

Wharfedale Montessori School and Wharfedale Babies

BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

Date created: September 2011

Person Responsible: Principal

Review period: Annually

Last reviewed &
Adapted: May 2017

Last re-written:

Next due for review: May 2018

Purpose and Aims of Policy:

The Montessori School approach:

In the Montessori educational approach great emphasis is placed on learning how our behaviour affects those around us. From the earliest years when a child first enters the nursery or pre-school, what might be classed as personal-social education is given in what we refer to as the grace and courtesy exercises and roleplay.

The ground rules in Montessori Schools are set in place to build a climate of respect. They are worded and discussed, for the different classes, age appropriately and are as follows:

These rules, are not in place as a means of imposed control, rather they are there in order to ensure a safe, happy and harmonious community. They are consistent with Government guidance "Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in school" (DCSF July 2011).

We do not hurt anybody physically or emotionally

We do not interrupt others' work

We do not run, yell, or snatch things from others in school

We always return things to their place complete and ready for others to use.

It's very important that adults can intervene and guide children, but in Montessori we're trying not to *interfere*. We aim to offer the children a sense of freedom within clear boundaries. The children learn how the way they behave affects others; they are taught to respect each other's needs in all aspects of living. We discuss all the different ways people can hurt each other either verbally or physically as well as discussing what care and respect and kindness looks like.

Children learn to respect each other's physical personal space, not to spoil each other's work, and how such things as playing scary monsters or rough tough play might be very

frightening to some children. We give the children examples of the sort of things that would hurt people's feelings if they were said, such as; you think a person's new coat is horrible, or that you did not enjoy their birthday party. These are classic examples of the sort of things a small child might say without understanding the consequences of their words at all. Even pulling nasty faces can scare very small children and we explain carefully all such things on a regular basis during discussion or circle time. Regularly taking things from other children's school bags, lunch boxes or coats, or theft of any kind, can also be defined as a form of bullying.

Any child who exhibits the above mentioned behaviours persistently despite being told of their effects could be defined as a bully even in early years.

With the very young children we often use puppets in a role-play situation to give examples of what bullying can be like and how it affects people in its different forms.

When our children move into the primary class the approach and reminders are still continued but at a primary age appropriate level.

The primary children are guided towards ways of controlling feelings of anger or frustration and reminded about how their anger will affect others, and their relationships.

They have a "MAD, SAD, GLAD" book where they are encouraged to vent their feelings in written form and this is used regularly and spontaneously by the children. The events recorded are used as a basis for whole class discussions about social interactions.

Even with all of these things going on, occasionally some minor form of bullying or display of inappropriate behaviour takes place. Unacceptable behaviour exhibits itself in many ways in young children, the common factor usually being a need for the child behaving badly to seek attention either consciously or unconsciously. Often it will be a temporary passing phase with a definite related cause such as a new sibling arriving, a house move, or, more seriously for the child/children, separation of parents.

Children who behave inappropriately often tend to be needy children. In the event of an incident involving unacceptable behaviour, we would always deal kindly with both the child being bullied and the bullying child. We would take the offender to somewhere allowing privacy and have a friendly but firm talk to try and find out if anything was worrying them in school or at home.

Talking things through with a caring teacher can help a child to deal with worries and frustrations in a positive way. Giving support of this kind can be enough to stop the behaviour re-occurring. The teacher would:

- comfort and talk to all children concerned in the incident, both instigators and recipients of disruption, whatever it may be
- take into account all possible elements of the situation, eg, was there provocation? was the child who had misbehaved unwell or upset due to such things as a house move, a new baby, problems at home etc?
- work towards solution by discussion of the inappropriate nature of such behaviour and its effects on both parties' feelings and ability to get on with good things and be happy together.

A child who bullies others can also be a child who is him/herself being bullied, or is being abused in some way and we must be ever watchful for this and aware of all relevant child protection issues. Please see our separate Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. As explained more fully in that Policy, staff all have current safeguarding certificates and update as required. Copies of the Policy are available for reference at all times, and are available to staff in the classrooms. Parents may also view our full policies on request at any time.

Persistent or more serious bullying behaviours:

In the event of a child showing persistently poor behaviour, or regularly bullying others on a more serious level, we would take the following steps:

- To deal with the immediate situation, we find something different and interesting for the child to do at a table on his/her own. In some situations, we would set the child some task helping a teacher in another room quietly. Positive constructive activities of a different and interesting nature help to calm and focus the child who will be feeling bad about his/her behaviour. This work is not in a separate place or a "naughty corner".
- The child will not be allowed to join in with the other children in the usual way until he/she is able to control his/her unacceptable behaviour.
- The child is told clearly that he/she may come back and work with the rest of the group as soon as he/she feels able to obey the simple rules of courtesy and consideration of others. These include not hurting anyone and not interrupting anyone's work or disrupting by being noisy or destructive.
- We discuss with parents any actions we have taken due to the behaviour of their child and keep detailed written observations of behaviour on a day by day basis in a confidential log so that we can work together towards a solution.
- We discuss the situation with all relevant staff team members on a confidential basis.
- The child in question would be carefully observed and any incidents, complete with actions taken in response, would be written up and dated. Parents, pupil and school in partnership would seek to find positive solutions.

Enforcing Discipline:

In some instances (luckily this rarely happens), a child may lose control of him/herself entirely when having a tantrum; loss of control can exhibit in different ways such as trying to shove chairs or tables across the room, throwing things taken from a shelf at other children or pulling other children by clothing or hair. If any form of restraint has to be used, we will report this to the parent as soon as practicable, and the incident will be registered in the child's records.

If an incident of this kind happened we would quietly but firmly separate the out of control child from the rest of the group. A temper tantrum or loss of control of this kind can be very frightening for other little ones.

We would of course calm and reassure the child who was causing a problem through loss of control, attempting to distract from the point of friction whatever the trigger of the behaviour had been. We would find an activity to re-engage the child and try to find out the cause of the problem through gentle discussion and questions. If this was not working we would call the parent/carer, and care for the child until parent collection could take place. We would then have a discussion with the parent regarding the behaviour and strategies to develop in order to handle further incidents should they arise.

If behaviour continues to be unacceptable we may need to seek specialist advice and would notify parents of our desire to bring in a professional external assessor to advise us on possible ways forward. It is important to stress here that this would be with parental consent after full discussion of possible causes and solutions as listed above.

If a child's behaviour does not improve despite all our efforts and where parents will not comply with our request to seek further specialist advice and assessment we may have to ask the parents to remove the child from the school as is clearly stated in our Prospectus.

Happily this is an extremely rare situation within any school and would only ever be a last resort.

Sanctions for bad behaviour are listed on a separate sheet (copy attached to this policy).

SENCO involvement:

The Principal, as the School's EDD/SEND coordinator and SENCO, would always be involved in monitoring any bullying issue that was persistent and could be classed as a behavioural difficulty. Please refer to the procedure in the separate EDD/SEND Policy. The SEN contact at Wharfedale Babies is Holly Furniss.

If serious bullying behaviours persist causing distress and potential harm to other pupils, parents would be asked to permit relevant professional assessment and referral.

If they refused to allow this assessment we would give warning in verbal and written form of possible suspension.

If parents still would not allow assessment, following a second written warning, we would as a last resort have to ask parents to remove their child from the school.

If behaviours occur which we consider to be completely unacceptable we retain the right to impose instant dismissal

Review of Policy:

This Policy will be reviewed annually.