

# *Katie B* *kids*

“There is no such thing as a ‘bad child’ – just angry, hurt, tired, scared, confused, impulsive ones expressing their feelings and needs the only way they know how. We owe it to every single one of them to always remember that.” Educator Jessica Stephens

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**Please also see:**

Resources for home: supporting emotional literacy and our admissions handbook

# Introduction

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We place happiness and wellbeing at the heart of our practice and ensure that our children feel safe in a positive and nurturing environment. Our children show high levels of well-being:

- They feel at home
- They act spontaneously
- They are open to the world
- They express inner rest
- They show vitality and self confidence
- They are in touch with their feelings and emotions
- They enjoy life
- They know they are cared for

Having a child centred approach is more than just planning activities that the children will enjoy, it is empowering the children to have a voice, that we listen to, both verbally and non-verbally. This leads our children to be the spirited young people that we have empowered them to be. We teach children the skills to think for themselves and to question the world around them, and sometimes this includes the rules and boundaries that we have set. This doesn't mean that we don't set limits, but that we have taught our children to be confident to question why those rules exist. This questioning doesn't always come verbally but may be expressed through actions. It is through this expression that children learn what is acceptable and what is not.

***“Strong willed children often grow into strong willed adults who become world leaders, world shapers and world changers. Parenting them peacefully is not only possible, it’s imperative because sowing peace in their hearts now while they’re in our care will grow a future a future of peace later when the world is in their care”*** LR Knost

# What is emotional literacy?

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Emotional Literacy is the term used to describe the ability to identify, understand and respond to feelings. It involves having self-awareness and recognition of one's own feelings and knowing how to manage them, such as the ability to stay calm when angered or to reassure oneself when in doubt.

Emotional Literacy also includes empathy, i.e., having sensitivity to the feelings of other people, being able to recognise and adapt to the feelings of other people.

## Why is Emotional Literacy Important?

Children who have a strong foundation in emotional literacy develop good communication skills, tolerate frustration better, get into fewer fights and engage in less self-destructive behaviour than children who do not have a strong foundation. These children are healthier, less lonely, less impulsive, more focused, and they have greater academic achievement. It is especially important that young children develop Emotional Literacy because they need to have a recognition of their emotions to know how to behave, mature, make and keep friendships and ultimately be happy.

Emotional intelligence =

Managing Emotions, Perceiving Emotions, Using Emotions and Understanding Emotions.

# Emotion coaching

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Throughout a busy day it is important that children can experience downtime as well as access to stimulating activities. Engagement is always the goal, and this can be from a focused activity such as baking or craft or when a child chooses to sit on a cushion alone to look at a book. It is of course important that the environment contains experiences for the children that they find exciting and that are in line with their personal interests, but of equal importance is ensuring that the environment isn't too busy and overstimulating. Spaces for relaxation are necessary, especially in a busy day nursery. Children must be given the opportunity to simply **be**, and in a busy nursery this can feel impossible at certain times of the day. It is then that children can feel frustrated and overwhelmed and need support of a trusted adult. It is important that we use these times as opportunities to build relationships with individual children. For children to want to listen, we must begin by **building relationships**.

*"What is emotion coaching?"*

Emotional intelligence is learned, we help our children develop emotional intelligence by 'coaching' them. Emotion coaching is helping children understand the different emotions they experience, why they occur, and how to handle them. In the simplest terms, we can coach our children about emotions by comforting them, listening, and understanding their thoughts and feelings, and helping them understand themselves. As we do this, children feel loved, supported, respected, and valued. With this emotionally supportive foundation, the adult will be much more successful at setting limits and problem solving.

## How emotion coaching improves behaviour

- As emotion coaching responds to children when their feelings are still at a low level of intensity it reduces the need for the children to escalate their emotions and behaviour.
- Children who are emotion coached from an early age become well- practiced at self-soothing. They are more likely to stay calm even when dealing with strong emotions.
- Emotion coaching does not involve disapproval of children's emotions so there are fewer points of conflict. At the same time, there are clear limits about inappropriate behaviour - children know the rules and the consequences for breaking them.
- Emotion coaching is between the adult and the child, so children are more responsive to adults' requests and feel respected and valued.

## Emotion coaching involves:

- Teaching the child 'in the moment' about the world of emotions
- Supporting children to develop strategies for dealing with ups and downs
- Accepting **ALL** emotions as **NORMAL**
- Using moments of negative behaviour as opportunities to build trusting and respectful relationships with the child while teaching

**There are 5 key principles of emotion coaching. They are referred to as 'Tuning in and CARE'.**

## Tuning in & 'CARE'

**1. Tuning in:** notice and become aware of emotions.

- Pay attention to your own emotions from happiness to sadness and anger.
- Understand that all emotions are a natural and valuable part of life.
- Observe, listen, and learn how a child expresses different emotions
- Look out for changes in facial expressions, body language, posture, and tone of voice.

**2. Connect and teach:** use emotional moments as opportunities.

- Pay close attention to the child's emotions
- Try not to dismiss or avoid them
- See emotional moments as opportunities for teaching
- Recognise feelings and encourage the child to talk about his or her emotions
- Provide guidance before emotions escalate into unwanted behaviour

**3. Accept and listen:** listen to the child, respect their feelings, show understanding and empathy, take the time to listen carefully.

- take the child's feelings seriously
- show the child you understand what he or she is feeling
- avoid judging or criticizing the child's emotions

**4. Reflect:** what you see and hear. Name the emotions so that the child can begin to identify and name the emotions.

- Identify the emotions the child is experiencing, instead of telling the child how they should feel.
- Naming the emotions the child is feeling can help to soothe the child.
- Set a good example by naming your own emotions and talking about them with the child/ren
- Help the child to build a vocabulary for different feelings, the larger the child's emotional vocabulary, the finer discriminations they can make between feelings and the better they can communicate with other about their feelings.

**5. End with problem solving and setting limits if necessary:** help the child to find good solutions

- Explore solutions about problems together
- Redirect children showing unwanted behaviour for what they **do**, not what they **feel**
- When children show unwanted behaviour help them to identify their feelings and explain why their behaviour was inappropriate
- Encourage emotional expression through different activities, but set clear limits on behaviour
- Help children think through possible solutions
- Don't expect too much too soon
- Be aware of the triggers and be prepared to help the child through them



# Upstairs and downstairs outbursts

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What parents, educators, and carers need to understand is that in most cases, a child will only have an outburst when they are facing an issue that they feel they cannot deal with and when they have already used up all the problem-solving skills and techniques known to them.

In a nutshell this basically means that once a child realises there is nothing that he or she can do to solve an issue that they are facing, then that child will behave in a manner that is going to be noticed by people around them.

Imagine your brain as a house, with both an upstairs and a downstairs.

The downstairs includes the brain stem and limbic region, which are located in the lower parts of the brain, this part of the brain is more primitive because they are responsible for basic functions, for innate reactions and impulses and for strong emotions.

The upstairs part of the brain is completely different it is more evolved and can give you a full perspective on the world. Because it is more sophisticated and complex it is responsible for producing many of the characteristics we hope to see in children, including, sound decision making and planning, control over emotions and their body, self-understanding, empathy and morality.

While the downstairs brain is well developed even at birth, the upstairs isn't fully developed until a person reaches their mid-twenties. The upstairs brain remains under huge construction for the first few years, since the upstairs brain is under construction, children are prone to becoming "trapped downstairs", without the use of their upstairs brain, which results in them having an outburst, making poor decisions, and showing a general lack of empathy and self-understanding.

The policy forms part of the *Katie B*  
*kids* development plan and will be reviewed annually.

## Upstairs outburst

An upstairs outburst happens when a child decides to have an outburst, they make a conscious choice to push buttons to get what they want. They are in control, although they may look out of control they could stop if they wanted and are able to control emotions and decide. At this time, they will be controlled, purposeful, frustrated, aware and communicative. In these situations, the child needs firm boundaries and clear discussion about appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

## Downstairs outburst

A downstairs outburst happens when a flood of stress hormones takes over the upper brain, causing an emotional outburst. The higher parts of the brain have been hijacked. At this time, they will be dysregulated, emotional, overwhelmed, unaware and unresponsive. There is no sense talking to the child about consequences or appropriate behaviour, they need nurturing, comforting and soothing.

## Triggers and predispositions for outburst

Sometimes children who are more capable of engaging their upstairs brain may sometimes be unable to do so due to certain triggers/ predispositions for outbursts, some of the triggers/ predispositions include but are not limited to a parental relationship breakdown- changes to routine- a new baby in the family- mum or dad working/ gone away- death of a family member- changes to sleep, exercise, nutrition, expectations.

## Any outburst is a signal to adults for support.

# Providing support

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## Upstairs outburst

A child's outburst may originate in the upstairs part of the brain, meaning the child is in control and is using the moment to intentionally achieve a desired end. In moments like this it is important to respond with care, but still setting clear boundaries and avoiding manipulative behaviour.

- Use this as an opportunity to emotion coach
- Validate and label feelings and emotions, they are valid, the behaviour is not!
- Empathise and comfort the child, it is important they feel understood and supported for how they are feeling.
- Set limits on the child's behaviour and work with them to problem solve ideas for how to deal with the situation differently next time e.g. using their words to explain to their peer what is wrong, they don't like etc. or speaking to an adult to get support
- Don't negotiate with the child, be clear with instruction
- Don't give in
- Don't call them silly- their emotion/ feelings are real
- Don't distract- it is important to treat this a learning opportunity
- Don't ask why- they probably don't know why and asking why can be frustrating

## Downstairs outburst

If an outburst originates in the more primal downstairs brain, and the child is truly out of control, then the adult's response should be less about setting boundaries and more about nurturing the child and guiding them back into a state of calm and control.

- Offer comfort
- Empathise
- Give time
- Once calm follow emotion coaching steps as above
- Don't ask why- they won't necessarily know why and asking can be very frustrating
- Don't ignore what is happening- it is important that the child is given the support they need at this distressing emotional time
- Don't distract- it is important that the child feels that their feelings are valid

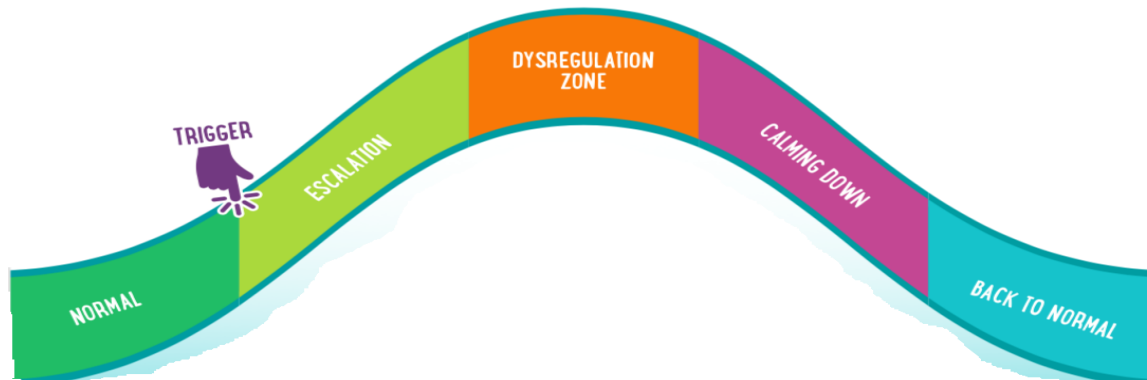


- **Ignoring a child who is in emotional distress is like ignoring a child who is in physical distress.**
- **Remember that it can take a child 90 minutes to fully calm down physically after an emotional outburst such as this so give supervision and support during this time.**




# Arc of the outburst

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We can plot an outburst on a graph.....



1. **Normal.** At first there is no outburst, but there may be some pre-dispositions.
2. **Escalation.** Something triggers strong upset feelings, after which an outburst behaviour begins and increases (called escalation).
3. **Dysregulation Zone.** When outburst behaviours reach their maximum we call that dysregulation because the higher functions parts of the brain are basically offline. Child is in fight - flight - freeze mode.
4. **Calming down.** Hopefully children don't stay in a state of dysregulation for very long and will naturally begin to calm down over time.
5. **Back to normal.** Eventually the brain and body will return to a baseline state of normal, whatever that looks like for that individual child.

BEFORE TRIGGER	ESCALATION	DYSREGULATION ZONE	CALMING DOWN	BACK TO NORMAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everything is OK, or</li> <li>Predisposed for trouble, i.e. dinnertime, rough day, over-tired.</li> </ul>  <p><b>PREVENTION TECHNIQUES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classic stuff like sleep, exercise, nutrition, consistent routines, and clear &amp; consistent expectations</li> <li>"Front-loading"</li> <li>Overall help the child to be their best self.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whining</li> <li>Arguing</li> <li>Yelling</li> <li>Physical tension in body builds</li> </ul>  <p><b>DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep yourself calm.</li> <li>Send de-escalation signals: take deep, slow, quiet breaths. Check your physical posture—your body should be relaxed, and not too tall or too close to your child. Slow your physical movements. Reduce or stop talking.</li> <li>Put on your "Face of Compassion."</li> <li>Let your child be "seen and felt."</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being "flooded"—brain isn't working.</li> <li>Fight, flight or freeze</li> <li>Screaming</li> <li>Hitting</li> <li>Throwing</li> </ul>  <p><b>SELF-MANAGEMENT &amp; HEALTHY BOUNDARIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assure safety for living things.</li> <li>Keep or regain your own calm. If you aren't calm, take your own time out—staying present when you are upset only makes things worse.</li> <li>Be available to help your child regain their regulation, or manage their environment to help with this.</li> <li>Practice healthy emotional boundaries. Avoid: talking, lecturing, rationalizing, fixing, advising, debating, correcting, threatening. Verbal interventions unlikely to work.</li> <li>Some kids need more space from you during this time, some kids need you to be physically present, but generally without much talking or involvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quieter voices</li> <li>Slower movements</li> <li>Hiding</li> <li>Physical "slump"</li> </ul>  <p><b>WAIT!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If your child is de-escalating, LET THEM! Don't intervene and mess it up.</li> <li>Time passing is helpful in de-escalation. Avoid rushing into the circle-back phase.</li> <li>Look for a physical slump or relaxation.</li> <li>"Do you want a hug to help you with your feelings?"</li> <li>Remember, you might need this time, too. Check your own physical state before re-engaging, too.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looks, acts, and reacts like your normal kid.</li> </ul>  <p><b>CIRCLE BACK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An hour or a week later, you can circle back to address important things related to the incident.</li> <li>Most important: reconnect the relationship and repair. Apologize for your part.</li> <li>Teach. For example, you can talk about the healthy coping skills YOU use when you have a hard time, that your child might also find helpful.</li> <li>Reparation. Work with your child to identify something that you can do together to 'make right' in some way.</li> <li>Please note, you don't need to do all of these. Every situation doesn't need a lesson and/or reparation, and some kids will have to work hard to build the ability to tolerate more than a few seconds of a circle back conversation.</li> </ul> 
<p align="center"><b>PARENTHOOD, UNDERSTOOD</b></p> <p align="center">Positive insights. Practical tools. Peaceful families.</p> <p align="center">Katie Malinski LCSW Child &amp; Family Therapist, Parenting Coach</p> <p align="center"><a href="http://www.katiemalinski.com">www.katiemalinski.com</a></p>				

# Questions adults should always ask

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## 'What can I do?'

### **Is the behaviour a result of something that I could have controlled better?**

Sometimes children will demonstrate an unwanted behaviour due to being too over excited and/ or too under stimulated. Examples of these may include:

- Poorly managed transitions - for example making children wait too long at meal or snack times before they can serve themselves.
- A non-stimulating play environment. The areas may not meet the needs of the children, may not engage or be challenging enough for the age group.
- An overstimulating environment with no opportunity for downtime.
- Poor routines that do not meet the needs of the children.
- Inconsistency in practice. For example, unwanted behaviours being poorly managed by some individuals within the team.

### **Is the behaviour developmentally appropriate for the child's age or stage of development?**

No? Then the child may need additional support through inclusion.

Yes? See below....

### **Is this child getting their primal needs met?**

Are they hydrated? Not hungry? Not tired? Do they have strong bonds with adults who they trust?

No? A meeting with parents / guardian to agree strategies or a referral may need to be considered? And move to next question ...

Yes? See below...

**Is the child upset? Has there been a distressing emotional situation for that child?**

No? Then we will assess the environment. Does it have the wow factor? Does it meet the needs of the child? Can we re engage the child? Can we distract?

Validate and label the emotion, as with sad and angry emotions, it is important to validate and label excitement and boredom so the child can learn how to appropriately behave in these situations.

Yes? Is the child having an upstairs or downstairs outburst?

**Upstairs outburst**

Follow emotion coaching:

1. Validate and label the child's emotions / actions
2. Empathise and support the child offering comfort if required
3. Problem solve and set limits on actions/ behaviours

**Downstairs outburst**

Don't use emotion coaching, instead:

1. Remove the child from the situation (if it is safe to do so)
2. Offer comfort to the child if they want it
3. Give time to calm down (up to 90 minutes)
4. Once calm follow emotion coaching (upstairs outburst)



# Expected behaviour

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## With babies...

- It's normal for babies to cry, it is how they communicate their needs - it is the responsibility of an adult to interpret what the baby is trying to communicate.
- As babies get older they are more able to communicate their likes and dislikes. For example, smiling or waving their hands in excitement.

## Our educators will:

- Always be loving and comforting with the baby.
- Introduce routine into daily life.
- Use children's likes and interests to promote their development and to ensure the environment is stimulating.
- Always be consistent with how they act towards and respond to babies
- Use lots of facial expressions as well as verbal cues to support babies in recognising the labelling of emotions.
- Use gentle gesture and expression to show babies that sometimes we need to set limits. For example, if a baby is on your lap and tries to reach for your glasses, they can be stopped by gently holding their hands and distracting them with something else.

## With toddlers...

- At this stage in their development, toddlers are learning to be independent, because they want to explore their surroundings. They are becoming increasingly aware that they are separate beings – that they can have different thoughts and feelings from others. Testing times in toddlers is just part of their normal development.
- Young children are driven by emotions, feeling and situations can often overwhelm them so irrational behaviour is normal and to be expected. Toddlers don't have a real understanding of time – they live and react in the moment. They are learning self-control. They have strong feelings and need adults to help them develop at this young age.
- Consistency in the nursery is essential and information should always be shared with parents.

## Our educators will:

- Stay in control. When a child is struggling with their emotions, they need the adult to offer security and to stay calm and rational.
- Be consistent.
- Have clear simple rules and routines that are easy for toddlers to understand, which are supported by visual aids and objects of reference.
- Use positive instruction. Avoiding using phrases such as "no" or "don't" and replacing phrases such as "don't run" with "please walk".
- Praise all toddlers' good behaviour and ignore minor misbehaviours whenever possible.
- Show children there are consequences for unwanted behaviour e.g., working together to make it safe then continue play quickly with little language.
- Introduce emotions cards to reinforce positive behaviour
- Label emotions through the day, so for example "I can see you are happy playing with that car" or "I can see you are upset that your friend has taken that toy". This helps children to build tools to increase their ability to communicate their feelings when they are developmentally ready.
- Never give orders, these are too harsh for a toddler.

## With pre-school children...

- At this age children have greater cognitive understanding and their emotional literacy is improving, with them beginning to understand their own emotions and recognising other people's emotions. However, they are still not capable of fully empathising with others.
- Reinforcing nursery rules to help them understand, children may still find it difficult to share for example at this developmental stage.

## Our educators will:

- Show empathy and validate their feelings, "I know you feel sad because you can't play with the truck, but your friend is playing with it at the moment" The more you validate feelings, the less likely children are to have to act on them.
- Talk to the child about how their behaviour makes others feel - reinforcing this with emotions flash cards, facial expressions, and tone of voice.
- Play emotions games and read books that increase a child's emotional literacy.
- Ask the child questions about their behaviour e.g., do you think it a good idea to ....? Why not? What should you do instead?
  - By asking them questions you are making them think through what they have done and how they could act differently next time.
  - Ensure that you follow the 10 second rule when questioning children, giving them 10 seconds to respond before asking them again.
- Set the limit and provide acceptable choices depending on the situation, for example at snack time "do you want water or milk?" or for craft "do you want to do sticking or painting?" If you are supporting a child in behaviour by offering them choices, then make sure the choices are of their likes
- Make use of targeted praise throughout the day.

# Promoting Positive Behaviour

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**Engaged** children are less likely to behave in an unacceptable or anti-social way. Children and adults also flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and where children are free to develop their learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. Children gain respect through interaction with caring adults who show them respect and value their individual personalities. Positive, caring, and polite behaviour will always be encouraged and praised in an environment where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their surroundings.

Children need to have reasonable and appropriate limits and expectations to behaviour for their own safety and the safety of their peers. Within the nursery we aim to set these boundaries in a way, which helps the child to develop a sense of the significance of their own behaviour, both on their own environment and those around them. We do this by communicating green choices, and nursery rules that keep us safe. When the green choices are followed restrictions to children's natural desire to explore and develop their own ideas and concepts can be kept to a minimum which is central to our nursery ethos. The rules governing the conduct expected of the children are discussed regularly and are agreed with the older children. They are explained to all newcomers, both children and adults.

Children are never ordered to "do as you're told", as this does not teach anything for next time. Positive discipline means explaining why. Punishment is never used. It is destructive, and it can humiliate children and make children feel powerless. Educators set realistic boundaries for children to work within, based on their level of development, stage, age and understanding. It is recognised that active play or "rough and tumble" in the early years is a natural part of the child's development and that it should be channeled in a positive way. Our nursery environment provides opportunities for safe active play inside and daily outside trips are planned in both the morning and the afternoon.

Our early years curriculum specialist is responsible for keeping up to date with legislation and research and thinking on supporting children's behaviour and

ensures that this is disseminated throughout the team on a regular basis.

## Our educators will:

- Notice and acknowledge positive behaviours.
- Use clear and consistent boundaries throughout the nursery.
- Explain the consequences of behaviours e.g., we may fall over if we run in nursery.
- Offer children choices using visual aids and objects of reference.
- Involve the children in problem solving with the use of positive and peaceful conflict resolution steps:
  - o Approach calmly with an open mind and get down to the child's level
  - o Acknowledge feelings "I can see you're feeling hurt/cross/upset/angry"
  - o Gather information from both sides - Say "What's the problem?"
  - o Repeat the problem - Say "so the problem is..."
  - o Ask for solutions and choose one together - Say "I wonder what we can do to solve the problem/help you feel better?"
  - o Be prepared to give follow-up support - Keep an eye out for what happens next and give further support if needed.
- Provide strategies to support turn taking e.g., using a sand timer.
- Share information with parents/carers about their children's behaviour both in the nursery and at home.
- Communicate and model positive behaviour, children take more notice of what we do rather than what we say.
- Recognise and acknowledge feelings to encourage empathy.
- Provide planned opportunities to discuss behaviour and feelings e.g., at circle time.
- Create an environment that minimises conflict e.g., ensure there are enough resources.
- Encouraging children to participate in a wide range of group activities to enable them to develop their social skills.

# Making praise powerful

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## **1. We make sure that our praise is specific:**

Why? Because children often dismiss general praise such as "great job!" But praise linked to specific behaviour is more meaningful and likely to be believed. Instead of "That is a fabulous picture!" we would use "I really like the way you have drawn the eyes..."

## **2. We make our praise descriptive**

Why? Because attaching a positive description to the praise gives them a positive label for themselves - it builds self-esteem. Instead of "What a good boy!" we would use "That was very Kind!"

## **3. We make praise realistic**

Why? Because praise that is too excessive makes children more cautious and less likely to risk failure because they are anxious about falling below the high standards they have been set.

Instead of "You must be the BEST at colouring in the whole nursery!" we would use "I can hear how much you have been practicing, you sound so much better".

## **4. We praise effort rather than achievement**

Why? There are many steps on the way to mastering a skill. Practicing perseverance and effort on the way to mastery encourages children to value the process of learning and to persevere next time.

Instead of "Running is easy for you, I knew you would win the race" we would use "I was proud you didn't give up even though it was tricky,"

## **5. We only praise what can be changed**

Why? Praising things that children have no control over such as appearance or intelligence can demotivate children. You can't try harder at things you cannot change."

Instead of "You are SO clever" we would say "That was really good thinking..."

# Therapeutic stories to support emotional well-being

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Therapeutic stories can heal, comfort, and reassure by offering a more helpful way for a child to look at a difficult situation. They also help to positively shift out-of-balance behaviour. Therapeutic stories may be literal; putting a child literally into their own personal story about a situation that they may have concerns about. Or they may be metaphoric; working in parallel with a situation that a child is dealing with rather than actively depicting the actual event or story. Therapeutic stories are clear enough for the child to identify with, yet indirect enough that they don't feel lectured, embarrassed, or ashamed.

Written and adapted for individual children, the therapeutic story must be engaging to be effective, making use of the child's likes and dislikes. Stories for young children are as light-hearted as possible while dealing with the necessary situations/s., The story will take a positive approach to support the wellbeing of the child. It will clarify the situation through the characters perception of it, acknowledge the characters and how they dealt with these, finally empowering the character by exploring the possibilities for action in the crisis, regarding temptations, obstructions and moral choices. The story will model the behaviour that the child needs to experience.

Therapeutic stories can be played out within the nursery as puppet shows, through small world play and through creative expression. Often this is with the child's key educator, under the support of the curriculum lead and SENCo.

# Managing unwanted behaviour

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On occasion behaviour displayed may be dangerous or harmful and in these situations some intervention may be needed. Educators will consider if they are the best person to deal with the situation at the time. If they have been hurt or are temporarily not calm enough to deal with the situation, they will ask a colleague to assist them. We operate a culture of psychological safety and team members will be vigilant to situations where they may need to step in to help a colleague who may be struggling, either emotionally or practically.

To intervene with unwanted behaviour our educators will:

1. Let the child displaying unwanted behaviour calm down, and minimise the attention given.
2. Comfort the victim (if another child is involved) and provide reassurance. We will administer any first aid if this can be done quickly- if not we will ask another adult to assist.
3. Return to the child who caused the harm or displayed the unwanted behaviour.
  - a. It is important to be at their level and to use eye contact as much as possible (taking into account age, stage and development and additional needs)
  - b. We will use gentle touch to gain attention (where appropriate) or use their name if they are not comfortable being touched
  - c. We will use a calm but firm voice
4. Explain briefly how the behaviour has caused harm or was inappropriate, the child must be asked how that behaviour has made them feel.
5. If appropriate, discuss with the child, the impact the behaviour has caused.
6. Encourage the child to make things better by returning a resource or activity to how it was, with support, if needed (for example if they have disrupted an activity, knocked equipment out of the way or broken something).
7. Not ask a child to say sorry as children do not understand this concept until much older. If they volunteer to say sorry this is fine.



Not on any occasion would a child be given or threatened corporal punishment. The only acceptable reason for physical intervention between a nursery educator and a child would be for the purposes of averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person, including the child, or to manage a child's behaviour if necessary. In these situations, this will be recorded, and parents or guardians will be informed and asked to sign the record on collection.

**The nursery educators and management team treat all parents, guardians, visitors, and children with the upmost of respect and always act in a polite and courteous manner. They deserve the same in return. Should a parent or guardian behave in an abusive or threatening manner the child's nursery place may be suspended or terminated without notice and paid fees will not be reimbursed.**

## In line with this policy and strategy we will ensure that:

1. Children are never sent out of the room by themselves OR singled out or humiliated in any way. Children may need some calm away from other distractions, but this will NEVER be called or used as "time out"
2. Staff will not raise their voices in a threatening way or use negative language. For example, "you're making me cross" or "your naughty"
3. In any case of unwanted behaviour, it will always be made clear to the child(ren) in question, that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome.
4. Any behaviour concerns or challenges will be discussed with parents or guardians, and it may be appropriate to arrange a meeting to discuss this in more detail. We always work in partnership to ensure consistency between home and nursery to resolve any issues together.
5. Confidential records for example ABC charts or emotional support plans will be kept if required so that triggers can be identified, and effective support put in place. Parents/guardians will be involved in this process.
6. When discussing behaviour:
  - a. Positive feedback and information about the child's day will always be given, and then discussion on any behaviour issues. Educators will share information/observations and any potential causes that may have been identified.
  - b. Anything negative should wherever possible not be discussed in front of the child or in earshot of any other children or parents/guardians.
  - c. The environment and the timing of discussions will be considered where possible when discussing behaviour with a parent/guardian.
  - d. It is important to work together with parents or guardians and to share knowledge of experiences at nursery and at home.
7. Through partnership with parents/guardians and formal observation, staff will make every effort to identify the causes for any unexplained and unwanted behaviour. From these observations, individual plans (IP's) or emotional support plans (ESP's) may be formed.
8. **Through effective emotional literacy children can develop non-aggressive strategies to enable them to develop effective relationships and friendships. They need to be given opportunities to express their feelings constructively and clearly.**

# Referring for specialist support

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Our educators are supported to provide emotion coaching with all children. Promoting strong personal social and emotional development is central to the ethos of the setting and is at the heart of all activities within the nursery. It is expected that the approach to unwanted behaviour is consistent and in line with current best practice in promoting positive behaviour. If despite the implementation of the settings policies, unwanted behaviour continues to exist then for the well-being of the child a referral for additional support will be made. With parental permission.

In the first instance a referral will be made to the Kent equality and inclusion team. This will result in a visit whereby nursery policy and practices can be reviewed to ensure that it is best meeting the needs of the child(ren) attending. If there are concerns over the child's progress within the setting, for example if the child's development, particularly in relation to personal social and emotional development, is tracking below their age bracket, or if the behaviour is becoming a barrier to the child accessing the early years curriculum from within the setting's own resources, then the settings SENCo will become involved. The early years best practice guidelines will be followed to identify what further can be done. If additional advice, training, or support is needed then it may be necessary for a referral to be made to LIFT, the Early Years Local Inclusion Forum Team.

If despite the above interventions there are any concerns regarding escalation of unwanted behaviour in a child, sudden changes in behaviour, or behaviour that is affecting the safety and/or the wellbeing of the child or other children in the nursery then a referral to Early Help would be discussed with the parents. This is a service provided by the local authority to families to help resolve problems at the earliest possible opportunity before they become more serious.

For serious situations involving a child whereby the settings policies are not effective in keeping the child or other children safe in the setting then for the welfare of the child a referral to the Kent safeguarding team will be considered. If it is thought that the child or other children are at risk attending nursery whilst this behaviour continues, a risk assessment will be put in place. If reasonable measures cannot reduce this risk, then parents will be asked to collect the child whilst further advise is sought.

# Nursery Values

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**We take care of the  
nursery and its toys**



**We are kind**



**We stay safe**



# A - Z of feelings

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Angry	Brave	Confused	Disorganised	Energetic	Friendly	Grouchy	Happy	Irritated	Jealous
Annoyed	Bored	Cheery	Defiant	Encouraged	Funny	Guilty	Humiliated	Interested	Joyful
Agreeable	Bothered	Cooperative	Depressed	Enthusiastic	Frightened	Great	Hurt	Insecure	Judgemental
Afraid	Bewildered	Caring	Discouraged	Embarrassed	Fearful	Groovy	Helpless	Impatient	Jumpy
Awkward	Brilliant	Confident	Delighted	Edgy	Furious	Grief	Hopeless	Ignored	Jaded
Affectionate	Bitter	Calm	Disgusted	Excited	Foolish	stricken	Honest	Inspired	Jocular
Anxious	Bashful	Clumsy	Determined	Empathetic	Fed up	Generous	Horrified	Inadequate	Jinxed
Alarmed	Bad	Curious	Disappointed	Envious	Frustrated	Greedy	Hesitant	Irrational	
Awful	Blue	Content	Dumb	Exhausted	Forgiving	Grateful	Hilarious	Ignorant	
Abandoned	Baffled	Competent	Detached	Eager	Flustered	Gullible	Humble	Indifferent	<b>K</b>
Absent minded		Compassionate	Destructive	Exuberant	Fortunate	Grumpy	Honoured	Irked	Kind
Accepted		Considerate	Daring	Expectant		Green with	Heartbroken	Irresponsible	Keen
Aggravated		Cautious	Disillusioned	Enraged		envy		Invisible	Knocked down
		Cranky	Devious						Kooky
		Clever							
<b>L</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>		<b>T</b>
Laid back	Mad	Nice	Okay	Panicked	Quiet	Respected	Sad	Sarcastic	Tolerant
Loving	Mixed up	Naughty	Overpowered	Peaceful	Questioned	Relieved	Surprised	Sassy	Trusted
Lonely	Meek	Nasty	Overjoyed	Playful	Questionable	Relaxed	Silly	Spiteful	Temperamental
Labile	Mean	Nauseated	Over the top	Pensive	Quirky	Resentful	Smiley	Scornful	Terrified
Lackluster	Miserable	Nervous	Obedient	Puzzled	Quarrelsome	Rattled	Scared	Secure	Timid
Light hearted	Malevolent	Nerdy	Obsessive	Powerful	Quivery	Refreshed	Sorry	Serene	Tired
Lost	Marvelous	Nutty	Off	Powerless	Qualified	repulsed	Serious	Smug	Tantrummy
Lousy	Magical	Noble	Offended	Picky	Querulous	Rageful	Stupid	Snaky	Troubled
Lucky	Manipulated	Noisy	Out of control	Pleased		Rational	Shy	Snarly	Tickled
Lazy	Manipulative	Neglected	Outraged	Psyched		Reasonable	Satisfied	Sociable	Torn
Loopy	Maternal	Neglectful	Overloaded	Petty		Reactive	Sensitive		Trustworthy
	Modest	Needy		Petulant		Ready	Safe		Touched

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Misunderstood	Needed	Over	Preoccupied	Rebellious	Stressed	Threatened
Mischievous	Nifty	stimulated		Reluctant	out	Thankful
Mopey	Naïve	Obstinate		Reassured	Stubborn	Tearful
Mistrusted	Nonchalant	Obligated		Restive		Thoughtful
Mellow	Nonplussed			Restful		Terrific
Melodramatic				Remorseful		Talkative
Moody				Reserved		

**U**

Understood  
Understanding  
Uneasy  
Uncertain  
Ugly  
Uncomfortable  
Unruffled  
Unafraid  
Useless  
Unimpressed  
Unappreciated  
Undecided  
Unique  
Unruly  
Up

**V**

Vivacious  
Vain  
Vibrant  
Violent  
Valued  
Vital  
Vexed  
Volatile  
Vulnerable  
Victorious  
Vacant

**W**

Worried  
Wacky  
Wary  
Weak  
Weary  
Weird  
Wistful  
Woeful  
Weepy  
Well  
Whiny  
Worn out  
Wound up  
Whimsical  
Warm  
Witty  
Withdrawn  
Worthless  
Wronged  
Willful  
Wishful

**X**

Xenophobic

**Y**

Yucky  
Yappy  
Youthful  
Yielding  
Yearning

**Z**

Zany  
Zealous  
Zonked  
Zippy  
Zestful  
Zen  
Zappy



*"When little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it's our job to share our calm. Not join their chaos." LR Knost*

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