The Dales Partnership

Butterknowle, Frosterley and Woodland Primary Schools

Behaviour Policy

Introduction

At Butterknowle, Frosterley and Woodland Primary Schools, we believe that children learn best when they are in a caring, secure and stimulating environment. A 'positive discipline' approach aims to motivate pupils and modify behaviour. We support children to promote self-regulation and self-esteem and resilience.

Our values and principles

The Dales Partnership schools support the philosophy that good staff/pupil relationships are essential to working effectively with children, therefore staff will ensure that;

• Everyone is familiar with the Policy on Behaviour and that all newcomers (parents, children, staff, students, visitors) are made aware of it.

• Staff provide a positive role model for all pupils by showing care and respect.

• Staff ensure that all pupils are safe and do not cause harm to themselves or others

• All staff have a consistent approach as to what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour and have a consistent and coherent approach to behaviour management.

• Rules for behaviour are explained to children, and staff remind children of the agreed in-house rules and reasons for them.

• Staff show children whose behaviour is unacceptable that it is their actions that are unacceptable, and not themselves.

• Staff encourage children to talk about their emotions, to acknowledge them and express them in their own, yet acceptable way

• Staff encourage self-discipline.

• Staff never punish children physically or threaten to send a child out of a room by themselves; never stigmatise them by humiliating them.

• Positive behaviour will be acknowledged by staff and drawn to the attention of others, e.g. consideration for another person, taking turns and sharing and helping others to succeed. We also operate a positive behaviour system (Dojos) that acknowledge desirable behaviours. We also send home certificates to celebrate success.

• Staff comment on self-discipline issues with parents, such as general behaviour, attitudes and relationships of children.

Supporting children in resolving conflict

'Anger is an expression of an unmet need' Marshall Rosenberg

IF CONFLICT ARISES:

In all school settings, conflicts arise. Common sources of conflict are disputes over space or materials, or social disagreements about how to play, turn taking, sharing resources or relationship issues.

Below are six problem-solving steps that staff (and parents) can implement to help children resolve conflicts. These are based on the High/Scope Approach to Conflict Resolution and Non-Violent Communication Strategies by Marshall B. Rosenberg. (www.cnvc.org)

1. **APPROACH CALMLY, STOPPING ANY HURTFUL ACTIONS OR LANGUAGES**.

   Observe as you approach; prepare yourself for a positive outcome. Be aware of your body language; it says a great deal about your intentions and feelings. Gently reach out to children who are upset or angry. Use a calm voice to communicate a POSTIVE and NEUTRAL attitude. Resolve to respect all points of view. If you do not feel able to stay neutral use an 'I' statement (I am really cross when I see …, or 'I'm upset because hitting hurts people). And delay the problem-solving process until you are able to be neutral. If the conflict involves an object such as a football, or equipment, let the children know that you need to hold the object during the process of resolution. This will neutralize the object, helping children to think about the problem, rather than the object.

2. **ACKNOWLEDGE FEELINGS**
   Give recognition to the feelings the children are expressing by using simple, descriptive words, e.g. you seem angry/sad/upset/frustrated.

   Use words that also reflect the intensity of their emotions e.g. 'You are very, very upset.' This lets the child know that you are connecting to their feelings. This will ultimately, help the children 'let go' of the feelings, although the feelings may briefly increase in intensity before they subside. This 'emptying out' is an important step that must occur before children can think clearly about situations. Once children have 'let go' of their feelings, let them know that you think they can figure out a way to solve their problem.

3. **GATHER INFORMATION AND IDENTIFY NEEDS**

   Tell children you want to hear from each of them. Ask open-ended questions that help them describe the details of the ACTIONS OR MATERIALS that are part of the problem. For example, 'John, tell me why you seem angry'. Sometimes you might need to help them by adding, 'are you feeling angry because you didn't get a turn?' (Not 'why did you do this? or how do you think she feels? These questions are too abstract).

   Listen carefully for the details and needs children are describing; they are the key to finding the solution.

4. **RESTATE THE PROBLEM**

Using the details and needs children have described, restate the problem, clarifying any issues by asking for more detail and reframing any hurtful language (for example, 'you can't play with me because I hate you!' can be reframed 'you seem very angry do you want to play alone?') Check with children to see if they agree that you have identified the problem.

5. ASK FOR IDEAS FOR SOLUTIONS AND CHOOSE ONE TOGETHER.

Give children plenty of time to think of solutions. "So we have a problem, can we find a solution, John, what's your idea?'

Respect and explore all of the children's ideas, even if they seem unrealistic, considering how each might work. Help children think through the specifics of cause and effect so that complicated or general solutions become concrete and possible to carry out.

Children may suggest, for example, 'They can share.' A suggested solution like this needs further exploration so that the actions that will happen are clear to all concerned. Initially children rarely find a solution, so you can offer to add one yourself. "I have a solution, would you like to hear it?'

6. GIVE FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT AS NEEDED

When children have agreed on a solution, make a simple statement, if possible, to recognize this accomplishment: 'You solved the problem.'

Children may need help in implementing the solution, or difficulties may arise because one of the children is still carrying angry feelings that need further acknowledgement. Check with each of the children to see if the problem has been solved, especially children who have been very upset.

The conflict resolution process helps children learn to:
• Express needs and strong feelings
• Hear and respect others point of views
• Express ideas, and experience the give-and-take of relationships
• Develop a desire to engage in positive social behaviours
• Feel in control of the solution and outcome
• Experience successful co-operative solutions
• Develop trust in adults and other children
• Understand how to make constructive choices
• Experience feelings of competence

It takes some time for children (and adults!) to work through the process and understand that this process can help them find 'win-win' solutions. Once they do, they will trust the process and be more willing to stay engaged in finding solutions.

It takes time and experience for adults and children to learn the problem-solving process.
Below is a list to help conflict resolution.
1. APPROACH CALMLY
2. ACKNOWLEDGE FEELINGS
3. ASK FOR INFORMATION
4. RESTATE PROBLEM
5. ASK FOR SOLUTIONS
6. FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT

IN CONCLUSION:

Democratic decision-making processes are time-consuming and can be difficult and frustrating to maintain at times. It may seem easier to simply remove the object or banish a 'naughty' child to the time out zone, but this does not encourage the child to develop self-regulation or aid high self-esteem.

Head teacher: Clare Carr

Chair of Governors: Joy Bellis

Date: 2023