



13. Behaviour Policy (including anti-bullying procedures)

This policy was adopted by *Wigod Way Wallingford Family Centre* on January 2023.

At Wigod Way Wallingford Family Centre (WWWFC) we aim to promote good behaviour by:

- Creating a safe and secure environment which fosters positive behaviour and believes the best of our children and our community
- Providing consistent and positive role models in both adults and children
- Modelling and using positive behaviour strategies – listening to and understanding children’s needs, praising and raising self-esteem, offering choices, clear boundaries, rewards and penalties, distraction and de-escalation
- Encouraging children to be self-disciplined and learn to regulate their own behaviour
- Having clear communications with parents over any behavioural issues
- Having clear and consistent practices understood by all staff
- Making it clear it is the behaviour not the child which is unacceptable
- Working positively with children and their parents/carers to promote the use of positive behaviour strategies
- Understanding special needs and making suitable adjustments to our practice and the environment
- Displaying positive behaviour guidelines in the session for the reference of children and parents/carers (See Behaviour and Expectations Agreement)

We do not accept behaviour from staff, volunteers, visitors, parents/carers or children which is aggressive, rude, disrespectful or discriminatory or may result in harm to themselves or another child or adult.

We recognise that parents/carers may need support in changing their child’s behaviour and staff will support parents and carers in a way which empowers parents/carers to make these changes. This may take the form of 1:1 conversations or referral/signposting to a parenting programmes or particular support in relation to children with additional or complex needs.

There is a very wide range of possible reasons for children’s behaviour. We will encourage parents and carers to explore the reasons for their child’s behaviour and to understand that children’s ‘unreasonable’ behaviour (aggression, inability to share etc.) is almost always reasonable from their point of view. We can accept how children feel at the same time as gently but firmly saying ‘no’ to how they are behaving. Where our intervention is necessary

for a child's safety or well-being, we encourage the child concerned to reflect on what has happened, if she/he is developmentally mature enough.

We do not sanction any form of physical punishment. Staff at the centre will talk to any parent/carer who uses any form of physical punishment in a sensitive way and work with the parent to find other ways of managing their child's behaviour.

We recognise that young children are learning different behaviours and need positive role models to guide them. Some parents/carers find it difficult to express their frustration or anger in an acceptable way and it is important that we engage with parents who find this difficult to encourage a positive parenting cycle through the generations.

If parents or carers behave in a rude, aggressive or disrespectful way to other children or adults:

- WWWFC staff will communicate with the parent/carer (face to face or by letter, whichever is appropriate).
- WWWFC staff will go over the agreement for behaviour in the centre.
- Staff will seek to understand the reasons for this behaviour and actively work with the family to help them recognise and change the way they behave.
- If no change is made, a written warning, sent by the Trustees of WWWFC, will be given stating that until the inappropriate behaviour changes the parent or carer will not be able to use the centre. It will be made clear that the parent/carer will be welcomed back if they can make changes in their behaviour.

BULLYING

We do not accept any form of verbal or physical abuse, racist, homophobic or sexist language.

We would define bullying as persistent anti-social behaviour that is likely to cause distress or anxiety to another child or adult.

WWWFC will take the following steps to eradicate bullying:

- Support will be given to the child/adult being bullied
- Facts about any incidences of bullying will be noted
- All the staff/volunteers will work with parents or carers to devise strategies to stop the bullying behaviour.
- A restorative approach will be offered if appropriate
- If adults are involved in bullying, staff will follow the procedure for unacceptable behaviour as outlined above.
- If the bullying behaviour continues the Trustees of WWWFC will be informed.

THE USE OF PHYSICAL CONTACT TO RESTRAIN CHILDREN

There may be times when adults or parents need to remove a child from a situation where they are in danger themselves or they are putting another child in danger. In this circumstance adults may use reasonable force to remove a child from the situation.

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force'.

The staff will adhere to the following relevant consideration before using reasonable force:

The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Staff should never touch or hold a child in a way that might be considered indecent.

Physical intervention can take several forms:

- Physically interposing between children
- Blocking a child's path
- Holding
- Leading a child by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a child away by placing a hand in the centre of the back: or,
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds

RECORDING INCIDENTS

Staff will record details of any incident which requires force (except in minor or trivial incidents). This may help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident and will be helpful should there be a complaint. In the event of a complaint being made the Complaints Procedure should be followed.

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH CHILDREN IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

There are many occasions when physical contact with a child may be proper or necessary when working with children from 0 – 5 years old. Touching is also very appropriate where a child is in distress and needs comforting, however the staff member/volunteer's main aim will be to encourage the child's parent/carer to comfort the child. Staff/volunteers will use their own professional judgement when they feel a child needs this kind of support.

Staff may use physical contact when caring for children for the following reasons:

- To build positive relationships- i.e. children sitting on laps for stories.
- To support in play activities- guiding/ holding hands etc

Guidelines for behaviour at WWWFC sessions (to be displayed)

What WWWFC staff and volunteers will do:

- Provide a secure and welcoming environment which will encourage positive behaviour by all who work in or use the centre.
- Be respectful of all users and other professionals.
- Work with parents/carers to use positive behaviour strategies to manage the behaviour of children in all the sessions by:
 - Understanding what is causing difficult behaviour.
 - Listening to children
 - Being consistent
 - Having clear boundaries
 - Praising and rewarding the behaviour we want
 - Distracting and removing children from situations which are causing harm or potentially causing harm to themselves or others.
- Appreciate that all parents and carers have difficulties with children's behaviour at some time. Work sensitively with parents who are having difficulty with their child's behaviour.
- Work with children, parents and carers if bullying occurs to stop the bullying behaviour.
- Challenge discrimination and the use of unacceptable language, racist, homophobic or sexist remarks.
- Listen openly to parents who wish to complain or feel unhappy about any aspect of WWWFC and work with parents to try and resolve the issue.
- Regularly review these guidelines

What we ask parents and carers to do:

- Be responsible for and supervise your children and the children in your care at all times
- Respect staff and other children, parents and carers
- Try to use positive parenting strategies (such as noticing good behaviour) and do not use any form of physical punishment (such as smacking)
- Work with staff to promote positive behaviour by all
- Use appropriate language (i.e. not swearing)
- Do not make racist, homophobic or sexist comments