Behaviour Policy

"You can't teach children to behave better by making them feel worse. When children feel better, they behave better." Pam Leo

The aim of this policy is to provide:

- A framework of how behaviour is supported and managed by staff working for and at Nurture Space Limited,
- A traumainformed and inclusive approach towards working with the child who are accessing Nurture Space services and activities.
- An environment where children feel safe in our care, especially when overwhelmed with feelings and emotions.
- A positive mental health and wellbeing environment through our approach in supporting children with their behaviour.
- Ways to support children to develop self-awareness and to become empathetic and reflective thinkers, by developing their emotional intelligence.

The nature of the work Nurture Space carries out means that it works directly with some of the most vulnerable children in the community. Many of these children have faced ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences), attachment difficulties and / or trauma and may become dysregulated and communicate their frustrations and emotions through their behaviour.

It is important that all staff working for Nurture Space have an understanding of Therapeutic Behaviour strategies and use these to support the children they work with.

Working with children:

During introduction sessions, staff at Nurture Space will always focus on developing a respectful and supportive relationship with a child. This may include communicating some of the boundaries within the sessions. Where possible, these are not referred to as 'rules' and should be kept to a necessary minimum.

Examples of boundaries:

- That we show each other respect by listening to each other.
- To ensure they are safe, an adult will be with / or supervising them.
- The need to keep resources and equipment safe.
- Understanding the area or environment they are working in and respecting others that might be
- using the same environment / space.

Therapeutic Behaviour Strategies:

Praising the positive
It is important that children are praised for positive behaviour they demonstrate. It is important that adults working with children model the language of praise on a regular basis. This doesn't have to be grand gestures, but an identification of something the child has handled well or a positive attribute about them. 'I like the way you, - said that / tackled that problem / dealt with that' 'I can see that you really thought about that' 'I can see how hard you found that, but you just kept going – that shows real resilience' 'I can see the effort you have put into that'
Reminders
When working with children, clear boundaries are put in place right from the start. However, boundaries should not be presented as 'rules'. They should be presented as a 'supportive way of working'. We remind children to make good choices to help them stay within these boundaries. Reminders help to do this. Adults also need to think ahead and judge if a child is in the right emotional state to carry out a task and adapt tasks if needed to try and support the child to stay in a calm place where they are able to think without their emotions taking over their actions.
Reflection
Children who become overwhelmed with their feelings and emotions, often need time to process these. The adults role in this is to maintain a connection with the child whilst also providing them with the space they need. Children who become overwhelmed often struggle to name their feelings and emotions in that moment. Sometimes they do not realise the behaviour they are showing. We respond therapeutically with connection, empathy and insight into the brain. This will help shift a child's overwhelmed reptilian brain into rational brain which will help them think and reflect. **NAME** – Start with the Childs name **FEELING** – Explain to them the feeling they are clearly having **BEHAVIOUR** – Verbalise the behaviour that they are showing **ENCOURAGE** – Give the child an example of how they have behaved in a positive way previously.
Restoration
Reflection can take some time. Adults need to be prepared to wait until a child is calm and ready to use their 'thinking brain' A restorative conversation with the adult, creates trust, reliability, and security through consistency. Adults need to select the appropriate time to have a restorative conversation with a child. Some areas it may cover, include: - What happened, in your words and in your opinion? - What was your experience? - What were you thinking at the time? - What have you thought since? - How did this make people feel? - Who has been affected? - How have they been affected? - What should we do to put things right? - How can we deal with things differently in the future?

Recording incidents:

As part of Nurture Space session logs, there is continued recording of any challenging behaviours displayed by children. This is to help staff see patterns and support further where necessary. Session logs are sent to the commissioning school on a weekly basis.

This also enables Nurture Space to give the commissioning organisation and clear picture of progress in developing more stable behaviour patterns as well as any behaviour challenges that are hindering the work that is being done or may be cause for wider concern.

Where it is deemed useful, a Communication Book may be set up between the Nurture Space staff member and the parent /carer of the child to record progress within a session. This communication book can also be used by the parent / carer to communicate anything that they feel is useful for the Nurture Space staff member to know, that occurs outside of the sessions.

In the interest of transparency and to continue to develop the trusting relationship with the child, this communication book is available for the child to read and comment upon where necessary.

Reporting incidents:

Behaviour incidents are considered serious due to one or more of the following reasons:

- Hinder the smooth running of the session
- Impact on the safety of the child, staff member or other users of the venue.
- Result in damage to the venue or resources provided for the sessions

If staff within Nurture Space feel that a child's behaviour is becoming more challenging, despite positive interventions being put in place, they may arrange a meeting with the commissioning organisation and the parents/carers of the child, to discuss an adaption to the initial plan.

Adaptions may include:

- Increasing the number of staff working with the child for the safety of the child, staff and members of the public.
- Reducing the number of length of sessions to a allow a more gradual build up of focused support time.
- Possible change of venue or resources.

Once agreed a date for a review meeting will be made so that the impact of these adaptions can be further monitored.

Serious behaviour incidents:

Wherever possible, Nurture Space will try to continue to work with children who find it hard to manage their behaviour with the understanding that further rejection of a child will only compound the difficulties that they may have. However, we have a responsibility to keep staff, other children and members of the public safe. In extreme circumstances, Nurture Space Ltd, may have no option other than to terminate working with a specific child. Circumstances may include a specific 'one off' serious event such as:

- A serious actual or legitimate threat of violence against a child, member of the public or member of staff.

- Sexual abuse or assault
- Supplying an illegal drug
- Carrying and offensive weapon.
- Inability for Nurture Space Limited to keep a child safe, due to their behaviour despite exhausting all company policies and procedures.

In these circumstances, the staff member from Nurture Space working with the child, will contact the Director, Ruth Moor. She will communicate with the contact person at the school / commissioning body immediately. The parent / carer of the child will also be contacted immediately and be asked to collect the child from the session.

Nurture Space reserves the right to stop all work with a child if a serious behaviour incident occurs and where the safety of the child, staff member or venue is compromised. If this is decided, The Director of Nurture Space will be put this in writing to the commissioning body / school and the parents /carers of the child, outlining the clear reasons why the service can not continue.

Date of Policy – May 2024

Date of next review – May 2025

Approved by – Ruth Moor

Signed: