**Behaviour Management Policy**

**1. Aims**

At Just for Kidz, our aim is to create a positive, respectful, and inclusive environment where children feel safe, supported, and able to express themselves. This policy is designed to:

* Promote positive behaviour and self-regulation in children
* Support children in understanding and managing their emotions
* Encourage respectful relationships between children and adults, as well as among peers
* Set out clear expectations and strategies for managing behaviour in a consistent, fair, and developmentally appropriate manner

**2. Philosophy and Approach**

Our approach to behaviour management is based on the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which emphasises the importance of understanding children’s needs and supporting them in their development. We believe that:

* Children learn best in a secure and supportive environment
* Behaviour is a form of communication, especially for younger children who may not have the words to express their feelings or needs
* Positive behaviour should be consistently reinforced through praise, encouragement, and clear expectations
* Children are taught to understand the consequences of their actions in a way that supports their emotional and social development

**3. Promoting Positive Behaviour**

To encourage positive behaviour, we will:

* Provide clear, consistent boundaries and expectations for behaviour, appropriate to the child's age and stage of development
* Model positive behaviour through our own actions and interactions
* Reinforce good behaviour through praise, rewards, and positive reinforcement
* Create a calm and structured environment where children can engage in purposeful play and activities
* Give children the opportunity to express their emotions and practice problem-solving in social situations
* Provide individual support for children who need help managing their emotions or behaviour

**4. Strategies for Managing Behaviour**

We use a range of positive strategies for managing behaviour, ensuring that children understand the impact of their actions and are encouraged to make better choices. These strategies include:

* **Redirecting Behaviour:** If a child is engaging in undesirable behaviour, staff will redirect the child’s attention to a different activity or behaviour, guiding them to make a more appropriate choice.
* **Using Positive Reinforcement:** Praise, stickers, certificates, or other rewards are given when children demonstrate positive behaviour, such as sharing, helping, or listening.
* **Setting Clear Expectations:** Children are informed of what is expected of them in terms of behaviour (e.g., using kind words, sharing toys, waiting their turn) through classroom golden rules. These expectations are explained regularly and reinforced through visual aids (e.g., charts or signs).
* **Time-In:** Rather than isolating children, staff may use "time-in," where a child is given a quiet space or is supported to calm down, reflecting on their actions with a staff member, for example the sensory room.
* **Modeling Positive Behaviour:** Adults model respectful, calm, and cooperative behaviour, demonstrating how to handle frustration, share, and resolve conflicts.

**5. Supporting Children with Behavioural Challenges**

Some children may require additional support to manage their behaviour, especially if they have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). In these cases, we will:

* Work closely with parents to understand any specific needs or challenges the child may have
* Develop an individual behaviour support plan, which may include tailored strategies and resources to help the child develop social, emotional, and behavioural skills
* Seek advice or guidance from external professionals, such as speech and language therapists or educational psychologists, where necessary
* Provide staff with training or resources on understanding and supporting children with challenging behaviour

**5a. Promoting Emotional Regulation through Zones of Regulation**

At Just for Kidz, we support children in developing their emotional regulation skills through the **Zones of Regulation** approach. This framework helps children identify and understand their emotions, which in turn supports them in managing their feelings and reactions appropriately.

The **Zones of Regulation** divides emotions into four colour-coded zones:

* **Blue Zone** – Low energy feelings, such as sadness, tiredness, or boredom
* **Green Zone** – Calm, happy, focused feelings, where the child is in a state of readiness to learn
* **Yellow Zone** – Heightened emotions, such as excitement, frustration, or anxiety
* **Red Zone** – Extreme emotions, such as anger or fear, where the child may be out of control or acting impulsively

Staff at Just for Kidz:

* **Model Emotional Awareness:** We encourage children to recognise their emotions and help them identify which "zone" they are in. For example, staff may say, "You seem to be in the yellow zone right now because you're feeling frustrated."
* **Teach Emotional Regulation Strategies:** Children are taught strategies to move from one zone to another in a healthy way, such as deep breathing, using calming techniques, or taking a short break to regain control.
* **Create a Safe Space:** We have designated spaces within the nursery where children can go to self-regulate when needed, such as a quiet area or sensory space. These areas are equipped with calming activities that help children return to the green zone.
* **Encourage Self-Awareness:** As part of promoting emotional regulation, we support children in becoming aware of their emotions and what triggers them. Staff help children explore which strategies work best for them when they are in different zones.
* **Supportive Conversations:** If a child is experiencing strong emotions, staff will engage in supportive conversations to help them express how they are feeling and to guide them towards using appropriate coping strategies.

The **Zones of Regulation** framework is an essential tool that empowers children to understand their emotions, develop self-control, and make positive choices about their behaviour.

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**6. Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour**

Unacceptable behaviour, such as aggression, bullying, or disruptive behaviour, will be addressed in a calm and measured manner. We will:

* Calmly intervene to stop the behaviour and explain why it is unacceptable
* Provide the child with a clear explanation of the behaviour’s impact on others (e.g., “Hitting hurts,” “We use kind words”).
* Discuss with the child alternative ways of behaving and the consequences of their actions
* Work with the child and parents to address any underlying causes or triggers for the behaviour
* Implement consequences that are appropriate for the child's age and development (e.g., taking a break, losing the privilege of using a toy for a short time)

In serious cases of challenging behaviour, we will:

* Carry out a risk assessment to understand potential risks to the child or others
* Develop a plan to address the behaviour and set goals for improvement
* Collaborate with parents and external professionals for additional support

**6a. Use of Physical Restraint**

In some exceptional cases, where a child's behaviour poses a risk to themselves or others, staff may need to use **physical restraint** to ensure the safety of all individuals involved. We recognise that physical intervention should only ever be used as a last resort, and only when other strategies have failed or when there is an immediate risk of harm. The following principles will guide the use of physical restraint:

* **Only as a Last Resort:** Physical restraint should only be used if all other behaviour management strategies (e.g., redirection, time-in, calm verbal reminders) have been exhausted and the child’s behaviour is putting themselves or others at immediate risk of harm.
* **Proportionate and Safe:** Any physical intervention used will be proportionate to the risk of harm and will be carried out in a safe, respectful, and controlled manner. The minimum amount of force necessary will be applied to prevent harm or injury.
* **Never Used for Punishment:** Physical restraint is never used as a form of punishment or to assert authority. It is used solely for the safety and protection of the child and others.
* **Training:** All staff members receive appropriate training in the safe use of physical restraint, including de-escalation techniques and when to seek additional support from senior staff or external professionals. Training is updated regularly to ensure staff are confident and capable in managing situations effectively and safely.
* **Recording and Reporting:** All incidents of physical restraint will be recorded in the child’s behaviour log, including the reasons for its use, the actions taken, and the outcome. A written report will be completed and shared with parents on the same day.
* **Debriefing:** After an incident of physical restraint, the child will be given the opportunity to discuss their feelings and behaviour with a staff member in a calm and supportive environment. The staff member will also reflect on the situation to assess whether there are any alternative approaches that could be used in future.
* **Parental Involvement:** Parents will be informed immediately if physical restraint has been used with their child. A discussion will be arranged to review the incident, understand the context, and work together on strategies to prevent similar occurrences.

**Physical restraint should always be used as a last resort and with a focus on the safety and emotional well-being of the child.**

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**7. Working in Partnership with Parents**

We recognise that parents are the child’s first educators and we believe in working together to address behaviour concerns. We will:

* Communicate regularly with parents about their child’s behaviour in a positive and supportive way
* Work with parents to understand any concerns, behaviours, or triggers at home
* Share strategies and provide guidance on how to support the child’s emotional and social development
* Invite parents to discuss any issues in person if required and work collaboratively on a plan of action

**8. Prevention of Bullying and Harassment**

At Just for Kidz, we are committed to creating an environment free from bullying. Bullying can take many forms, including physical, verbal, and emotional, and is not tolerated. We will:

* Promote kindness, inclusion, and respect for all children
* Address any incidents of bullying or harassment immediately, involving both children and parents in the process
* Teach children the importance of friendship, sharing, and understanding others’ feelings

**9. Recording Behaviour Incidents**

If an incident of unacceptable behaviour occurs, we will:

* Record details of the incident, including the child’s name, the behaviour, the intervention used, and the outcome
* Share the incident with the parents/carers on the same day, ensuring open and honest communication
* Monitor the child’s behaviour over time to identify patterns or triggers
* Keep a confidential record of all incidents, to ensure consistent follow-up and to support ongoing behavioural development

**10. Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Nursery Manager to ensure its effectiveness. Any changes in legislation or best practice will be reflected in the updated policy.