Brabyns Nursery School

Positive Behaviour Policy

Written by - Cheryl Edwards - September 2026
Next review - August 2027

Our Approach

At Brabyns Nursery School, we believe that every child is unique, valued and deserving of kindness, respect and care. We recognise that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are still developing their emotional regulation, communication, social understanding and ability to manage their feelings and behaviour.

Our approach to behaviour is therefore positive, nurturing, consistent and age-appropriate. We aim to teach children how to understand and manage their emotions, make positive choices, develop relationships and resolve difficulties with support from trusted adults.

Our Nursery follows the Brabyns whole-school approach to behaviour, ensuring that children experience consistent expectations, language and responses across the school. These expectations are adapted appropriately for the age and developmental stage of children in the EYFS.

We believe that behaviour is a form of communication. When a child finds it difficult to manage their behaviour, we seek to understand what they are communicating and what support they may need, while maintaining clear and consistent boundaries.

Our approach is underpinned by:

- Kindness and respect
- Positive relationships
- Inclusion and belonging
- Consistent boundaries
- Positive reinforcement
- Emotional regulation and co-regulation
- Making good choices
- Restorative conversations
- Reflection and learning
- Partnership with parents and carers
- Understanding individual needs
- High expectations that are appropriate to each child's age and stage

---

Aims

The aims of our behaviour approach are to:

- Create a calm, safe, nurturing and inclusive environment.
- Support children to develop positive relationships with adults and their peers.
- Teach children how to recognise, express and manage their emotions.
- Develop children's ability to make positive choices.
- Encourage kindness, cooperation, respect and consideration for others.
- Help children understand that their choices and actions can affect other people.
- Provide clear, consistent and age-appropriate boundaries.
- Recognise and celebrate positive behaviour and good choices.
- Help children understand that everyone makes mistakes and can make a better choice next time.
- Support children to repair relationships following difficulties or incidents.
- Work closely with parents and carers to provide consistent support.
- Identify where behaviour may indicate an additional need and respond appropriately.
- Ensure that children with SEND, developmental differences or other individual needs receive appropriate support and reasonable adaptations.

Our Expectations

At Brabyns, we encourage children to:

- Be kind and caring towards others.
- Use gentle hands and feet.
- Use kind and respectful words.
- Listen to adults and one another.
- Share, take turns and cooperate with others.
- Look after our environment and resources.
- Tell an adult when they need help.
- Recognise and talk about their feelings.
- Begin to understand the feelings of others.
- Try to solve problems with adult support.
- Make safe and positive choices.

These expectations are taught explicitly through everyday interactions, stories, role play, modelling, discussions, group times and opportunities within children's play.

Understanding and Regulating Our Emotions

At Brabyns Nursery School, we recognise that helping children to understand and manage their emotions is an important part of developing positive behaviour.

Throughout the Nursery School, we use **The Colour Monster** by Anna Llenas as a familiar and accessible way of helping children to:

- Recognise different emotions.
- Name and talk about how they are feeling.
- Understand that all emotions are okay.
- Begin to understand why they may be feeling a certain way.
- Recognise how emotions can affect their behaviour.
- Develop strategies to regulate and manage their emotions.
- Talk to trusted adults when they need support.
- Understand and recognise emotions in others.

The children are encouraged to use the language and colours associated with *The Colour Monster* as part of their everyday experiences. Staff may ask questions such as:

> "Which colour are you feeling today?"
>
> "What is making you feel that colour?"
>
> "What could we do to help you feel better?"
>
> "What would help your feelings feel calm?"

The Colour Monster is used alongside other appropriate strategies, including talking with an adult, breathing exercises, sensory experiences, quiet spaces, physical movement, distraction, reassurance and Thinking Time.

We recognise that children may experience a range of emotions throughout the day and that all emotions are ok. Our role is to help children understand their feelings and develop appropriate ways of expressing and regulating them.

Partnership with Parents – The Colour Monster

We encourage parents and carers to continue conversations about emotions at home. To support consistency between home and Nursery, we recommend that parents and carers have a copy of *The Colour Monster* by Anna Llenas at home.

Using the same language and approach at home and Nursery can help children to develop a stronger understanding of their emotions and feel secure in talking about how they are feeling.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share the book with their child, talk about the different emotions and colours, and use the language naturally within everyday situations.

For example:

> “I wonder if you are feeling yellow because you are excited?”
>
> “It looks like you might be feeling a little blue today. Would you like to talk about it?”
>
> “You seem very cross. Let's think about what might help you feel calmer.”

The Colour Monster is therefore an important part of our whole-Nursery approach to emotional wellbeing, positive behaviour and self-regulation, helping to create a shared language between children, staff and families.

Making Good Choices

At Brabyns Nursery School, we use the language of **“good choices” and “bad choices”** to help children understand that their behaviour is something they can learn to manage and that they can make different choices.

We encourage children to make good choices throughout their day and help them to understand that their choices can affect themselves and others.

Staff will use positive, consistent language such as:

- “That was a kind choice.”
- “You made a good choice when you used your words.”
- “You have made a choice. Let’s think about what you could choose instead.”
- “Was that a safe choice?”
- “What could you do differently next time?”
- “You can make a different choice.”
- “Let’s make a good choice together.”

We recognise that young children will not always be able to make positive choices independently. Adults will therefore support children by modelling appropriate behaviour, giving clear choices, helping them to regulate their emotions and providing opportunities to try again.

Where a child makes a bad choice, the focus will be on learning and making a better choice next time, rather than labelling the child as “naughty”.

For example:

> “You chose to hit your friend. Hitting is not a safe or kind choice. Let’s think about what you could do instead when you are feeling cross.”

Children will be supported to understand that:

- Everyone makes mistakes.
- We can learn from our choices.
- Our choices can affect other people.
- We can make a different choice.

- Adults are there to help us make good choices.
- Making a bad choice does not make us a bad person.

Supporting Children to Make Positive Choices

Where appropriate, adults will offer children simple, realistic choices to encourage independence and self-regulation.

For example:

> "You can sit here and join the group, or you can sit with me until you feel ready."
>
> "You can use gentle hands with the toys, or you can choose a different activity."
>
> "Would you like to walk to the bathroom or hold my hand?"

Giving children appropriate choices helps them to develop independence, confidence and responsibility for their own behaviour.

Adults will avoid giving choices where there is not genuinely a choice available. Expectations relating to safety and safeguarding will always remain clear and consistent.

Positive Behaviour Management

Our values-driven approach to behaviour prioritises inclusion. We recognise that young children are still developing the skills required to regulate their emotions and behaviour and therefore require patient, consistent adult support.

Staff model the behaviour we expect to see and use positive relationships as the foundation for behaviour management.

Where behaviour presents a challenge, staff will:

1. Remain calm and respond promptly.
2. Consider the child's age, stage of development and individual circumstances.
3. Clearly and simply explain what behaviour is expected.
4. Support the child to regulate their emotions.
5. Redirect or distract where appropriate.
6. Give the child an opportunity to make a good choice.
7. Use a restorative conversation when the child is ready.
8. Support the child to understand the impact of their actions.
9. Help the child to repair relationships where appropriate.

10. Share concerns with the Room Leader and/or Nursery Manager where further support is required.

We do not label children as “naughty”. We distinguish between the child and their behaviour, recognising that children can make mistakes and learn from them.

When a Child Makes a Bad Choice

If a child makes a bad choice, staff will remain calm and supportive. The response will depend on the child's age, stage of development and the circumstances.

Staff may:

1. Remind the child of the expected behaviour.
2. Explain simply why the behaviour was not a safe or kind choice.
3. Offer an appropriate alternative.
4. Support the child to regulate their emotions.
5. Give the child an opportunity to make a better choice.
6. Use Thinking Time where appropriate.
7. Talk through what happened once the child is calm.
8. Support the child to repair relationships where appropriate.
9. Praise the child when they subsequently make a positive choice.

We believe that children should be given opportunities to “try again”. A bad choice should be used as an opportunity for learning, reflection and developing emotional and social skills.

Thinking Time

At Brabyns Nursery School, **Thinking Time replaces the use of “time out”.**

Thinking Time is not intended to be a punishment, isolation or a means of excluding a child from the group. It is an opportunity for a child to move away from a situation with adult support, regulate their emotions and reflect when they are ready.

Thinking Time may be used when:

- A child is finding it difficult to regulate their emotions.
- Behaviour is continuing despite appropriate adult support and redirection.
- A child needs support to calm down before they can safely rejoin an activity.
- There has been an incident where the child needs time and support to understand what has happened.

An adult will remain available to support the child. The approach will be appropriate to the child's age, developmental stage and individual needs.

An adult may say:

> "You have made a bad choice. We are going to have some Thinking Time together so that we can calm our bodies and think about what happened."

Once the child is calm and ready, the adult will support them to reflect through a simple, age-appropriate conversation.

This may include:

- What happened?
- How were you feeling?
- What choice did you make?
- Was it a safe or kind choice?
- How did your choice make someone else feel?
- What could you choose next time?
- How can we make things better?

The purpose of Thinking Time is to teach and support, not to shame or punish.

Restorative Conversations

Following an incident, staff will support children to repair relationships wherever this is appropriate.

Restorative conversations may include helping children to:

- Recognise what happened.
- Understand how another child may have felt.
- Express their own feelings.
- Say sorry when they are ready and understand why.
- Help repair or restore something that has been damaged.
- Rejoin their peers positively.
- Think about what they could do differently next time.

For very young children, restorative work may be demonstrated through actions rather than a formal conversation.

Rewards and Positive Reinforcement

Brabyns Nursery School places a strong emphasis on recognising positive behaviour and good choices.

We believe that children benefit from specific, genuine and immediate praise which helps them understand what they have done well.

Staff use positive reinforcement to recognise:

- Kindness and caring behaviour.
- Sharing and turn-taking.
- Helpful behaviour.
- Good listening.
- Cooperation.
- Resilience and perseverance.
- Positive communication.
- Gentle interactions.
- Independent problem-solving.
- Making a positive choice.
- Successfully managing emotions.

Praise should be specific wherever possible, for example:

> "You waited patiently for your turn. That was very kind."
>
> "I noticed you used gentle hands when you were playing with your friend."
>
> "You were feeling cross, but you used your words to tell me. Well done."
>
> "You made a safe choice by walking inside."

Recognition may also include smiles, encouragement, positive comments, sharing achievements with parents, giving children responsibilities and celebrating their contribution to the Nursery.

We aim to ensure that positive reinforcement is meaningful and does not become dependent on material rewards.

Celebrating Good Choices

Good choices should be noticed and celebrated throughout the Nursery day.

Staff will provide specific praise when children demonstrate positive behaviour, for example:

> "You were feeling cross, but you chose to use your words. That was a really good choice."

"You wanted the toy, but you chose to wait for your turn. That was very kind."

"I noticed you helped your friend. That was a lovely choice."

By consistently recognising good choices, we help children to understand what positive behaviour looks like and encourage them to repeat it.

Our aim is for children to gradually develop the confidence and understanding to recognise their choices, understand their impact and make positive decisions for themselves.

Responding to Challenging Behaviour

When behaviour presents a challenge, staff will consider:

- What happened immediately before the behaviour?
- What is the child trying to communicate?
- Is the child tired, hungry, overwhelmed or upset?
- Is the environment contributing to the behaviour?
- Does the child understand the expectation?
- Is the expectation appropriate for their age and developmental stage?
- Does the child require additional support with communication or emotional regulation?
- Are there SEND or other individual needs that need to be considered?
- Has the behaviour become a repeated pattern?

Staff will seek to understand the underlying need while maintaining clear boundaries.

Repeated or significant behaviours will be discussed with the Room Leader and Nursery Manager. An individual support plan or additional strategies may be considered where appropriate.

Inclusion and Individual Needs

We recognise that children do not all develop emotional regulation, communication and social skills at the same rate.

Behaviour strategies will therefore be adapted where necessary for children with:

- SEND
- Speech, language or communication needs
- Developmental differences
- Additional emotional or social needs
- Other individual circumstances which may affect behaviour

We will work with parents, carers and relevant professionals where appropriate to understand a child's needs and agree consistent strategies.

The aim is not to lower expectations, but to ensure that children are given the support and reasonable adaptations they need to meet those expectations.

Physical Intervention

Physical intervention is not used as a form of punishment.

Staff will only use physical intervention where it is necessary and proportionate to prevent a child from causing harm to themselves or others, or where necessary to prevent serious damage to property.

Any incident involving physical intervention will be dealt with in accordance with Brabyns safeguarding and physical intervention procedures and will be reported to the Nursery Manager.

Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate.

Unacceptable Behaviour

We recognise that some behaviours require an immediate and clear response, including:

- Deliberate or repeated physical aggression.
- Behaviour that places another child or adult at significant risk.
- Deliberate discriminatory or prejudicial language or behaviour.
- Persistent behaviour that significantly impacts the safety or wellbeing of others.

Such incidents will be addressed promptly and appropriately, taking account of the child's age, stage of development and individual circumstances.

Any discriminatory behaviour or language will be challenged and addressed immediately. Children will be supported to understand that unkind or discriminatory behaviour is not acceptable.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We believe that working in partnership with parents and carers is an essential part of supporting positive behaviour.

Parents and carers know their children best, and we value information they can provide about their child's:

- Personality and temperament.
- Emotional needs.
- Communication.
- Home experiences.
- Triggers or anxieties.
- Strategies that work well at home.

Where a pattern of concerning behaviour develops, we will communicate openly with parents/carers and work together to identify appropriate strategies.

We will:

- Share positive achievements as well as concerns.
- Discuss strategies that can be used consistently at home and Nursery.
- Listen to parents' views and concerns.
- Agree appropriate next steps.
- Review strategies and progress together.
- Involve other professionals where appropriate and with parental involvement wherever possible.

We particularly encourage parents and carers to support our shared approach to emotional regulation by using **The Colour Monster** at home. Having the book at home and using the same language around emotions can help children make meaningful links between home and Nursery.

We believe that a consistent approach between home and Nursery gives children the greatest opportunity to succeed.

Staff Consistency and Whole-School Approach

All staff are expected to follow the Brabyns whole-school behaviour expectations and apply them consistently, while recognising the particular developmental needs of children.

Staff will:

- Model positive behaviour.
- Use consistent language.
- Use the language of good choices and bad choices consistently.
- Maintain calm and predictable responses.
- Follow agreed behaviour strategies.

- Communicate concerns appropriately.
- Support colleagues in maintaining consistent practice.
- Reflect on their own interactions and behaviour management approaches.

Leaders will monitor behaviour practice and provide staff with guidance, support and professional development where appropriate.

Recording and Monitoring

Significant or repeated incidents will be recorded in accordance with Brabyns procedures.

Records will be used to:

- Identify patterns.
- Monitor the effectiveness of strategies.
- Identify additional needs.
- Inform discussions with parents/carers.
- Support referrals or professional involvement where appropriate.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are identified and acted upon.

Records will be factual, objective and respectful.

Safeguarding

Behaviour concerns may sometimes indicate that a child is experiencing difficulties or that there may be an underlying safeguarding concern.

Staff must remain alert to changes in behaviour, emotional presentation and patterns of behaviour and follow Brabyns safeguarding procedures where a concern arises.

Behaviour should never be viewed in isolation where there may be concerns about a child's welfare.

Exclusion

We recognise that exclusion is particularly inappropriate as a routine response to behaviour within the EYFS.

Our priority is to support children to remain fully and actively engaged in their learning, relationships and Nursery community wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Where behaviour presents significant or ongoing concerns, the Nursery Manager will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify appropriate support and strategies.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains consistent with:

- The current Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework.
- Brabyns whole-school behaviour expectations.
- Safeguarding requirements.
- Equality and inclusion principles.
- Current best practice in early years behaviour and emotional regulation.

The policy will be reviewed alongside the school's wider behaviour and safeguarding policies.

Policy owner: Nursery Manager
Applies to: All Brabyns Nursery School staff, children, parents/carers and visitors
Date: September 2026
Review date: September 2027