



Getting along together: behaviour policy

Status	Non-statutory
Responsible governors	Children's learning and development committee
Last review date	Spring 2026
Date of next review	Spring 2027
The policy is available for staff at:	School offices and shared drive
And for parents/carers at:	School website

Policy audit

Version, revision date, who revised, section revised

VX, January 2021: Helen Currie, Alison Emmett: added discussion of risk, 'challenging behaviour' changed to 'signs of stress', added Tales Toolkit language, addition of COVID guidelines

V2, January 2022: Helen Currie: amended COVID guidelines and Tales Toolkit language

V3, January 2023: Helen Currie: additional information on Curricular Goals

V4, February 2024: Helen Currie: Forest School statement

V5, March 2025: Alison Emmett: updated wording of principles/values. Removed reference to COVID and lockdown. Updated Forest School details. Added reference to My Concern.

V6, February 2026: Alison Emmett: added asking parents to talk to us about child-on-child abuse outside school. Added where families wait at Low Hall. Added 'Stop! I don't like it! back in. Updated Forest School detail. Changed *PEP* to *My Early Years Support Plan* to avoid confusion with PEPs for Looked After Children and as this is now our practice.

Introduction

At the Forest Alliance of Nursery Schools we believe it is important for young children to develop and extend their natural curiosity and interest in the world and in the people who they meet. At our schools we teach young children how to get along and learn together, and how to develop as unique, tolerant and respectful individuals. We have written our Curricular Goals based on this value. We base much of our language, social, and literacy teaching on Tales Toolkit, which supports children to find solutions when problems arise. We plan and provide a comprehensive early year's curriculum which prioritises the personal, social, and emotional development of young children as they learn and play in the company of others. We recognise that learning to be aware of the feelings, ideas, and views of others is an important part of early childhood education. We recognise the responsibility of early year's teachers and educators to create safe and secure learning environments where children can at times be quiet, imaginative, and reflective and at other times active, energetic, and talkative. It is our responsibility to establish the right conditions for successful learning and for every child to feel part of the school community.

The aim of this policy is to give a clear understanding of how our values and principles have shaped our curriculum and practice to:

- promote positive behaviour which helps children's social development and emotional well-being
- ensure that children feel safe and secure in our schools
- help children to understand our expectations and learn to behave in an appropriate way

- support children to develop strategies for playing and working together without conflict or discrimination (including bullying or harassment)
- make sure that all staff have a consistent approach to behaviour management
- inform parents that our approach is consistent and fair
- Support families to feel confident to come to nursery every day so that children are settled and secure.
- We have written our School Development Plan and Equality Objectives based on the 5 pillars of wellbeing to ensure that we are supporting all of our stakeholders in this vital area.

Principles in practice

Here are how our 5 principles, or values, relate to behaviour:

1. Children have rights to play, learn, and be heard

We work together to secure every child's rights to a safe, secure, and welcoming educational environment. An environment where children can learn, have an equal voice, and feel free from harm, bullying, or harassment. We recognise that young children may be unfamiliar with playing and learning in large groups and away from a home environment. We believe it is important that every child has the time and support to learn how to manage their feelings and emotions, build their own self-awareness and self-confidence, play alongside other children, learn to collaborate in groups, and listen to the views and feelings of others.

It is our policy to:

- Provide a broad curriculum that gives significant focus on children's personal, social, and emotional development (PSED) and communication and language development. So children can learn the skills they need to get along together in harmony. Our Curricular Goals reflect this value in their entirety. We use Tales Toolkit to support children to develop the skill of finding solutions when a problem arises.
- Ensure all staff share responsibility for planned teaching that helps children to make friends, play safely, and learn to reflect on the consequences of their actions and words.
- Concentrate on positive behaviour by describing and encouraging actions and language that are appropriate when children work together.
- Recognise some children may take more time to settle into our busy multi-lingual schools. Our staff support that process by establishing firm expectations and boundaries, clear and consistent practice, and by modelling how to co-operate and take care of others.
- Actively discourage verbal and physical aggression and any behaviour that could become discriminatory, bullying or harassing towards specific children.
- Support children who become involved in conflict/dispute to resolve the problem through talk and non-punitive measures. We use Tales Toolkit to support this, helping us to solve problems and find a solution.
- Ensure unacceptable behaviour is always dealt with immediately and in a consistent manner. This should include explaining why the behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that the individual is valued, encouraging children to apologise and find a way of changing the upsetting behaviour.

2. Parents/ carers are a child's first educators

It is our policy to build positive relationships with parents so they can continue to be an influence on their child's learning and development and can share their knowledge about their children as they

become involved in the day to day life of the school. Mutually respectful partnerships between parents and staff can strengthen our behaviour principles and approach to teaching behaviour.

It is our policy to:

- Ensure parents are well informed of strategies that teach positive behaviour and of ways to manage actions and language that are signs of stress.
- Ensure adults model consistent positive respectful behaviour patterns to support young children.
- Ensure staff, such as a child's Key Person or special educational needs support, maintain good contact with parents to discuss any behaviour concerns and appropriate strategies.
- Ensure parents and staff work together to monitor the child's social and emotional development and plan relevant help.
- Inform parents if their child has been hurt or if they have hurt another child.

3. Teamwork and leadership are essential to delivering quality

Our schools have a well-deserved reputation for offering outstanding early education and care to young children. Our well qualified teams lead on high quality educational programmes that ensure every child makes good progress in personal, social, and emotional development. Governors and staff are committed to upholding this high standard and lead the way on inclusive early education and good behaviour so that all children learn how to build positive relationships, manage their feelings, and demonstrate friendly and co-operative behaviour.

It is our policy to:

- provide high quality education and keep this under regular review to ensure there are no barriers to learning, teaching, and the development of emotional wellbeing.
- take responsibility for monitoring standards through regular reviews and learning walks which focus on how well children get along together and how they are supported to participate in working groups.
- recognise that behaviour that shows signs of stress can be disruptive and hurtful so we ensure all staff are trained to minimise and handle any potential challenges.
- have designated leads on aspects of PSED, SEND, and Sustainable & ethical behaviour
- have a bullying and harassment policy in the Staff handbook and a Behaviour Statement that incorporates our parent-developed parents' charter for ethical and respectful behaviour so that all adults provide consistent models to children.

4. Children make progress when professionals work together and share information

We acknowledge that high quality early childhood education and care thrives where there are good professional partnerships. We draw on the expertise of health, social care, and education professionals, as well as the insights of parents to ensure all children get the best from their time at nursery school. We have established professional partnerships with local nurseries, playgroups, and primary schools to ensure a good flow of information, advice, and support. We invest in partnership work so that the individual needs of children are identified and addressed appropriately.

It is our policy to monitor and assess each child's learning and development in a range of areas, including PSED and communication and language. If a child's progress in any of those areas needs additional specialist support then school staff will discuss with parents how to access such support.

It is our policy to:

- Monitor and manage each child's PSED, communication, and language development through the six-week check list and on-going assessment of our curricular goals and planned teaching.
- Respond promptly if a child has significant needs and ensure the child's parents, Key Person, and the SENDco meet to begin to build an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), or to apply for SENIF funding.
- Discuss any additional behaviour management support a child requires with the child's parents.
- Work with parents to implement strategies in school and at home and work together on the child's written records of progress.
- Ensure parents are fully consulted before any child is referred to other professionals, such as the Educational Psychologist.
- Work with other professionals and parents to keep children safe from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying, and harassment.

5. We believe in being ethical, respectful and tolerant

We will co-operate to secure an educational environment that is inclusive, where children can value and appreciate everyone as a unique individual. We believe that it is just as important for young children to learn to get along together as it is to learn to read, climb, or count. In our schools children have the time and encouragement to develop strategies for playing and working together without conflict or discrimination. They learn how to be respectful, tolerant, and ethical.

It is our policy to:

- Ensure all adults in our schools behave with equal fairness in their interactions with young children and take account of cultural, language, and faith diversity.
- Recognise each child is a unique individual who has different experiences, abilities, and family lifestyles to share. Expect that all are given the appropriate support and guidance to adopt our schools' shared code of behaviour.
- Ensure staff build on children's growing self-awareness and awareness of others to encourage consideration for the natural world and local environment. This includes the negative effects of damaging growing flora and fauna, littering in the streets, wasting water, lights, and other energy resources.
- Develop and maintain as live practice guidance such as the Behaviour Statement (incorporating the Parent's Charter) and the Staff Code of Conduct.
- Monitor and review our policy and practice as part of our annual review cycle and ensure that changes are shared.
- We provide Forest School at both nursery schools: our assistant headteacher runs a session at Church Hill on Mondays and at Low Hall on Tuesdays. By the end of the school year all 3- and 4-year olds have had a six-week block, with children from lower income families having more experience. These sessions help children to experience the natural world as they play and helps each child to build resilience, work with tools, and explore the natural environment. These session help children to work together as a group, being kind to their peers and to nature.

Legislation and Policy into Practice

As maintained nursery schools we comply with the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010, and those in respect of safeguarding children and supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Behaviour policy in practice:

Setting the scene for growth

What parents/carers can do

Our Behaviour Statement, entitled like this policy 'Getting Along Together', is on display in our lobby and garden or main entrance areas and on the schools' website. It shows how we expect children and adults to behave while on school premises. Parents and carers can help their children behave well in nursery by modelling 'Getting Along Together' while in school – and might find it helpful to adopt or adapt while at home.

At drop off, the waiting period in the garden at Church Hill and on the path at Low Hall gives parents and carers an opportunity to help children settle and prepare for a relaxed and happy time in nursery school. Children can learn to respect the needs of others by being encouraged to behave appropriately at this time. We encourage parents to ensure that their child attends nursery school every day to ensure that they are settled into a routine which will support their behaviour and wellbeing. Hanging up their own coat and bag allows greater independence and gets them school ready. Staff inside the classroom will support any child who needs help. **What we do**

- allow a child time to adapt to a new environment with different expectations and boundaries.
- ensure that all children and their families are greeted by staff so that they have a positive start to the day.
- understand that there are different approaches to behaviour management depending on a child's age, developmental stage, and educational needs.
- provide activities that are developmentally appropriate, exciting, and challenging, that motivate children to be fully involved, to play co-operatively and develop problem solving skills, and that foster a respect of cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity.
- understand the challenges of parenting.
- Bi-lingual staff play a key role in helping where children are at the early stages of learning English.
- Carefully plan for each child's wellbeing and social interactions through our Curricular Goals and the use of Tales Toolkit to support them to find solutions when problems arise.

Talking to the children

- be firm, fair, and consistent.
- model how to deal with and sort out difficult situations, e.g. use a sand timer to encourage sharing, waiting, and turn taking.
- involve children in sorting out problems and disputes using the Tales Toolkit symbols, modelling finding a resolution.
- praise good behaviour by saying "I like the way you.....", or "I really like the way that Hasan is sitting quietly and showing me that he's ready to listen."
- remind children of the rules in a positive way such as 'remember we walk in the nursery and if we want to run we go in the garden'.
- support children to have a positive image of themselves and their peers.
- strive to be 'emotionally attuned' to children by saying "You seem to be feeling sad/angry. Shall I help you?"
- ensure that a child who has done something unhelpful understands that it is their behaviour and not themselves that is unacceptable.
- Ignore low level behaviour, i.e. behaviour that is not unsafe for the child or others; consider moving one child away from the other and encouraging them to engage in more positive play.

Working together with parents/carers

- Regular communication between a child's Key Person and their parent/carer means we can support the child's positive behaviour in an ongoing and collaborative way.
- Agreeing consistent boundaries and a consistent approach will help build the child's confidence and ease the transition from home to school.

- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact their child's Key Person or any other member of staff if they have concerns regarding behaviour in the nursery schools or their child's behaviour at home.
- Key People can share ideas to help the parent/carer to manage their child's behaviour at home.
- Parents will be informed if their child behaves inappropriately towards another child, especially if they hurt the other child. Parents will also be informed when their child has behaved well.
- Sometimes a child will behave inappropriately towards another child outside school. We encourage parents and carers to tell us and to let us deal with it in line with this policy. There may be things happening for the child that we know about. This understanding can help us manage behaviour positively and resolve situations quickly.

Exploring and taking risks

In this context of respect and communication, we seek to build children's confidence, motivation, self-esteem, and enjoyment by supporting them to take risks. Our outdoor areas provide scope for running and climbing. Our Forest School activities include learning respect for fire.

Children explore their understanding of the world and themselves through role play, sometimes pretending to be superheroes. We monitor this as we do all aspects of the children's engagement, to check that the child or other children are not at risk of injury or distress, or that individual children are not getting stuck in a type of play where they are not comfortable. We redirect play if it is non-productive, for example a battle which could become violent and therefore unacceptable can instead become a rescue operation where children cooperate.

Dealing with signs of stress

Behaviour which signals that a child is experiencing stress of some kind includes:

- intimidating or excluding other children verbally and/or physically
- using racist, discriminatory, or other prejudiced comments
- damaging property, toys, and other materials
- snatching toys off other children, interrupting their play, and taking over their play space/conversations
- damaging other children's work or constructions
- being aggressive e.g. pushing, shoving, biting, scratching, and hitting
- swearing or using offensive gestures
- spitting

Children may demonstrate this type of behaviour due to:

- immaturity
- lack of understanding
- delayed language skills which means that they are not able to express their wants, needs, or feelings
- low self-esteem
- behaviour they have seen and are copying
- the way others are behaving towards them
- special educational needs such as those who are autistic or who have global delay

We do not believe that children should be belittled, frightened, or punished. Instead, we believe that it is better to try and change the way children feel about themselves and others. We want every child to feel pride in belonging to our Nursery, where everyone is valued.

What we do:

- try to sustain equality towards all children during our interactions with them.
- Sometimes children have trouble with each other. We teach them to say 'Stop! I don't like it!'. Or they can raise their hand to show the palm. Or do both together.
- Sometimes this doesn't work. Perhaps they can't manage it yet. Perhaps one child might just carry on. When this happens, we ask children to tell an adult. We tell them not to deal with it themselves. Instead we empower children to use the Tales Toolkit language and symbols which all staff wear on their lanyards and say 'We've got a problem. Let's find a solution'. This is language we use in all our learning. Together we find the solution.
- praise the child's positive behaviour
- try to work out the cause of the stress that the child was under, validating their emotions by for example saying 'You seem angry. Is that what's going on? I wonder what's making you feel that way?'
- always listen to both sides of a disagreement (while still reinforcing our guidelines and boundaries) and try to involve children in resolving a conflict.
- talk for the child if they are unable to express themselves with spoken language.
- ask a child who has hurt or upset another child to observe the effect of their behaviour on the other child and to find a way of making the other child feel better. This could be a genuine 'sorry' or comforting them with an arm around them. An apology can be enough to ease hurt feelings.
- Aim to end the discussion on a positive note, emphasising that the child is valued even though the behaviour is not.
- Following the resolution of dispute, encourage the children to continue playing together.
- Deal with a more serious incident away from other children.
- If an incident is not reported at the time but we hear about it later we will talk to the children involved, if we feel that it is still appropriate to do so.
- If a child is hurt we will tell their parent/carer

Other strategies:

- It may be necessary, on occasion, for staff to ask a child to sit quietly for 2 or 3 minutes. This is for a maximum of 2 minutes for 2-year olds and up to 3 minutes for 3-year olds. This gives them the time and space to self-regulate and reflect on what has happened. They sit on a chair in the same area where the 'incident' occurred. This could be inside or outside in the garden, but is ideally quiet and safe. Children should be calm for 2 minutes before getting up again and should move on to something that they can be praised for. We will never call this a 'naughty chair' as we promote positive language.
- During our story session we help children listen to and respect the views of others. We model resolution through Tales Toolkit story sessions.

Additional Support:

- If incidents reoccur, the child's Key Person will meet with the child's parent/carer to work together to find agree strategies that can be followed consistently in school and at home.
- The child's needs will be monitored and the SENDco will meet with the child's parents/carers to agree a *My Early Years Support Plan* detailing strategies to be used and targets to be met.
- The plan and results will then be reviewed regularly. It may be necessary for the child to be referred to other professionals such as the Educational Psychologist, for additional support.

Positive Handling:

Positive handling may be occasionally used by a trained adult to physically hold a child.

Positive handling is only used when a child is:

- A danger to themselves or to others
- Seriously damaging property
- Behaving in a way that is a risk to maintaining a safe, calm, and positive environment

Staff need to know what is expected of them when putting this into practice:

- Removing other children from danger
- Remaining calm and being aware of verbal and non-verbal communication
- Giving the child space
- Supporting and reassuring the child (for example: I know you are upset and I'm here to help)

If positive handling is used, a report must be completed, detailing the incident if this strategy is not detailed on a child's *My Early Years Support Plan*. If the incident is serious, a report must be completed on *My Concern* detailing the incident and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Key to other policies

- Different But Equal: Equality, Inclusion & SEND Policy
- Teaching & Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Safeguarding in Schools Policy
- Admissions and Transitions Policy
- Complaints Policy & Procedure

end

Appendix 1 Forty positive adjectives to use with children

Active	Gentle
Affectionate	Graceful
Artistic	Healthy
Assertive	Helpful
Calm	Imaginative
Careful	Intelligent
Caring	Kind
Clever	Lively
Confident	Loving
Considerate	Mathematical
Creative	Musical
Curious	Outgoing
Determined	Peaceful
Energetic	Persuasive
Entertaining	Polite
Enthusiastic	Quick
Expressive	Scientific
Funny	Strong
Friendly	Thoughtful
Generous	Warm

What other adjectives can you think of that describe positive attitudes and actions?

From: *The Thinking Child Resource Book* (Nicola Call and Sally Featherstone)

Appendix 2: Our Golden Rules

We write rules as a group once we are settled as part of our democratic process. This is an example:

- We touch others gently and show that we are friends by sharing and being kind
- We play inside and share toys and books with each other
- We put our hand up when we want to talk
- We try to wait until after others have finished speaking
- We walk and talk (not shout) inside
- We say "sorry" when we make others upset
- We ask others to stop if they hurt us or take our toys
- We listen to the teachers and each other
- We leave sweets, toys, chewing gum and food at home
- We help tidy up
- We remember to say "please" and "thank you"
- We have our snacks at the Snack Table
- We wash our hands before we eat and after we have eaten
- We wear an apron when we play in the water and paint
- We put our paintings on the drying rack
- We roll our sleeves up when we paint and play in the water
- We write our name on our work.

We all have fun and stay safe at Nursery when we remember to follow these golden rules