



## Positive Behaviour Policy

(Read in conjunction with our Safe Touch Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and Biting Policy)

This policy represents the agreed principles for positive behaviour throughout the Nursery. All Nursery staff, representing Jack in the Box Nursery, have agreed to this policy and have had training through Hertfordshire's Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour (TAB).

At Jack in the Box, we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We provide a warm welcome to each individual child and family and offer a caring environment where all children can learn and develop to become curious independent learners within their play.

Please read this policy in conjunction with our Data Protection policy for the information collected by Jack in the Box, the professionals this information may be shared with and the retention periods this data is held for. Please read this policy in conjunction with our Special Education Needs (SEND) policy, Inclusion and Equity policy and our Child Placement, Admissions and Attendance policy.

The only person's behaviour you can control is your own.

It's the behaviour that is challenging, not the child.

All behaviour is a form of communication.

Behavioural mistakes are learning opportunities

Fight fire with water

Analyse, don't moralise

### Aims and expectations

It is the primary aim of Jack in the Box that every member of the Nursery feels **valued and respected**, and that each person is treated fairly and within their developmental means. Staff would NEVER threaten corporal punishment or threaten any punishment which could adversely affect a child's wellbeing. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. The Nursery's positive behaviour policy is therefore designed to support the way in which all members of the Nursery can work together in a supportive and positive way. Jack in the box seeks to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe, and secure and to support the key aims outlined within this policy. Regular communication is had with parents/carers forging partnerships with them and other agencies of the settings behaviour expectations and attendance which is applied consistently, fairly, and effectively.

At Jack in the Box, we aim to work in an environment in which children can develop self-regulation and self-esteem, with respect for others ensuring everyone knows what is expected and children are free to develop their learning in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. **Susan Goodbrand** is the named practitioner responsible for leading desirable behaviour within the setting, setting a clear behaviour vision for all.

### In order to achieve this at Jack in the Box:

At Jack in the box, we recognise that children lack the emotional literacy to communicate how they are feeling, which is why it is often demonstrated through behaviour that may be considered to be challenging. We are that voice for children, to value and respect feelings and create an

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environment where their uniqueness is celebrated, not punished simply because they do not fit into the mold of the 'golden' rules.

We achieve this by creating an ethos where the culture is based around a child-centered approach. Often children try to make sense of the environment as opposed to causing disruption, for example a child may be angry that an activity has ended or confused, rather than rationalising that now it is snack time.

### Leadership and Management

Leaders and managers ensure that all staff share the same rules and behaviours, and they are clear and concise. Staff and children are clear on expectations and the associated consequence for challenging behaviours, consistency is the key, and all staff use a consistent approach. This ensures there are no uncertainties around expectations or open any opportunities for boundaries to be tested. Staff must ensure their tone of voice remains calm throughout the day. Sharp loud tones are not used during the day. There may be rare occasions where staff need to use a louder tone, this tone would only be used in an incident where a child may be at risk of immediate harm and staff/ children need to be alerted quickly to prevent an incident of harm.

Jack in the box staff have a clear set of non-negotiable rules and consequences that are developmentally appropriate to their cohort and staff are clear on the next steps when these are challenged. Staff are aware that children explore during play and there may be incidences of certain play that practitioners deem unsuitable, such play may include 'Gun play' where children build pretend guns from construction toys and role play with them. Staff ensure this type of play is not encouraged and play is diverted. Staff will ensure if 'Gun Play' is witnessed and deemed to be non- age appropriate that this is recorded in the safeguarding file.

Clear plans for specific children are put in place such as an Individual Education plan (IEP) if the behaviour is not deemed as developmental and may be related to a special educational need or disability (SEND) differentiation or adaptations alongside reasonable adjustments are made to the environment or cohort to support children's needs. These plans are not deviated from ensuring all staff respond in the same way. (Each setting will discuss non-negotiable rules at team meetings alongside the agreed script to use for behaviours within their setting and complete the Therapeutic Approaches to Behaviour Culture and Ethos- Therapeutic Action Plan, this is a working document and needs to be regularly updated to ensure its effectiveness).

### Definition of behaviour

Staff know how to promote desirable behaviours and manage, challenging, difficult, or dangerous behaviours and have an understanding to look at what that behaviour might be communicating, this has been implemented through attending the Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour (TAB) training.

Staff at Jack in the box focus on de-escalating and preventative strategies rather than focusing solely on reactive strategies. An example of this de-escalation would be a child throwing a toy around in an angry state of emotion. To **De-escalate** this situation, we would remove other children from the area, as well as resources (whilst leaving the main item the child is throwing). The **Preventative** is knowing you have a child who will throw toys when they get angry so providing opportunities for a safe throwing space such as bean bags and hoops which can be provided before they become dysregulated.

Staff understand that some challenging behaviours are often developmentally appropriate, as Early Years educators it is our duty to identify developmental behaviours, through assessments, and plan appropriate next steps for example water play for pouring and boxes for emptying while practitioners' model how to use them e.g., building towers and knocking them down.

For some children 'high five rules,' 'golden rules' or behaviour management strategies can be a

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catalyst for escalating behaviour and staff need to ensure children who are becoming emotionally dysregulated are not flooded with multiple choices or distractions while in this dysregulated state. Children need time to calm down before talking to them or giving them choices. Warning children before the transition is about to happen can support them in preparation for the change, using sand timers/ picture visuals gives a visual aid and supports children's understanding of the time left before stopping their game/ activity.

### Functions of Behaviour / why the behaviour is occurring?

At Jack in the box, we recognise that all behaviours are a form of communication, staff observe the behaviour that may be viewed as unkind. It may be that the child has no concept that it was not a positive interaction nor has the language to communicate their wants. Staff understand that all behaviours have a function, what is the behaviour (function) communicating? Remembering that one behaviour may have several functions.

Staff continually observe behavioural functions to ascertain why the behaviour is occurring could it be:

1. A **sensory** need (child meeting a known or unknown need), this need provides input to one of the senses and they are enjoying the sensation that this behaviour is giving them, this behaviour is likely to happen in different situations, even if there is minimal interaction and engagement on offer. This behaviour might display itself in the forms of biting, running, tipping things out, there is often no build up and can come out of nowhere.
2. **Escape** or **avoidance**, this demand may be verbal, physical, or related to proximity or environment. Often children are trying to escape a situation such as trying to run out the door, hide under tables or display challenging behaviour before a certain event to allow them to get out of the situation. Avoidance behaviours happen when being asked to do something and is a way of avoiding the situation or demand.
3. **Attention**, this behaviour can present itself as verbal, physical, social, or related to proximity. Children can use challenging language, self-sabotage such as destroying work, destroying something someone else has made. This type of behaviour seeks constant positive feedback and a need to show and share everything they do with adults, (we call this attention needing) children who display this behaviour physically or emotionally need this attention to help them feel safe and emotionally regulated. Planning time within the day to have that special time such as a story or game can support this.
4. **Tangible**, this behaviour occurs as a way of gaining access to an item or activity, e.g., if a child is taken outside as a consequence for biting/ hitting then they quickly learn that their way of accessing the outdoor provision is through these behaviours. Having a quiet area or safe space can support this.

### Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

ACEs are Adverse Childhood Experiences which children may have experienced during their early life or continue to do so through their cultural capital.

These Could include verbal, physical, or sexual abuse, parental septation, domestic violence, mental illness, drug or alcohol abuse and incarceration. Often settings may not know if children have experienced ACEs however a high proportion of young children will be experiencing at least one of these and practitioners need to be vigilant to the children's behaviour to notice these patterns or changes. (See safeguarding policy). Staff need to understand that some behaviours that children may be displaying may be learnt experiences from their home life. If a child has witnessed domestic violence at home, where hitting is a normal part of life, they would become confused at nursery to be told that this behaviour is unacceptable. Our role is to support children and be the positive role model for behaviour in the setting to ensure that ACEs from home are not

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impacting on low self-esteem, confusion around acceptable behaviour, lack of social skills, no empathy, and lack of understanding around cause and effect. Therefore, Children who may have experienced ACEs try to help us understand how they are feeling through their behaviours, which may not always be deemed as appropriate. Staff need to be the interpreter in this experience and put words to the story the child is remembering and feeling.

### **Attachment**

All children need to make a secure attachment with their main significant adult or adults from a very early stage and continue to have consistent and warm relationships from there onwards throughout childhood for emotional and psychological good health. When young children have experienced early difficulties and disruption, they can come to nursery less ready to learn, a secure attachment is fundamental to well-being and future success.

### **What children might display who have attachment difficulties and have experienced developmental trauma**

#### **Difficulties in:**

- Forming and maintaining relationships- peers and/ or adults (struggles to make friends, refuses help, bullies others)
- Forming a positive self- image (struggles with taking risks in learning)
- Managing stress
- Information retention and problem solving (memory- stress impacts on areas of the brain associated with memory)

#### **Responses to stimuli:**

- Disassociation (freeze) (psychological response to being completely overwhelmed)
- Aggression (fight)
- Run and climb (flight)
- Hypervigilance (on alert) (peripheral vision is increased, the brain is sensitised to the environment)
- Overwhelmed (by sights, sounds, touch) (sensory need)

What may appear as difficult, obstructive, and disorganised is actually anxious, scared, and overwhelmed, the triggers may be preverbal, and practitioners need to recognise this and plan for it.

A key person system within the nursery supports attachment with our very young children so that they can make attachments, build relationships and be readily available when a child has become dysregulated. Staff/ key persons help to identify what they are feeling and notice how those feelings show in their bodies, this helps to support ways to regulate those feelings so that they are not overwhelmed and stop their thinking brain from working. If children begin to recognise these signs, then systems can be put in place to help self- regulation, such as showing a card/ holding a special toy, because they are starting to feel dysregulated before the event happens. In this time children may just need a member of staff or their key person to sit with them quietly for them to regulate again.

### **Understand what is happening.**

#### **Staff need to tune into:**

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- how are children communicating their feelings/ wants and needs?
- Understand the context: what are the situations/ relationship/ dynamics that led to the reaction?
- Explore and make sense of what you see: what is the function of the behaviour? How does it make sense?
- Be vigilant: Notice how changes (however subtle) in behaviour communicate feelings or needs.
- Seek positive messages: look for ways to engage in the positives.

Staff need to take time to reflect on what they see, understand what is happening in order to plan and support children to success, only then will it be effective when calming and allowing the thinking brain to develop so that emotional responses are regulated.

Routines are important and provide a feeling of safety and predictability, however what makes a child feel safe will differ from child to child, this is why it is important to be flexible with the systems and processes to respond to children who may be overwhelmed causing them to respond in Challenging ways.

### **Techniques to use**

- PACE- Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy. This is a way to support a distressed/ dysregulated child.
- Connection before Correction- re-establish relationships, ensure the child feels safe in the attached relationship, talk about what has happened and support children and staff to repair relationships damaged by their responses through the use of emotional literacy, name that emotion.
- De-escalation scripts- used in times of flight. “I can see something is wrong.” Tell them why you are there – “I am here to help” – “I’m wondering what would help” (See impact of language section)
- Being kept in mind: staff will ensure that children are always kept in mind even when not physically present- remembering their favourite toy, their pet’s name. “Can you look after my pen until I come back and see you”
- Naming it: Staff need to be clear and identify with children what they want them to do and where the boundaries are. Children are not always aware of expectations, boundaries, and rules when they may not have to abide by them at home. This in turn does not mean that children can abide with them consistently and may have the capacity to process them on one day (thinking brain) and not another because of the part of their brain that is leading their responses.
- I wonder...: This response is very permission giving from the child. Sometimes children will respond with a body action such as a shrug of the shoulders or a facial expression. Using certain phrases can help move things forward. “I wonder if you were feeling worried about putting your coat on” “I am wondering, your body looks worried/ angry/ frightened. Naming emotions and sharing emotional literacy can help young children understand what that feeling is. Our Zones of regulation board sharing visual clues can support this further.

It is important that staff/ key person provide a quiet area/ safe space to escape to and have clear protocols in place for how a child will access this space if needed. Some children react in a certain way because of their experiences and need time, understanding, skills, consistency, and patience from staff to help repair in order to change their responses. Staff focus on reducing anxiety, rather

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than behavioural management, avoiding the use of rewards and sanction systems that only embed feelings of individual shame and support building relationships.

### Mental health

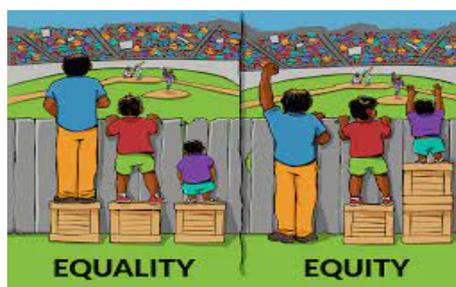
When children experience a range of emotional and behaviour problems that are outside of their developmental norms, they are categorised as experiencing mental health issues.

Mental health issues are categorized as:

Emotional disorders, conduct disorders, hyperkinetic disorders such as ADHD, developmental disorders, attachment disorders, and trauma disorders.

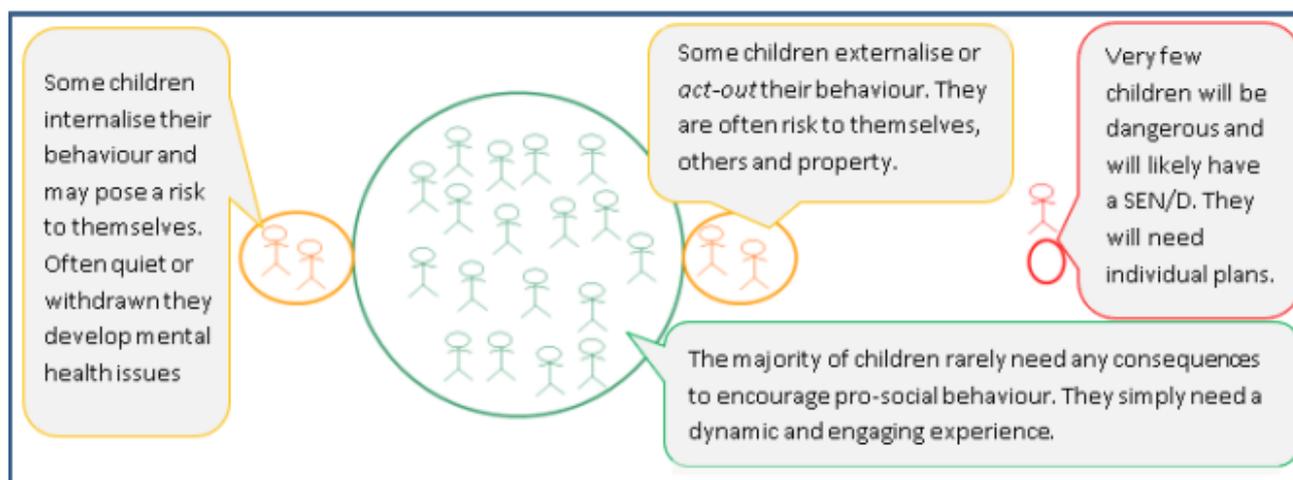
Staff implement strategies to decrease the risk in the setting by having a whole setting approach to promoting good mental health, creating positive relationships, positive nursery management, creating a sense of belonging, having positive peer influences, friendships and having effective safeguarding policies and procedures.

### Equality V Equity



At Jack in the box, we make reasonable adjustments in line with the Special Educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice, to enable all children to have a success outcome. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual children, or groups of children. We make this a reality through giving more support to those who need it, which is proportionate to their own circumstances, this ensures that everyone has the same opportunities, this might be providing more support to a disadvantaged child so they can reach their full potential. Equity is ensuring that we give a child what they need to become successful. Equality is treating everyone the same, this however only works if we have all started from the same learning experiences and homelife.

### Inclusion



At Jack in the box, we apply an inclusive model that accepts that children have individual needs. Where children have a significant difference to their peers, we accommodate this through differentiation and personalised planning in order for children to reach their full potential. This policy is the plan for the majority of children (the green circle) and the children within the orange

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circle with little adaptations. In addition, some children may require an Individual Risk Reduction Plan (Red circle) (see tab file for proformas) to formalise strategies that differentiate from this policy. When differentiating provision, staff need to refer to the model above considering the following:

- The green circle represents most children within the setting the majority of these children have similar needs which can be met through this behaviour policy to support their behaviour and are able to cooperatively listen and follow the settings rules and boundaries with little support. Most children within the green circle are unlikely to be subject to any consequences for their behaviour and are able to behave in a desirable way to achieve academically with a dynamic and engaging early years' experience. Young children may be within any of the circles and may at times behave contrary to the will of staff, these children present very little risk of harm to themselves, others, or property. This group is often called the 'Safe Learners.' Approaches that create fear can turn green children orange. Giving the children what they need to feel safe is important in these situations, such as a toy from home or visual references.
- Look carefully at the green group for potential internalisers. They often don't stand out as they have many strategies to avoid being noticed.
- One or two orange children (Circle on the left) represents children who may be at risk of harming themselves either physically or by withdrawing or hiding. These children are often very quiet or withdrawn who can be missed from our planning as their behaviour are not deemed as challenging. However, this group represents children who are **internalising** their behaviours, they may have mental health issues or be experiencing ACEs of some nature. Some children's internalising behaviour is masked by high academic output. It is important to try to differentiate between those internalising children who are simply quiet by personality and those where it may be masking a deeper struggle.
- One or two orange children (circle to the right) are more noticeable, these children display behaviours that harm other people they **externalise** their behaviour and can become a risk or harm themselves, others and property. Externalisers are often kinaesthetic learners who can become bored within the nursery environment. With a small amount of differentiation these children can often have their needs met in a similar way to children within the green circle.
- Occasionally a child within the nursery presents a risk of harm which is far beyond that of any other child. This child/ren (represented in the red circle), can not be kept safe by simply following policy and need a differentiated plan in order to be safely included. This behaviour may be linked to another need such as autism, social emotional or attachment or the reason for this behaviour may be unidentified. In such cases staff have a robust Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle in place and a Risk reduction plan is completed. (See observation and analysing behaviours below)

## Positive Handling/ Physical Intervention

Positive handling/ Physical Intervention is where practitioners use reasonable force to avert immediate danger or to prevent children from injury to themselves or others or damaging property. Practitioners only if absolutely necessary may have to use physical intervention, this action would only be taken when the child is displaying dangerous behaviours that would present a significant risk of harm or immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour. Jack in the Box will keep a record of any occasions where physical intervention is used and parents/carers will be informed that same day or as soon as reasonably practical. (see Safe Touch policy)

Jack in the box provides an environment that promotes equality of opportunity, this does not mean that all children should be treated the same, they are recognised for the unique skills and the

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abilities they have.

## **Focused Observations/ Analysing behaviours**

### **ABC proforma (see TAB file)**

**Setting/Activity event-** It is important that staff are very specific on the activity/ event that is taking place when recording this. Consider who is in the area with the child (children and staff), what the child is doing and what resources are available.

- A- **Antecedent**-This is what happens immediately before the behaviour occurs e.g. Staff member rings the bell for tidy up
- B- **Behaviour** – This should define the behaviour precisely; the form the behaviour takes e.g. child screams and lies on the floor. Frequency: Record exactly how many times the behaviour occurs e.g. hits head with fist three times, throwing 4 wooden blocks across the room. Duration: If frequency is an inappropriate measure, then record the overall duration of time. The person recording the observation should not be the staff member who responded to the behaviour as they are likely to have heightened emotions and may find it difficult to provide an accurate account. It is extremely important to analyse not moralise and add no personal opinions.
- C- **Consequence** – What happens immediately after the behaviour occurs e.g. reduced access to the bike, group activity stopped. This needs to be factual with no personal opinions.

In order to assess conscious behaviours, the adult should consider:

- What is the expected outcome of the behaviour?
- What is the motivation to behave in a challenging way?
- What is the motivation to behave in a desirable way?
- What are the expected consequences?
- How can the adult impact on the young person's beliefs and values?

To assess subconscious behaviours the adult needs to consider:

- Are there medical issues?
- Is it a phenotype behaviour (relating to a genetic disorder)?
- What may be causing anxiety?
- What may be causing confusion?
- What is stimulating the child?

When staff identify behaviour in a child that is beginning to cause concern staff must make detailed observations using the ABC method and focus not only on the challenging behaviours but look at the times the child is engaging in desirable behaviours too. Staff look for any underlying causes or triggers for the challenging behaviour, in order to prevent the difficult behaviour rather than reacting to it. De-escalation is critical in ensuring our children do not experience high levels of stress and anxiety in our setting resulting in challenging behaviour and see them for who they are, not the behaviour they are exhibiting. De-escalation is being aware of the experiences and feelings of the child, in order to intervene to either change the experience or change the feelings generated by the experience.

Staff will look at what motivates that child to learn, what assists them in feeling regulated and what will ultimately result in desirable behaviours. This is why it is important to observe children at times when they are calm and regulated, as we can identify resources, experiences or members of staff that will be most effective in managing the challenging behaviours. In these moments it may not be necessary to record a consequence when observing desirable behaviour apart from **Praise!** Remembering to praise desirable behaviours through positive reinforcement.

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Staff need to remember that praise may look different for many children; some children may not respond positively to direct praise due to self-esteem or those who are internalisers by nature. Making a general comment such as 'It is excellent to see you all playing together at the water tray. Well done'. This could be revisited later with the child on a 1:1 basis, 'I was very impressed that you played with 'X' and 'X' at the water tray. I noticed you shared your cup. That is brilliant to see. Well done'. Knowing your children is key to know what works best.

### Anxiety Mapping (see proforma in TAB file)

Once staff have completed ABC observations and are beginning to identify the moments within the setting that cause negative feelings and behaviours, now need to explore the context where children demonstrate challenging behaviours in greater depth. Staff need to observe where the child/children are most anxious, or most dependant, enabling staff to begin to plan for de-escalation and ultimately avoidance of challenging behaviours. ABC observations and staff's knowledge of the child/ren will provide an insight to which themes need to be tracked.

By tracking staff, location, activities, learning styles against the child's increased anxiety and dependency, staff can analyse the anxiety-based feelings that create difficult and dangerous behaviours. Heightened anxiety increases the risk of not being able to self-manage and children become increasingly overwhelmed by the object, activity or person. Dependency is increasing reliance on an object, activity, person. Dependency suggests that a child will not be able to self-manage if the object, activity or person is unavailable. Staff will ensure that they never unnecessarily raise a child's anxiety or miss an opportunity to lower anxiety. Staff must plan to ensure children do not become overanxious as a result of individual people, objects or activities. Staff must plan to ensure children do not become or remain over dependant on individual people, objects or activities.

### Roots and fruits (see proforma in TAB file)



Behaviours, feelings, and experiences are all closely linked, and all behaviours are a form of communication. Young children may not have the emotional literacy and could lack the self-regulation skills required to communicate how they are feeling. Early years children demonstrate the top layer, the tree canopy (behaviour) as a way of communicating to us that something is not right, they are not feeling safe, happy or ready to engage in learning. At this point they are feeling or experiencing something that is causing them to feel negative feelings, these negative feelings will lead to negative behaviour.

During this period staff will collectively complete a roots and fruits activity. Staff will consider what was identified through the ABC and anxiety mapping assessments when completing the roots and fruits with the focus on desirable behaviours not just challenging behaviours. (See TAB file for greater detail on completing the assessment)

### Default

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Everyone has a default set of behaviours and feelings. A child's default is the feelings they habitually experience, at times of rest you will experience your default feelings, regardless of what is happening around you. If a child has a negative default, they can experience negative feelings without having any negative experiences at that moment in time. Similarly, those with a positive default will experience positive feelings without positive experiences. Children with a negative default will feel unimportant, sad, rejected, anxious, helpless, or angry, unless something is happening to suppress these feelings in the short term.

Often behaviour strategies work for a short period of time, then stop, this is often because it began to make a difference and distracted the child from their default in the short term. Staff need to ensure that if the distraction or strategy is compromised, used inconsistently the child will revert back to their default of negative feelings which result in negative behaviour. It is important that staff support children in changing their default setting and understand that this can take time and repetition. Our aim is to create and maintain a positive default in our children, we want a dominance of desirable feelings over challenging feelings. By ensuring children experience a wealth of desirable experiences and feelings, we can begin to shift their default within the setting.

Having a therapeutic environment, with therapeutic practitioners ensures that behaviours are not suppressed in order to access a reward because the moment that suppression is removed the child will revert back to their default behaviour. Behaviour suppression is not sufficient to create lasting changes in behaviour. At Jack in the Box, we want our children to begin to develop internal discipline.

### **Reflect, Repair and Restore**

Emotional recovery, reflection, repair and restore are essential stages following any harmful behaviour. Everyone affected by an incident needs space to re-visit the experience by re-telling and exploring the story with a changed set of feelings. During any behavioural incident feelings may be influenced by anger, frustration, or disappointment. The purpose of reflection, repair and restore is to re-visit the experience with each individual once calm, relaxed and reflective. However, it is essential that everybody involved in a harmful incident is given time to recover before the process of reflection, repair and restore can begin.

**Reflect:** Once everyone involved has had time to regulate and calm, it is important to include time for all to reflect on the incident. Re-visit the experience with each individual with a changed set of feelings

**Repair:** Have a discussion about repairing the feelings of everyone involved focussed on the harm that's been done and how feelings and relationships can be repaired.

**Restore:** Early years children seldom have the emotional literacy to verbalise their feelings. Staff will support children by providing answers to these questions to support them through the repair and restore process. "I noticed that X is feeling upset. She is sad and quiet because her arm was bitten... and that hurts. I wonder how we might make her feel better. Perhaps we could go and say sorry/ make her a special card/ give her a bravery sticker/ give her a teddy, ask if she would like to come for a walk with us".

### **Impact of Language**

The use of language can contribute to the negative feelings associated with challenging behaviour, such as 'clam down', 'stop it now', 'everyone else is doing it'. Negative phrases and providing a lack of choice (or too many), ignoring can result in negative feelings for children. We know that negative feelings can result in negative behaviours.

### **Negative phrasing include:**

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No

Don't throw the toy car

No running

Don't snatch

Don't hit

That wasn't kind

Negative phrases focus only on the negative behaviour or suggests blame, and this fails to give specific instructions. Children in a heightened state of anxiety take longer to process so catch up halfway through the sentence, so may only respond to 'throw the car'. Even if they do process 'don't throw' you leave them with lots of other things they can do with the car, e.g. break it.

### **Making demands/ No choice**

Get here now!

Get out!

Do as you are told!

Give it to me now!

Share

No choice is where a positive phrase is delivered as a demand or with anger and aggression, this can trigger defensive, confrontational or oppositional responses. Making demands of a child/ young person can lead to auto-acceptance of the demand and can lead to auto-rejection of it. The child will not listen to what it is you want them to do but reject it automatically, including things they actually want.

### **Open choices**

What do you want to do?

Would you like to go inside?

Open choices are where options could be perceived as available when actually the choices are limited by the expectation of the adult. The phrase 'what do you want to do'? could be answered with 'go home' or 'hit you'. The legitimate answer would be unacceptable to the adult and create defence, or oppositional responses.

### **Empowering the behaviour**

Come back here now

You are not allowed in there

Get down from there

Children learn that their behaviour will create anxiety for staff or authority figures and will use this behaviour to gain control or reward, as such the behaviour has become empowering. An example of this would be 'I will let you use the computer if.....' children learn that if they make unacceptable noise, they will be offered a reward they may not have received had they remained quiet, and this will empower them to repeat this strategy in the future.

### **Positive phrasing**

- Positive phrasing e.g. - "Stand next to me," - "Put the toy on the table" - "Walk beside me"

Positive phrases are clear, uncomplicated, unambiguous instructions delivered with clarity. It is often beneficial to support a positive phrase with a 'please' or 'thank you'. Using please will suggest an element of choice so this should be reserved to low-level behaviours. Keep the phrasing consistent and model the action allowing the child to understand the request in a positive way. Repetition gives the child more opportunity to process the instruction ensuring you allow enough time for children to process it. Some children will need to be taught desirable behaviours e.g. 'kind hands', some children will need to practise what this looks like.

- Limited choice e.g. - "Put the pen on the table or in the box" - "When we are inside, Lego or drawing" - "Talk to me here or in the garden" 'Are you going to sit on your own or with a group'

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Limited choices often follow directly from positive phrases. Only offer choices that are available and ones that have been thought through so that staff are also content with either choice. It is only a choice if both options would be accepted by the child.

- Disempowering the behaviour e.g. - “You can listen from there” - “I’m here when you are ready”
- Use of a De-Escalation Script, e.g. - Use the person’s name – “David” Acknowledge their right to their feelings – “I can see something is wrong”. Tell them why you are there – “I am here to help” Offer help – “Talk to me and I will listen” Offer a “get-out” (positive phrasing) – “Come with me and.....”
- Children with Special Educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may need extra time to process this information so will be allowed longer to ‘take up’ the information and react.
- Phases such as “stop” maybe used in situations where you need immediate action from a child/ren.

## Schemas

Many behaviours deemed to be challenging fall within a Developmental Schema. Schemas are described as patterns of repeated behaviour which allows children to explore and express developing ideas and thoughts through their play and exploration. The repetitive action of schematic play allows children to construct meaning in what they are doing. Children learn best through opportunities to engage in active learning through hand on experiences, these opportunities allow children to problem solve, question, predict, imagine, speculate and develop independent choices as they make decisions in an area, they are familiar with.

Children use play to develop a methodical, systematic, and logical collection of information through their senses and movements as they interact with staff, each other, objects and materials within the Early Years environment. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) states that if staff support children’s schematic play patterns they can build on individual children’s interests, therefore taking part in powerful learning opportunities through sustained shared learning experiences.

Having a basic knowledge and understanding of schemas can support staff in understanding their observation of children, which can in turn support the way in which staff respond to what is perceived to be challenging or complex behaviour. (See common types of observed schemas within TAB file)

## Teaching desirable behaviours

- Teaching desirable behaviours are regularly discussed/ reviewed and agreed within team meetings, and explained to all newcomers, both children and adults. The implantation of “high five” values was implemented from the children’s suggestions (Safe learners)
  1. Listening ears
  2. Looking eyes
  3. Sitting nicely/ comfortably
  4. Quiet mouths/ indoor voices
  5. Hands up= High five

At Jack in the Box, we understand that children learn behaviour through:

- Their relationships
- Patterning and copying
- Reminding
- Repetition and structure

## Jack in the Box Positive Behaviour Policy

- Clear and agreed boundaries
- Praise and reward when successful
- Comfort when not successful

At Jack in the Box, we teach positive behaviours through:

- Relationships
- Role modelling
- Consistency
- Scripts and routines
- Positive phrasing
- Planning
- Reward and positive reinforcement
- Comfort and forgiveness
- Visuals/ objects of reference
- Distraction, praise, making adjustments, differentiation as well as excellent nursery- home links.
- Staff at Jack in the Box ensure that the therapeutic action plan is applied consistently, so children have the security of knowing what to expect and can build on their desirable behaviour. It must be remembered that we are not born knowing how to share and play co-operatively and the children need to learn by example and modelling.
- In case of behaviours such as bullying, discrimination or other abuse, the behaviour and attitudes will be made clear, but by means of explanations rather than personal blame. This would be explained to parents/ carers at the end of the session and recorded in the safeguarding file.
- Staff are positive role models for desirable behaviours and praise children on their acts of desirable behaviour.
- Staff will not raise their voice in a threatening way. As a team we will take positive steps to avoid a situation in which children receive adult attention only in return for challenging behaviours.
- Staff in the Nursery school will make themselves aware of, and respect, a range of cultural expectations regarding interactions between people.

The nursery may work alongside outside agencies with individual children and their families to support the child in developing their desirable behaviour.

### **Differentiated measure:**

Now and next boards

Jobs/ responsibilities

Small withdrawal groups

Time with a key person

Rotation activities

Differentiated curriculum

Sensory circuits

Designated self- directed time/ activities

Outside time

Intervention withdrawal group

Symbols

Activities/ tasks

Jack in the Box Positive Behaviour Policy  
Planned scripts and routines  
Planned activities  
Visuals/ objects of reference

### **Gradual Release of Responsibility**

This approach moves teaching the responsibility of learning from staff members to the child, by finding out what motivates them to begin with and by reinforcing the replacement behaviour every time you see it.

**I do it-** Staff model explicitly what they expect from a child, this will have to be modelled multiple times to begin with.

**We do it-** Staff join the child at their level and do it together. If you are expecting a child to sit on a chair instead of walking around, place a chair next to theirs and sit together.

**You do it together-** Rather than 'we do it' where the activity is completed by the facilitating adult, this time the focus is collaborative learning. Staff may involve a peer/ peer who also complete the desired action. You do it together relies on lots of positive reinforcement using your voice, 'I am going to be so excited to see you sitting on the chair', this may need visual aids to support or silently guide them (move them towards the chair) with a big smile and thumbs up. (See Safe Touch policy)

**You do it alone-** Staff provide lots of opportunities for the child to practice. This would be followed by lots of positive praise and recognition of the achievement.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Nursery managers monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis and reports to the team on the effectiveness of the policy and, if necessary, make recommendations for further improvements.

The Nursery keeps records concerning individual incidents of challenging behaviour for key children. The team record those incidents in their 'Behaviour record file when a child is showing difficult or dangerous behaviours.

### **Exclusions**

Exclusions will only be implemented when all other sanctions have been exhausted and following on-going professional and parental/ carer involvement. When this occurs, the nursery is left with no other option but to exclude.

A decision to exclude a child should only be taken in the following circumstances:

- Serious breaches of the settings positive Behaviour Policy; or
- If allowing the child to remain in nursery would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupils or practitioners in the setting

At Jack in the Box, we take necessary steps throughout our philosophy, policy and practice and avoid the need for complaints. All disputes which arise will be dealt with accordance with our complaints policy.

**This policy was adopted by the managers and staff in September 2025**

**Signed on behalf of Jack in the Box Mangers:** .....

Jack in the Box Positive Behaviour Policy  
**Staff Signatures:**