

## Guidelines for supporting positive behaviour

### Early Childhood Department

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All children learn and grow in their understanding of socially appropriate and desirable behaviour. In early childhood the teachers continually work with social behaviour by endeavouring to be role models worthy of imitation. The variety and sequencing of our daily activities builds a rhythm into our mornings. This provides a comfortable knowing of what to expect, thus supporting positive behaviour.

As children work and play, the teachers:

1. Encourage respect and care of self, others and the environment.
2. Encourage the learning of self-control.

#### **Challenging Behaviour**

Most children experience difficulties at some time in their development. There are many ways that the teachers help children to better integrate into the early childhood group, taking into consideration the child's age and developmental stage. The following are examples of practice:

1. Distract the child in a playful manner.

2. Redirect the child to a new focus or activity.
3. Gain the child's attention with a look, gesture or word to make them aware of our observations.
4. Remove the child from the situation and engage them with an adult led task. This stops the inappropriate behaviour, refocuses the child's attention and enables them to calm down. When appropriate the child returns to the group.
5. If the disruption continues, the child needs to be with an adult to 're- centre' themselves, this may involve a period of time, until the adult deems that they are ready to return to the social group and will be able to manage their behaviour appropriately.
6. If the child misbehaves during the early childhood morning on several days and the above steps have not been helpful, we may ask the parent to collect the child early or keep them at home the following day, to allow space for the child and hopefully a chance of a quiet morning away from group dynamics.
7. If unacceptable behaviour that was upsetting to other children was to continue to occur despite all the above measures, it might be necessary to ask a parent to keep a child at home until the matter has been looked into further and some resolution of the situation is found.

All the steps suggested above need to be consistent and may need to be practised over days or weeks with parental consent and co-operation.

Approaches for consideration when behaviour of a child is consistently disruptive and/or there is cause for general concern:

1. Parent conversation on a regular basis.
2. Teacher review on a regular basis (daily and/or weekly written records.)
3. Bring to the attention of colleagues for shared observation and support.
4. Implementation of a written action plan to target a particular problem or concern. (A copy of this may be given to parents to further support their child.)
5. Recommendation to consult with other professionals for help and support eg: the school's Educational Support department, school doctor.

Each new child comes into early childhood on the basis of a term's trial. If at the end of this term the child has not settled, they may not be ready for social integration in a group yet and may need a later starting date. It is possible also that a term's trial may be extended if the teachers deem it appropriate. If the child has been in the early childhood department longer and a problem arises, every effort will be made with parental support to reintegrate the child into the group. However, in very rare cases, if after trying all strategies with parental support the child's needs cannot be met, the child may need to leave.

### **Parental Support**

In keeping with our philosophy of supporting positive behaviour, we ask that parents agree to support us by considering the appropriateness of the toys, clothing and out of school activities available to the

young child. Electronic games, weapons, make up, teenage style clothes, cartoon or super hero/ supermodel images and their actions are not considered helpful in social integration and may work actively against what we are doing in our early childhood department. Our early childhood department supports the child's right to a nourishing, supportive and appropriate environment. We acknowledge that all children learn from their environment through the sense impressions they receive and their imitation of what they experience around them. We feel very strongly that watching television, DVD's, Computer screens and videos or any other screen use is not an appropriate experience for children under seven. It does not encourage meaningful movement, nourish the child's need for a variety of rich sense impressions or provide appropriate role models. It restricts the child's life experiences some of which may be irreplaceable. We find that screen watching does not support appropriate behaviour in early childhood and ask for your co-operation with this issue.

### **Bullying**

The Early Childhood Department accepts the main school policy on bullying given in the parents handbook. We aim to prepare pupils to understand this by modelling for them polite, respectful and caring behaviour and positive attitudes to one another and also by providing an environment in which every individual child is cared for, respected and can flourish. All early childhood teachers and assistants are well aware of their duty to provide a safe environment for the children in their care, to observe and listen to children carefully in order to detect any signs of bullying, and to maintain close communication with parents.

This document also details our policy on meeting aggression and disruption and is given to all parents.

If parents suspect that bullying is taking place in early childhood, the procedure for reporting this is the same as in the Main school and the early childhood teaching body as a whole carries the pastoral care role.

### **References:**

Behaviour Policy for Classes 4 – 8

Upper School Behaviour Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Human values policy

Anti-radicalisation (prevent) policy

Safeguarding and Child Welfare Policy