

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Achieving Positive Behaviour Policy

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Cross Reference	Physical Intervention Policy

Purpose of this document

Aspired Futures (AF) believes that a child/young person (CYP) flourishes best when their personal, social, and emotional needs are met and they have clear and developmentally appropriate expectations.

CYP need to learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others, and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. This developmental task requires support, encouragement, teaching, and setting the correct example.

Details of Policy

The operational team has overall responsibility for the CYP programme for supporting social and emotional behaviour. The team holds Development Team meetings fortnightly to discuss any issues in regards to individual CYP behaviour.

Principles

- AF recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by members of the setting.
- All staff, volunteers and visitors are required to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating CYP, parents/carers and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- AF familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's guidelines for behaviour. This is a compulsory part of the Induction process in which new members must sign to agree that they have understood and will consistently apply and adhere to.
- AF work in partnership with parents or carers. They are regularly informed about their CYP's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents/carers (as and when possible) to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.
- AF also works in partnership with relevant multi-agencies specifically around a CYP's well-being and behaviour to help provide the best possible support.

Strategies for CYP who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

- AF require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping the CYP find solutions in ways, which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development.

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- It should be ensured that there are enough popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that CYP are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns.
- Considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share should be acknowledged.
- We develop self-esteem, confidence, feelings of competence and a sense of belonging in the group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- Creating situations in which CYP receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour is to be avoided.
- When CYP behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- We never send CYP out of the room by themselves, nor do we use a 'naughty chair' that excludes them from the group.
- We never use or threaten physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking.
- We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individuals.
- If absolutely necessary we will use physical restraint, which is defined as the reasonable application of the minimum force necessary to overpower a CYP with the intention of preventing them from harming themselves, others or from causing serious damage to property.
- Such acts of physical restraint are conducted, dealt with and recorded appropriately by following the AF Physical Intervention Policy.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to inconsiderate behaviour.
- We must always speak with the CYP about any inconsiderate behaviour that has taken place with the aim to end the situation on a positive note that they can learn and develop from.

Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children can engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some young children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing.

- AF recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.
- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure that nobody gets hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies, blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.
- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

Hurtful behaviour

AF take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without conscience of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

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- We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.
- We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
- Therefore we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child be able to manage his or her own feelings.
- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage as that will have the opposite effect.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. Older children will be able to verbalise their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour.
- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings.
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy.
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.
- We support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
- We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:
 - They do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs – this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting.
 - The child may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated;
 - The child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse;
 - The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
 - Where this does not work, we support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to appropriate services where necessary.

AF recognises that for older children it is important to gain their own independence and begin to learn about taking some responsibility for themselves and their actions particularly towards others. AF continuously strives to empower the older children within the groups to support and care for younger members by offering a budding

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system with older children and younger peers this provides a positive role modelling practice with in the setting whilst empowering older peers and giving them a sense of responsibility to care for others often raising their own awareness to the needs of the younger children.

On occasions as with younger members of the groups older children can present with quite hurtful sometimes racist, sexist or bullying comments towards others however this is often unintentional hurt and AF staff would inform the Children and Young People Assessment and Inter-Agency Manager (CYP Manager), Service and Volunteer Manager (SV Manager) or Lead Sessional Worker who would speak to the child immediately trying to identify a reason for their actions and offering explanations to why we do not use this negative behaviour.

AF offer teenagers within the setting the opportunity to become trainee volunteers during the groups enabling them to gain the knowledge and experience an AF volunteer would when joining the organisation. We are also committed to supporting the young person through their last few years in education with the intention to encourage and guide young people into further education long term ultimately leading to a more positive outlook into future adulthood.