

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

Aim

Our interactions with children is serviced on the importance of rights and dignity for the child, acknowledging and accepting children’s feelings and encouraging these feelings to be expressed.

At The Little Village we encourage acceptable forms of behaviour by using strategies that build children’s confidence and self-esteem. Our Village staff provide children with support, guidance and opportunities to manage their own behaviour and promote collaborative approaches to behaviour guidance between the stakeholders and/or external agencies.

Natural Quality Standard

This policy links to the following NQS: National Quality Standards 2.3.1, 2.3.4, 2.3.3

Links to other policies

- Biting Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Keeping of Records Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy

Sources

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 168
- Kids Matter
- Phillip Rowell “Guiding Children’s Behaviour’ NCAC factsheet



Strategy

In creating this policy, The Little Village has taken into consideration the needs of all its stakeholders with the child at the core of its purpose. For this reason, the following strategies and practices aims to:

- While the staff villagers at TLV are aware and respect individual children's and families' backgrounds and beliefs, it may be necessary to balance the individual needs of each child with evidence-based practice sourced from recognised authorities on care and education.
- The Work Health and Safety (WHS) states that employers have a duty of care to their employees to ensure that the working environment supports emotional and mental wellbeing. Staff/educators/carers who are implementing behaviour guidance strategies and/or plan for children that display inappropriate behaviours (especially if behaviour is aggressive towards other children or adults) need continued support and assistance. Staff/educators/carers can experience levels of stress and anxiety, which may lead to sickness or apathy in workplace. Therefore their needs, mental and physical wellbeing needs to also be considered.

We believe in encouraging children to resolve problems, and manage defeats and frustrations where appropriate. This can be achieved by exploring possible solutions, and helping children develop their resilience by learning to understand and deal with their emotions. This will depend on the child's age and level of development.

Steps that we take towards establishing acceptable behaviour management include:

- Setting and maintaining appropriate limits of behaviour, encourage children to be involved in this. Write up TLV behaviour guidelines and rules and display in room and also ensure parents/families sight behaviour guidance policy and child behaviour agreement on enrolment
- Explain the appropriate uses of materials and equipment, establish play spaces which include areas where children can find solace, peace, and relaxation
- Reinforcing positive behaviour with praise

- Explaining why behaviour is inappropriate or unacceptable and providing acceptable options
- Offering children choices and encouraging decision making
- Setting realistic expectations which are age and stage appropriate
- A calm, controlled tone of voice and attitude should be assumed by educators/staff/carers in all situations. It is not appropriate to use any form of physical punishment with children, and it is important not to demean, make fun, belittle or frighten a child as a form of punishment.

NB: IF a child becomes violent towards staff and/or children it may be necessary to remove the child immediately from the setting/room. While every effort is made to support a child with additional needs and subsequent behavioural concerns, we depend on family cooperation. Parent may be asked to collect the child if the child continues to put educators and children safety and wellbeing at risk. TLV reserves the right to suspend and/or cancel the child enrolment providing 2 (two) week notice if the parent/legal guardian does not show cooperation with TLV recommendations and guidelines.

In Practice

The following behaviour management techniques are implemented at TLV:

PREVENTION:

A well-designed and equipped room, tailored to the needs of the children prevents frustration, interruptions and hazards. It offers privacy, independence and easy supervision. The daily routine should provide enough time for play, a sense of security, little waiting for children and a well-planned transitions between activities and routines.

Primary educators, Educational Leader and Families will consult to create Behaviour Management Guide for children identified as having challenging behaviours or additional needs. The strategies taken may be individualised to address the needs of the little villagers.

CONSISTENCY:

All educators throughout TLV, and not just the child's primary carers, need to follow strategies outlined in Behaviour Management Guide to ensure consistency. Families are also strongly encouraged to follow the plan at home.

POSTITIVE REINFORCEMENT:

This could be the basic procedure used in all rooms. Redirecting unacceptable behaviour to an acceptable alternative focuses on the positive rather than the negative. This can be enhanced through praise

MODELLING POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS:

When staff demonstrate appropriate behaviour and communication through their every day actions, children learn what is expected from them i.e. it is not appropriate to sit on tables and benches and the ask children not to do this.

LIMIT SETTING:

Staff need to set a few clear, simple rules that are appropriate to the age of the children in their care-groups. It is appropriate to involve older children in the process by creating and discussing the “rules” together. Limits and expectations should be displayed both in pictures and in writings at the child level, allowing parents and other staff/casuals. Children should be reminded of what they need to do in a positive tone and staff should monitor and acknowledge children for remembering the “rules”.

PROBLEM SOLVING:

Staff can appeal to children’s growing cognitive reasoning by involving them in solving their own issues. Staff can ask children questions to help them identify their needs, feelings, causes and choices. The following problem solving techniques are to be used for all children within TLV:

- Remind and help the child to stop and take a deep breath!
- Collect information about the event and how the child feels i.e. “Tell me what happened? Why did you...? How are you feeling?”
- State the issue/problem clearly back “You want the puzzle but so does Andy. What can we do so you are both happy? What would be a better way to sort that out?”
- Generate ideas with the children about what can be done, encourage them to use their words even silly ideas as well as practical ones, avoid criticising ideas.
- Evaluate these ideas i.e. “ So what will happen if you...?” “will it solve the problem?”
- Go back through the ideas the children generate and ask which one they are going to try. Implement their strategy and congratulate the child/ren on their problem solving.





LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

Through the use of ...“If...then...” statements, children can be helped to see the logical outcomes of their actions. For example, “if you run inside then you could trip and hurt yourself or someone else!”

FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS:

We believe the strongest practice for behavior guidance is working with families to create continuity and consistency for each child. Upon enrolment families will be provided with copy of TLV’s Behavioural Guidance Policy and will seek information from families about their guidance strategies used at home. Families are always welcomed to express their thoughts, expectations and feelings openly with staff.

However, should a child’s behaviour begin to affect overall classroom management, the Room Coordinator or Responsible Person will ensure the following processes are adhered to:

- Organise formal and informal meetings with parents regarding the patterns of behaviour where we will provide documentations i.e. incidents reports and observations to help prepare a joint Behaviour Action Plan which will be reviewed regularly.
- Families are to be encouraged to make an appointment with their GP and if necessary ask for referral to a paediatrician or/and relevant specialist.
- If the behaviour is violent and continues with no improvement putting the safety of staff and children at risk, TLV may arrange with the family a short break for the child to allow all stakeholders reprieve from the pattern of behaviour.
- The Little Village may also consider offering reduced hours and/or days for the child’s attendance, particularly if the child’s need cannot be met without additional resources or the support of an additional staff member i.e. inclusive support staff.
- In such situations, The Little Village will complete a risk assessment that will take into consideration the child’s safety and comfort as well as that of the rest of the villagers.

Families who are unwilling to follow TLV recommendations may have their care reduced to more manageable times or ultimately, the cessation of care altogether. This will only occur if TLV feels they are unable to manage a child’s effective care without compromising the safety and care of all its villagers and all other practices have not been successful.

Management of Unacceptable Behaviours – Natural Escalation

Warning

1. A child is given a verbal reminder of acceptable behaviour, by outlining 'green choices' versus 'red choices'
2. Staff Villager will count down from 3, to allow the child time to make their choice and redirect behaviour.
3. Limit-setting and problem solving strategies can take place here if another child is implicated.
4. If a child's behaviour is aggressive, they will be guided to quiet place away from children to allow time to reflect without bringing harm to self or others. Adequate supervision will be maintained.

2nd Warning

1. If a child continues to show disruptive behaviours, the child is given the choice of logical consequences and positive redirection.
2. Steps 2-4 will be repeated.

3rd Warning

1. A child that continues to display unactable behaviour will be asked to sit down to reflect on own behaviour. Reflective questions such as 'how do you feel when...?', 'how does (educator) feel when...?' will engage the child in meaningful dialogue about the consequences of their behaviours.
2. The child will only sit down for enough time that a child is able to engage in meaningful dialogue. This could be verbal or non-verbal communication that is age-appropriate. Staff Villagers will use their experience to determine child's readiness to re-engage in group activities.