



# St Mary's Nursery School

• Principal: Mrs Sinéad Markey MEd •

## **St. Mary's Nursery School Behaviour Management Policy Promoting Positive Behaviour**

It is our intention to work with parents to promote a safe and secure environment in the Nursery where children can play and learn free from harm. Parents and staff (including temporary staff and students) will be given a copy of the school's promoting positive behaviour policy. Behaviour Management in the school will be in accordance with the guidelines outlined by the EA Psychology Department. All staff are trained in conflict resolution in the Nursery and follow an agreed policy on resolving conflict.

### Positive Behaviour Procedures carried out by Permanent Staff

1. For a minor breach of discipline (for example running or shouting) a child will be spoken to by a staff member and a reason given why that behaviour is not acceptable. At no time will staff raise their voice or point their finger at a child to maintain or reinforce acceptable behaviour.
2. For a serious breach of discipline (for example causing damage to property or minor injury to others) the child will be withdrawn from the situation, spoken to and quietly reasoned with and brought to a table- top toy.
3. For a more serious breach of discipline, Positive Behaviour Procedure 2 will apply and parents will be informed of the serious nature of the incident. It is expected that the parents will support and reinforce the teacher's actions at home.
4. Where a child is continually disruptive or destructive in the nursery and Positive Behaviour Procedures numbers 1, 2 and 3 above have proved ineffective the principal may decide to shorten

the child's day and seek advice if necessary from EA Belfast Region advisors and if appropriate, set up a behaviour management programme. Support from the Harberton Outreach Service may be necessary.

### Managing Behaviour

Staff is aware that anger management at this stage is important in modifying later behaviour. The following behaviours contribute to Anti-social behaviour in 3 year olds and as such require appropriate intervention from staff.

1. Overactive, restless behaviour.
2. Poor concentration.
3. Attention seeking.
4. Tempers.
5. Difficult to control.

It is important to observe the children to see what comes before the behaviour. Behaviour rarely comes without a prior trigger in the child's life for example bereavement, or change at home.

If a child has a bad start to the morning e.g. overly tired and fighting with a sibling it can take 45 minutes to come out of the situation so expect the child to be angry for a while. This is why taking a few minutes to talk with mum is important in the morning. Daily reflection and writing of observations is important to build up a picture of what may be a difficulty or what works well with a particular child.

Staff will use the agreed format to record these observations.

### Risk Factor Indicators

Early onset of behaviour.  
Breadth of deviance or anti-social behaviour.  
Frequency & intensity of behaviour.  
Diversity of anti-social behaviour.  
Family characteristics.

### We will encourage Positive Behaviour by -

1. Modelling appropriate behaviour, ensuring the children see and hear us displaying good manners to each other as adults. Ensure they hear us saying please and thank-you. (good behaviour can be learned).
2. Praising and highlighting appropriate behaviour. Catching the children being good and commenting on it. Keeping sentences short and precise as overloading with long sentences means the child will only hear and retain the last part.
3. Actively talking and listening to the child.
4. Playing with and alongside the child.
5. Promoting the development of Early Literacy through our Language Policy and Parent Courses.
6. Teaching the children to be both assertive and co-operative.

The staff will endeavour to promote a consistency of approach that is both fair and firm. We will include the parents in our policy by keeping them informed and involving them fully in the life of the school.

### Dealing with inappropriate behaviour

The staff will look out for early triggers or warning signs that inappropriate behaviour is imminent. We will alert other staff members and attempt the following de-escalation strategies.

1. Interruption.
2. Distraction.
3. Redirection.
4. Ignore.
5. Humour.
6. Remove.

**PREFERRED Supportive & Intervention Strategies** (Describe strategies that, where and when possible, should be attempted before positive handling techniques are used)

1. Verbal advice and support.
2. Reassurance.
3. Rule reminder.
4. Negotiation.
5. Choices/limits.

6. Humour.
7. Consequences.
8. Planned ignoring.
9. Distraction (known key words, objects, etc ... likes).
10. Take up time.
11. Time out.
12. Withdrawal.
13. Cool off: directed/offered. Time allowed out to cool off or calm down.
14. Contingent touch.
15. Transfer adult.
16. Success reminder.

(Staff will decide on appropriate strategies to use).

#### De-escalating the situation

Staff will adopt the following strategies in order to de-escalate a situation where inappropriate behaviour is being displayed.

1. Calming techniques - talking gently giving 'I' messages - 'I'm sad that... Won't tidy up' etc. Explain the consequences, affirm, and repeat clearly.
2. Actively listen to the child giving eye contact.
3. Show concern.
4. Try to reduce the levels of the child's feeling.
5. Respond to reasonable needs.
6. Give the pupil a chance to back down

#### Dealing with a crisis or confrontation

It is paramount that if we are in this situation that our emphasis will be on protecting the child, other pupils, and the staff. The staff will endeavour to remain calm and controlled, to be active listeners, to keep talking, and to get assistance. We will not use confrontational language, or body language. Staff will avoid standing too close to the child or displaying prolonged eye contact. If the child feels you are blocking him/her in this could escalate the situation and induce a "fight or flight" response.

1. Staff members may employ the de-escalation strategies and this may be sufficient.
2. Another member of staff will be alerted for assistance. The design of the school and the deployment of staff will ensure another staff member is close by at all times.

### Restraint Policy

In dealing with certain situations it may be necessary to restrain a child if de-escalation strategies have not worked and there is serious danger posed to the child or others.

If staff has to move a child from danger they will do so in a way that will be intended not to hurt or inappropriately touch the child. One staff member with nearby assistance from another should suffice. A second staff member will avoid overwhelming the child with her presence but will be on hand to intervene in the event of the child attempting to injure the restraining staff member.

Restraint may involve simply holding the child's hand firmly and directing him away from danger.

It may involve sitting closely and interacting as per our de-escalation procedures.

At an extreme example it may involve lifting the child from danger and quickly moving aside.

### Strategies for Conflict Resolution - adopted in St Mary's Nursery School

#### Why Conflict Resolution?

Everyone's feelings should be respected.

Children are learning -

- The language of social interaction
- To respect different opinions
- To express their feelings
- To respect the feelings of others

Harmful behaviour should be stopped - gently, calmly, quietly, - no lecturing or labelling.

Listening to all the feelings reduces egocentric behaviour.

Rephrase hurtful language to protect feelings and model respect for others.

Don't impose a solution. You can make suggestions - I've got an idea - and ask what they think.

Don't take sides in the conflict.

The children own the solution.

Eventually children learn to see that there is more than one side to a problem, and they will not need to go through all the stages.

### Resolving conflicts and problem solving in the Nursery

- 1 **APPROACH CALMLY:** Observe as you approach, and expect a positive outcome. Be aware of body language - it says a lot about your feelings. It is important to be neutral and respect all points of view. If this is difficult, use "I" messages, eg I feel angry because hitting hurts people. Do not problem solve until you feel calm. Stop harmful behaviour and hold objects about which there is a dispute. Get down to their level.
- 2 **ACKNOWLEDGE FEELINGS:** Recognise and reflect all the feelings, e.g. you seem angry, sad, upset etc. This helps children let go of feelings, but they may need to "empty out" feelings, before they calm down. Let the children know you think they can work it out.
- 3 **GATHER INFORMATION:** Ask open-ended questions of each child in turn to get the details. Don't ask why they did something. Don't ask for interpretation. Stick to facts. Give time to explain - try to develop language.
- 4 **RESTATE THE PROBLEM:** Use the children's words to restate the problem, clarify issues, and reframing hurtful language) "I hate you, you can't play" - change to "You seem angry, you want to play on your own"). Check that everyone agrees with your account.

- 5 ASK FOR IDEAS FOR A SOLUTION: respect all ideas, while leading children to think through cause and effect to make them workable. Make sure they are specific (not "share" but who and when). DO NOT IMPOSE YOUR SOLUTION.
- 6 GIVE FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT: Children may need help implementing the solution, or more discussion may be needed if one child is still angry. Check to see that each child is content with the solution. Praise the children for solving the problem.

### Conflict Resolution in the Nursery

What children learn from resolving conflict.

- Their self-esteem is supported by the win-win approach.
- It is OK to have a variety of feelings including anger, but to express feelings appropriately.
- Children acquire a feelings vocabulary. Acknowledging feelings helps children to calm down.
- Other children also have feelings and wants.
- Problems can be talked about and sorted out.
- Adults are supportive, helpful and trustworthy.
- It builds relationships between children.
- Children can become independent problem solvers if they see the process modelled over and over again.
- Children learn to be assertive and not aggressive.
- Timid or passive children can also learn to be assertive.
- The process helps children to become resourceful, socially adept and emotionally resilient.

### In conclusion:

At all times, staff encourage positive behaviours by highlighting our golden rules. These are displayed visually around the room and all staff display a mini visual reminder for the children.

### **Golden Rules at St Mary's Nursery School**

**♥ Quiet voices**

**♥ Gentle hands**

**♥ Walking feet**