Behaviour Policy

LYDALLS
NURSERY SCHOOL
and CHAMELEON CLUB

Our vision is to:
1/ Have high expectations and aspirations for all children.
2/ Develop self-motivated, happy, considerate and confident learners.
3/ Provide an inspirational and dynamic learning environment.

We believe 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's behaviour stems from their feelings. Children are more likely to behave positively when they feel safe, secure and a sense of belonging and being valued.

The development in our children of positive attitudes and dispositions needs to be in place to support them with forming positive relationships with others and developing into responsible and caring individuals.

We aim to support the development of self esteem, confidence, consideration, cooperation, independence, enthusiasm, determination, empathy and respect.
The school works closely with families to develop a shared understanding of these attitudes and of the behaviour we expect at Lydalls. These expectations are shared with the children and their parents as part of an induction to the school and as part of the daily school routines.

We recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication.

Aims
We aim to create a safe and secure environment and encourage the children to become considerate and empathetic individuals. In order to achieve this we aim to:

- Nurture children's respect for and sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others, for belongings and for the environment.
- Create a safe and secure environment where there are clear and consistent positive expectations and practices by all staff. This involves children understanding the potential impact of their words or actions on others.
- Provide positive role models and cooperative relationships between both adults and children to support learning.

- Value children's contributions and efforts within clearly understood boundaries. These are established by encouraging children to be self disciplined and take responsibility for their own actions.
- Motivate children to be sociable and cooperative.
- Give appropriate praise and share this with their parents to further encourage positive behaviour at home.

Guidelines

We strive to create an environment of trust and security, so that children, parents and staff are confident that their concerns will be listened to and responded to.
Staff will consistently model a calm and polite manner even when difficult situations arise.
At all times we expect children and adults to be polite, respectful and helpful, to treat each other, the Nursery environment and other people's property with respect and care and to be aware of safety for self and others.
We do not accept any form of physical or verbal abuse or racist or sexist language; this will be challenged by staff.

Procedures for particular situations

Disputes between children

Initially, children are encouraged to settle disputes themselves. We support children to express to others when they do not like the way they are being treated, they may need adult support with this.
If a child approaches an adult with a concern, it is important that they are dealt with sensitively and that they are given an opportunity to explain what has happened. Any other children involved should have the same opportunity. The adult should ask the children if they think the behaviour has been fair, and encourage them to empathise with each other. Adults will encourage children to think about what could be done to rectify the situation. To support this staff may role model the behaviour and language that children could use to solve disagreements.
Children will be expected to show remorse and apologise as appropriate.
Staff will always step in quickly in potentially harmful situations, bearing in mind the children's safety. Adults will then explain why something is unacceptable or hurtful and the procedures above will be followed.

Responding to adult requests

Children will be expected to conform to staff requests and to behave respectfully to adults and peers at all times. Children are given the opportunity to discuss these expectations at the time. However, if a child is having difficulty with these expectations they may be supported to move away from a situation, to enable a discussion to take place. Particular types of inappropriate behaviour are discussed in larger groups or during carpet times to reinforce our high expectations of positive behaviour.

Staff speak positively about what they are requesting from children, rather than relying on using the negative. For example, saying “walking feet” rather than “stop running”, or “gentle hands” rather than “no hitting”.

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 addressing using strategies as above.

We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and are acceptable within limits. We do not consider this play to be aggressive'.

We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.

We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies - blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.

Staff will tune in to the content of the play and may suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

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, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without understanding of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings, such as anger or fear which sometimes overwhelm them.

We will support the children with managing these feelings, as they have not always yet developed the means to do this for themselves.

We help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour.

We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings experienced. 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. 'Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? It made you feel angry, didn't it, and you hit him'.

We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings. 'When you hit Adam, it hurt him and he didn't like that and it made him cry'.

We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. 'I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn't crying any more. Let's see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one.'

We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn taking develops. Children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.

We support the development of social skills through modelling positive behaviour, and by using role play, 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.

Emotion Coaching

We use emotion coaching to support children at nursery.
The steps we use in practice are:
STEP 1: Recognising, empathising, validating feelings and labelling them.
STEP 2: Exploring the issue, whilst also setting limits on behaviour.
STEP 3: Problem solving with children.

An example of these steps in action might be:
STEP 1: "I can see you look really sad. It's OK to be sad that your brother can't come to nursery with you."
STEP 2: "I understand – you wanted to keep playing on the scooter with your brother… it's OK to be sad about that…it's not OK to kick the door"
STEP 3: "Let's see how we can sort out this problem. What do you think?...[If a child needs help to think of solutions, we suggest some]…We could draw him a picture together or take a photo of you coming down the firefighter's pole to show him later. What do you choose?"

Calming down

If a child needs an opportunity to calm down they may be supported to sit down or given space until they are calm enough to resolve a situation. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child be able to manage their own feelings. We do not punish a child's rage, as that will have the opposite effect.

Some children may choose to come to an adult for a cuddle when upset. Other children may prefer a quiet space and to be given time to calm with some favourite items/toys, whilst knowing an adult is nearby and available to them. Once calm we offer children explanations and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding. We respect children's verbal and non-verbal communication regarding their preference for a cuddle or touch.

Once calm the child should be given the opportunity to explain their view point and to suggest ways to resolve difficult situations. If behaviour has been inappropriate a child will be expected

to show remorse and make reparations as appropriate. Making reparations may include a child apologising, however it is not helpful to simply say to a child; 'say sorry'. This can then become something said without meaning. We encourage children to think of ways in which they can make what has happened better. For example, they may choose to give their friend a cuddle and say sorry if they have had a disagreement, or they may take them their favourite toy or make them a picture. The important thing is that the amends that they choose to make has meaning. We suggest ideas to children where they need support.

Further support

If a child has difficulty with these expectations, we will talk with them and their parents/carers to form a joint approach to developing more positive attitudes and behaviour. When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. Children may be supported by a positive handling plan or communication passport. Where an incident has occurred that is more serious, such as a bite, we will record how the situation was managed in writing and share this with parents. We will always consider factors that may be affecting a child's behaviour and work sensitively to support their needs. Parents can talk to us at any time and can borrow books about behaviour management from our Parent's Library.

Reviewed: Spring 2026
Next Review: Spring 2027

Governors Authorisation

17th March 2026