9. Childcare Practice Procedures

9.10 Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour

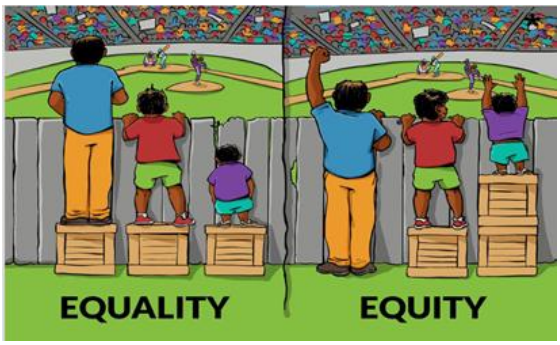
Our aim is for children to be intrinsically motivated to behave in a pro-social way, to be able to self-regulate and be able to support others to regulate themselves.

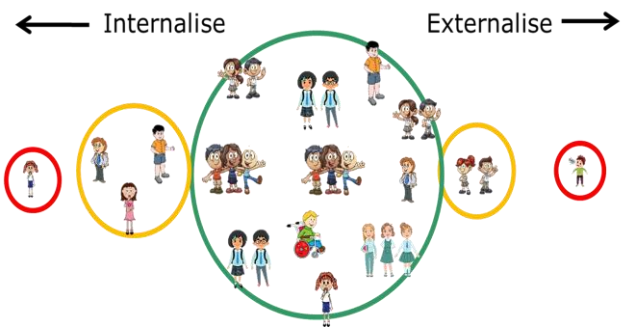
At Pirton Pre School we believe –

Negative experiences create negative feelings. Negative feelings create negative behaviour.

Positive experiences create positive feelings. Positive feelings create positive behaviour.

We strongly believe in Equity which means 'giving everyone what they need to achieve success'. At Pirton Pre School we advocate for each child to receive the resources, experiences, appropriate interventions and support in their learning to achieve their full potential. Not every child fits into one box and instead of making the children fit into one box we need to support them in the box that best suits them.





We have a Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour (TAB) which allows us to –

- understand that behaviour is communication

- analyse behaviour rather than moralise about it
- look for the root cause of the behaviour and consider their feelings and experiences (roots and fruits/the iceberg model)
- model therapeutic practices with all children, adults and parents or visitors from outside
- choose our language carefully to disempower and deescalate unsocial or antisocial behaviours
- have a good understanding of Child Psychology and Development (including Attachment and Trauma)

What is Pro-Social Behaviour?

Children like, and thrive, on feedback on their prosocial behaviour. We do not take pro social behaviours for granted but do not overly celebrate/reward them.

When children feel safe, liked, praised, rewarded, included, involved, consulted, motivated, heard, rested, successful, accepted, needed, appreciated and nurtured they are more likely to behave pro-socially.

We can assess children's pro social development by their understanding, recognition and ability to adhere to our Golden Rules –

- Friendly faces
- Listening ears
- Kind voices
- Using our words
- Kind hands
- Sensible feet

How will Pro-Social Behaviours be Encouraged?

- Be a role model
- Use positive and warm body language
- Give non-verbal feedback, for example a thumbs up, or pointing to your smile, a wink.
- Being aware of our tone of voice, remaining calm. We avoid displaying feelings of frustration and disappointment.
- Subtle praise and compliments are given. These are specific to the pro social behaviour observed i.e. "thank you for picking up the lego. That is really helpful", "I noticed that…."
- Providing encouragement rather than instructions e.g. "Could you help me find three cars to put in the basket?" rather than "Tidy up!"
- Spending quality time with the children, having fun and playing
- Say what you want not what you don't want e.g. "I'd really like it if you sat on your chair" rather than "Don't stand on the chair"
- Use limited choices

- Disempower any unsocial behaviour by redirecting our attention and disengaging from the behaviour displayed
- Talk about our Golden Rules consistently with the children and ask for their contributions.
- Stickers for more specific behaviours
- Share feedback of pro social behaviours demonstrated with the parents/carers
- Superstar Awards.

What is Unsocial Behaviour?

Behaviours that we may see at Pre School but are easily managed include –

- Unwillingness to share and/or turn take
- Shouting
- Invading others' space
- Throwing a toy/resource
- Displaying aggressive body language
- Using words or language that can upset others
- Unwillingness to listen and/or follow instructions

How will these behaviours be managed?

Staff will deal with these incidents consistently, restoratively and in a timely manner.

We will -

- Provide a discreet reminder of our golden rule(s)
- Offer suggestions for conflict resolution
- Provide Time In and time to co-regulate. If necessary, support and guide restorative approaches (Respond, Relate, Reflect and Repair)*
- Provide limited choices
- Appear calm and self-assured
- Maintain a neutral facial expression.

We will not –

- Shout or raise our voices (unless a child is in immediate danger)
- Verbally 'Hush' or 'Shush' a child
- Humiliate a child
- Physically intervene (unless there is an immediate danger)
- Make a child say 'sorry'
- Bribe a child to behaviour pro socially

What is Antisocial Behaviour?

Antisocial behaviours have a negative impact on other people.

Children displaying these behaviours are not exercising self-regulation and are not thinking about the impact on others. These behaviours may be difficult to manage or dangerous. They could include –

- Physical assault
- Verbal assault
- Dangerous/threatening behaviour around the pre-school (throwing furniture, climbing, intimidating others)
- Bullying
- Persistent refusal to follow the Golden Rules

How will these behaviours be managed?

We will –

- Ensure all children and staff are safe. This may include clearing the vicinity or, if safe to do so, removing the child
- Provide Time In* and time to co-regulate. If necessary, support and guide restorative approaches (Respond, Relate, Reflect and Repair)**
- Allow the child space and time if needed.
- Provide limited choices
- Appear calm and self-assured
- Maintain a neutral facial expression
- Only use Physical intervention as a last resort and only by staff trained to do so
- Alert either the Manager or Assistant Manager

We will not –

- Put ourselves or others in danger
- Escalate the situation or antagonise
- Invade a child's space until they are ready
- Use formal physical intervention or restraint unless trained or if someone is at imminent risk of harm (physical intervention or restraint is always a last resort)

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We will –

- Share occasions of pro-social, unsociable and antisocial behaviour in a timely way. This could be done by –

- Super star award

- Verbal feedback at handover
- Feedback via Tapestry
- A telephone call

- Arrange meetings as appropriate to discuss
- Share observations and assessments undertaken such as ABC charts
- Signpost parents to support groups and external agencies, if required
- Offer additional support through the Early Help Team or Inclusion Officer.

Recording

Any instances of unsocial and/or antisocial behaviour are recorded in the incident book and any other relevant forms including accident forms. Observation and assessment records such as ABC charts are kept too.

Exclusion

We may use fixed term exclusions as these can allow us time to help create a better plan to support the child and or protect others. They are in place for the shortest possible time.

Permanent exclusion could be used where we are unable to use the current resources to keep the child and or other people safe from significant harm.

These are only used as a last resort.

Physical Handling

We use the principle of applying reasonable minimal force and handling in proportion to the situation. Staff use as little force as necessary to maintain safety. This intervention should only be used for as short a period as possible to keep the child safe and maintain well-being and will only be used if de-escalation strategies have failed to be effective.

We will -

- Provide a calm, gentle but firm approach and application of the intervention
- never restrict the child's ability to breathe
- encourage side-by-side contact with the child
- ensure no gap between theirs and the child's body
- keep our back as straight as possible
- avoid close head-to-head positioning to avoid injury to the child and ourselves (head butting)
- only hold the child by their 'long' bones to avoid grasping at the child's joints where pain and damage are most likely to occur

- avoid lifting the child, unless necessary
- reassure the child and provide 'Time in' if the child is willing.
- only apply a physical intervention on a disabled child if training or preferred method is provided from a reputable external source e.g. British Institute of Learning Disabilities www.bild.org.uk/

In all incidents where physical handling has been used, the following actions must be taken:

- inform the parents as soon as possible
- report to the designated person as soon as possible on a Safeguarding Incident Reporting form, ensuring that it is clearly stated when and how parents were informed. Parents are asked to sign a copy of the form which is then kept on the child's file.

***Time in** = a positive alternative to Time Out. The underlying premise is that when a child is struggling with behaviour, they need our guiding, support and care even more than normal. This is called co-regulation and is vital for children to understand feelings and behaviour.

****Time In Stages**

- **Respond**

  A child could be in a negative stress system (fight or flight, freeze) and may need a strategy to help calm them before we are able to 'relate'

  Provide regulation such as a distraction, fidget toy, crunchy snack, sensory input or mindful activity.

- **Relate**

  To co-regulate, a child needs to feel safe and secure. We need to have, or be –

  - A warm, friendly, expressive face
  - Plenty of time
  - Positive body language
  - Be attentive and in-tune
  - Acknowledge feelings and meet body language
  - Let them know we are on their team

- **Reflect**

  Have an open, non-judgemental conversation about what happened, the reasons it happened.

- **Repair**

  Encourage the child to ‘put themselves in someone else’s shoes’. Talk about their feelings and those of the others that have been affected. Use resources such as the Colour Monster, books about feelings, the ‘How do you feel today?’ board.

  Ask the child for their thoughts on repairing the situation. How could they make it better?

  We will not ask a child to say sorry unless they choose to. Instead, we will ask a child if they would like to check to see if they’re okay. They may choose to give them a hug. But no action is forced.

  We would offer to repair together to reduce self-consciousness.