

Trinity Nursery School

Positive Behaviour Policy



Adopted by Board of Governors on: 04.06.2024

To be reviewed on: 04.06.2025

Signed by the Principal: _____

Signed by Chair of Governors: _____

Version	Date	Revision Author	Summary of Changes
1	01.09.2018	Z. Perry	Unknown
2	30.05.2024	S. Alexander	New Policy retains sections of the previous version but has been updated to reflect current practice and training through use of the calm plan strategy.

Mission Statement

At Trinity Nursery School (TNS) our aim is to provide high quality pre-school education in an environment that is safe and stimulating, where learning takes place through play and everyone is treated as an individual. We believe that parents/guardians have the greatest influence in a child's life, and as such we view parents as our partners in the education of their children.

Introduction

At TNS there is a continuous awareness of and respect for the needs and rights of all children and adults: also an appreciation of and respect for the learning environment, both indoors, outdoors and the resources. To achieve these aims helping children regulate their emotions and behaviour is viewed as an integral part of the curriculum.

We aim to take a an approach that is individualised, attachment aware and nurturing in its approach, helping every child on an individual basis to succeed. This approach is also trauma informed, with an awareness that not all children have the same early experiences in life.

As a school our understanding is based on the six principles of Nurture

Children's learning is to be understood developmentally

The classroom offers a safe base

The importance of nurture for developing wellbeing

Language as a vital means of communication

All behaviour is communication

The importance of transitions in children's lives

We know that all children want to do the right thing, but at times are unable to do so. As adults our role is to help the child understand and regulate their emotions and behaviour so that they can make good choices and be safe, happy and successful during their time in school. Our Positive Behaviour Policy is based on the approach of the Calm Plan, which the school staff undertook training provided by the Education Authority in 2022.

We believe that all behaviour is a form of communication and we aim to address what the child is trying to communicate to us through their actions. While it is made very clear to the children that negative and unsociable behaviours are unacceptable and can be dangerous, much more time and emphasis is placed on helping children to recognise their own emotions and regulate them, along with regulating and taking responsibility for their own actions.

Such an approach aims to raise the child's wellbeing and promote their understanding of their own emotions and behaviour, helping children learn to manage them with increasing independence and control. As this is an individualised approach all children benefit from an approach that is developmentally appropriate to them, and in particular there is flexibility to support children with additional needs or in specific circumstances with an approach tailored particularly to their unique needs.

The Positive Behaviour Policy is a document which is endorsed by the Board of Governors, used by the Staff Team and available on request to parents and DE Inspectorate. This policy was devised by the staff following participation in the Education Authority Behaviour Support Team's Calm Plan Training and will be reviewed regularly in light of Department Guidelines and current legislation.

Rationale

Trusting relationships between the staff will help the children feel secure. Positive relationships between home and school are equally crucial and the staff team will work hard to ensure parents/carers feel acknowledged and listened to. We believe that the early years are the optimal time to begin preventative work with children in order to facilitate their social competence.

It is a central aim of our school that every pupil feels valued and respected. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is at the heart of our school's planning, policies, practices and ethos.

- Article 3 ' –The best interest of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning the child'.
- Article 12 ' –Children have a right to have a say in matters which affect them'.
- Article 28 ' –Every child has the right to an education delivered on the basis of equality of opportunity '
- Article 29 ' –Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full'.

We also aim to promote a caring environment, where values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. We continually work hard to encourage and support parents to adopt a similar approach at home. We place great importance on emotional well-being.

Aims

- To promote good behaviour through teaching children to recognise and begin to regulate their emotions and behaviour
- To promote a the children's personal social and emotional development alongside their own wellbeing.
- To create an atmosphere of caring and respect for oneself, others and the environment, enabling quality teaching and learning to take place.
- To provide a curriculum matched to the needs of the individual child
- To work in partnership with parents

Objectives

- To adopt a consistency of approach throughout the school
- To provide appropriate role models
- To give daily reinforcement of rules through positive recognition
- To communicate our policy to parents and for them to acknowledge acceptance

To enable our aims and objectives to be realised the staff team will use the following range of strategies:

We help children look after themselves by –

- Using specific, effort based praise to focus children's attention on the positive things they do
- Helping them recognise their feelings and express themselves in an acceptable way
- Encouraging them to ask for help from peers as well as adults
- Encouraging their endeavours, identifying and planning for their interests

- Building their independence through developing self help skills
- Encouraging them to see the good in others
- Peer teaching (encouraging them to learn from one another)
- Following the class rules to ensure their own safety

We help children to care about others by –

- Modelling appropriate behaviour
- Working on and reinforcing the understanding of feelings/emotions and choices
- Modelling and facilitating conflict resolution conversations with the children
- Naming and making feelings clear including the consequences of their actions and by reflecting back to children e.g. look at your friend's face, they are sad
- Modelling and facilitating restorative conversation/actions with the children
- Being aware of the power of language i.e. not being confrontational or negative
- Boosting self esteem
- Giving time to listen and help, acknowledging their responses sensitively

We help children to be polite by –

- modelling desirable behaviour
- Saying "good morning"
- Saying (and encouraging them to say) "please" and "thank you"
- Encouraging turn taking
- Talking one at a time, listening to each other and not interrupting when someone is already speaking (all adults, including parents and children)
- Introducing new visitors at appropriate times and with sensitivity
- Giving clear messages

Strategies we use to support our aims and values

We ask children to look after equipment by –

- Modelling how to tidy and care for equipment and resources
- Teaching health and safety
- Putting things in the right place at tidy up time
- Having a group discussion, "How do we look after this"?
- Washing toys and equipment
- Reminding children to tell staff about any breakages
- Singing the 'Trinity Stars' song as part of our morning routine in addition to a daily discussion around rules

We help children to care about the environment by –

- Making it as attractive as possible
- Displaying children's work
- Making displays of interesting objects including natural materials
- Providing labelled storage
- Explaining proper care and use of areas (sand in the sand pit etc.)
- Teaching about the natural environment
- Tending to indoor and outdoor plants
- Modelling careful handling; noticing, acknowledging and praising positives

- Sharing responsibility
- Encouraging their help with tidying up; picking up rubbish

Rights and Responsibilities

We strongly endorse a partnership between parents, the staff team, governors, outside agencies and children in the work of the nursery school.

Rights	Responsibilities
Pupils	Pupils
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be educated in a safe well managed environment; • To be treated fairly, consistently and with respect; • To have their views listened to. • To experience a broad, balanced and suitably differentiated curriculum and to have any special learning needs identified; • To have the help of an adult when they seek it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respect the views, rights and property of others and behave safely in the preschool setting; • To take responsibility for their behaviour and to develop the skill of working independently; • To listen to the person who is meant to be speaking; • To ask for help if they do not understand or require assistance.
Staff	Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in an environment where social courtesies are upheld; • To be respected by children, staff and parents; • To deliver the curriculum in a safe and adequately resourced environment; • To the support of parents in the effective delivery of their child's education and care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a stimulating, happy learning environment; • To listen to the children, value their contributions and respect their views; • To develop positive relationships with parents and carers; • To ensure that the curriculum is suitably tailored to meet the needs of all pupils; within the resources available; • To share with parents any concerns they have about their child's progress and/ or development.
Parents	Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a safe, well managed and stimulating environment for their child's learning/care; • To a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum for their child; • To be informed about (pre-school) rules and procedures; • To be informed promptly if their child is ill or has an accident, or if the pre-school has concerns about their child; • To be kept informed about their child's progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To act as positive role models for their child in their relationship with preschool; • To ensure that their child attends preschool regularly and suitably equipped for the day ahead; • To be aware of (pre-school) rules and procedures, and encourage their child to abide by them; • To provide the pre-school with relevant background information about their child, including any concerns they have about nursery or any change in the child's circumstances; • To show interest in their child's education/care and attend planned meetings

Statement of acceptable behaviours

Children are not born with the instinctive knowledge and skills to share and play co-operatively and require teaching, modelling and reminding about the behavioural expectations of the nursery school.

Pre-school children are cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically developing a sense of right and wrong in everything they do. The children are also developing their capacity for self-control, managing and regulating their own emotions and behaviour.

Children explore a variety of behaviours at this age. Most we consider will occur naturally, particularly when they are new to nursery school. The staff team expect to deal with behaviour such as inappropriate shouting out, having a tantrum, snatching toys, walking away at tidy up time etc. The children will quickly be made aware that such behaviours are not acceptable in nursery school. We will use a range of strategies to reinforce appropriate behaviour for the age and stage of the children.

We will use a range of teaching strategies, including stories, songs, circle times, direct teaching times and in the moment learning opportunities, to model and teach behavioural expectations and offer opportunity for the children to rehearse and extend these skills throughout the year.

Unacceptable Behaviour

We do not accept the following from children, parents, staff or visitors:

- Bullying
- Hurting others - physically, verbally or emotionally
- Inappropriate language
- Damage to and/or destruction of property
- Taking things from the school or from others
- Being unkind to peers
- Refusal to co-operate with staff instructions
- Interrupting adults and peers

(Please also see section on SEN)

Rules

Developmentally, the children are at the stage where they are extending their understanding of the concept of rules and consequences. It is important that they know and comprehend the rules at nursery school as these may be different from the behaviour expectations at home.

Rules are required for the following reasons:

- To promote the safety of all children and staff
- To ensure that behaviour expectations are clearly defined
- To help children develop a sense of responsibility for their actions, and an understanding of the effect their actions may have

The children are involved in agreeing their own set of class rules at the beginning of the school year. These class rules are displayed and referred to regularly and as required to reinforce positive behaviour.

Reflecting the input of the children, each year the rules will typically be as follows:

1. We use indoor voices
2. We use walking feet
3. We use listening ear
4. We use kind words

5. We have gentle hands and feet
6. We care for each other and the toys

Positive Reinforcement

Most children respond well to verbal praise and recognition from adults. In promoting good behaviour, emphasis will be placed on the role of praise in reinforcing our shared class rules.

Our reward system aims to: -

- Develop children's sense of self, confidence and self esteem
- Promote an ethos of kindness and co-operation
- Establish a climate in which children develop an understanding of what constitutes acceptable behaviour and positive attitudes
- Encourage and promote consistency
- Positively recognise children for good behaviour
- Encourage children to take responsibility
- Promote self esteem

The range of positive reinforcements will include verbal praise and positive feedback; privileges and responsibilities and on infrequent occasions small tangible rewards. These can be awarded on an individual and group basis as appropriate throughout the year.

Examples of Positive Reinforcement

Verbal Feedback - Verbal praise should be specific, effort based and centred on the child's achievement rather than focusing on the adult viewpoint "Well done - you worked very hard at ____" "I'm sure you are very proud of yourself" "You kept going when that part of was tricky, you didn't give up - well done!" "It was very kind of you to share your toys with ____" "what lovely manners - you remembered to say thank you!"

Positively encourage children within the environment who show desired behaviours by placing a spool in the class reward jar. The children, as a class can choose what reward they are working towards.

Non verbal endorsements should occur naturally between staff and children and serve as an effective form of reinforcement. Such methods include appropriate eye contact, smiles, nods, the 'thumbs up sign, 'high 5' etc.

Involving Parents/Carers - Conversations with parents/carers in front of the child, Seesaw notes sent to parents/carers are other ways of providing positive feedback and can serve to develop positive relationships with parents.

Corrective Strategies

Children will not always behave in appropriate ways while at Nursery. When this occurs staff will help support children's understanding to recognise and correct their behaviour.

Strategies should:

- Help the child recognise their feelings/behaviour and regulate it with adult support

- Enable children to be supported in a calm and positive manner
- Be selected from a gradual and graded order
- Preserve the individual's self esteem
- Acknowledge the child's feelings
- Focus on the behaviour rather than the child
- Be part of a fair and consistent approach across the class and school
- Be administered as soon as possible in a calm, respectful manner
- Allow for flexibility to take account of the age and stage of development of the child, any SEN and any other relevant factors
- Provide an opportunity for the child to develop a more positive response in future

Before implementing consequences staff will use a range of strategies to modify unacceptable behaviour including:

- Tactical ignoring;
- Non- verbal responses including eye contact, gesture and/or hand signal, use of visuals;
- Verbal redirection e.g. 'Paul please sit on the carpet Thank-you.'
- Speaking to the child on a 1-1 basis in a patient and calm manner appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Reminding the child of the behaviour expectation e.g. "Josh, you need to keep the sand in the tray."
- Exploring the need for a particular behaviour e.g. "Keep the water in the tray so the floor doesn't get wet and nobody slips and gets hurt."
- Helping children to understand the effect of their behaviour e.g. "If you shout out during story time, no one can hear the story and we all miss out"
- Encouraging the child to make the situation better e.g. "Joe is sad because you took the train off him. What can you do to make him feel better?"
- Offering choices e.g. 'Sarah you need to put the toy away during story time. You can give it to me or put it in the box. What are you going to do?'
- Working aside from peers.
- Using proximity praise e.g. praising the appropriate behaviour of another child e.g. "James, I can see you are ready for the story you're sitting so quietly".

On occasions when the unacceptable behaviour is persistent and / or of a more serious nature the staff team may implement a range of consequences. When considering which consequence to employ staff will use their discretion, always aiming to make the response appropriate to the misbehaviour. Staff will select from a hierarchy of consequences, always aiming to make the response appropriate to the misbehaviour. Parents may be consulted at any stage during this process.

Consequences for inappropriate behaviour in play

- Speak to the child - "the water needs to stay in the tray or the floor will get wet"
- Speak to the child again- explain why the behaviour is not appropriate and that they will not be able to stay in that area unless they behave appropriately.
- Bring the child to the visuals to explain why they cannot continue to play in that area
- Remove from activity/area to another "You can play at the water again when you are ready to play calmly."

Consequences for inappropriate behaviour towards another child

- Separation of the children for a few minutes – child to use calm down couch to self or co regulate

- Reminder of the classroom rules
- Restorative Action - helping to make things right, helping other child to feel better
- Reminder of the rules before return to play
- If needed, depending on behaviour, children may move straight to “Thinking Time” in the quiet room.

Use of the calm down couch and thinking time shall be communicated to parents via Seesaw. See Appendix 2 and 3 for images.

Severe Clause: Thinking Time

When a child:

1. Willfully hurts another (biting, hitting, kicking, nipping, pushing etc.)
2. Willfully destroying property
3. Overtly refuses to do what is asked
4. Engages in behaviour that stops the class from functioning
5. Parent informed

The staff team will discreetly and calmly use “Thinking Time” in the quietroom for a limited period (usually 3 minutes with the support of a timer) to offer the child the opportunity to calm down in a safe place.

Thinking Time is not “Time Out” thinking time is “Time In”. Rather than being excluded, there will be a focus on connection. Children will be supported by an adult who will sit close to them while the child is given space, time and support to begin to regulate. The adult may or may not interact with the child verbally, depending on the child’s needs. The child may be provided with a fidget toy or sensory toy to help with the self-regulation process. If the child is particularly stressed physical strategies may be used to support regulation e.g. going for a walk, wall presses, sitting on a wobble chair. It is important to understand that these are not rewards, they are strategies to help the child process their feelings and begin to regulate them.

The Thinking Time will be followed up by a restorative conversation with a view to encouraging the child to select a more appropriate behaviour in the future.

Children will not be pressed to say sorry to another child, as this is an abstract concept and can have little meaning for children. Instead the child will be encouraged to notice that the other child is sad and think of a way that they could help ‘fix’ the situation or make the child feel better.

“Hannah is sad because you knocked down her tower, look at her face- she is sad, how could you help her feel better?”

If the child cannot think of a solution the adult can prompt “Maybe you could help her build the tower again?” Or “What makes you feel happier when you are upset?”

Often children may suggest giving the other child a hug, the other child should be asked if they want a hug, rather than having to accept it. If they do not want a hug then alternatives could be offered for example a “high-five”.

Additional Corrective Strategies

- Non verbal reminders of behaviour expectations e.g. eye contact: gesture/hand sign/Visuals
- Rule reminder
- Warning - first, second
- Child will help to clean up a mess they made

- Removal from activity
- Loss of privilege e.g. being the helper
- Reduction of time in area of play
- Discussion with parents

Severe/ Persistent Behaviour Issues

Where unacceptable or dangerous behaviour has been occurring over a period of time and preventative or corrective strategies have had limited success, the Principal and Class Teacher will liaise with the parents to create an individualised plan for the child (this may be a Risk Reduction Action Plan being put in place following advice). This plan will consider elements of the nursery day/environment that the child finds particularly challenging and how to support their increased success in navigating these. This plan may involve increased adult support, spending increased time in smaller social groups, additional transition times, and temporary reduction in hours to build capacity. Additional use of sensory strategies/sensory diet.

Links with Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

Social, Emotional, Behavioural and Well-being difficulties are recognised as a Special Educational Need. Children with difficulties in this area may benefit from an approach that recognises their additional need as an SEN. This could mean, in consultation with the parents of the child following an approach in line with the Department of Education's 'Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs'.

In the Code of Practice there are three stages: Stage 1 is school based, Stage 2 is also school based but with help from agencies outside the school, Stage 3 involves referral to for example - Educational Psychology; outreach support services; EA-SER Behaviour Support Team.

Where inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour persists, teaching staff in collaboration with parents will implement a behaviour plan and/or a Personal Learning Plan in line with stages 1 to 3 of the 'Code of Practice for SEN'. This will set intended outcomes and strategies to be implemented by the nursery staff and at home.

Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling

Under Duty of Care, staff may use a physical intervention in relation to a pupil for the purpose of preventing the pupil from the following:

- causing personal injury to any person (including the pupil himself) or damage to property
- engaging in any behaviour harmful to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils

Whilst there is no legal definition of reasonable force, the working definition of 'reasonable force' is the minimum of force necessary to prevent a pupil from physically harming him/herself or others or seriously damaging property, but used in a manner which attempts to preserve the dignity of all concerned.

Actions taken will always be:

- in the child's best interest
- necessary
- reasonable and proportionate
- last resort (where possible).

This approach will always be for the purposes of maintaining health and safety throughout the school community. Parents will be informed of actions taken.

Links to Other Policies

This document is one of the key policies within the Nursery School and is closely linked to Special Educational Needs, Health and Safety, Child Protection, Anti-Bullying and Learning and Teaching Policies.

The aims and principles of this Positive Behaviour Policy have been agreed by the staff team and endorsed by the Board of Governors. This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis, reviewed regularly, and updated to reflect any change in guidance and legislation.

Policy Distribution

This policy will be made available to all parents on commencement of their education at TNS. All new staff will be given a full copy. Children will be involved every year in discussing and drawing up rules for their own and peers conduct. These will be displayed pictorially in the classroom.

Appendix One - Staff Guide (to action applicable in a situation involving discipline) Problems and Resolving Conflicts

1. Approach calmly
2. Acknowledge feelings
3. Gather information
4. Restate the problem
5. Ask for solutions and choose one together
6. Be prepared to give follow-up support

Solving

- Be firm and consistent
- Act with confidence and sympathetic firmness when disciplining
- Action should be well timed
- Speech will be quiet, firm and calm – always positively phrased
- State what is acceptable behaviour in simple clear terms, with choices if possible, adding a statement about why the behaviour is not acceptable if this is relevant
- Consequences of inappropriate behaviour should be immediate, of short duration and should not humiliate the child
- It should bear some relation to the act if possible and should be consistently applied and maintained
- It should allow the child a choice (you may play with... or with)

Effective consequences are:

- Restrictions of space / where to play
- Restrictions in use of resources /what to play with
- Restrictions in activity should not be used **if** a child needs to have space and time to calm down this should be time with an adult using sensory spaces/strategies using the calm down coach rather than “Time Out”
- Try not to increase the child’s feeling of guilt – accept any restitution s/he wishes to make and leave it there - do not insist on a child saying sorry, rather they should make the situation right
- Anticipating and preventing misbehaviour reduces the necessity for consequences

Appendix Two – Your child used the calm down couch today to help them to co/self-regulate

Image pending

Staff are to send home the above image via Seesaw with a brief overview of events outlining the situation, action, outcome of the events.

Appendix Three – Your child engaged in 'Thinking Time' with adult support today to help them co/self-regulate.

Image pending

Staff are to send home the above image via Seesaw with a brief overview of events outlining the situation, action, outcome of the events.