Behaviour Management Policy

Academic year 2026/27 | Reviewed at least annually

Statement of Intent

At The Wendy House, we believe children flourish when they feel safe, secure, respected and understood.

Young children are still developing the skills needed to understand and manage emotions, communicate their needs, resolve conflicts and regulate their behaviour.

We therefore view behaviour as a form of communication and aim to understand what a child may be communicating through their actions.

Our approach is positive, consistent and appropriate to each child's age, stage of development and individual needs.

We aim to help children develop:

- confidence and self-esteem;
- emotional regulation;
- empathy;
- positive relationships;
- communication skills;
- independence;
- an understanding of boundaries;
- respect for themselves and others; and
- appropriate ways of expressing feelings and resolving difficulties.

Positive Behaviour

Staff will provide positive role models and treat children, families and colleagues with kindness, respect and courtesy.

We encourage positive behaviour through:

- warm and responsive relationships;
- clear and consistent expectations;
- praise and encouragement;
- appropriate routines and boundaries;
- recognising children's feelings;
- supporting children to communicate;
- helping children solve problems;

- modelling kindness and respect;
- supporting turn-taking and sharing; and
- providing activities and environments appropriate to children's developmental needs.

Staff will recognise and positively acknowledge behaviour such as kindness, helping others, cooperation and consideration.

Understanding Behaviour

When behaviour is challenging, staff will consider why the behaviour may be happening rather than focusing only on stopping it.

Possible factors may include:

- tiredness;
- hunger;
- frustration;
- difficulty communicating;
- sensory needs;
- changes at home;
- difficulty understanding expectations;
- strong emotions;
- developmental stage;
- SEND;
- anxiety;
- difficulty with transitions; or
- environmental factors.

Staff will observe patterns and consider whether changes to the environment, routine, communication or adult support may help.

Co-regulation

Young children often need support from trusted adults before they are able to regulate their emotions independently.

When a child is upset, overwhelmed or struggling to manage their behaviour, staff will remain calm and provide appropriate support.

This may include:

- acknowledging the child's feelings;
- staying close and providing reassurance;

- helping the child move to a quieter space with adult support;
- reducing stimulation;
- using simple language;
- distraction or redirection;
- giving the child appropriate choices; and
- helping the child return to play when they are ready.

Children will not be isolated or sent away alone as a punishment.

A child may be supported to move away from an activity or situation temporarily where this helps them regulate or keeps themselves or others safe.

An adult will remain available to support the child, and the child will be helped to return positively when appropriate.

Boundaries and Consequences

Children need clear, simple and consistent boundaries.

Staff will explain expectations in ways appropriate to children's age and understanding.

Where appropriate, children will be helped to understand the natural or logical consequences of their actions.

For example, if a child throws resources, staff may help them pick them up and show them how to use the resources safely.

We will focus on teaching, rather than punishing.

Staff will make clear that it is the behaviour that needs to change — not that the child is “bad” or “naughty.”

Language Used With Children

Staff will communicate calmly and respectfully.

We will avoid:

- humiliating children;
- shaming children;
- labelling children as naughty or bad;
- threatening children;
- frightening children;
- shouting in a threatening way; or
- using sarcasm or ridicule.

An adult may need to use a firm or raised voice where immediate action is necessary to prevent a child or another person being harmed.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment will never be used or threatened.

No child will be smacked, shaken or subjected to any other form of physical punishment.

We will not use any punishment that could negatively affect a child's wellbeing.

Physical Intervention

Physical intervention will only be used where it is absolutely necessary, for example to prevent immediate danger of personal injury to the child or another person, or where reasonable intervention is necessary to prevent serious damage to property.

Any intervention will:

- be reasonable and proportionate;
- use the minimum intervention necessary;
- last for the shortest possible time;
- never be used as punishment; and
- take account of the child's age, development and individual needs.

Every occasion where physical intervention is used will be recorded.

Parents/carers will be informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where physical intervention is repeatedly required, we will work with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the SENCO or other professionals to consider why this is happening and what additional support may be needed.

Hitting, Kicking, Biting and Other Physical Behaviour

Young children may sometimes bite, hit, kick, push, scratch or use other physical behaviour when they do not yet have the skills to communicate or regulate their emotions differently.

Staff will intervene calmly to keep everyone safe.

The child who has been hurt will be comforted and supported.

The child who has displayed the behaviour will also be supported to understand what happened and develop safer ways of expressing their needs and feelings.

Staff will consider:

- what happened immediately before the incident;
- what the child may have been communicating;
- whether there are patterns or triggers;
- communication needs;
- sensory needs;

- developmental stage; and
- whether additional support is required.

We will not label a young child as a “biter”, “bully” or “aggressive child.”

Where incidents are repeated, we will work closely with parents/carers to agree consistent strategies.

SEND and Additional Needs

We recognise that behaviour may sometimes be linked to SEND, communication difficulties, sensory needs or developmental differences.

Children will not be punished for behaviour arising from needs that they are unable to control or understand.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate.

The SENCO may support staff and families to identify strategies and, where necessary, seek additional professional advice.

This should be read alongside our SEND Policy and Equality & Diversity Policy.

Individual Behaviour Support

Where a child regularly requires additional support with behaviour or emotional regulation, we may develop an individual approach in partnership with their parents/carers.

This may include:

- observations;
- identifying triggers;
- agreed strategies;
- communication support;
- environmental adjustments;
- visual supports;
- sensory strategies;
- additional adult support where appropriate; and
- involvement from the SENCO or other professionals.

Strategies will be reviewed to determine whether they are helping the child.

Working With Parents and Carers

We believe behaviour is best supported through partnership with families.

Where there are recurring concerns, we will speak sensitively with parents/carers and share relevant observations.

We will listen to families' knowledge of their child and work together to agree appropriate strategies.

Parents/carers will also be informed about significant incidents involving their child.

Information about other children will remain confidential.

Bullying

At The Wendy House, every child has the right to feel safe, included and respected.

We recognise that true bullying involves repeated behaviour and an imbalance of power, and care should be taken when applying the term to very young children who are still developing social and emotional understanding.

However, repeated behaviour that causes another child distress or harm will always be taken seriously.

Staff will:

- intervene promptly;
- support the child who has been affected;
- support the child displaying the behaviour;
- consider what may be contributing to the behaviour;
- help children develop empathy and relationship skills;
- monitor for patterns;
- work with parents/carers where appropriate; and
- seek additional support if necessary.

We will promote kindness, inclusion and respect through everyday interactions, stories, activities and adult modelling.

Conflict Between Children

Disagreements and conflict are a normal part of young children's social development.

Where appropriate, staff will support children to:

- express how they feel;
- listen to one another;
- understand another person's perspective;
- find solutions;
- take turns;
- repair relationships; and
- move forward positively.

Children will not be forced to say “sorry” without understanding what has happened.

Instead, staff will help children understand the impact of their actions and, where appropriate, consider how they can make things better.

Imaginative and Fantasy Play

Children sometimes engage in imaginative play involving superheroes, battles, weapons, “goodies and baddies” or other dramatic themes.

We recognise that this can be a normal part of children's imaginative development.

Rather than automatically banning such play, staff will:

- supervise appropriately;
- maintain clear safety boundaries;
- ensure participation is voluntary;
- intervene if another child becomes frightened, distressed or excluded;
- encourage empathy and respect; and
- use appropriate opportunities to explore ideas such as fairness, consequences and helping others.

Behaviour That Raises a Safeguarding Concern

Sometimes a child's behaviour, play, language or emotional presentation may indicate that they have experienced or witnessed something concerning.

Where behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, staff will not investigate the matter themselves.

They will record and report the concern immediately in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Safeguarding procedures will take priority over behaviour-management procedures.

Recording Incidents

Significant incidents will be recorded where appropriate.

Records will be factual and may include:

- date and time;
- children involved;
- what happened;
- relevant circumstances;
- action taken;
- injuries, if applicable;
- physical intervention, if used;
- support provided; and

- information shared with parents/carers.

Records may be reviewed to identify patterns and help us improve support.

Staff Consistency

All staff, students and volunteers will be expected to follow the setting's approach to behaviour.

Staff will discuss appropriate strategies through:

- induction;
- staff meetings;
- supervision;
- SEND discussions;
- safeguarding discussions; and
- relevant training.

Where an individual child has an agreed support strategy, relevant staff will be made aware of it.

Named Responsibility

The Wendy House will identify an appropriate member of staff with overall responsibility for supporting the setting's approach to behaviour.

However, supporting children's behaviour is the responsibility of all staff.

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where:

- statutory requirements or guidance change;
- an individual child's needs identify a need for review;
- patterns of incidents suggest practice should change; or
- the needs of the setting change.

Policy Approval & Review

Policy year	2026/2027
Approval status	Awaiting Management Committee approval
Next scheduled review	March 2027