan for handling their child's behaviour; we also share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been intimidated by this behaviour, explaining that the child who has been unkind, is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.

We should remember that young children's emotions can become all-consuming and regulating those emotions is very hard for them to achieve without sensitive support. We must be aware of children's needs and support every child within our community to achieve a happy enjoyable

learning experience through love, care and compassion.

Challenging unwanted behaviour from adults in the setting

Settings 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 the case of a staff member, disciplinary measures being taken.

Where a parent makes discriminatory or prejudiced remarks to 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.

Signatures

DTBKCC-P-07.1

Supporting Emotional Development & Challenging Behaviour

Signed by - All staff at Dottie Tots (Please use additional space on the back of this paper if necessary)

By signing this means I have fully understood what is expected of me and I will carry out my duties in compliance to the details within this policy

Name	Position	Signature	Date

Policy to be reviewed as necessary or annually at a minimum.