



LINKS CHILDCARE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Promotion of Positive Behaviour Policy for School Age Children

Last Review Date: April 2023

Policy No. 14 B

Issued: 2018

Policy Statement

At Links Childcare we aim to support and guide all children to manage their own behaviour and learn to resolve conflicts that arise. School age children attending our After-School Service bring with them the experience of their primary school and a growing maturity in relation to regulating their own behaviour and emotions. We aim to build on this and to further their capacity to develop coping strategies. This policy identifies way to foster and affirm positive behaviour and outlines strategies to modify challenging behaviour. This policy is available to parents, children and staff on www.linkschildcare.ie (<https://linkschildcare.ie/about-us/our-policies/>) or contact us at info@linkschildcare.ie

Principle

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018.

Procedure for Supporting Positive Behaviour

Parents are encouraged to read the Promotion of Positive Behaviour for School Age Children Policy on enrolment. It is available on our website: www.linkschildcare.ie. Educarers will keep open lines of communication with families on an on-going basis in relation to maintaining behaviour guidance strategies and practices:

Each child is assigned a key Educarer who will be responsible for building up a special relationship with him/her and the family. This helps with getting to know what the child enjoys and some of the situations he/she may find difficult.

- Staff will be the role model of positive behaviour and how they speak and interact with the children is a key part of their role.
- Positive social behaviours among children will be recognised and encouraged.
- Children's efforts, achievements and feelings will be acknowledged by sincere encouragement leading to growth in self-esteem.

What we expect from Our School-Age Children

- Treat others with dignity and respect at all times.
- Behave well in crèche so that everyone can learn and have fun e.g. listen to your Educarer, follow instructions.
- Give of your best at all times.
- Play safely in the garden and allow others to play too.
- Be respectful of all at dinner time and allow everyone to enjoy their food.
- Keep the Room clean and safe for everyone.
- Have respect for the property of others.



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Strategies for Supporting Children

It is recognised that all children's behaviour has some meaning to the child, however, at times this behaviour may be difficult or pose a danger to the child or other children.

For School Age Children **Minor behaviour problems** may include bad language, hurtful words, temper tantrums, fighting, hitting, screaming, kicking, refusing to co-operate etc that occur on occasions, for short period of time, in keeping with the developmental stage. Minor behavioural incidents should only result in minimal or short-lived negative impact on the child itself or on others around them.

Educators will assess each situation and use their best judgement in dealing with the matter, in line with the guidelines set out in this policy.

6 Step Conflict Resolution:

1. **Approach calmly** – put yourself in the shoes of the child. All their feelings are relevant and real in the moment. Approach the situation calmly and get down to the child's eye level.
2. **Acknowledge feelings** – describe how the child/ children are feeling, children often do not have the language to explain how they feel, leading to more frustration. Help the child by describing it for them "you both look very sad and upset"
3. **Gather information** (in a way that is appropriate to the age of the child) – remain neutral by giving each child the opportunity to express their side of the story. Children sometimes need lots of time to get the words or actions out so take your time and remember the importance of the lessons learnt in these situations.
4. **Restate the problem** – after listening to the children simply describe what the problem is so both/all can understand both sides of the story.
5. **Ask for ideas for solutions & choose one together** - give the children an opportunity to come up with solutions and keep working on it until you all agree on something. This can take a bit of time but gives the children lots of practice compromising with one another, which is a vital skill for the future.
6. **Be prepared to give follow up support** – it is important the staff member follows through on the agreed solution. This helps place trust in the process and children will have confidence in the approach.

For School Age Children **Moderate Behaviour Problems** may include those stated above but now becoming a feature of the behaviour of the child on a more regular basis

- Educators will discuss the reoccurring behaviour and put a plan in place.
- When the behaviour happens the 6 Step Conflict Resolution Plan will be used with the child
- The matter will be discussed with the child's family. If deemed appropriate a record of child's behaviour will be kept over a period of a week and parents will be consulted and asked to sign the record.



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Managing Severe and Challenging Behaviour Problems Among School Age Children

Challenging behaviours are frequent and repeated actions by a child that impact significantly on other children or the child himself/herself, or their ability to engage in the daily activities, and which fails to improve under the usual behaviour management strategies or requires ongoing intensive one-to-one management to keep under control.

If a child's behaviour is considered dangerous to themselves or others, the Educarer will carefully remove either the child or the other children from the situation. This is in order to protect all using the crèche. The child will be given time to become calm and a the Educarer will help guide him/her with his/her behaviour. The Key Educarer will record the incident and discuss it with the family.

If a child's behaviour is ongoing or becomes severely challenging the service will implement the following strategies:

- The Educarer and Crèche Manager will meet the parents to discuss the behaviour and develop an action plan for going forward to help the child overcome the issues.
- If necessary, the family will be supported to contact any relevant external professionals.
- If the behaviour is a child protection concern, the Child Protection Policy will be implemented.
- All information gathered and discussed will be stored securely and all conversations are confidential.
- All meetings, plans and observations will be recorded and stored in the child's record in a locked cabinet.
- The staff will always work in the best interest of the child using their best judgement in situations which can be demanding and stressful on all involved.

Age	Examples of Severe and Challenging Behaviour
School-age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated openly aggressive actions • Bullying • Child is considered a danger to themselves or others • Repeated contained aggressive actions • Destructive behaviour • Impaired or disordered responses • Poor coping skills • Impaired social skills • Unusual behaviour



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In order to ensure that the crèche environment is a place where positive behaviour is fostered and affirmed the following practices are at all times prohibited:

- the use of corporal punishment;
- the use of, or threat of, any practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitative, intimidating, isolating, emotionally or physically harmful to the child or neglectful of the child.
- Bullying of any form
- Restraint of a child by unapproved methods

Physical restraint may only be used in exceptional circumstances to (Any such intervention will involve minimum force for minimum time.

- To prevent an accident such as a child running across a road.
- To prevent injury e.g. if a child is having a temper tantrum

Such an intervention will be used only as a last resort. It will ensure no pain to the child. An Incident Report Form will be completed and parents will be advised of the incident and asked to sign the form. Any such last resort intervention will be an evidence based method.

Training in behaviour management from a positive stand point is a part of Links Childcare's CPD Programme.

Procedures if a Child Leaves the Crèche unaccompanied and without authorisation

At Links Childcare the safety of children is of paramount importance. School Age Children are collected from school in fit for purpose cars and are always escorted into the building by their Driver/Educator. Once inside, the release buttons of doors of the crèche are at a height where they are readily accessible only to adults. It is accepted however that in all environments there is a possibility that a child may, in extraordinary circumstances, leave the crèche unaccompanied, particularly those in the upper age groups of primary school.

In the unlikely event of this happening the following steps will be taken:

- Parents/guardians will be phoned immediately.
- Head Office will be contacted for assistance.
- If the child has a mobile phone, parents/guardians will be asked to phone the child immediately.
- A search of the surrounding area will be made by the Manager and a team of staff.
- Help will be asked from neighbours, if appropriate.
- CCTV will be examined.
- Bearing in mind that the most likely place that the child will go is home, parents will be asked to make their way to their home as quickly as possible.
- Friends of the child still in crèche will be comforted, if upset.
- If the search is not quickly successful, the Gardaí will be contacted, while the search continues.
- After the event, the incident will be recorded on an Incident Report Form and reported to the relevant authorities.



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Bullying

In accordance with the standard Department of Education and Skills definition, we at Links Childcare regard bullying among School Age Children, as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by a child or group of children against another child or children and which is repeated over time.

Types of Bullying: The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, harsh and hurtful words and other forms of relational bullying
- cyber-bullying
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a child's membership of the Traveller Community and bullying of children with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off, hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with crèche's Promotion of Positive Behaviour for School Age Children Policy. However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Incidents Bullying Behaviour among children will be categorised as Severe and Challenging Behaviour and in response will be dealt using the steps outlined above.

We at Links Childcare are of the opinion that prevention of bullying is as important as an appropriate response to an incident that has occurred, and therefore, with our school age children we regularly discuss the need to be aware of bullying and we encourage all children to report any instance where they are made to feel uncomfortable. Educarers use the following questions to lead discussion and to check in on all children in a supportive environment. Older children can write their responses.

1. Has someone called you upsetting names? _____
2. Has someone laughed at you and made you cry or feel bad? _____
3. Has someone hurt you by pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or biting you? _____
4. Has someone forced you to give them something? _____
5. Has someone made you do something you were frightened to do? _____
6. Has someone made you do wrong things? _____
7. Has someone encouraged you to bully others? _____
8. Has someone refused to let you join in their games for no good reason? _____
9. Has someone refused to speak to you when you wanted to be their friend? _____
10. Has someone encouraged other children to ignore you? _____

If there are some 'yes' answers the Educarer will work with the child and parents to ensure that he/she feels fully safe.

Review

Management, in consultation with staff, monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy yearly or as required.