St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School



Nursery Behaviour Policy

September 2026

Review: September 2027

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body September 2026

It is due for review in September 2027

Hayley Francis Date: 9th September 2026



Head Teacher



Lindsay Wise Date: 9th September 2026

Chair of Governors

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1. Aims of the Policy

At Nursery, we recognise that children are developing their understanding of emotions, relationships, communication and self-regulation. Positive behaviour is therefore taught, modelled and supported through warm, responsive relationships and age-appropriate expectations.

Our aim is to create a safe, happy, inclusive and nurturing environment where every child feels valued, respected and secure and can learn through play and positive interactions with others.

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication. When a child finds it difficult to manage their emotions or behaviour, staff will seek to understand the underlying need and provide appropriate support.

Our approach is consistent with the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), particularly Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED), and recognises that children develop these skills at different rates and in different ways.

2. Our Nursery Promises

At the beginning of each academic year, or when a new intake of children joins Nursery, staff talk with the children about how we can keep ourselves and others safe and make Nursery a happy place in which to play, learn and develop.

Following these discussions, the Nursery team will establish our Nursery Promises for the year. These are:

- Use kind hands and feet
- Always use good manners
- Look after our friends

The promises will be expressed in language that is simple, positive and meaningful to the children. They will be regularly revisited through conversations, stories, role play, modelling and everyday interactions.

Our expectations include:

- being kind and respectful to others;
- listening to and responding to adults and our friends;
- sharing and taking turns;
- using gentle hands and safe bodies;
- looking after our environment and resources;
- helping others;
- talking about our feelings and asking for help when we need it.

Staff will model these behaviours consistently and provide children with appropriate support to develop them.

3. Promoting Positive Behaviour

Positive behaviour is promoted throughout the Nursery Day through:

- warm and responsive relationships;
- positive adult role modelling;
- clear and consistent expectations;
- praise and encouragement;
- opportunities to develop independence;
- support to recognise and name emotions;
- teaching children how to manage feelings and resolve conflicts;
- stories, songs, role play and discussion;
- appropriate support for sharing, turn-taking and cooperation;
- providing children with time and space to regulate their emotions when needed.

Staff will use specific praise to help children understand what they have done well. For example:

"You waited for your friend to finish. That was kind and patient."

"You helped to tidy the toys. You are taking good care of our Nursery."

This helps children to understand the behaviour we are encouraging and supports their developing self-awareness and self-regulation.

4. Rewards and Recognition for Positive Behaviour

We use positive reinforcement to recognise children's efforts, achievements and progress.

Stickers

Children may receive a sticker to recognise a range of positive behaviours and achievements, including:

- good listening;
- trying their best;
- sharing and taking turns;
- helping others;
- joining in with activities;
- showing kindness;
- taking responsibility;
- tidying and caring for resources;
- making progress in their learning or development;
- demonstrating an understanding of our Nursery Promises.

Stickers will be used positively and appropriately and will not be used to compare children with one another.

Star of the Week

Each week, a child may be recognised as Star of the Week for demonstrating particularly positive behaviour, kindness, effort, achievement or progress.

The purpose of Star of the Week is to celebrate children's individual successes and help them develop a positive sense of self.

Value Beads

We encourage and celebrate acts of kindness within Nursery.

When children demonstrate kindness, care, helpfulness or consideration towards others, they may contribute a value bead to the Nursery pot.

When the pot is full, the Nursery children will receive a special treat or shared experience. This provides an opportunity to celebrate kindness as a group and reinforces the importance of working together as a Nursery community.

Rewards will always be age-appropriate and will complement, rather than replace, children's intrinsic motivation and developing understanding of positive relationships and behaviour.

5. Supporting Children When Behaviour Is Difficult

We recognise that young children are still developing the skills required to manage their emotions, impulses and behaviour.

Children may display behaviours such as frustration, crying, shouting, pushing, hitting, grabbing or refusing to participate. Such behaviour will be responded to calmly and consistently, taking into account the child's age, stage of development, individual needs and circumstances.

Staff will:

1. remain calm and respond sensitively;
2. ensure the safety of the child and others;
3. acknowledge and name the child's feelings where appropriate;
4. use simple, clear and age-appropriate language;
5. help the child understand the impact of their actions;
6. support the child to regulate and calm themselves;
7. model and teach alternative ways of communicating their needs;
8. support children to repair relationships where appropriate;
9. recognise and praise positive behaviour when the child is ready to re-engage.

For example, if a child hits another child, staff will calmly intervene and explain that hitting is not safe. The child will then be supported to communicate what they wanted or needed and to identify a safer way of responding.

Where appropriate, staff may use strategies such as distraction, redirection, changing the environment, offering choices, providing reassurance or allowing a child time and space to regulate.

We recognise that children may need adult support to co-regulate before they are able to manage their emotions independently.

6. Inappropriate or Unsafe Behaviour

If behaviour presents an immediate risk to the child or others, staff will intervene promptly to maintain safety.

Physical intervention will only be used where necessary to prevent injury or significant harm and will be in accordance with the school's safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

Staff will never humiliate, threaten, shame or label a child because of their behaviour.

Incidents will be dealt with sensitively and confidentially, with consideration given to the child's developmental stage and individual circumstances. All behaviour incidents will be reported on Nursery in a box under ‘incident’ and on Myconcern.

7. Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise parents and carers as important partners in supporting children's personal, social and emotional development.

If a child's behaviour is causing ongoing concern, staff will communicate openly with parents and carers. Where appropriate, this may include sharing information about:

- what has happened;
- possible triggers or underlying needs;
- strategies that have been successful;
- strategies being used in Nursery;
- how parents and Nursery can work together consistently.

If inappropriate or unsafe behaviour continues over a period of time, the Nursery Manager will meet with the parents/carers to discuss the child's individual needs and agree appropriate strategies.

Where necessary, an individual Behaviour Support Plan may be developed. This will identify the child's strengths, possible triggers, support strategies and agreed approaches and will be reviewed regularly.

In exceptional circumstances, where a child's behaviour presents a significant or ongoing risk to themselves or others, and where reasonable support strategies have been implemented but have not been effective, the Nursery may consider a temporary part-time timetable as an additional support measure. This would only be considered following discussion with the child's parents/carers and would be based on the child's individual needs and circumstances. The purpose of a reduced timetable would be to support the child's successful participation in Nursery, while providing an opportunity to review and strengthen appropriate support strategies.

Any temporary reduction in attendance would be regularly reviewed, with the aim of returning the child to their normal timetable as soon as it is appropriate and safe to do so. The Nursery will work in partnership with parents/carers and, where appropriate, relevant professionals to ensure that the child's welfare, development and access to education and care remain central to any decision made.

8. Individual Needs and Inclusion

We recognise that children's behaviour may be influenced by a range of factors, including their stage of development, communication skills, emotional wellbeing, sensory needs, additional needs, experiences at home or changes in their circumstances.

Staff will consider these factors when supporting behaviour and will avoid making assumptions about a child's intentions.

Where a child has Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), staff will work with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and other professionals to ensure that behaviour support is appropriate to the child's individual needs.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to enable all children to participate fully in Nursery life.

9. Supporting Emotional Regulation

A key part of our Nursery provision is helping children to recognise and manage their emotions.

Staff will support children to:

- recognise and name feelings;
- understand that all feelings are acceptable, while some behaviours are not safe;
- communicate their needs;
- develop strategies for calming themselves;
- seek support from a trusted adult;
- begin to resolve conflicts;
- develop empathy and consideration for others;
- become increasingly independent in managing their emotions.

Children will not be expected to regulate their emotions independently before they are developmentally ready to do so.

10. Outside Play

The same positive expectations apply during outdoor play.

Children will be encouraged to:

- play safely and appropriately;
- share equipment and take turns;
- respect adults and other children;
- care for plants, animals and the outdoor environment;
- look after Nursery equipment;
- help to tidy away resources;
- resolve disagreements with appropriate adult support.

Outdoor play provides valuable opportunities for children to develop cooperation, independence, physical skills and self-regulation.

11. Staff Responsibilities

All Nursery staff are responsible for promoting positive behaviour and creating an environment where children feel safe, secure and valued.

Staff will:

- model respectful and positive behaviour;
- establish clear and consistent expectations;
- respond to behaviour calmly and consistently;
- use positive language and specific praise;
- support children's emotional development;
- recognise individual differences and needs;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- communicate effectively with parents and carers;
- record and report significant concerns in accordance with school procedures;
- reflect on the effectiveness of behaviour strategies and adapt them where necessary.

Staff will work together to ensure that children experience consistent expectations and responses across the Nursery environment.

12. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager and Nursery team will monitor behaviour and consider whether strategies are effective in supporting children's development and wellbeing.

Where patterns or recurring concerns are identified, staff will consider whether changes to the environment, routines, interactions or provision may help to support the child.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body and updated where necessary to reflect changes to legislation, statutory guidance, school practice and the needs of the children attending Nursery.

13. Policy Statement

At Nursery, we believe that positive behaviour develops through secure relationships, consistent boundaries, positive role modelling, encouragement and sensitive adult support.

Our approach is based on helping children to understand their feelings, develop self-regulation, build positive relationships and learn how to make safe and respectful choices.

We celebrate every child's individual achievements and recognise that children develop these skills at different rates. Our priority is to ensure that every child feels safe, valued, included, respected and supported to thrive.

Completed by: Emily Lerego (Nursery manager) September 2026

Review date: September 2027