



MARTENSCROFT

NURSERY SCHOOL & CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Managing Feelings and Behaviour Policy:



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INTRODUCTION

As Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centres is a specialist Early Years setting, we recognise that Personal, Social and Emotional Development underpins all aspects of teaching and learning, alongside the other Prime Areas. We understand that learning to 'Manage Feelings and Behaviour' is part of the curriculum and young children need to be equipped with skills to manage different emotions and be taught how to self-regulate. We advocate that Behaviour Management is not something that is 'done to' the children, but something that is taught throughout our daily discovery and approach.

As a Rights Respecting School, we believe that every child has a right to learn and develop in an inclusive, safe, friendly and nurturing environment. Children learn most effectively in an environment which is secure and which provides appropriate routines and structures to promote co-regulation. Our approach to teaching socially appropriate behaviour, gives our children an ability to learn how to develop a moral framework, based on equality and respect for all, that lasts a lifetime. Young children usually 'misbehave' because they have not yet learnt how to react to feelings and needs in acceptable ways. The most common needs and feelings that can trigger challenging behaviour are; attention, boredom, anxiety, fear, anger, curiosity, independence, anticipation and lack of communication skills. We also recognise that some of our children will have experienced trauma in their lives which can negatively impact on a child's behaviour, this is why all of our staff have received 'Trauma Informed' training and embed it into their daily practice.

Our Rights Respecting School gives every child a powerful language and emotional intelligence to use to express themselves, understand how they should be treated and challenge injustices for themselves and others. Children are empowered to access opportunities that enables them to make informed decisions about their learning, health and wellbeing.

We provide a holistic curriculum that focuses on teaching the whole child, as a result our curriculum teams lead on teaching our children the 'Martenscroft Morals'. All our children are taught how to be 'Expressive, Nurturing, Inquisitive and Mindful' so they can play, learn and grow together.



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SCHOOL AIMS

At Martenscroft we aim to:

- Develop children's and adult's understanding of each other and to treat each other with respect whilst recognising our own rights.
- Create an inclusive, secure, happy and caring environment where we can all participate and engage effectively in order to develop responsibility and independence.
- Support children to understand that there are agreed values and codes of behaviour.
- Provide stimulating and challenging learning experiences through a broad and balanced curriculum designed to meet the various needs and talents of all.
- Provide opportunities to explore feelings and behaviour where staff and children are able to co-regulate in order to develop emotional intelligence.
- Develop strong and supportive relationships between children and adults and value the parents, carers and the community of the school as important partners in the education process.
- Create a culture where children feel safe to express all of their emotions, ask for help and rest in our support. Where children do not fear falling short of our expectations when they can't meet them but do their best to meet them and learn through experiences.
- Support children so they can co-regulate with us and learn how to manage their big feelings.
- Give children the confidence to challenge and question when necessary in a respectful way.

Our Approach:

- We promote a 'Conscious Culture' where all adults focus on the reasons for behaviour incidents, whilst prioritising language choice, learning opportunities and behaviour expectations. We strive to avoid children experiencing shame for their behaviour and instead teach children to talk about and learn from mistakes, whilst taking responsibility for their actions.
- Our 'Restorative Approach' focuses on resolving conflict, repairing harm by listening to others feelings and identifying the reasons for behaviour so children can learn for incidents.



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- We believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear, developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour. This is implemented by creating child friendly, agreed rules in each of the rooms which the children produce alongside the adults.
- Children 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 is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example.
- Self-regulation is essential to learning and developing successful and responsible members of the school and wider community. Where children struggle to self-regulate our staff spend time co-regulating with the children when expressing extreme emotions or behaviours. We use the 'Time In' method rather than a 'Time Out' approach to support the children to regulate and to teach them coping and managing feelings strategies. Each room has a designated area where children are safe and supported through their emotions and have access to readily available resources to support healthy regulation.
- Children need consistent and appropriate routines and structures to help to promote positive learning behaviour.
- Adults will demonstrate appropriate and acceptable behaviour themselves and have high expectations of everyone, providing role models for children in the provision.
- Children's successes and thoughtfulness towards one another should be noticed, encouraged and reinforced through a variety of strategies such as specific verbal praise that recognises the desired behaviour.
- Children should become independent, make positive choices and learn to regulate their own behaviour rather than have sanctions imposed on them.
- Emotional intelligence, wellbeing and holistic health approaches are embedded into our curriculum. The children are taught explicit strategies to keep themselves emotionally and physically healthy and safe.
- Our children are taught how to identify triggers for behaviour, have their rights respected through establishing personal boundaries and learn appropriate responses for different feelings.



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Our Strategies:

- Consistent links with home which build strong relationships with parents/carers and children.
- Child friendly rules and boundaries displayed in rooms.
- Positive reinforcement & effective praise strategies that celebrate our 'Martenscroft Morals' and behaviour for learning.
- Being present and engaging with the children. When children are expressing extreme emotions or behaviour, the children are taken to a 'Time In' space where staff co-regulate to support the child.
- Validate emotions and teach children the appropriate emotional response e.g. 'I can see that you are angry. I would be angry too if someone knocked my tower over. Let's take some deep breaths and then talk to our friend.'
- Knowing children's triggers and interests to avoid misbehaviour or use distraction method techniques where appropriate.
- Clear routines and clear communication of expectations.
- Teaching children consent, this will be modelled through talking to them about what will happen before carrying out task e.g. before wiping a child nose, informing the child you are going to touch them.
- Teach children how to express a full range of emotions healthily and safely, so that the children know that all emotions are valid and should be experienced.
- Talking to children at their level and being respectful through modelling desired behaviour expectations.
- Use appropriate signs, symbols and objects of reference to help the child understand where there may be communication barriers.
- Using different tones of voice without shouting or raising our voices at children.
- Avoid over using no or stop, by focusing on what the children can do and modelling desired behaviour.
- When teaching children to apologise for a behaviour incident, children are taught to be explicit in their apology so they understand the impact of their actions on others.
- Build self-esteem and independence whilst celebrating each child's individuality.



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Working closely with parents/carers

Before children begin attending Martenscroft we will arrange a home visit with the family wherever possible, to begin the child's transition to the school. The home visit helps to begin to form the relationship between parents, children and practitioners, and starts the process of sharing information. At the time of entry to Martenscroft and when children are on gradual admission, we discuss children's needs, likes, dislikes and any other relevant information so we can get to know as much information about your child as possible.

It is important to have daily conversations between key worker staff, parents and carers to discuss individual children's needs and events. We also actively encourage parents and carers to be involved in their child's learning and development through Tapestry and regular parent's meetings. We feel it is important to adopt a positive approach when discussing children's development and when sharing achievements and progress. It is also important to be honest and open when there are concerns about behaviour so we can work together in the best interests of the child.

We aim to always be approachable and friendly towards parents and carers, demonstrating a positive working relationship. When necessary, we can put parents and carers in touch with our Children's Centres team, the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator or other outside agencies who can assist with the demanding role of parenting. We aim to create an environment where parents and carers feel able to discuss any concerns they have regarding their child's care, stage of development and educational provision with a member of the staff team who will respond by offering support and advice.

It is important to know that not all strategies indicated within this policy statement will be used with all children all of the time. For example, staff may have to adapt their language if children have English as an additional language or where there are children with special educational needs or disabilities. Their needs will be considered and strategies will be used that support their understanding of good behaviour. Furthermore, there may be different cultural expectations in relation to behaviour and we need to be aware of this when working with children, parents and carers. Staff will use their professional judgement in how to manage situations within the setting. Equally, we are always willing to listen to parent's views about their child, as they are, after all, their child's first 'educator', a role which we acknowledge and respect fully.



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In return, we ask that parents inform us of any relevant changes to their circumstances which may affect their child's behaviour, e.g. new baby, moving to a new house, bereavement, divorce, separation, or hospitalization etc. so we can support the child through the period of adjustment. We encourage parents and carers to re-enforce expectations of positive behaviour by talking to their child at home and actively support staff by implementing positive behaviour strategies at home.

Behaviour Incidents

We understand that many parent and carers are anxious about their child being hurt as a result of another child's behaviour or worry their child may hurt another child. Whilst we put measures in place to reduce the risk of children being hurt by one another, we cannot prevent all behaviour incidents from happening. When children are hurt as a result of another child's behaviour, an accident or incident form will be completed and parents will be informed of the incident. If a child receives a noticeable mark or injury, the parents will be contacted at the time of the incident and on rare occasions, parents may be asked to collect their child to seek medical attention. All incidents will be assessed by a trained first aider to ensure that all children receive first aid attention if required and are reported to a senior leader. (Refer to First Aid Policy for accident procedures). The parents of the child who has caused the injury would also be informed of the incident. We have a strict confidentiality policy, consequently the names of other children involved in the incident would not be shared with other parents. All behaviour incidents are logged on our system CPOMs, reported to the senior leadership team and to parents and carers of all children involved.

Biting is fairly common amongst young children and it is one of the things that concerns adults the most. Evidence suggests that up to a quarter of all very young children will bite others at some stage. We understand this is a difficult situation for parents whether it is your child that has been bitten or if your child has been responsible for biting. Biting is often very painful and frightening for the child who is bitten. It can also be frightening for the child who bites, because it upsets the child and most likely results in a negative interaction with an adult. Biting can make the child who bites feel very powerful because of the strong reaction that it brings. This power can be frightening for the children because they need to feel secure that their feelings can be controlled. Biting happens for different reasons with different children and under different circumstances, like all other behaviour incidents.



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Some of those reasons include; exploration, teething, cause and effect, role play, attention, imitation, frustration, stress, lack of vocabulary and a strong will to be independent. We use biting resources for any child who demonstrates repeated biting behaviour.

In some circumstances, staff may use reasonable force to restrain a child to prevent them:

- Causing disorder
- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property

Incidents of physical restraint must:

- Always be used as a last resort
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded and reported to parents

Only staff who have received 'Team Teach' training will be able to use reasonable force to restrain a child to ensure that this is carried out in the correct manner.

We also ensure that our children are taught the British Values and learn how to show respect & tolerance towards one another so our children are free from prejudice-based and discriminatory behaviours, including:

- Racial
- Faith-based
- Gendered (sexist)
- Homophobic/biphobic
- Transphobic
- Disability-based

Any prejudice and discriminatory behaviours that are reported or witnessed are recorded on our system CPOMs, shared with the senior leadership team to determine the correct course of action and the parents of all the children involved are informed.



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The school will ensure that all incidents of sexual harassment and/or violence are met with a suitable response, and never ignored. Children are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable:

The school's response will be:

- Proportionate
- Supportive
- Decided on a case-by-case basis

The school has procedures in place to respond to any allegations or concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing. These include clear processes for:

- Responding to a report
- Carrying out risk assessments, where appropriate, to help determine whether to: Manage the incident internally, refer to early help, refer to children's social care or report to the police.

Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information.

Persistent Behaviour Difficulties

For children with persistent behaviour difficulties we define individual strategies through creating an 'About Me' document. This enables a consistent approach to be followed by the whole team, to support the child and so that all staff are aware of potential triggers for behaviour incidents. The strategies and behaviour patterns are recorded and monitored regularly, working closely with the identified child's parent or carer as soon as we identify any concerns regarding a child's behaviour. In these cases, it may be appropriate to introduce an individual risk assessment or behaviour plan where the child is set small, clear, achievable targets. Increased supervision will also be implemented or at times a temporary reduced timetable will be implemented to ensure that all children are safe within the environment and all children's needs are supported and met.

We also carefully monitor when children regularly hurt the same child, there are many reasons why a child may be repeatedly hurt by another child. The main reason often being because the children are friends and enjoy playing together. However, we carefully monitor situations to ensure that this behaviour is not targeted or deliberate towards another child and record incidents on CPOMs to recognise patterns. We teach our young children age appropriate 'Bullying' awareness, focusing on teaching our children to be kind friends and equip them with the skills to build strong and effective relationships with others, whilst understanding their rights be treated fairly and with respect.



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Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Although it is rare in a nursery setting, we take the view that it can happen, so remain vigilant to it.

Bullying behaviour is defined as:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period time
- Difficult to defend against

Bullying is prevented by high staff to child ratios and excellent supervision. Our expectation 'be kind' helps children to know that bullying is not acceptable, and all staff are aware of this. If a member of staff suspects that bullying might be taking place, they would take immediate preventative action – ensuring that the children are not near to one another, shadowing the perpetrator, and using age appropriate talk-based interventions.

When children demonstrate frequent behaviour difficulties, our main aim is to identify the underlying cause so we can support the child and family with individualised strategies and support.

In Conclusion

At Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centre we believe every child has the right to achieve their full potential, taking regard of race, colour, gender, cultural background and any individual needs that they may have. Our Managing Feelings and Behaviour Policy supports staff, children and families to ensure that all behaviour incidents are dealt with in accordance to this policy.