



Curzon & Fawood Nursery Schools  
& Family Wellbeing Centre

# Curzon & Fawood Nursery Schools Behaviour Policy

**Reviewed – Summer 2022**

**Next Review – Summer 2023**

**Policy Lead – SENDCo**

**Approving Committee - Resources**

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## Current Context

At Curzon and Fawood we are aware that for the young children we are educating, the world is changing extremely rapidly. We are not educating them to be able to live in the world we live in now, or to do the jobs we do now. If we are intelligent, we will teach children to live in a world not fully formed yet, and to have the courage to be part of forming it.

*"Life is best organized as a series of daring ventures from a secure base" ~ John Bowlby*

## Statement of Principles

At Fawood and Curzon Crescent we believe that the most important way that children learn how to interact with their peers and with adults is by observing how adults behave with one another and with children. Adults act as role models for children, and we believe it is important that our own behaviour should reflect the professionalism, positive actions and attitudes we would expect from children.

## To this effect we aim to:

- Treat each child as an individual and with respect so that children are encouraged to treat others with respect
- Try to understand what a child is communicating through their behaviour ~ all behaviour is a communicative act
- To recognise that a child's behaviour is a response to a situation and to help children understand their response and develop their abilities to self-regulate
- Observe each child and be mindful of children's levels of wellbeing
- Acknowledge children's feelings with them e.g. joy, anger, hurt, sadness, disappointment, excitement, and pleasure and help them to use language to describe their emotions
- Work closely with parents and carers, listen to them and discuss their child's needs with them
- Encourage children to talk about behaviour they like and dislike and to say how they want to be treated
- Offer children a creative and interesting environment in which they feel safe and secure
- Develop our understanding of the impact of attachment on the young child's developing brain. Current research indicates that early life experiences are hugely influential on subsequent development.

*'Attachment is the way we relate to the important people in our lives. It is a key element of psychological and emotional well-being and forms our views about love and connection. The way we attach to others determines the quality of our relationships, how we see the world and the tone and depth of our lives. Our attachment style and patterns are grounded in our first experiences, namely those primary relationships of our first years of life.'* (Centre for Attachment, 2016)

## Principles

Our approach to understanding children's behaviour is rooted in an understanding of attachment theory, which views all undesirable behaviour as a child's communication of an unmet need. Our procedures, including home visits, the allocation of a key person for each child, regular meetings with parents; even the 'family service' style of lunch act to establish secure attachments between children and their secondary caregivers at nursery.

The discovery of real time brain imaging has allowed psychologists to understand that the experiences a child has, even in the womb, shape the way their brain develops, long term or repeated trauma becomes hard wired in to the child's brain as it forms and develops. Adults who provide a safe haven for children to explore their emotions can be considered to be equivalent to 'brain surgeons' as they create the conditions for children to recover from trauma and become resilient and happy.

We use an 'Emotion Coaching' model to support children to recognise their powerful feelings, express them with words rather than actions and think about alternative ways of interacting with others and their environment

## Working alongside Parents and Other Carers

Most parents have a strong, nurturing attachment with their child. And, where they are finding this difficult is often due to circumstances out of their control, it is important not to judge parents who are finding it difficult to create a secure attachment with their child. However, it is vital to continue to follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns.

It is important to explain to parents that we use an Attachment Aware approach at nursery and support them to develop their skills as emotion coaches too, the more consistent we all are with a child the more successful they will be in learning to manage their emotions.

As professionals we need to be open and actively listen to what parents tell us about their relationships with their children and how they interact. We also need to be sensitive and open when thinking about how we communicate

with families about their child's behaviour, and focus on the meaning of the behaviour and what the child is communicating to us.

We also recognise that this society is built on deep inequalities, not least a structural racism that shapes the different experiences of everyone who lives in it.

As educators, we seek to expose and challenge all forms of discrimination.

## Covid 19

The virus has caused trauma on a societal basis, no one has escaped feelings of fear, worry and anxiety about Covid 19. However, as we are seeing in so many ways Covid 19 is revealing and adding to long standing inequalities in our society. The areas our schools are located in have been hit extremely hard and will probably continue to be severely affected by the economic crisis that is currently unfolding.

As children return to nursery we will need to be aware that they all will have experienced a degree of stress, as will their family. Some may have experienced a bereavement. For children who are finding things particularly difficult we can add them to the SEND register and involve outside professionals, such as play therapists in exploring their emotional needs. In the case that you are particularly worried about a child, please contact the SENDCo. However, many will cope well and be very happy to be back.

Staff working directly with the children and their families will have a very important role in helping them process and recover from the stress they have experienced. Caring for our own mental health at this time is essential, we must look after each other and practice self-care. All staff can access support at The Education Support Partnership on 0800 0856 148.

## Strategies

### Unconditional positive regard

In order to build positive attachments to the young children we work with we need to hold them in unconditional positive regard (Carl Rogers 1902-1987). In order to learn how to self-regulate children need a positive self-image. We help them develop self-esteem and self-confidence, which is a necessary requirement for children to learn and reach their full potential.

This means that we make it clear to them, in very explicit ways that while we may not like some of their behaviour, we like them very much and will be available to help through the difficult feelings they are experiencing. We must

avoid being reactive and reflect on what is being communicated to us and how we can use it as a learning opportunity.

### Emotion Coaching

There are five steps to Emotion Coaching:

- Be aware of the child's emotion
- Recognize a child's expression of emotion as a perfect moment for connection and teaching
- Listen with empathy and validate the child's feelings
- Help the child learn to label their emotions with words
- Set limits when you are helping the child to solve problems or deal with upsetting situations appropriately. Be very explicit about what isn't acceptable.

Practical guidance to carrying out effective emotion coaching can be found in the training material provided by Kate Cairns Associates (KCA). Ask your line manager if you need further guidance.

### Teach Explicitly about Trauma and Recovery

A lot of the stories we read with young children are centred on a character experiencing adversity and finding ways to overcome it. As educators we can talk about how The Owl Babies felt when their Mummy wasn't there? Make up new endings to stories. Let children explore different scenarios safely with you. Use Persona Dolls to image more real-life situations and help the children express their empathy.

### Specific praise

Recognising positive behaviour and building a child's self-esteem is a powerful tool for an educator. It can also be used to signal to a child what your expectations are without putting them under pressure by praising another child who is doing what you expect, in their hearing.

### Modelling

Children are extremely observant of adult behaviour. As babies they had little understanding of words and relied on non-verbal cues such as tone of voice, facial expression and body language. It is important to give positive messages with all these forms of communication, as well as through staff

interactions with other adults. We always need to remain calm and professional while we are with the children.

Sometimes narrating a situation for a child can help them internalise a calm, rational response to a problematic situation. For instance, "My friend, Kevin doesn't want to play with me right now...what can I do? ...could I ask Mohamud if he wants to play instead?"

### Repairing relationships

We never insist that a child says 'Sorry'. But we do talk with them about the consequences of their behaviour on others and encourage them to 'repair' the relationship so they can move on, and together the conflict or difficulty can be a 'teachable moment' where the child and adult can use it to co-regulate and the child can use it as step towards being more able to self-regulate.

### Positive Handling

- ALWAYS hold children by the hand, not the wrist
- Lead children from the side, not from behind
- Always approach a child from the front
- Give the child TIME to process your request
- Walk beside while holding hands, no dragging
- If a child falls to the floor give them time to get up
- If you need to move them for safety reasons, get another adult, then each adult goes to one side of the child and lift together

This policy can be cross referenced with the following policies and documents:

- Learning, Teaching and Play Policy
- SEND Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Schools
- Code of Conduct

- Parent/Carers Handbook.

## References and Further Reading

Bowlby, John; *Attachment and Loss. Volume 1*

Bowlby, John; *The Making and Breaking of Affectional Bonds*

Cairns, Kate; *Attachment, Trauma and Resilience*

Gerhardt, Sue; *Why Love Matters, How Affection Shapes a Baby's Brain*

Geddes, Heather; *Attachment in the Classroom*

Goleman, Daniel; *Emotional Intelligence, Why it Can Matter More Than IQ*