



Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

Our approach

At Cherish Childcare we believe children flourish when they feel safe, secure, understood and valued. Practitioners build warm, responsive relationships, act as positive role models and support children to understand their feelings, communicate their needs and gradually develop self-regulation.

We use co-regulation: adults notice and respond to children's emotional and physical cues, help them return to a calmer state and, when they are ready, support them to reflect, problem-solve and develop new skills. We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and that some behaviours, including biting, grabbing, pushing, shouting or difficulty waiting and sharing, may be developmentally typical for young children.

Our approach is relational, developmentally appropriate and inclusive. We do not label children as "naughty" or define a child by their behaviour. We make clear that feelings are accepted while unsafe or hurtful behaviour may need adult support and boundaries.

Our aims

- recognise the individuality, developmental stage, communication style and needs of every child;
- provide warm, responsive relationships so children feel safe, respected and supported during times of stress;
- help children develop emotional vocabulary, self-regulation, empathy and problem-solving skills over time;
- promote kindness, cooperation, respect and non-violent ways of resolving conflict;
- work consistently with parents and carers so that children receive joined-up support between home and nursery;
- ensure staff understand child development and do not place unrealistic expectations on babies or young children;
- identify when behaviour may indicate an unmet need, SEND, communication difficulty, stress, safeguarding concern or change in the child's circumstances;
- use observation, reflection and appropriate support plans where behaviour is persistent, intense, out of character or significantly affecting the child or others; and

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- ensure physical intervention is used only when absolutely necessary to prevent immediate harm and is recorded appropriately.

Behaviour Lead

The named person responsible for promoting and supporting positive behaviour is Cheniece Boothe.

- advise and support staff where there are concerns about a child's behaviour or emotional regulation;
- work with the SENCO where behaviour may be linked to additional needs, communication, development or access to learning;
- support staff to use consistent, developmentally appropriate strategies;
- review behaviour-related incidents, observations and support plans to identify patterns, triggers and effective approaches;
- seek advice from relevant professionals where appropriate and with parental involvement/consent where required;
- support updates to policy and practice; and
- identify staff training needs and maintain records of relevant training and professional development.

How we promote positive behaviour

Our first focus is on creating an environment and adult approach that reduces unnecessary conflict and helps children succeed. Staff recognise that adult expectations, routines, environments and interactions can either reduce or increase stress for young children.

- Staff act as calm, respectful role models and use polite, warm and consistent language with children and each other.
- Activities are planned from observations of children's interests, developmental stage and learning style so that children are meaningfully engaged rather than expected to wait for long periods.
- Resources are organised so that there are sufficient interesting choices and, where appropriate, duplicates of highly desired resources to reduce avoidable conflict.
- Staff position themselves purposefully around the environment, interact with children and notice early signs that play or emotions are becoming difficult.
- Practitioners step in early with additional attention or a "time-in" approach: staying alongside the child, joining their play, offering help, redirecting gently or inviting them to another meaningful activity so they can regulate with adult support rather than being isolated.

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- Children are not expected to sit, wait, take turns or share beyond what is realistic for their age and developmental stage. These skills are introduced gradually, for example in very small groups with very short waiting times.
- Stories, puppets, role play, songs, visual prompts and everyday conversations are used to explore emotions, kindness, turn-taking, waiting, problem-solving and the effect our actions can have on others.
- Staff name feelings and model simple regulation strategies when children are calm and receptive, rather than attempting lengthy explanations while a child is highly distressed.
- Children are given age-appropriate opportunities to contribute to simple nursery expectations and routines.
- Children are supported to move, explore and take appropriate physical risks safely rather than being unnecessarily restricted.

Responding to distressed or challenging behaviour

When a child displays behaviour that is distressed, unsafe, hurtful or challenging, staff respond calmly and proportionately. The immediate priority is safety, followed by helping the child regulate and understand what happened when they are developmentally ready.

- Staff intervene promptly to prevent injury or escalation while keeping their tone calm and respectful.
- The child who has been hurt or upset is comforted and supported immediately.
- The child displaying the behaviour is supported through co-regulation rather than shame, humiliation or isolation.
- Where possible, staff redirect or distract the child, offer a safe alternative or provide “time-in” with a trusted adult.
- Staff may use simple language such as “I won’t let you hit” or “Hands are for helping” while physically positioning themselves to keep children safe.
- Staff do not shout, except where a raised voice is necessary to prevent immediate danger.
- Children are supported to express feelings through words, gestures, signs, visuals or other communication methods appropriate to their needs.
- Once calm, staff may help the child reflect on what happened, notice how others may have felt and consider what could help next time.
- Children will not be required to give a forced apology. An apology is encouraged only where the child has sufficient understanding and empathy for it to be meaningful.

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- Staff reflect on whether adult actions, transitions, waiting, noise, environment, communication demands, tiredness, hunger or other factors may have contributed to the behaviour.

Physical intervention

Cherish Childcare does not use or threaten corporal punishment or any punishment that could adversely affect a child's wellbeing.

Physical intervention may only be used where it is absolutely necessary to prevent a child injuring themselves or another person, or where immediate action is required to manage a serious safety risk. Any intervention must be reasonable, proportionate and used for the shortest possible time.

- Any physical intervention is recorded as soon as possible.
- Parents/carers are informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Where a child is known to require specialist physical support or an agreed restrictive intervention, this will only be undertaken by appropriately trained staff in line with an individual plan and professional guidance.
- Any repeated need for physical intervention will trigger review by the Behaviour Lead/manager and SENCO, including consideration of additional advice or support.

Working with parents and confidentiality

Parents and carers are important partners in supporting children's emotional wellbeing and behaviour. We share relevant information about their own child, listen to what families tell us and aim for consistent approaches where appropriate.

- Parents/carers will be informed when their child has been significantly hurt, upset or involved in a notable incident.
- We will not disclose the identity or personal information of another child involved in an incident. Parents will be told what happened to their own child and how staff responded, while confidentiality for other children and families is maintained.
- Where behaviour becomes a repeated concern, parents/carers may be invited to meet with the key person, Behaviour Lead, manager and/or SENCO to agree next steps.
- All discussions and records are handled confidentially and shared only with people who have a legitimate professional need to know.

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When behaviour causes ongoing concern

We do not treat every instance of hitting, biting, grabbing or emotional dysregulation as a behavioural difficulty. Staff consider the child's age, development, frequency, intensity, duration, context and whether the behaviour is out of character or is beginning to significantly affect the child or others.

Where behaviour is persistent, intense, developmentally unexpected, escalating or significantly affecting safety, relationships, learning or participation, we will gather information systematically and agree a plan with the family.

- Staff may use structured observations, including ABC-style observations (Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence), to identify patterns, triggers and what helps the child regulate.
- The Behaviour Lead and SENCO will consider communication needs, SEND, sensory needs, health, sleep, family circumstances, changes in routine and safeguarding factors.
- An individual behaviour/support plan may be developed with clear strategies, consistent adult responses, environmental adjustments and review dates.
- Risk assessment may be used where behaviour presents a foreseeable risk of injury to the child, other children or adults.
- Advice may be sought from the Area SENCO, health professionals, speech and language therapy, educational psychology or other relevant services where appropriate.
- Parents/carers will normally be involved and consent obtained for referrals unless safeguarding procedures require information to be shared without consent.

A child may be supported to move temporarily to a quieter or safer area with an adult where this is necessary to reduce risk or help them regulate. This is not used as punishment or exclusion; the adult remains emotionally available and the child returns when it is safe and appropriate.

Supporting social and emotional development

- Children are helped to feel safe through predictable routines, warm key-person relationships and adults who respond consistently.
- Staff use play, stories, role play, visual supports and real-life situations to help children develop words and strategies for feelings, conflict and problem-solving.
- Staff model and scaffold non-aggressive alternatives such as asking for help, using simple words or signs, waiting with adult support, finding another resource or taking space with an adult.
- If play becomes overly boisterous, dysregulated or unsafe, staff join the play, redirect it, adjust the environment or offer an alternative activity rather than waiting for conflict to escalate.

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- The policy is revisited with staff through induction, supervision, meetings or additional support whenever incidents or practice indicate that further guidance is needed.

Anti-bullying

We do not tolerate deliberate, repeated targeting, intimidation, exclusion, discriminatory behaviour or bullying. We also recognise that young children are still developing impulse control, empathy, language and social understanding, so repeated physical behaviour is not automatically labelled as bullying without considering development and context.

- Staff intervene whenever a child is being repeatedly targeted, hurt, intimidated or excluded.
- The child affected is supported and reassured.
- The child displaying the behaviour is supported to develop safer ways of communicating and relating to others.
- Parents/carers of children directly involved are spoken with sensitively and separately, while confidentiality is maintained.
- Repeated or serious incidents are recorded, monitored and may lead to an individual support plan or involvement of the SENCO/other professionals.

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