# Happy Little Butterfly

Early Learning Centre

# Behaviour Management Policy

## Aim

Children face many challenges throughout their lives including learning acceptable behaviours and being able to regulate their own behaviours in different social and emotional environments, or when interacting with their peers or adults.

This policy aims to:

* Reflect the values, attitudes and current recommended strategies that promote positive play behaviours and patterns
* Define clear and transparent care-giving strategies that communicate how behaviour management is implemented by the service
* Inform parents and staff about the procedures involved in behaviour management plans

## Legislative Requirements

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2017

National Quality Standards 2017

Child Care Service Handbook 2017-2018

## Implementation

#### Overview

At Happy Little Butterfly we believe that staff should not aim to control children by delivering rewards or punishments but instead should teach children how to act considerately. Staff aim to encourage acceptable forms of behaviour by using strategies that build children’s confidence and self-esteem and provide children with support, guidance, and opportunities to manage their own behaviour.

In line with Happy Little Butterfly’s belief in the environment as the third teacher, the centre’s first step to behaviour management is **prevention**. Staff will endeavour to provide a well-designed and equipped room tailored to the needs of the children attending. Classrooms will offer privacy, independence, and easy supervision and the daily routine should provide enough time for play, a sense of security, and well-planned transitions between activities. This helps to prevent frustration, interruption, and hazards.

Happy Little Butterfly staff understand that a child’s behaviour may be affected by:

* Age and development, special or additional needs
* General health and wellbeing
* Relationships with their family
* Play and learning environments including physical indoor/outdoor settings, weather, time of day
* Staff/carers’ care-giving strategies and practices
* Relationships with other children, staff and visitors
* External factors such as family, home life, school or peer group experiences

While staff are aware of and respect individual children’s and families’ backgrounds and beliefs, it may be necessary to balance the individual’s needs with staff knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices and current best practice recommendations from recognised authorities.

#### Behaviour Management Guidelines

At Happy Little Butterfly, staff **acknowledge** and **model** positive behaviour. Acknowledgement teaches children to evaluate their own efforts rather than rely on others’ evaluations of these. Staff endeavour to label behaviour rather than children when responding to both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, for example “thank you for helping me pack away” rather than “good job”.

The following guidelines can assist staff when recognising and implementing behaviour management strategies and practices:

* Staff respond to and acknowledge children’s emotions such as happiness, anger, pleasure, fear, anxiety, frustration, sadness, and pride.
* Staff acknowledge that the emotions experienced by children are significant. For example, an adult who is not scared of thunder will not trivialise the fear or anxiety expressed by a child.
* Staff understand that children may not have developed appropriate strategies to express emotions due to their age and/or stage of development. Staff hold appropriate expectations for varying age groups and stages of development.
* Staff’s attitudes and caregiving strategies demonstrate an understanding and empathy towards children.
* Staff follow the Happy Little Butterfly Code of Ethics when dealing with parents, children, and other staff members.

When inappropriate behaviour occurs, the staff member will let the child know that the displayed behaviour is not acceptable by:

* Acknowledging the act
* Acknowledging the feeling or hurt the behaviour has caused the victim
* Moving the offending child away from the situation
* Suggesting an alternative way of behaving before returning to play, and
* If the child continues to offend, employing a **Behaviour Management Plan**

#### Behaviour Management Procedures

**Biting:** Although biting is regarded as a normal developmental behaviour in babies, it is socially unacceptable and is strongly discouraged at Happy Little Butterfly in all age groups.

Should an incident occur, a staff member will:

* Use words and actions to let the offending child know that this is not okay and that they have hurt another child. The offending child is moved away from the victim.
* Recommend a more appropriate way of dealing with situations, providing the child with specific words and actions they could use in the future.
* If the offending child is feeling upset, provide comfort and help them back into play.
* Complete an incident report.

If the child continues the behaviour, a Behaviour Management Plan may be put into place. For example, a staff member will be allocated to supervise the offending child and aim to identify and prevent situations in which biting may occur.

**Physical aggression (hitting, pinching, pushing/shoving):** As above.

**Sharing and taking turns:** Staff supervise and encourage by modelling sharing and turn taking behaviours as well as planning situations that allow children to practice these behaviours.

For toddlers, staff make greater use of words to talk a child through a situation and provide words to use when negotiating sharing and turn taking. Pre-schoolers are strongly encouraged to make use of their words as a staff member talks a child through the problem.

Should a situation occur, the staff member will:

* Acknowledge what the child has done: “Emma, Jane is playing with the doll. It’s not okay to take the doll away from her.”
* Provide an alternative behaviour: “If you would like a turn you can say “Can I have a turn please?”
* Make things right: “Emma, can you give the doll back to Jane please?” If the child is unable to do this alone, then the staff member will assist them to return the toy to the other child.
* Reinforce the centre’s rules regarding turn taking: “It’s Jane’s turn with the doll. When Jane has finished her turn then it will be your turn.”
* Remind the other child of the rules: “Jane, when you’re finished with the doll can you please let Emma know?”
* Offer an alternative while the child is waiting: “Would you like to play with this car until Jane is finished with the doll?” If the child is not co-operative, staff may offer another alternative such as “Well how about coming with me and we can play with the play dough for a while?”
* The staff member will continue to encourage the child back into play.

**Negotiating with peers:** We strongly encourage the use of words for toddlers in conjunction with actions to help them in situations. Pre-schoolers are encouraged to use their words over actions in negotiating with peers.

**Displaying empathy for others**: Staff members assist the child by talking through the consequences of their action and how it makes the other child/ren feel. They will then give the child the opportunity to rectify the situation, discussing possible solutions.

**Managing emotions and behaviour appropriately:** Young children are beginning to learn how to manage their emotions such as anger and frustration. In situations where a loss of emotional control (eg tantrum) occurs, staff members will:

* Provide the child with a safe space to let their feelings out.
* Identify the cause of the tantrum and address it.
* Assist the child to follow through with the correct behaviour.

For example, a child refuses to put their hat on and loses emotional control by yelling and throwing themselves to the floor. A staff member would:

* Make sure the child is in a safe place where they will not harm people or property.
* Stay with the child until he/she calms down.
* Acknowledge the child’s feelings (“You really didn’t want to put your hat on. It made you feel mad.”).
* Calmly discuss the issue with the child. If the child continues to refuse to wear a hat then logical consequences will be enforced: “We wear hats when we play outside. If you don’t want to wear your hat you can sit here in the shade.”

***Important***:

* The use of physical punishment by staff, relief staff, students and/or visitors as a behaviour guidance strategy is **not** acceptable under any circumstances.
* The use of isolation, humiliation, intimidation or negative labelling by staff, relief staff, students, and/or visitors as a behaviour guidance strategy is **not** acceptable under any circumstances.

#### Role of the Family in Behaviour Management

Crucial to the success of behaviour management is the role families play, especially parents and guardians.

**Enrolment, orientation and settling in:**

* Upon enrolment families will receive a copy of our behavioural management policy and staff will seek information from families about the guidance strategies used at home.
* Families should recognise that some behaviour management strategies or practices established in the home cannot be enforced in the centre’s environment.

**Continued communication:**

Families should feel able to express their thoughts, expectations and feelings openly with staff. We strongly urge families to keep staff updated on any changes in the child’s family life that may impact their behaviour, for example: moving house, new siblings, changes in family structure etc. Appointments can be made with the Centre Director to discuss sensitive issues confidentially.

Should a child’s behaviour begin to affect overall classroom management, the director will ensure the following procedures are adhered to:

* Formal and informal meetings will be organised to provide feedback to parents regarding the problems being raised in the classroom.
* Families will be encouraged to make an appointment with their family GP and if necessary ask for a referral to a paediatrician.
* If possible, we may arrange with the family a short break for the child. This will give everyone time to take a breath and the child a chance to stop the cycle of behaviour.
* Families who are unwilling to follow through with centre recommendations will have their care reduced to more manageable times or ultimately, if the centre feels they are unable to manage a child’s care, the centre may be forced to cease care. This decision will not be taken lightly and would be a last resort.

## Review

This policy is created in consultation with staff and families attending the service. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed: January 2020 Next review: January 2021