



BEHAVIOUR POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation		
Last Review	September 2023	Kindergarten Head
Approved	September 2023	Principals and Kindergarten Head

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for behaviour management at Thomas's Kindergarten. It is addressed to and must be adhered to by all members of staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Thomas's Kindergarten Disability Policy, English as an Additional Language Policy, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy, Staffing Policy, Teaching & Learning Policy

Aims

Our aims for behaviour in the Kindergarten are that all children will:

- be tolerant and understanding of the feelings and needs of others;
- develop a responsible and independent attitude;
- develop an awareness of right and wrong and differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour;
- learn to have respect for others and to behave courteously towards them;
- contribute to a safe environment.

Principles

We expect everybody, adults, pupils, parents and anyone connected to the Kindergarten to be kind, honest, considerate, trustworthy, courteous, responsible, co-operative, friendly and hardworking. The [Thomas's Values](#) further support the development of children and their behaviour.

The Kindergarten focuses on four themes to develop these values in our children in an age appropriate way:

- Kindness
- Respect
- Perseverance
- Givers, not Takers

We should all respect others' feelings and be ready to help; give praise and encouragement; be sympathetic to others' needs; try our best; tell the truth; be reliable in carrying out our duties; be polite and show respect for property.

The Kindergarten children should show kindness and courtesy to all members of the kindergarten community; ask for help when necessary; listen carefully and try to have a positive approach to kindergarten life.

Teachers are expected to promote a happy environment for the children, ensure the safety of the children to the best of their ability, establish high expectations and maintain appropriate behaviour in the kindergarten. They should deliver the best possible activities and learning experiences to the children through careful planning, assessment and relevant feedback and show courtesy at all times in their dealings with parents.

Parents are expected to support the Kindergarten teachers with the education they provide to the children and to be courteous with Kindergarten staff, other parents and the wider Kindergarten community, i.e. members of the church staff and local residents.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head has overall responsibility for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour. Their role includes:

- keeping up to date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support
- accessing relevant sources of expertise on promoting behaviour within the programme for supporting Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- recognising that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by members of the Kindergarten
- ensuring all staff and visitors to be positive role models; treating children, parents and each other with kindness, friendliness, care and courtesy
- ensuring new staff and volunteers are familiar with this Behaviour Policy and its guidelines for behaviour
- ensuring all members of our setting – children, parents, staff, volunteers and visitors – to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently
- working in partnership with the children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their Key Teacher. We work with the 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. We provide information and updates about Behaviour Management including our strategies with our parents and carers as necessary.

Procedures

We encourage our children through:

- **positive praise** - we encourage children through process specific praise
- **positive reinforcement** - linked to the Kindergarten values, children have an opportunity to be 'Star of the Week' when they demonstrate one of our Kindergarten values.

Golden Rules

At the start of each year, the Key Teachers agree Golden Rules with the children to help them understand their expectations. These will include topics such as using kind hands and feet, safe movement, listening to others and taking turns.

Social stories, Circle time

We instil routines, golden rules and new situations to children through discrete staff-led input sessions to help children understand a behavioural expectation in the Kindergarten.

Strategies

We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping to find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so they can learn a more appropriate response.

- We follow the principles of Restorative Justice to ensure a consistent approach by all staff, which give the children the tools to self-regulate and manage their own conflicts over time. This is achieved through discussion around what happened, the feelings involved and how the affected party would like to move forward.
- We ensure that there are enough popular toys and resources and sufficient activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns, and use sand timers to help the children take turns with resources such as the computers.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share, praise is used to reward positive behaviour.
- We support each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our Kindergarten, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- When children behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their actions and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- We never send children out of the room by themselves.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking, nor are children ever threatened with these.
- We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.

- Mindfulness and breathing techniques are integral with children in order to promote overall well-being, aid self-regulation, and as a coping strategy for different behaviours.

Physical Intervention

- Staff will only use restrictive physical intervention in extreme circumstances where a child is in danger of hurting themselves, others or causing significant damage to property.
- Examples of where physical intervention may be used include
 - Physically interposing between two children;
 - Blocking a child's path if they are intent on hurting another child;
 - Deflecting a hand or foot, or other body part that is intended to make contact with another child or adult;
 - Shepherding a child away by placing a hand in the centre of their back;
 - Moving a child to a quiet area, with the support of an adult, when their behaviour is disturbing the activities of others within the room.
 - Using 'safe holding' techniques to hold/calm child and stop them from injuring themselves or other. This may include holding the child's arms and embracing the child in the adults arms.
- Staff will use the minimum restrictive force necessary to maintain safety and for as short a period as possible.
- Where physical intervention is used, a record of who was involved, the reason, the length of time and how the child was held must be kept and parents informed on the same day.

Children under three years

- When children under three 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 recognise that 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.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff members 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. Refer to Appendix for further details on how the Kindergarten respond to incidents of biting.

Physical play

Young children often engage in more energetic and physical play – 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 rough and tumble play is normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or “aggressive”.
- We 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. ie. our Golden Rules.

- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violent 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.
- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to 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 cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

At the Kindergarten we employ a range of strategies for involving children, staff and parents in managing hurtful behaviour. This will include prevention, communication, and celebration of good behavioural choices, and will involve the following approaches:

- Involving parents to ensure that they are clear that the Kindergarten does not tolerate hurtful behaviour or bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they have any concern.
- Involving children so they understand the Kindergarten's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent hurtful behaviour or bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
- Openly discussing differences between people that could motivate hurtful behaviour or bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, gender or sexuality. Also children with different family situations.
- We support young children to learn and understand what is hurtful behaviour and boundaries are.
- 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.
- We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
- Therefore 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. 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 his or her own feelings.
- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage as that will have the opposite effect.
- 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 explanations and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.

- 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'. Our 'Mood Monsters' are used to aid this emotional literacy, and these are shared with families to strengthen the home-school link and offer support outside of the Kindergarten.
- 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 develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.
- 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 it is clear that 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. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:
 - they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs; this may be in the home and it may also be in the Kindergarten;
 - their parent, or teacher in the Kindergarten, does not have the skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger;
 - the child is exposed to high levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse;
 - the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
- Where this does not work, we may engage external professional to support the child and family.

Exclusion

The Kindergarten reserves the right to exclude a child whose conduct at Kindergarten has been prejudicial to good order or discipline, or to the reputation of the Kindergarten.

- Temporary or permanent exclusion is at the discretion of the Head.
- Details of the procedure are communicated in full to the child's parents.

A decision to exclude a child, either for a fixed period or permanently is seen as a last resort by the Kindergarten and is made only after a thorough investigation.

Reasons for exclusion:

- Serious or persistent breach of the Kindergarten's rules or policies
- Risk of harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the Kindergarten
- Breakdown of the relationship between the Kindergarten and parents

Recording and Reporting

A good relationship between parents and the Kindergarten is essential. Parents should feel welcome at the Kindergarten and must have access to a teacher or the Head at the beginning and end of each session.

Reports on development and behaviour include:

- daily verbal reports;
- written reports annually;
- parent/teacher meetings twice annually.

Records of assessments of the child's progress in Personal, Social and Emotional Development are maintained in line with the EYFS. Pastoral log including records of behaviour, bullying and exclusions.

Equity and Inclusion

The children and parents are actively involved in our behaviour expectations and their perceptions are explored and valued.

There are clear curriculum guidelines for children with learning difficulties and behaviour. Appropriate assistance will be provided in a variety of ways including;

- A range of learning styles
- Using pupil's ideas and motivations as a starting point for learning
- Adjusting the conceptual demand of the task as appropriate for the child.

The Kindergarten is fully aware of the equal opportunities legislation as it relates to behaviour policies, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amended 2000) and takes account of all special educational needs, disability, race, religion, culture and other vulnerable pupils.

Staff are aware that they must make reasonable adjustments in the application of their behaviour policy according to the individual child. The school ensures that it complies with the relevant equality legislation and with the duty to promote the well-being of pupils (section 21 of the Education Act 2002, as amended by section 38 EIA 2006) and has a commitment to improving outcomes for all pupils and eliminating all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying; as well as promoting equality of opportunity, the welfare of pupils and good relations across the whole school community. It also ensures that vulnerable pupils – such as those with special educational needs, physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked-after children, receive behavioural support according to their need.

References

This policy has been informed by:

DfE Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2023)

DfE Statutory Guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2023)

DfE Advice 'The Prevent Duty' (June 2015)

DfE Advice 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools' (July 2022)

Appendix 1: Management of biting

Introduction

Biting is a common behaviour among children and can be a concern for parents and staff. Biting can often be painful and frightening for the child who has been bitten and also frightening for the child who bites. Biting happens for different reasons with different children and under different circumstances. This is part of some children's development and can be triggered when they do not yet have the words to communicate emotions such as anger, frustration or need. We follow our positive behaviour policy to promote positive behaviour at all times.

We aim to act quickly and efficiently when dealing with any case of biting. The Kindergarten uses the following strategies to prevent biting: sensory activities, biting rings, additional supervision, adequate resources and staff who recognise when children need more stimulation or quiet times. We treat any incident with care and patience, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.

We recognise that working in partnership with parents/carers is a key factor of any successful behaviour management strategy. We will involve parents/carers and explain that strategies should be implemented in the home as well as in the Kindergarten.

Behaviour Management

- Wherever possible the child who has bitten should have their behaviour managed by their Key Teacher and the consequence of this behaviour should be explained in a way which is appropriate to the child's age and stage of development.
- The child who has caused the bite will be told in terms that they understand that biting (the behaviour and not the child) is unkind and will be shown that it makes staff and the child who has been bitten sad. The child will be asked to say sorry if developmentally appropriate or develop their empathy skills by giving the child who has been bitten a favourite book or comforter.
- Following a biting incident, staff should consider implementing the following strategies:
 - a. increase the supervision of a child who is biting; this does not necessarily need to be one to one. It could be during particular times of the day, or by simply reducing the number of large group activities provided. (Where this requires additional staffing, this is usually at the cost to the parents)
 - b. make sure a child who is biting receives significant encouragement when displaying positive behaviour, and avoid excessive attention following an incident.
 - c. evaluate the routine and judge whether it is meeting the needs of the child. A good quality routine should provide experiences and activities both indoors and outdoors that have no waiting times. Whilst group activities should be for the benefit of the children and not as a holding exercise.
 - d. plan activities which help release frustration such as physical outdoor play and malleable experiences like play dough, gloop etc.
 - e. provide cosy areas for children to relax in and activities which release tension such as splashing in water, digging in sand and using sensory equipment.

- If a child continues to bite, observations will be carried out to try to distinguish a cause, e.g. tiredness or frustration. Meetings will be held with the child's parents to develop strategies to prevent the biting behaviour including parents engaging external professional support. Parents will be reassured that it is part of a child's development and not made to feel that it is their fault.
- Where a child may repeatedly bite and/or if they have a particular special educational need or disability that lends itself to increased biting, e.g. in some cases of autism where a child doesn't have the communication skills, the nursery will carry out a risk assessment which may identify the need for additional supervision (Where this requires additional staffing, this is usually at the cost to the parents).
- Should the child not respond to the above methods, we reserve the right to ultimately exclude a child if we feel this is the best course of action for all concerned. This exclusion may be temporary whilst we review other ways to support the child and the staff. However, in more serious cases or where measures are unsuccessful, the Kindergarten may regretfully make the exclusion permanent for the safety of the other children and staff. This decision will only be taken in consultation with the Head and Principals.
- Records will be kept of all incidents, meetings and strategies implemented.

Procedure

In the event of a biting incident:

- The child who has been bitten will be the priority and should be comforted and given reassurance.
- Once the child is calm staff should check for any visual injury. If there is a bite mark, this should then be washed with warm soapy water and wiped with a medical wipe. Staff will explain to the child what is happening and support the child as this process may be painful.
- If the skin is broken:
 - a. If the wound is bleeding it should be allowed to bleed as covering the wound can increase the risk of infection.
 - b. Staff should wear gloves when dealing with bodily fluids.
 - c. In cases where the bite has broken the child's skin, a senior member of staff must contact the parent/carer of the child immediately. This phone call should be sensitive and give reassurance to the parent/carer and offer an explanation of the procedure which has been followed. You will need to advise the parents/carers to contact the child's GP. If the skin has been severely broken the staff member should ask the parents to take their child to Accident and Emergency, or call an ambulance.
 - d. If further guidance is required staff should contact the local hospital.
- If the skin is not broken :
 - a. Staff will monitor the bite for 45/60 minutes and then check if there is bruising or a bite mark still present. Two members of staff will carry out the check.
 - i. If there is no obvious mark or bruising this can then be discussed with the parents/carers at collection time.
 - ii. Where the bite has left the child with a bite mark or bruising then a senior member of staff should contact the parents of the child to inform them of the incident.

- In response to a request from a parent to be informed of the name of the children who has bitten, or been bit, staff must explain that they cannot disclose this information as confidentiality must be maintained.
- The parents/carers of the child who has bitten another child/member of staff should be informed either immediately or at collection time depending on the severity of the bite; this must be handled in a sensitive and confidential manner and not discussed openly in front of other parents/carers and children.
- The staff member who witnessed the incident should complete an Incident Form for all children involved.
- The Head will be informed of all biting incidents.

Potential triggers for biting

Staff are aware that there are a range of triggers which can cause children to bite and work as a team to identify these and reduce them. Triggers include:

- Exploration – babies and young children explore the world around them using their senses, young children do not always know the difference between gnawing on a toy and biting someone.
- Teething – swelling gums can be painful and cause discomfort; this can be relieved by biting or chewing on something.
- Cause and effect – at around one years old, children become interested in what happens when they do something. For example, they may bang a spoon on a table and discover it makes a noise. This behaviour may be repeated again and again to support their learning and development. This could be the case with biting as the child explores the reaction to biting someone.
- Attention – when children are in a situation where they feel they are not receiving enough attention, biting is a quick way of becoming the centre of attention.
- Independence – toddlers are trying very hard to be independent using phrases such as “me do it” and “mine”. If a child wants a toy, or wants another child to do something this could lead to a biting incident.
- Frustration – children can be frustrated by a number of things, such as long waiting times before or after transition times. Wanting to do something independently, but not quite being able to manage the task. Also not having the vocabulary to express themselves clearly. This can lead to biting as a way of dealing with this frustration.
- Environment – an environment that does not provide challenge, or allows children to become uninterested can lead to displays of negative behaviour such as biting.
- Not having their needs met – children who are tired, hungry or uncomfortable may bite others as a way of expressing their emotions. All these triggers should be considered – it could be one of these factors or a combination of them.