

# PLAY MONTGOMERYSHIRE

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Registered Charity No 1000016

## POLICY – BEHAVIOUR

**Throughout this policy, when referring to children, this applies equally to young people for whom we are responsible.**

**GOOD BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE SMOOTH OPERATION OF THE GROUP. A PLAY PROVISION CAN SET THE STANDARDS OF ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR IN CHILDREN, LAYING DOWN THEIR VISION OF THE FUTURE.**

It is the adult's role to set the standards for acceptable behaviour. Until a child is shown they do not know the difference between right and wrong.

**All play in a play provision needs to be child directed. Consideration needs to be given to the difference between a child's natural curiosity to explore and experiment, and deliberate inappropriate behaviour.**

Some ways in which a child explores may not be acceptable, and they need to learn about this, but they should not be made to feel bad about misunderstanding what is acceptable. A simple explanation should be sufficient. Some children may need visual instructions and more explanation, others may have a behaviour strategy in place – this should be followed at all times.

### **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE.....**

**Between acceptable behaviour, unacceptable behaviour and inappropriate behaviour?**

**INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR:** Is when the child's behaviour is widely recognised as inappropriate because it impacts on other people or property in a destructive way, such as biting, smacking, hitting, kicking, punching, pinching, swearing, bullying, damaging property or other peoples work.

**UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR:** Is when the behaviour is a result of the child playing, but the playing has innocently led to behaviour that is unacceptable to the other children or the play workers, such as causing upset, damage or a threat to safety.

**ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR:** Is when a child is playing in a way that allows them self-expression; and although they may not be behaving in a way the play workers or other children would prefer, it is not impacting adversely on individuals or property.

### **ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR MAY BE ENCOURAGED THROUGH.....**

- \* Adults setting a good example, by showing consideration, respect and good manners to others, including the children.
- \* Providing a stimulating and social environment, appropriate for the children's stage of development, thus preventing boredom or frustration.
- \* Providing plenty of opportunity for free play and self-expression in a safe and caring environment.
- \* Understanding the children's ability to carry out acceptable behaviour and having realistic expectations of them. Appreciate the difference between accidents and deliberate provocation.
- \* Encouraging self-discipline and an understanding of boundaries. When it is appropriate and the child

understands the situation, return the responsibility of the behaviour and its outcomes back to the child.

- \* Remaining calm, constructive and fair when dealing with unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour. Praise acceptable behaviour, being positive and rewarding whenever possible.
- \* Using Body language and tone of voice appropriate to the message being given thus avoiding mixed messages.
- \* Recognising there may be a reason for the behaviour due to problems the child is experiencing. The child may need firm handling **and** understanding.
- \* Maintaining eye contact with the child when talking to them, but "ignore" the child and avoid eye contact when they are in time of reflection.

**BULLYING:** What is bullying? There are various definitions of bullying around but this one probably encompasses most of the elements:

***Bullying is deliberate harassment or an aggressive act, which causes hurt to another.***

***The hurt can either be physical or psychological, inflicted by one person or a group (of any age) on others.***

It can include one or more of the following:

***Being hit, kicked, spat at or threatened.***

***Being called names.***

***Teasing or sending nasty notes***

***Repeatedly excluding a child by not talking to them, or not letting them join in.***

***Deliberately destroying another child's toy, work or belongings.***

**NB Bullying can also include the following issues:**

- a) Race / culture**
- b) Class (wealth, poverty, speech,)**
- c) Religion**
- d) Disability**

All staff must watch for early signs of distress.

Listen to and record any and all incidents.

Offer the victim immediate support.

Report all incidences to the play / youth leader.

Make it clear to the bully and their parents that the behaviour is unacceptable.

**WHEN TO DRAW THE LINE.....**

If a child is behaving unacceptably or inappropriately it may be necessary to draw on the following sanctions. If the child is with a parent, carer or key worker, it may be better to talk first to the named adult, discussing the behaviour and how to best deal with it ***unless safety is being compromised and it needs to be resolved urgently.***

**SANCTIONS:**

These sanctions are to be used with consideration and care. Children who are taking part in a behaviour improvement plan will already have a strategy in place, and this should be used instead. These sanctions are intended for average children. If in doubt consult the parent, carer or one to one worker.

**Stage one (on the first display of the behaviour)** - distract the child by calling their name, going over to them or calling them to you. Explain to the child why they should stop what they are doing or alter their behaviour in a way appropriate to their stage of development.

**Stage two (on the second display of the behaviour)** - explain to the child if they repeat the behaviour one more time they will need to spend time on their own to reflect on their behaviour.

**Stage three (on the third display of the behaviour).** - Seat the child on their own, away from other children and distractions for a short period of time (1 minute for every year of age, or a time appropriate to the stage of development of the child). Tell the child how long they will be seated there, and that at the end of the period you will have expected them to realise the behaviour was not acceptable /appropriate. You may decide they will also have to put the situation to rights by clearing up a mess or by apologising to

someone.

**Stage four (on the fourth and consecutive displays of the behaviour).** - The child will be sat with the play leader who will confirm the unacceptability/ inappropriateness of the behaviour, talk about why it was repeated and try to work with the child on how they can improve their behaviour and learn self-control.

**If the behaviour is continually repeated, and the above sanctions fail to work, consideration needs to be given to the following options -**

- \* Discuss the matter with the parent/carer
- \* Temporary or permanent one to one help
- \* Referral to a behaviour specialist, with the co-operation of the parent/carer
- \* Temporary or permanent exclusion from the play setting, with a letter sent to the parent explaining the situation and the length of time for which the child is excluded.

*All sanctions should reflect the age and ability of the child.*

**Children should not be excluded for the convenience of the staff, only when other options have been unsuccessful and the happiness and safety of other children and the safety of the staff are compromised.**

**PHYSICAL HANDLING OR RESTRAINT OF CHILDREN SHOULD BE AVOIDED APART FROM WHEN IT IS AN ISSUE OF SAFETY.**

*Children should never be smacked, shaken, humiliated, ridiculed, completely isolated or made to feel unwanted or undervalued.*

*It is the behaviour, not the child, that is being challenged. It is important to keep a sense of perspective; their behaviour is not a personal judgement on the play workers.*

**This policy will be reviewed at least annually**

Accepted at the meeting dated ...../...../.....

Signed ..... Chairperson

I have read and understood this policy

signed ..... name .....date .....