



*Village Hall, Chapel Road, Fingringhoe, Colchester, CO5 7BH*

*☎ 01206 729731*

*Registered Charity No. 1202216*

## **09 Childcare practice procedures**

### **09.12 Well-being and Relationship Policy**

'When we look beyond the behaviour and see the emotion, we respond with love and connection instead of control and sanction.'

Our setting has adopted a whole setting approach to behaviour, using trauma informed practice. Behaviour is understood neuro-scientifically as a communication of unmet need or as an adapted, defensive response. The understanding that children learn best within positive, trusting relationships informs our approach to managing and changing behaviour. We expect staff to work hard as 'stress detectives' to identify the need and provide developmentally appropriate support, removing barriers to learning and promoting engagement.

A key person who understands children's needs, their levels of development, personal characteristics, and specific circumstances, supports this development. This ensures children's individual needs are understood and supported. Settling into a new environment is an emotional transition for young children especially as they learn to develop and master complex skills needed to communicate, negotiate and socialise with their peers. Skills such as turn taking and sharing often instigate minor conflicts between children as they struggle to deal with powerful emotions and feelings. During minor disputes, key persons help children to reflect and regulate their actions and, in most instances, children learn how to resolve minor disputes themselves. However, some incidents are influenced by factors, requiring a strategic approach especially if the behaviour causes harm or distress to the child or others. These situations are managed by all staff using a stepped approach which aims to resolve the issue and/or avoid the behaviour escalating and causing further harm. This is an unsettling time for young children. Practitioners are alert to the emotional well-being of children who may be affected by the disruption to their normal routine. Where a child's

behaviour gives cause for concern, practitioners take into consideration the many factors that may be affecting them. This is done in partnership with the child's parents/carers and the principles of this procedure are adhered to

The setting manager will:

- ensure that all new staff attend training on trauma informed practice approach
- to support staff to use the stepped approach as laid out in the policy.
- advise staff on how to write and follow a dysregulation plan.

Children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control. Children are never labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by removing them from the group to be left in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. If a child is distressed or causing harm to others, it may help to remove them from the immediate environment where the incident occurred. They should be taken to a quiet area by their key person to support co-regulation. If appropriate, the key person can use this time to help the child reflect on what has happened.

**As part of promoting positive behaviour, we promote British values in our everyday practice:**

When thinking about and supporting behaviour and relationships, we take account of the following British values:

**Democracy – Learning about and taking an active role in making decisions together**

**Fairness and equality.** We encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, helping children to know their views count, showing consideration for other's opinions and values. We capitalise on opportunities for talking about feelings, e.g., when children do and do not need help and to develop inquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

**Individual liberty – We have the right to believe, act and express ourselves freely and the freedom to make our own choices.** We encourage children to develop a positive sense of

themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities.

**Mutual respect and tolerance – We should treat others how we want to be treated, we should respect each other, and different opinions:** We recognise that codes for interacting with people vary between cultures and require all children and practitioners to respect themselves, other people in the community including those of different faiths and backgrounds, and the setting environment.

**Rule of law – We are all expected to follow the law, and other rules:** We aim to promote the development of a sense of right and wrong. As children develop, they learn about boundaries, the difference between right and wrong, and consider the views and feelings, needs and rights of others. Sometimes it is necessary to help children understand their own boundaries in certain situations, explaining why we do not accept certain behaviour. Boundaries are set in a way which helps the child to develop a sense of the significance of their own behaviour which encourages self-discipline. We keep rules to a minimum and ensure that these are age and stage appropriate.

### **Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP)**

An understanding of trauma and childhood adversity underpins our approach to all relationships within our setting community. We are committed to ensuring that our setting develops a trauma and mental health informed approach, and that all children and practitioners develop positive mental health and resilience which enables them to fully engage in life and learning.

**The (TPP) values are:**

- **Compassion and Kindness (instead of blame and shame),**
- **Hope (instead of hopelessness),**
- **Connection and belonging (instead of disconnection).**

Our setting implements this approach for positively supporting behaviour by:

- Consistent calm adult behaviour
- Consistency in routines and boundaries
- Restorative practice
- Supporting challenging behaviour with dignity
- Working together with Parents and partners
- 'Stress' detecting

At our setting, we believe in the power of positive and frequent praise for good and caring behaviour as a more effective way of improving standards and relationships between individuals than constant criticism.

### **Parents as partners**

We are committed to working collaboratively with parents and carers in supporting children's development in all areas, including behaviour. We recognise that there may be different expectations for children's behaviour at home and at the setting. With a good level of communication, we can provide consistency for the children, and this will help alleviate frustrations and misunderstandings that can lead to behaviours that are unacceptable or unknown. Where behavioural difficulties continue, parent/carers will be further invited into the setting to talk with relevant practitioners. By working together, parent/carer and the setting will explore possible underlying causes and share positive strategies to ensure a consistent approach between setting and home, and an action plan will be agreed, shared and reviewed to monitor outcomes.

Our setting shares our behaviour and relationships policy on our website. Key adults have daily discussions with parents about children's wellbeing, relationships, and activities, sharing any behaviour concerns at the earliest opportunity. We invite parents to come and speak to us with any concerns they have and will arrange additional discussions as required.

**Preserving dignity: *(add your own approaches to the list)***

Positive language is used when supporting children who are struggling to cope with a situation, and a differentiated, personalised response will always be required to support the individual emotional needs of children. Behaviour management begins with a positive and proactive approach **(hope)**. Our practitioners will use the following strategies when they identify that a child is feeling unregulated:

Redirection- (reminder - what should the child be doing?)

Distraction- (what else can we find to do instead?)

Non-verbal strategies- (hand out palm facing up-stop, finger to lips-shhhh)

Rule reminder- (what's our rule about-kind hands etc, indoor walking)

Gentle encouragement- (calm voice, I prefer it when you, I know you can...)

'Time in' with the key person or a practitioner- (cuddle, story, opportunity to be listened to)

encouragement to a 'safe space' within the room/environment- (tent, den, library, under table, favourite place etc)

Peer led approaches (encouraging positive pairings with other friends).

Our practitioners support children to learn through ensuring a consistent, calm and fair approach to supporting children through stressful moments.

Age-appropriate strategies (stepped approach) used by practitioners (ages are a rough guide and responses must be differentiated for the individual child):

<u>2-4yrs</u>	
1. Always praise positive behaviour – (TPP) hope instead of hopelessness.	<p><b>Be a stress detective!</b></p> <p>Observe children's behaviours against the (TPP) Window of Tolerance or the ABC strategy. (antecedents – what happened before; behaviour = what was the behaviour observed; consequences – what happened after the event. Support them to feel regulated. Are they in their comfort zone? Consider upstairs/ downstairs thinking.</p>
2. Directly encouraging and modelling good behaviour. Use 'look' and other non-verbal symbols. 'Kind hands/ feet/ words' prompt etc. explain what you want to see.	
3. Rule reminder - ask children if they 'remember the rule about', and can they explain why we have this rule. Always use positive language. Stop sign – clear hand signal, along with verbal 'stop'.	
2. redirection, distraction, and inclusion. Directional choices, first/ then. – (TPP belonging)	

**3. Approach situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions (co- regulate using regulate, relate, reason).**

**(a) REGULATE:** Adult is calm and regulated. Rhythmical breathing pattern. Support the child to take small first steps. There is always a way back, keep the problem small. Adult to use their knowledge of the child and how best to support their regulation. Ideas include movement – Patterned, repetitive, rhythmic, hand on arm with gentle pressure, mindful breathing. Singing, dancing music, walking, running, swinging.

**(b) RELATE:** Connect – empathy: let the child know that we understand how they feel, and it matters to us. Use words the adult would like the child to use at some point in the future during these occasions. Self-talk, self- direction. Scripts:  
*'I notice this seems to be a problem', 'this is kind of scary', 'I am wondering whether this might be hard for you'. 'I imagine you are angry/disappointed/frustrated and now you don't know what to do with yourself', 'its scary/hard/big deal because...', 'we can...that should help'.*

**(c) REASON:** Invite the child to problem solve with you. It lets the child know that solving the problem is something to being worked out *with* them rather than to them. Only when the child has returned to their window of tolerance can any consequences be discussed. Having a think about potential solutions to the problem. Remind children that the goal is for a solution that works for both, and it will help them get to what they want.

### Summary of Regulate, Relate, Reason:

Noticing and acknowledging by name, affirm and validate

Sitting alongside, not opposite

Communicating and open body language, not crossing arms or legs

Keeping a calm tone

Initiating contact rather than waiting for a child to approach

Actively listen with whole body, not just your ears

Smiling and laughing whenever possible

Seeing distractions as attempts to self sooth (self-regulate) because a child is feeling stressed

Commentating rather than interrogating/translating as much as possible

**At Roman River Pre-school we:**

**help children to look after themselves.**

**help children to look out for others.**

**help children to be polite.**

**ask children to look after equipment.**

**help children to care about the environment.**

### **Use of physical intervention**

Physical intervention to keep a child or other children safe should only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

The EYFS states that physical intervention from a staff member towards a child may be used for the purposes of “averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child’s behaviour if it is absolutely necessary”.

Staff must do all they can using the approaches laid out in the policy to avoid using a physical intervention.

If a situation arises which requires urgent physical hands-on intervention this is best applied by the staff who know the child well or has a good relationship with that child to support them to co-regulate.

### **Recording**

Any instance of physical intervention is fully recorded immediately and reported to the manager as soon as possible when an incident form can be written. Parents are asked to sign a copy of the form which is then kept on the child’s file.

## **Dysregulation Plan**

If a child is struggling to regulate, a dysregulation plan will be written for the child to follow and implemented within the setting. This will be written with parents, key person and the manager. If however, the children becomes overly distressed and unable to co-regulate, the parent would be informed and next steps will be discussed. The next steps may include that the child goes home to regulate and senior management and parents communicate the best outcome for the child.

## **Children with SEN and SEMH**

We understand that some children may need additional or different support, beyond that of other children of the same age. Support for these children in collaboration with parents/carers may involve implementation of a 'one plan' and 'one page profile' with specific targets related to behaviour (please refer to our SEN policy). Where appropriate, this stage may include referral to external agencies for additional support/ assessments with parents/ carers consent. For these children, it is important that teams (parents, carers, key practitioners, and SENCO) meet regularly (TAC meetings) to ensure good communication and continued consistency.

This policy was adopted by:	Date:
Roman River Pre-School	September 2023