# Jubilee Pre-School

## Positive Behaviour, Relationships and Self-Regulation Policy

**Age range:** 2–4 years
**Policy owner:** Pre-School Manager
**Date adopted:** September 2026
**Review date:** September 2027
**Approved by:** _____

## 1. Our Vision

At Jubilee Pre-School, we believe that behaviour is something children learn through secure relationships, consistent boundaries, adult modelling, teaching, encouragement and experience.

Our approach reflects our Christian ethos and our guiding principle:

**"Love your neighbour as yourself." – Luke 10:27**

We want every child to know that they are valued, loved and capable of learning and growing.

We therefore seek not simply to manage children's behaviour, but to **train and nurture young hearts** by helping children gradually develop kindness, empathy, honesty, responsibility, patience, gentleness, forgiveness and self-control.

Our approach has been informed by the principles within Abbey Wedgeworth's **Training Young Hearts** series. The books provide a useful shared language through which young children can explore how they use their hands, mouths, feet, eyes and ears, and how they understand and respond to their feelings.

The *Training Young Hearts* resources complement, but do not replace, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Our professional practice remains rooted in children's developmental needs, safeguarding, positive relationships and the statutory requirements of the EYFS.

# 2. Our Core Principle: Behaviour is Taught

Young children are not born knowing how to:

- share;
- wait;
- manage disappointment;
- express anger safely;
- negotiate with another child;
- control impulses;
- recognise another person's feelings;
- resolve conflict;
- listen when highly emotional;
- use words instead of physical behaviour; or
- repair a relationship after something has gone wrong.

These skills develop gradually.

At Jubilee Pre-School, we therefore view behaviour as an important area of **learning and development**.

We will maintain clear boundaries and high expectations while recognising each child's age, stage of development, communication skills, emotional development and individual needs.

Adults will ask:

**"What does this child need to learn?"**

rather than simply:

**"How do we stop this behaviour?"**

# 3. Training Young Hearts at Jubilee

We use simple, positive and consistent language throughout the setting.

Our hands are for helping.

We teach children to use their hands for:

- helping;
- creating;
- caring;
- playing;
- sharing;
- comforting; and

- gentle touch.

Adults intervene immediately when hands are being used to hurt.

## Our mouths are for kind words.

We teach children to use their mouths to:

- communicate;
- ask for help;
- express needs;
- speak kindly;
- encourage others;
- tell the truth; and
- communicate feelings.

Children who bite, shout or use hurtful language are supported to learn safer and more appropriate ways of communicating.

## Our feet are for safe choices.

We teach children to use their feet for:

- exploring;
- playing;
- moving;
- dancing;
- helping;
- walking safely when required; and
- travelling safely around our environment.

Adults will intervene when children kick others or use their bodies in ways which are unsafe.

## Our ears are for listening.

Listening is treated as a developing skill rather than a test of obedience.

We help children learn to:

- listen to adults;
- listen to other children;
- respond to important safety instructions;
- take turns in conversations; and
- notice what others are communicating.

We recognise that children's ability to listen will vary according to their age, development, environment, emotional state and individual needs.

## Our eyes help us notice others.

Children are encouraged to notice:

- when someone needs help;
- facial expressions;
- how another person might be feeling;
- the consequences of their actions;
- their environment; and
- the wonderful world around them.

Our feelings help us understand what is happening inside us.

At Jubilee, **all feelings are accepted, but not all behaviours are safe or acceptable**.

A child may feel angry.

They may not hurt someone because they are angry.

A child may feel frustrated.

They may not throw an object at another person.

Our responsibility is to help children understand the difference between the **feeling** and the **behaviour**.

# 4. Our Five-Step Approach

Our practitioners use the following approach:

## CONNECT → UNDERSTAND → REGULATE → TEACH → RESTORE

### 1. CONNECT

The adult approaches calmly and establishes emotional and physical safety.

Children are more able to learn when they feel secure and connected to a trusted adult.

### 2. UNDERSTAND

The practitioner considers what may be underlying the behaviour.

For example:

- frustration;
- tiredness;
- hunger;
- sensory overload;
- difficulty communicating;
- wanting a resource;
- difficulty waiting;
- separation anxiety;
- a change at home;

- developmental immaturity;
- SEND;
- difficulty understanding expectations; or
- strong emotions.

Understanding a behaviour **does not mean permitting unsafe behaviour**.

### 3. REGULATE

When a child is highly distressed or dysregulated, adults prioritise helping the child become calm and safe.

Adults may:

- lower themselves to the child's level;
- reduce their language;
- use a calm tone;
- acknowledge the child's emotion;
- move to a quieter area;
- remain nearby;
- offer appropriate comfort;
- use familiar calming strategies; or
- give the child appropriate time and space while maintaining supervision.

### 4. TEACH

Once the child is sufficiently regulated, the practitioner teaches the behaviour or skill the child needs.

For example:

**"You wanted the truck. You can say, 'My turn next please.'"**

### 5. RESTORE

Where another child has been affected, practitioners help children repair the relationship in a developmentally appropriate way.

The purpose is not to shame the child, but to develop empathy and responsibility.

## 5. What Practitioners Say

Consistency of adult language is important.

### Hitting

**"I won't let you hit. Hitting hurts."**

Then:

**“You were really cross. You wanted the toy.”**

When calm:

**“What are our hands for? Our hands are for helping and gentle touch. You can say, ‘My turn please.’”**

## Pushing

**“I won’t let you push. I’m going to help keep everybody safe.”**

Then:

**“You wanted to get past. You can say, ‘Excuse me please.’”**

## Kicking

**“I won’t let you kick. Kicking hurts.”**

**“You’re feeling very cross. I am here to help you.”**

Later:

**“Our feet are for safe choices. Let’s think about what you can do when you’re cross.”**

## Biting

The immediate priority is the child who has been bitten.

The practitioner will calmly stop the behaviour:

**“I won’t let you bite. Biting hurts.”**

The child who bit will not be labelled as a “biter”.

Once calm, the adult will consider what triggered the behaviour and teach an alternative means of communicating.

For example:

**“You wanted some space. Next time we can say ‘stop’ or ask a grown-up for help.”**

Repeated biting will be monitored to identify patterns, triggers, communication difficulties, sensory needs or other underlying factors.

## Snatching

**“You really want that toy. Mia is using it at the moment.”**

**“Let’s ask, ‘Can I have a turn when you’ve finished?’”**

Practitioners will recognise that sharing and turn-taking are developmental skills and will support rather than simply demand them.

### Throwing

**“I won’t let you throw that because someone could get hurt.”**

Where appropriate:

**“You want to throw something. Let’s find something that is safe to throw.”**

### Shouting

**“I can hear that you’re cross. I’m listening. You can tell me.”**

Adults will model the tone and communication they want children to develop rather than responding to shouting with shouting.

### Refusing an instruction

Practitioners will first consider whether the child:

- understood the instruction;
- had sufficient processing time;
- is overwhelmed;
- is struggling with a transition;
- needs visual support;
- needs the instruction broken into smaller steps; or
- is attempting to communicate an appropriate preference or need.

Where a boundary is necessary, adults remain calm and consistent.

For example:

**“I know you don’t want to tidy up. It’s hard to stop when you’re enjoying something. I’ll help you. Shall we start with the cars or the blocks?”**

## 6. Emotional Distress and Meltdowns

A distressed or dysregulated child will not be expected to engage in lengthy explanations, apologies or reasoning.

Adults will prioritise:

**Safety → connection → regulation → teaching**

Practitioners will:

- remain calm;
- use minimal language where appropriate;
- maintain appropriate supervision;
- acknowledge feelings;
- reduce unnecessary demands;
- protect other children where necessary;
- provide a calm space without using it as punishment; and
- reconnect with the child afterwards.

Children will never be shamed for experiencing strong emotions.

# 7. Repair Rather Than Forced Apologies

Children will be encouraged to recognise when their actions have affected another person.

However, practitioners will **not routinely force children to say "sorry"** when they do not yet understand what the word means.

Instead, adults might say:

**"Look at Jack's face. He is upset because he was hurt. What could we do to help him?"**

Depending upon development, the child might:

- check whether the other child is okay;
- bring them a comfort item;
- help rebuild something they knocked down;
- return an item;
- offer appropriate comfort;
- say sorry spontaneously; or
- practise what they could do differently next time.

The aim is genuine **empathy, responsibility and restoration**, rather than compliance with a particular word.

# 8. Praise and Encouragement

Adults will deliberately notice positive behaviour.

Praise should be specific whenever possible.

Instead of simply:

**“Good girl.”**

we might say:

**“You noticed that Noah needed help and you helped him. That was very kind.”**

or:

**“You were cross, but you used your words instead of your hands. You worked really hard to do that.”**

We particularly recognise:

- kindness;
- perseverance;
- helping;
- listening;
- gentle behaviour;
- problem-solving;
- honesty;
- patience;
- empathy;
- responsibility; and
- developing self-control.

## 9. What We Will Not Use

Jubilee Pre-School does not use practices intended to frighten, humiliate or shame children.

We do not use:

- physical punishment;
- smacking;
- threatening language;
- humiliation;
- shouting at children;
- ridicule;
- withholding affection;
- public shaming;
- labelling children “naughty”, “bad” or similar;
- withholding food or drink as punishment;
- forced apologies;
- isolation as punishment; or
- developmentally inappropriate expectations of obedience or self-control.

A child's behaviour will never be used to define their identity.

We separate the **child from the behaviour**.

A child may have made an unsafe choice.

They are not an unsafe or "bad" child.

# 10. Physical Intervention

Physical intervention will only be used when necessary to protect a child or another person from immediate harm, in accordance with the EYFS and the setting's safeguarding procedures.

Any intervention will be reasonable, proportionate and for the minimum time necessary.

Appropriate records will be maintained and parents/carers informed where required.

Physical intervention will never be used as punishment.

# 11. Persistent or Concerning Behaviour

Repeated behaviour is viewed as information.

Where behaviour persists, practitioners will avoid simply increasing punishment or consequences.

Instead, the key person and/or manager will consider:

**What is this behaviour communicating?**

We may observe and record:

**Antecedent → Behaviour → Response/Consequence**

to identify patterns.

Consideration may include:

- communication and language;
- emotional regulation;
- sensory processing;
- environmental factors;
- relationships;
- sleep/tiredness;
- hunger;
- developmental stage;
- significant changes or experiences;

- SEND;
- safeguarding concerns; and
- whether reasonable adjustments are required.

Parents/carers will be involved appropriately.

Where necessary, the SENCO and/or other professionals will be involved.

# 12. SEND and Additional Needs

We recognise that children with SEND may communicate distress, sensory needs, anxiety, pain, frustration or unmet needs through behaviour.

Expectations and support will therefore reflect children's individual development and needs.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- visual timetables;
- now-and-next boards;
- reduced language;
- additional processing time;
- sensory support;
- predictable routines;
- transition warnings;
- quieter spaces;
- individual communication systems;
- increased adult support; and
- individual regulation strategies.

Reasonable adjustment does not mean abandoning boundaries around safety.

Instead, we adapt **how we help the child achieve them**.

# 13. Safeguarding

A significant or sudden change in behaviour can be an indicator that a child needs additional support or may be experiencing harm.

Practitioners must remain professionally curious.

Behaviour including:

- sudden aggression;
- withdrawal;
- fearfulness;
- sexualised behaviour;
- extreme distress;
- significant regression;
- persistent changes in emotional presentation; or
- other concerning changes

must be considered within the setting's safeguarding procedures where appropriate.

Safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL/DDSL in accordance with Jubilee Pre-School's safeguarding policy.

Behaviour must never be considered solely a discipline issue when there may be a safeguarding explanation.

# 14. Equality and Inclusion

Jubilee Pre-School will ensure that behaviour expectations and responses do not discriminate against a child because of disability, race, religion or belief, sex or any other protected characteristic.

Practitioners will challenge discriminatory language or behaviour in a developmentally appropriate manner.

Children will be taught that every person deserves kindness, dignity and respect.

# 15. Partnership with Parents and Carers

Positive behaviour is most effectively supported when practitioners and families work together.

We will communicate sensitively and respectfully with families.

We will not describe a child at collection by saying:

**"He was naughty today."**

Instead, practitioners will provide factual and constructive information.

For example:

**"Theo found sharing the construction toys particularly difficult today and hit another child when he became frustrated. We supported him to calm, practised asking for a turn and helped the children reconnect afterwards. We'll keep supporting this and let you know if we notice a pattern."**

Where behaviour is persistent or concerning, we will work with parents to agree consistent strategies.

## 16. Christian Ethos, Grace and Forgiveness

Our Christian ethos shapes the way we view every child.

We seek to model:

**love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.**

Children will inevitably make mistakes while learning.

Our response should therefore communicate:

**"What happened wasn't okay, but you are still loved, you can put it right, and we can try again."**

Forgiveness does not remove boundaries.

Instead, children learn that mistakes can be acknowledged, relationships can be repaired and they can make a different choice next time.

Adults are expected to model this themselves, including acknowledging and repairing situations where an adult gets something wrong.

## 17. The Role of Training Young Hearts Resources

The *Training Young Hearts* books may be incorporated into:

- story times;
- small-group discussions;
- circle times;
- spontaneous conversations;
- displays;
- staff language;
- emotional-literacy activities; and
- discussions following incidents where appropriate.

The resources will **not** be used to publicly identify or shame a child following an incident.

For example, a practitioner should not announce:

**"You hit somebody, so we're going to read *What Are Hands For?* because you were naughty."**

Instead, the books form part of the setting's ongoing curriculum for **all children**.

## 18. Our Shared Language

Across Jubilee Pre-School, children will regularly hear:

**Our hands are for helping and gentle touch.**

**Our mouths are for kind words.**

**Our feet are for safe choices.**

**Our ears are for listening.**

**Our eyes help us notice others.**

**All feelings are okay. We learn what to do with them.**

**Love your neighbour as yourself.**

And when something goes wrong:

**"Let's try again."**

## 19. Expectations of Staff

All practitioners are expected to:

- model the behaviour we want children to develop;
- maintain warm, responsive relationships;
- establish clear and consistent boundaries;
- recognise behaviour as communication;
- intervene immediately where safety is compromised;
- co-regulate children experiencing strong emotions;
- teach alternative behaviours;
- use developmentally appropriate language;
- promote empathy and restoration;
- recognise positive behaviour;
- consider individual and SEND needs;
- communicate professionally with families;
- record significant incidents appropriately;
- raise safeguarding concerns promptly; and
- reflect on their own responses to children's behaviour.

Adults must not expect children to demonstrate emotional regulation which adults themselves are failing to model.

# 20. Staff Response at a Glance

When behaviour occurs, staff should remember:

1. MAKE SAFE

**“I won’t let you hurt.”**

2. CONNECT

**“I’m here. I’ll help you.”**

3. NAME

**“You were angry because…”**

4. REGULATE

Help the child become calm enough to learn.

5. TEACH

**“Next time you can…”**

6. RESTORE

**“How can we help?”**

7. MOVE FORWARD

**“Let’s try again.”**

# 21. Monitoring and Review

The manager will monitor implementation of this policy through:

- staff supervision;
- observations of practice;
- discussion of significant or recurring behaviour;
- safeguarding monitoring;
- SEND review;
- feedback from families;
- staff training; and
- policy review.

Patterns of behaviour incidents will be reviewed where necessary to determine whether changes to provision, environment, routines or individual support are required.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner following:

- significant changes to statutory guidance;
- a significant incident;
- changes to provision; or
- identified concerns regarding practice.

## Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside Jubilee Pre-School's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Admissions/Settling-In Policy

## Policy Approval

**Pre-School Manager:** _____

**Signature:** _____

**Date:** _____

**Approved by:** _____

**Date:** _____

**Next review:** _____