



## Holland Park Pre-Prep & Nursery

### Supporting Children's Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy

#### **Statement:**

Holland Park Pre-Prep believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Children need to learn to consider the views, 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.

Children need to have set boundaries of behaviour for their own safety and the safety of their peers. Within the setting we aim to set these boundaries in a way which helps the child to develop a sense of the significance of their own behaviour, both on their own environment and on those around them. Restrictions on the child's natural desire to explore and develop their own ideas and concepts are kept to a minimum.

#### **Aims:**

We aim to teach children in an age appropriate way to learn how to behave in a sociable and positive manner. The principles that underpin how we achieve good behaviour exist within the programme for promoting personal, social and emotional development.

#### **Procedures:**

- We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and we require staff to be aware of, and respect, those used by members of the setting.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We familiarise new staff and volunteers with the setting's *Behaviour Management & Anti-Bullying Policy* and its *Guidelines for behaviour (below)*.
- We expect all members of our setting - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, and we require these to be applied consistently.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

#### **Guidelines for behaviour:**

##### **Dealing with negative behaviour:**

- The teacher will speak to the child and remind them of the boundaries and expectations. The child will be given the opportunity to correct their own behaviour.



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- If the child continues to show negative behaviour, then they will be asked by their teacher to play somewhere else and choose a new activity to join in with.
- If developmentally appropriate, the teacher will speak to the child and help them to decide what to do next. For example, if they have hurt their friend then they may be encouraged (but never forced) to say sorry or choose somewhere else in the classroom to play.
- If it is recognised by the teacher that the child needs some quiet time away from the situation then they will instigate 'thinking time' (please see below).
- Teachers consistently use positive language to support children's behaviour; for example, "please remember to walk in the classroom" and not "do not run".
- Staff are ready to initiate games and activities with children, when they feel play has become aggressive, both indoors or out.
- We will use stories to support children in learning positive behaviours for example 'hands are not for hitting' and 'teeth are not for biting' by Elizabeth Verdick.
- We will never: exclude children from the group, use a 'naughty chair' or 'time out' strategy, use physical or corporal punishment, such as smacking or shaking, use techniques intended to single, humiliate individual children, or shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.
- Details of a serious incident of inconsiderate behaviour (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of the Manager.
- Confidential records will be kept on any serious negative behaviour that has taken place. Parents will be informed and asked to read and sign any entries concerning their child. In the case of negative behaviour, the identity of the child displaying negative behaviour is not shared with other parents.
- Parents may be asked to meet with staff to discuss their child's behaviour, so that if there are any difficulties, we can work together to ensure consistency between home and the setting.
- In some cases, we may request additional advice and support from other professionals, such as an educational psychologist or child guidance counsellors.
- Through partnership with parents and formal observations, staff will make every effort to identify any behavioural concerns and the causes of that behaviour. From these observations and discussions, a plan will be implemented to best support the child.

### **Children under three years:**

- When children under three years old behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
- We understand that in children's early development, they are learning the concept of sharing and turn taking and it is important to acknowledge children's feelings and to help them understand how others might be feeling.
- We recognise that babies and very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.



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- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.

### **Self-Regulation:**

Self-regulation is the ability to manage your emotions and behaviour in accordance with the demands of the situation. It includes being able to resist highly emotional reactions to upsetting stimuli, to calm yourself down when you get upset, to adjust to a change in expectations and to handle frustration without an outburst. It is a set of skills that enables children, as they mature, to direct their own behaviour towards a goal, despite the unpredictability of the world and our own feelings. At HPPN we think it is of the utmost importance that children are given the tools to be able to self-regulate their emotions and deal with conflict.

### **Thinking time:**

At Holland Park Pre-Prep, we use 'thinking time' to help support children in managing their own feelings and behaviour and to take time away from a challenging situation. Thinking time provides time for the child to gain control of the situation as they are supported in reflecting on their behaviour and think about what they need to do next. A teacher will always be present with the child throughout thinking time as they talk through with the child what has happened, supporting them learning about the actions of their own behaviour. Thinking time enables the child to think about how they are feeling and/or how their actions may have made their peers feel. Thinking time is usually in a quieter area of the classroom, whether this be on the carpet, on a chair, or outside in the garden, wherever the teacher feels that the child may feel most comfortable. The teachers will never use 'thinking time' as a threat or a punishment and we do not use 'time out' or naughty steps'.

### **Our nursery core values:**

We actively promote our core values; 'be happy', 'be ambitious', 'be resilient', 'be respectful' and 'be you'. Through each of our values we are promoting and supporting children's behaviour and attitudes, teaching them how to interact positively with each other and the environment. Teachers guide children in an age and stage appropriate way to express their own feelings and emotions as well as explore ways to help them manage them. This can include helping a toddler to self sooth, a toddler to engage in a sensory experience and a pre-school child to talk about how they are feeling. Our curriculum is designed to support children in developing and acquiring skills, positive attitudes and behaviours as they progress throughout the nursery.

Please see curriculum policy.

### **Biting:**

We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them, and for younger children especially, the language to communicate with their peers. However, we aim to support children in learning that biting is an unacceptable behaviour.

### **Procedure:**



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- Staff will first attend to the child that has been bitten by another child. They will comfort and reassure the child. A cold compress will be applied.
- Staff will speak to the child who bit the other child and explain to them that what they done is not kind and we do not use our teeth for biting.
- Staff will encourage the child to think of how they can make their peer feel better.
- Staff will use stories such as 'Teeth are not for biting' to support the child in learning that biting is not kind.
- Teething children may also be provided with cold teething rings to bite on and cucumber sticks. We focus on language to reinforce the message that we only bite on cold rings and food, not our friends!
- In the case of repeated incidents of biting, we provide a shadow to follow the child closely. This person will constantly monitor the child's actions and intervene, acting to distract and divert to prevent biting frequency. This is one of the few occasions when the shadow may be heard saying no.

### **Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression:**

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need to be addressed. We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. However, we will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure that children are not hurt.

### **Hurtful behaviour:**

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

- We will help children to learn about and manage their own feelings through a range of different experiences.
- We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling.
- We offer support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them in a way that is appropriate to their level of understanding.
- We support older children in verbalising their feelings better, enabling them to talk through the feelings that motivated the behaviour.
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has a toy.



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- We support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
- We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry but encourage this where they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together.

### **Anti-bullying:**

Bullying is defined as “behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”. It is characterised by intent to hurt, often planned, and accompanied by an awareness of the impact of the bullying behaviour. Bullying is always a repeated behaviour that makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened.

We take bullying very seriously whether amongst children or adults, and we have strict procedures that will be adhered to should there be any evidence of bullying within the setting. A child who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress to another. Bullying can occur in children five years old and over and may well be an issue in after school clubs and holiday schemes catering for slightly older children.

Children must be encouraged to recognise that bullying, fighting, hurting and discriminatory comments are not acceptable behaviour. We want children to recognise that certain actions are right and that others are wrong.

Bullying takes many forms:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats.
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- Emotional: excluding, tormenting, ridicule or humiliation.
- Racial: racial taunts, gestures and graffiti.
- Social: unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.

Any form of bullying is unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately.

### **Procedure:**

- Staff will adopt a policy of intervention when they think a child is being bullied, however mild or “harmless” it may seem.
- We show the children who have been bullied that we are able to listen to their concerns and act upon them.
- We intervene to stop the child who is bullying from harming the other child or children.
- We explain to the child doing the bullying why his/her behaviour is not acceptable.



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- We give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied.
- We help the child who has done the bullying to recognise the impact of their actions.
- We make sure that children who bully receive positive feedback for considerate behaviour and are given opportunities to practise and reflect on considerate behaviour.
- We do not label children who bully as 'bullies'.
- We recognise that children who bully may be experiencing bullying themselves or be subject to abuse or other circumstances causing them to express their anger in negative ways towards others.
- We recognise that children who bully are often unable to empathise with others and for this reason we do not insist that they say sorry unless they feel genuine remorse for what they have done. Empty apologies are just as hurtful to the bullied child as the original behaviour.
- We discuss what has happened with the parents of the child who did the bullying and work out with them a plan for handling the child's behaviour.
- We share what has happened with the parents of the child who has been bullied, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving.
- If any parent has a concern about their child, a member of staff will be available to discuss those concerns. It is only through co-operation that we can ensure that our children feel confident and secure in their environment, both at home and in the setting.
- All concerns will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- Staff must be aware that a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern where there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm" (Children Act 1989).

By positively promoting good behaviour, valuing co-operation and a caring attitude we hope to ensure that children will develop as responsible members of society.

**Date:** August 2021  
**Reviewed by:** P. Culling  
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