



Positive behaviour management Policy

Written in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024): Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements: Supporting and understanding children's behaviour

3.58 Providers are responsible for supporting, understanding, and managing children's behaviour in an appropriate way.

3.59 Providers must not give or threaten corporal punishment or any punishment which could negatively affect a child's well-being. Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by anyone who is caring for or is in regular contact with a child, or by anyone living or working in the premises where care is provided. Any early years provider who does not meet these requirements commits an offence. A person will not be considered to have used corporal punishment (and therefore will not have committed an offence), if physical intervention was taken to avert immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary.

3.60 Providers must keep a record of any occasion where physical intervention is used, and parents and/or carers must be informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

At Little Squirrels, we believe that behaviour is part of a child's developmental journey. Through consistent guidance, role modelling, and partnership with parents and carers, we aim to empower children to build confidence, self-esteem, and positive relationships.

Our Approach to Behaviour

We understand that learning to regulate emotions and behave appropriately in a group setting is a gradual process. This policy outlines our principles and strategies for supporting children as they develop socially and emotionally.

Encouraging positive behaviour

At Little Squirrels positive behaviour is encouraged by:

- Practitioners modelling being positive role models.
- Practitioners actively engaging in play with the children and supporting their ideas giving them confidence.
- Offering choices, using voting stones.
- Having clear consistent boundaries and routines that are known within the whole setting.
- Practitioners use consistent positive language with a calm tone of voice. Getting down to children's level if they want to speak to them, not shouting across the room.
- Not to use the word 'No' but instead some words that they understand 'Chairs are for sitting on' if a child is climbing.
- Ensuring the environment is interesting and inviting for the children.
- The children having somewhere to access if they need some quiet time in all rooms.
- Allowing children to lead their own learning/play and making their own choices.
- Supporting children's independence to choose their own resources and experiences.
- Praising appropriate behaviour.
- Informing parents about individual achievements.

Behaviour Intervention Strategies

When unwanted behaviour occurs, practitioners will:

- **Intervene immediately** and assess the situation.
- **Engage with all children involved**, using a calm, respectful tone and age-appropriate language.
- **Discuss feelings** and support children in recognising how their actions affect others.
- **Redirect younger children** using distraction or alternative activities.
- **Do not use punitive language** such as "naughty" or "bad". Instead, we separate the behaviour from the child.
- **Use alternatives to forced apologies**, such as comforting gestures, drawing a picture, or Makaton signs.

Practitioners will **not**:

- Shout, intimidate, or use physical punishment.
- Use exclusion strategies such as a "naughty chair" or "time out."
- Withhold food or treats under any circumstances.
- Leave the child alone to regulate themselves.

Instead, we use **reflective or calming time** to help children regain composure in a supportive way. Practitioners will be there to support the child until they are fully regulated.

Behaviour support

If challenging behaviour persists despite consistent strategies:

- Practitioners will work closely with parents/carers to ensure consistency within boundaries and routine.
- Outside support (e.g. SENCo, Health Visitor) may be recommended.
- Incidents will be recorded, and **ABC (Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence)** charts will be used to identify triggers and patterns.

Biting Policy

Biting is a common but distressing behaviour in early childhood. We handle incidents with sensitivity and confidentiality. Our aim to support both the child who bites and the child who is bitten.

Why Children Bite

Biting may occur due to:

Exploration or sensory stimulation.

Teething discomfort.

Cause-and-effect curiosity.

Attention-seeking.

Imitation of peers.

Frustration, anxiety, or stress.

Communication delay to express emotions.

Response and Prevention

We use the **“Who, What, When, Where”** method to understand each incident:

- **Who** was involved?
- **What** happened before and after?
- **When** did it happen?
- **Where** did it take place?

Prevention Strategies:

- Provide teething toys or sensory items.

- Ensure children's individual routines are met to reduce tiredness or hunger.
- Closely monitor high-risk situations (e.g. sharing toys, giving each other space).
- Reinforce positive behaviour with attention and praise.
- Encourage emotional expression using language, visuals, and play.
- Create calm, predictable environments to reduce stress.

Involving Parents and Carers

Working in partnership with families is essential. We ask parents to:

- Inform us of any relevant changes to their circumstances which may affect their child's behaviour, e.g. new baby, moving to a new house, bereavement, divorce, separation, or any illnesses etc
- Form close professional relationship with parents.
- Reinforce behaviour expectations at home.
- Collaborate with practitioners and support agreed strategies.

We promise to:

- Communicate daily about your child's behaviour and progress.
- Be consistent, non-judgmental, and supportive.
- Offer guidance and external support when needed.

Strategies for Inconsiderate Behaviour

All practitioners, students, and volunteers are expected to use **positive guidance** strategies:

- Help children identify and express feelings.
- Acknowledge positive behaviours like sharing and kindness.
- Avoid giving attention only in response to negative behaviour.
- Support children in problem-solving conflicts.
- Never isolate or punish children physically or emotionally.
- Consistent attachment with a key person
- Gentle, patient responses
- Focus on emotional support and co-regulation

Where necessary, physical restraint is used **only** to prevent injury or serious damage and is documented thoroughly, with parents informed the same day.

Rough and Tumble Play & Fantasy Play

We recognise the value of fantasy and physical play, which may include aggressive themes. While not inherently harmful, boundaries are necessary:

- We engage in play to teach empathy and conflict resolution.
- We set clear limits and guidelines for physical play.
- We use fantasy themes as “teachable moments” to reinforce values.

Special educational needs

Children with SEN may need individual strategies according to their specific needs. Our nursery SENCO will support children and share strategies with practitioners.

Policy updated by Kylie Jones and the Little Squirrels team **January 2026**