



Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup

Managing Aggression and Challenging Behaviour including Bullying

Principles

Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup implements the High/Scope approach that strongly believes in fostering and developing young children's growing ability to control their own lives, to make choices and accept responsibility for their actions. We also believe that all children have the right to expect a positive approach to support and guide young children to develop socially, and emotionally. Staff use the **Six Steps of Conflict Resolution** in solving problems with children.

Smacking or any form of punishment that humiliates, that attacks children's sense of self and makes them feel helpless is damaging and should NEVER be permitted in early year's settings.

Policy's Statement of Intent

Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup sets high expectations of behaviour through encouraging positive behaviour. Staff acknowledges that some children are more skilled in interacting with other children or adults than others. Staff understands that the young children make social mistakes and need adult support in solving arguments and developing social skills. **The six steps of conflict resolution- the procedure** encourages adults to acknowledge children's feelings, adults to stay neutral and to find out information on what caused the problem. Adults share control with the children, and help them remain in control of the situation. It is recognized that this approach does not have quick solutions to negative behaviour, but in accordance with the High/Scope principles, we believe these quick solutions are enforced by adults and have not helped the child in long term to become responsible for his/her actions.

Under no circumstances do we use any form of punishment. We encourage children to respect themselves, each other and environment. In case of a particular incident or persistent unacceptable behaviour we always discuss ways forward with parents.



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Procedures

- All staff employed by Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup Management Committee are expected to implement High/Scope Approach.
- Through induction a new member of staff is introduced to this policy and **the six steps of conflict resolution. (Appendix 1)**
- Six Steps of Conflict Resolution are displayed on notice boards for parents and staff.
- Adults encourage rather than praise, because praise can give the child the message that it is good to please adults. We try to promote their inner desire to monitor and control behaviour.
- Staff minimizes negative behaviour within a framework of safety and supportive adult-child-interactions.
- Adults provide a positive role-model & use positive and supportive strategies in discussing and solving issues with young children.
- When discipline methods are used they focus on the negative actions/words, not on the child.
- Adults provide safe, stimulating and developmentally appropriate environment. Adults plan activities based on children's interests.
- Adults support children to express themselves.
- Adults provide a caring environment where a child is accepted for himself/ herself.
- If a child expresses strong, frustrating feelings (shouting, for instance), adults support the child to find a calming place, where a child and adult stay for a while. This may be a quiet book corner or sand tray. The adult keeps acknowledging the child's strong feelings.
- Adults observe the child and after a child has had time to 'bail out' the strong feelings, adults continue to problem solve and find solutions.
- If the staff were concerned about a child's behaviour they would record these concerns and discuss them with the parents. They would hope that from this joint approach the child is supported at home and in the playgroup by consistent approach.



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- If the staff find that they are still very concerned about the behaviour, or that there appears to be underlying reasons for it, which are beyond their control, they would encourage the parent to seek advice on this matter through their Doctor or Health Visitor.
- If at any time the staff is concerned, through factual observations they have from working with or talking to the child that the behaviour may be a symptom of abuse they will act in accordance with the Child Protection Policy.

Anti Bullying

We are committed to providing a caring & safe environment where all Children & Staff can develop to their full potential. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our setting.

Bullying

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. Bullying has been described as the 'willful conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone' (Tattum & Herbert 2000).

The following are considered types of Bullying (this list is not exhaustive);

- Verbal Bullying - this is the most common type and includes teasing, name-calling and threats.
- Non-Verbal Bullying - this includes non-verbal forms of communication including hand gestures; facial expressions and body language.
- Physical Bullying - this can range from a push or shove to a physical assault.
- Exclusion Bullying - Phrases such as 'you're not playing with us' may indicate bullying of this kind.
- Spoiling/Hiding Things - Knocking/destroying the work of another

Recognizing Bullying

The following signs may indicate that 'something is wrong' (not an



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exhaustive list). Staff need to consider and be alert to all the possibilities including Bullying. For example a child's

- Unwillingness to come to the playgroup which they had previously enjoyed
- Atypical soiling
- Fear to say what is happening when given an opportunity to do so
- Disturbed sleep & becoming upset for no apparent reason either at home/playgroup
- Unexplained behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn in groups or showing signs of stress
- Loss of interest in activities they previously enjoyed.

Procedures to Deal with Bullying

- At the beginning of the term the staff will draw out the appropriate rules for the Playgroup.
- The staff will display these for parents and children. For parents they will be issued in the first newsletter and be on display in the setting. Parents will be encouraged to discuss the Playgroup rules with their child.
- Children will be reminded of the rules each morning and afternoon at Greeting Time.
- Rules will be displayed in simple form, by using visuals as much as possible so the children can understand them easily.
- For instance, the rules will say
 - Inside no running, no jumping, no shouting.
 - Inside and outside, we listen to each other.
 - Inside and outside, we don't hurt each other.
 - Inside and outside, we try and help each other.
 - Inside and outside, we take turns and share with each other.
 - Inside and outside, we listen to the staff and do what we are told.
- If a problem arises, the problem will be discussed between the Key Worker and the parents, and a new rule agreed or further advice sought, in case of additional needs.
- Staff must be consistent, follow the rules, acknowledge positive actions and practice problem solving steps. Please see appendix 1. They will try and nip the issue in the bud and not let it become too big.



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- If unwanted behaviour persists the staff should involve the parents. Staff will have meetings with both set of parents to share observations about any issues arising and agree together an Action Plan. Parents will be asked to sign the Action Plan and to work with the staff on its implementation.
- Parents are invited to be involved in the drawing up of any rules and their cooperation is needed in carrying them out. If you as a parent have any concerns, please consult with the staff as soon as possible. If a parent feels the issue is not been addressed or they wish to take matter further, parents should follow the procedures set out in Compliments/Comments/Complaints Policy.
- If the Playgroup staff, believe that the child displaying bullying behavior has underlying issues that may suggest a child protection issue, Staff are advised to forward their concerns to Gateway Team and follow the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.
- If playgroup staff feel they have exhausted all attempts to resolve an issue, they will then bring the issue to the Management Committee.
- Issue will be then be discussed in strict confidence, with Management Committee and any external bodies deemed essential brought in to assist in the management of situation, parents/ guardians will be kept informed throughout this time of the progress.
- If a solution still cannot be found, Management Committee reserve the right to exclude the child for a temporary period or permanently if all points have been exhausted. Please note this is last alternative, and will be avoided at all costs.

This policy was reviewed and updated by Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup Committee on 06/2015, and reviewed again on 01/2016 and 12/2016.

This policy links with the following others;

- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Data Protection policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Partnership with parent's policy



Appendix 1

Six steps of conflict resolution

1. **Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.** Place yourself between children, on their level. Use a calm voice and gentle touch; remain neutral rather than take sides.
2. **Acknowledge children's feelings.** Say something simple such as "You look really upset." If needed, set limits positively: "pushing needs to stop" and hold the object.
3. **Gather information.** Ask "What's the problem?" Or describe the problem you see and look for yes or no response. Do not ask 'why' questions as young children focus on what the problem is rather than understanding the reasons behind it.
4. **Restate the problem.** "So the problem is" Use and extend the children's vocabulary.
5. **Ask for solutions and choose one together.** Ask "What can we do to solve this problem?" Encourage children to think of solutions but offer options if the children are unable to at first.
6. **Be prepared to give follow up support.** Acknowledge children's accomplishments e.g. "You solved the problem!" Be prepared to give follow-up support.

Problem solving actions and phrases guidance taken from highscope programme and kids and conflict website.

www.kidsandconflict.com