



# Behaviour Policy

2023/2024

*Nourishing the Human Potential*



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## Behaviour Policy

This policy covers:

- Working with children
- Parents & Guardians & Carers
- Teaching Staff

### Statement of intent

At EMC, we believe children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met. They must feel safe, respected, and cared for. This calls for clear and appropriate expectations and standards for the behaviour of everyone, children and adults, who may occasionally or regularly be part of school's activities.

### The Aim of this Document

The intention is to clarify for everyone what is socially acceptable and expected, and help pupils understand the needs and rights of others. Every pupil has the right to feel safe and secure at school, and know they are supported if ever they feel vulnerable. As such, bullying of any type or nature will not be tolerated and shall immediately be addressed.

### Methods

- Ensure that all staff have appropriate tools for promoting positive behaviour, and are offered relevant training if necessary. All staff is encouraged to refer to Ginni Sackett's Positive Phrasing document.
- We require all staff, parents/guardians, pupils to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We familiarise new staff with the community's behaviour policy and guidelines.
- We expect all members of our community—parents/guardians, staff, and pupils—to keep to the guidelines.
- We work in partnership with the parents/guardians to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observation records to help us understand the cause and respond appropriately.

### Prevention Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

- We require all staff and pupils to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour for their age and developmental stage. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable, and supporting pupils to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.



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- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We support each pupil in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each pupil in developing a sense of belonging to the community, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We avoid creating situations in which pupils receive adult attention only in return for inconsiderate behaviour.
- When pupils behave in inconsiderate ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their action and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Pupils are never threatened with these.
- We do not use techniques intended to humiliate/intimidate individual pupils.
- We use physical restraint, such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to themselves, other pupils or adults and /or serious damage to property.
- Inconsiderate behaviour is immediately brought to the attention of the environment guide, details are recorded in the pupil's personal file (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses). The pupil's parent/guardian receives a copy of this form.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial abuse or otherwise, we immediately clarify the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to pupils' inconsiderate behaviour.

## Children under three years

- We recognise that strategies for supporting pupils under three who behave in inconsiderate ways need to be developmentally appropriate.
- We recognise that very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.
- Should a child engage in repetitive hurtful behaviour towards other children, the school may request a suspension of the child's enrolment until the behaviour ceases.

## Hurtful behaviour

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of four will at some stage hurt someone or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time. It is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For children under four, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.



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- We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.
- We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
- Therefore, we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the children to return to their normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child to be able to manage his or her own feelings.
- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage as that will have the opposite effect.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and helping them feel safe. Verbal children will also respond to holding to calm them down, but we offer them explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings experienced. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. 'Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? It made you feel angry, didn't it?'
- We help young children learn to sympathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings –e.g. 'When you hit Adam, it hurt him and he didn't like that and it made him cry'.
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour.
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.
- We support social skills through modelling behaviour and grace and courtesy activities.
- We help pupils to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another pupil; we do not force pupils to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents/guardians to identify the cause and find a solution together.
- At no time and in no way is a pupil labelled by using negative words or deeds.



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## Staff Expectations

### Staff are expected to:

- treat each other with respect and follow the guidance given in the staff handbook.
- present a good role model for the pupils and adults at school.
- prepare the environment in a way that entices the pupils' interest for work.
- convey to the pupils that it is negative behaviour that is unacceptable and not the children themselves.

One of the great benefits of the Montessori approach is that children have the opportunity to learn how to behave in a social situation from other children slightly older than themselves.

Here are some techniques that we use when dealing with challenging behaviour:

### Children's House (3-6 years)

1. Modelling good behaviour.
2. Positive intervention and distraction.
3. Practising social skills through grace and courtesy lessons.
4. Talking things through.
5. Inviting the child to observe other children's interactions.
6. Gluing: requested to remain close to the guide, or another adult in the environment, until the child is ready to regain his/her privilege of freedom.
7. Should all of the above fail to cease the behaviour, meeting with the parents / guardians to discuss the situation and request their collaboration.
8. Calling the parents/guardians to pick up the pupil immediately after the behaviour occurs.

### Elementary School (6-12 years)

1. Modelling good behaviour.
2. Providing the pupil with clear and consistent parameters, and expecting pupils to comply with the rules laid down for the co-operative running of the class.
3. Talking things through.
4. Inviting the child to sit and reflect on their behaviour.
5. Restricting the pupil's privilege of freedom within the environment.
6. Should all of the above fail to cease the behaviour, meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss the situation and request their collaboration.
7. Calling the parents/guardians to pick up the pupil immediately after the behaviour occurs.
8. Suspending the pupil from the campus for a determined period of time.

### House of Youth (12-18 years)

1. Modelling good behaviour.
2. Providing the pupil with clear and consistent parameters, and expecting them to comply with the rules laid down for the co-operative running of the class.
3. Talking things through.
4. Requesting the pupil to write a reflective essay on the situation, its impact, and what they learned from it.



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5. Should all of the above fail to cease the behaviour, meeting with the parents/guardians and the pupil to discuss the situation and request their collaboration.
6. Calling the parents/guardians to pick up the pupil immediately after the behaviour occurs.
7. Removing the pupil's privilege of freedom within the environment.
8. Removing the pupil from the campus for a determined period of time.

In certain cases, should a pupil repeat hurtful behaviours numerous times, or show any sign of emotional instability, we will recommend the following:

1. Professional counselling
2. A shadow: an adult who will support the child in his everyday life at school, and ensure he is not harmful either to him/her self or to others.

Where serious hurtful behaviour repeats itself, the school reserves the right to permanently exclude a pupil.