

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Over the Rainbow Early Learning Centre Ltd recognises all children are individual with unique needs and abilities. We endeavour to manage behaviour through a supportive model. We aim to support and guide all children to develop the skills of self-regulation (regulating their emotions), problem-solving and decision-making skills.

All staff will support children with their individual needs and adjust the supports as required. Staff will implement clear and consistent expectations for all children. Staff will follow clear strategies to support children as named in this policy.

Our approach to supporting children with their social, emotional and behaviour skills is to ensure as far as possible that children are kept comfortable, relaxed, happy and engaged in play and other activities while the adults model positive ways of relating to them and each other. We recognise the need to understand children's behaviour as a form of communication and to consider what might be triggering the behaviour and what the child is communicating. Children will be supported to learn how to express their feelings in appropriate ways and helped to learn how to deal positively with conflict.

We will work collaboratively with parents/guardians to implement this behaviour management policy. Through this partnership, it places each child's needs and rights at the centre of our practice. While staff are aware of and respect individual children's and families' backgrounds and beliefs, it may sometimes be necessary to balance these with our knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices and current best practice recommendations from recognised appropriate authorities, in the best interests of the child.

Our complaints policy and procedures should be followed where there is any issues or concerns regarding the implementation of the managing behaviour policy.

Principle

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 and the Tusla Quality and Regulatory Framework.

Communication Plan

Expectations and agreed codes of behaviour are accessible and communicated to all, using a variety of media, e.g. handbooks, posters and pictures. They are communicated in a way that ensures that they are understood according to the levels of literacy and understanding of every child.

All parents/guardians are informed of the Policy on Managing Behaviour on enrolment. Staff members check with parents/guardians that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.

A summary of this policy is included in the Parents Handbook. This policy will also be included in staff induction and annual staff training.

A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to all staff and to parents/guardians in the Policy Folder located within the setting.

Parents/guardians may receive a copy of the full policy at any time upon request. Parents/guardians and staff will receive written notification of any updates.

Procedure for Supporting Positive Behaviour

Staff

- Staff will model positive behaviour through how they speak and interact with the children as outlined in our Code of Ethics Working with Children policy.
- Role modelling includes: Explaining feelings, using a calm tone of voice, giving choice to the children, using language to help children understand positive decisions, getting down to the child's eye level.
- Any rules will be kept clear, simple and age appropriate.
- The room leader in each session is responsible for building up a special relationship with each child and their family. This helps with getting to know what the child enjoys and some of the situations they may find difficult.
- The learning curriculum is designed with the age and developmental stage of the child in mind.
- Staff will always comfort an upset child.
- Staff will show empathy to the feelings which the child may be experiencing.
- A child's behaviour is not discussed outside the service with any third parties. Only relevant staff will be informed of information including action plans, or care plans.
- All staff receive training on this policy at induction and when necessary after that.
- All behaviour management strategies implemented by staff are in keeping with the ethos and the mission of the service.

Children

- Children's efforts, achievements and feelings will be acknowledged by sincere encouragement leading to growth in self-esteem and self-discipline.
- A range of activities will be available to the group of children that offer a lot of choice to all children in order to support children's play ideas.
- **Over the Rainbow Early Learning Centre Ltd** encourages independence and autonomy for each child.
- This policy is communicated to all children in an age appropriate manner (See Behaviour Management policy for children).

Respectful interactions between Children

A culture of respect is in place within **Over the Rainbow Early Learning Centre Ltd** and we expect all children to show the following:

- To be polite, friendly, respectful and helpful to others.
- To play fairly and include others in our activities.
- Respect one another, accepting differences of race, gender, ability, age and religion.

- Use socially acceptable behaviour.
- Ask for help if needed.

Room Rules

- Be kind to one another
- Share with one another
- Listen to each other
- Take turns
- Remember to say please and thank
- Care for our toys and books
- Help at tidy-up time
- Use walking feet inside
- Use quiet voice inside
- Wash hands before eating, after using the toilet, after coughing or sneezing when coming in from outside.
- Always tell Ann-Marie or Jennifer if you have a problem

We recognise each individual child is unique and may need different levels of support to manage situations. If an issue arises between peers, we encourage all children to speak to a staff member to develop solutions to resolve the issue.

Parents

- Requests of specific strategies from parents will only be implemented where it follows strategies outlined within this policy and is in line with best practice.
- Staff implement a balanced approach to communication with parents as per our Partnership with Parents and Carers policy.
- Staff are aware of respectful communication in supporting children in managing their own behaviour. Where staff need to speak with a parent/guardian about a child's behaviour, the child will not be present.
- The parent/guardian is informed of incidents of behaviour in a mindful manner e.g. away from the door, not calling the parent into the room in front of other parents, away from other children.
- Parents can request a meeting with the managers to discuss specific elements of the managing behaviour policy, which we will endeavour to facilitate at the earliest convenience.
- **Over the Rainbow Early Learning Centre Ltd** maintains clear procedures on monitoring and recording any incidents or issues in relation to supporting children with managing their own behaviour.
- Information is only shared with parent/guardians regarding strategies or plans in place to support their child.
- Parents are encouraged to discuss any concern regarding behaviours occurring within our service. All issues, concerns or grievances are managed within our service in accordance to our complaints policy.
- Where an accident and/or incident has been recorded under the managing behaviour policy, details are recorded separately for each child involved and parents are asked to sign. Each record will only disclose the name of the

individual child of the parent which is signing. The second child's name is not disclosed.

Encouraging positive behaviours

Over the Rainbow Early Learning Centre Ltd encourages positive behaviour through:

- Providing a balance of adult led and child led activities.
- Offering a variety of opportunities to meet the needs of the children attending the service.
- Children do not sit for long periods of time, outdoor play is encouraged.
- The environments are laid out into specific spaces with sufficient space, equipment and materials to meet the needs, abilities and interests of the children.
- Flexible routines to meet the needs of the children.
- Play activities will be used to play out challenging situation so children get the opportunity to practice positive behaviour strategies.
- Books and storytelling is used to talk about feelings and what we can all do when we are angry, upset or frustrated.
- Strategies recommended in Aistear that we use include:
 - Anticipating conflict and supporting children in resolving it, coming to the assistance of frustrated children and helping them find solutions.
 - Modelling social behaviour when interacting with adults and children, thus helping children to learn from others' social skills such as taking turns, listening, sharing, asking for something, and saying excuse me, sorry, please, and thank you.
 - Encouraging children to help each other during their activities, play and routines.
 - Helping children share skills and knowledge with each other.
 - Encouraging and acknowledging spontaneous co-operative efforts made by the children.
 - Talking to children about the time they spend together.
 - Encouraging children to play co-operative games.
 - Interacting with (play and converse with) children rather than managing (giving instructions and warnings).

Prohibited Practices

- Corporal punishment - Any physical force which is used with intent to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, such as hitting, spanking (refers to striking a child with an open hand on the buttocks or extremities with the intention of modifying behaviour without causing physical injury), shaking, slapping, twisting, pulling, pinching, squeezing, or biting is prohibited.
- Practices or the threat of any practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitative, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful will not be carried out on any child while attending the service.
- Bullying of any form.
- Restraint of children by unapproved methods.
- The use of the bold chair or time out.

Strategies for Supporting Children

It is important to gather information and knowledge about the whole child as soon as possible. This information can be used to anticipate a child's reaction and behaviour knowing what is likely to upset a child's mood or behaviour, knowing when to step-in or just observe from a safe distance. It is recognised that all children's behaviour has some meaning to the child however at times this behaviour may be difficult or pose a danger to the child or other children.

Over the Rainbow Early Learning Centre Ltd follow different strategies based on the type, frequency and impact of the behaviour(s).

Resolving an Incident / Conflict Management

This type of behaviour may be a once off incident or it may be specific times where a child needs support based on their age, stage of development or needs. We support the development of self-regulation through the Conflict Resolution Approach or the Whole Brain Child Strategies.

These strategies support the child to develop the skill of regulating emotions and problem-solving. There may be different levels of support which are needed for each individual child, the adult should adjust support where necessary in this process for each individual child.

Below are the steps to follow in using the Conflict Resolution Approach:

- **Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions** – Place yourself between the children on their level; use a calm voice and gentle touch; remain neutral rather than take sides. Put yourself in the shoes of the child. All their feelings are relevant and real in the moment. Approach the situation calmly and get down to the child's eye level.
- **Acknowledge children's feelings** – Say something simple such as "You look really upset;" Let children know you need to hold any object in question. Describe how the child/ children are feeling, children often don't have the language to explain how they feel leading to more frustration. Help the child by describing it for them "you both look very sad and upset"
- **Gather information** – Ask "What's the problem?" Do not ask "why" questions as young children focus on what the problem is rather than understanding the reasons behind it. Remain neutral by giving each child the opportunity to tell their side of the story. Children sometimes need lots of time to get the words out so take your time and remember the importance of the lessons learnt in these situations.
- **Restate the problem** – "So the problem is..." Use and extend the children's vocabulary, substituting neutral words for hurtful or judgemental ones (such as "stupid") if needed.
- **Ask for ideas for solutions & choose one together** (or for younger children give a solution) - give the children an opportunity to come up with solutions and keep working on it until you all agree on something. This can take a bit of time but it's giving the children lots of practice compromising with one another which are vital skills they will need. Ask "What can we do to solve this problem?" Encourage children to think of a solution but offer options if the children are unable to at first.
- **Be prepared to give follow-up support** – it is important the staff member

follows through on the agreed solution. This helps place trust in the process and children will have confidence in the approach. Acknowledge children's accomplishments, e.g., "You solved the problem!" Stay nearby in case anyone is not happy with the solution and the process needs repeating.

The code of behaviour is referred to throughout this conversation. Isolating, undermining, labelling or disregarding practices are not used. Children are encouraged to be respectful and show empathy.

Managing Moderate behaviour Issues

This type of behaviour can be recognised when inappropriate behaviour is becoming a more regular occurrence.

Strategy

- The strategy for supporting the child should be consistent. It should follow the six steps Conflict Resolution Approach as outlined above.
- Incidents of reoccurring behaviour are documented. The type of information which is recorded may include location, time, date, triggers, witness and is stored within the child's file in a locked cabinet.
- These behaviours may or may not immediately be shared with parents as it may be linked to the age of the child or stage of development. It is the role of the adult to support the child in developing these problem-solving skills.
- The key worker may speak with the child (if age appropriate) to discuss the behaviour. E.g. why they think it might be happening, what can be done to support the child. This is an informal conversation in a quiet space away from the child's peers.
- The key worker will discuss the reoccurring behaviour with the manager and put a plan in place. The plan will have a start and end date for review.
- Staff may observe the child to identify any triggers of the behaviour. Where observations are carried out, the child should not feel isolated. It is important at this stage, that staff involved are clear on the purpose of the observations and behaviours being observed.
- In respecting the dignity and rights of the child, where observations are carried out, information should be shared with relevant staff.
- The well-being of the children and staff is paramount, and the school aged childcare service may put varied supports in place where needed.
- Following the observations, staff are supported to reflect on trends and/or triggers for the behaviour. Additional strategies may be suggested at this stage e.g. staggered transitions, one-to-one support at mealtimes, visual routine, increasing adult: child ratio, physical layout is arranged so that there is a high level of visibility.
- After carrying out the observation:
 - ✓ The key worker and/or additional staff member may request to speak with the child's parent/guardian.
 - ✓ During the meeting, the plan, trends and/or noticeable triggers may be discussed with the parent/ guardian.
 - ✓ Parent/ guardians are encouraged to contribute to the plan.
- This process may be cyclical and reoccur many times to identify a trigger or the appropriate strategy.

Managing Challenging/serious behaviour Issues

Challenging/Serious Behaviour Issues may include repeated pattern of behaviour which impacts with the child's learning or engagement, behaviours that are not responsive to the process described above, prolonged tantrums, physical and verbal aggression, disruptive behaviour or dangerous behaviour that is a risk to the child or other children.

Strategy

To support serious behaviour issues we may use the following:

- If appropriate, we may develop an individual care plan to support the child. Where other strategies are in place to support the child, there is a clear outline provided in the care plan. These strategies follow best practice guidelines.
- **Time to one side with support of an adult:** - In rare situations, it may be appropriate to use time to one side with the support of an adult, for short periods of time, to enable a child to calm down. Adult support is needed throughout this time, and a child must never be isolated in any space or room without adult support. **This should not be used as a form of time out and/or isolating a child.**
- **Holding or restraining a child to prevent harm:** -The purpose of this intervention can only be to prevent injury to the child, another child or to an adult, or to prevent serious damage to property. Regardless of age, physical restraint must only ever be used for immediate safety reasons, with the minimum force and for the minimum amount of time.
- If staff physically intervene to prevent injury to a child or others, staff are aware of the following:
 - ✓ Physical intervention is used only as a last resort
 - ✓ Staff ensure no pain is inflicted upon children
 - ✓ An incident report is completed, and Parents/guardians are informed of the staff intervening
- In some cases, an individual care plan is developed from external agencies who are supporting the child. **Over the Rainbow Early Learning Centre Ltd**, in so far as practical, will implement this care plan in collaboration with parents/guardians.
- A plan may be developed in collaboration with the staff team, family of the child and in so far as practical, the child.
- If necessary, the family will be supported to contact any relevant external professionals.
- If the behaviour is a child protection concern the Child Protection Policy will be implemented.
- All information gathered and discussed will be stored securely and all conversations are highly confidential.
- All meeting plans and observations will be recorded and stored in the child's record in a locked cabinet.
- The staff will always work in the best interest of the child using their best judgement in situations which can be demanding and stressful on all involved.
- When all reasonable attempts to support the child, whose challenging behaviour is causing difficulties has failed, it may be necessary to suggest to parents/guardians to seek professional advice, such as a psychologist or play

therapist. The parent/guardian may then seek the advice or request referral to other professionals.

- If all above attempts at supporting the child and their family has failed and management deems the child a risk to other children, themselves or staff, management reserves the right to suspend services to the child and encourage the parents to find a more suitable preschool elsewhere.
- NO Child is to leave the service unaccompanied. They must be signed out by an adult as per our collection policy. If a child leaves unauthorised and unaccompanied the following procedure will apply:
 - ✓ Children will never be left unsupervised – a staff member will follow the child if necessary
 - ✓ The child's parent/guardian will be contacted
 - ✓ The best interests of the child and their safety is always our priority.
- Leaving the premises unauthorised is considered a serious behaviour issue.

Recording incidents

Records are kept of significant incidents to include:

- a) The child's name
- b) Time and location of the incident
- c) Events leading up to the incident
- d) The nature of the incident
- e) Others involved
- f) Witnesses
- g) How the situation was handled
- h) Whether restraint was used, what form of restraint and the reason for it
- i) Consequences
- j) Parents/guardians signature/s.

(See Accidents and Incidents Policy)

This policy was adopted by **Over the Rainbow Early Learning Centre Ltd** on:

Date: _____

Manager

co-Manager

Review Date: _____