Managing Feelings and Behaviour

Early Years Foundation Stage
Personal, social and emotional development

A professional, creative and developmentally appropriate approach to supporting young children’s feelings and behaviour development
# Managing Feelings and Behaviour

## Contents Page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural Milestones</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting Positive Behaviour</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Strategies to support self-regulation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does and don’ts of ‘Quiet time’</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenging Behaviour</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biting</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struggling to share and take turns</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tantrums</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary of Terms</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Managing children’s feelings and behaviour creatively

When managing young children’s feelings and behaviours we need to look at creative approaches. Creative strategies can be implemented by any provider and significantly improve the day to day experiences of both children and adults. We need to understand which strategies are developmentally appropriate and prioritise the importance of supporting children to be able to self-regulate.

The Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014 outlines the roles and responsibilities for behaviour management in early years settings (appendix 1). Development Matters in the EYFS supports practitioners in implementing the statutory requirements of the EYFS. It is based on broad, chronologically referenced age bands for assessing and monitoring children’s learning and development across curricular areas and includes Personal, Social and Emotional Development (appendix 2). It can be used to give an overall best fit of children’s progress within Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

Age Bands
Birth to 11 months
  8-20 months
  16-26 months
  22-36 months
  30-50 months
  40-60+ months
Behavioural Milestones

Behavioural expectations of children should not be higher than is actually developmentally appropriate for their stage of development and be consistent with their level of understanding. A one year old is unlikely to understand and learn discipline whereas a child of three years developmentally is highly likely to have a better understanding of their behaviour and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

“Behavioural milestones” are important as they support us to determine how a child's behaviour and understanding is developing. Remember that each individual child develops in their own way and at their own rate.

0-12 months

- No understanding for consciously intentional behaviour (when a baby find a marker, they may begin to draw on their face, the walls, the floor. The baby doesn't understand that this is unacceptable behaviour, they are just exploring.).
- No understanding of conscious reactions during interactions (when interacting with a baby you may notice them grabbing toys from you or other babies. This is because the baby is unable to understand the concept of sharing at this stage).
- Beginning to develop trust (first step towards positive self esteem).

12 - 36 months:

- Still does not consciously plan actions or have control.
- Does not have the capacity to understand, remember or obey rules.
- Sharing is developmentally incompatible at this stage.
- Begins to explore cause and effect relationships (when you are hungry, you eat).
- Begins to become interested in other children.
- Beginning to develop independence.
- Starts to test boundaries and able to do things considered “naughty” or “destructive”.

36 - 60 months:

- Consciously aware of their own interests and intentions.
- Becomes easily frustrated when things don’t turn out as expected.
- Begins to manipulate ideas in their minds.
- Begins to understand consequences of their behaviour.
- Able to make appropriate decisions before acting.
- Can talk through things in a simple manner.
- Establishes friendships and learns how to be a friend.
- Becomes independent and finds own limits.
- Wanting to please adults (feels guilty for disappointing others).
- Will follow rules to please adults.
- Able to follow simple rules.
- Becomes very competitive.
- Beginning to comprehend the relationship between actions and consequences.

5 – 8 years:

- Asks questions constantly and becomes more critical.
- Compares selves to others.
- Makes simple judgements (good/bad, win/lose).
- Uses words to hurt others.
- Needs encouragement to support self esteem.
Within any group of three and four year olds, there will be a wide variety of ability, achievement and personality.

What are the characteristics that most three to four year olds share?

### Typical Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Intellectual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>They:</strong></td>
<td><strong>They:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- test boundaries</td>
<td>- repeatedly ask questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- show changes of mood i.e. times of quiet and calm and other times of noisy, assertive, boisterous behaviour</td>
<td>- repeat activities until they have been mastered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- need immediate and individual attention</td>
<td>- have varying degrees of concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- can feel insecure in new surroundings.</td>
<td>- want to be involved in active learning situations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>They:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sometimes, they:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- have excess energy that occurs in bursts</td>
<td>- play alongside others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- have trouble sitting still</td>
<td>- are unable to share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- have some difficulties dressing and in fine motor co-ordination.</td>
<td>- are unconcerned about others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- require a high degree of adult support.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Promoting positive behaviour
Creating a framework for good behaviour involves all aspects of the life of a setting including the expectations adults have of how children should behave, the way in which strong positive relationships are valued and promoted, how language is used, the organisation and routines of the setting and the emphasis which is placed on building a mutually respectful relationship with parents.

Give positive feedback

Positive feedback is the best and most effective way to promote positive behaviour and discourage inappropriate behaviour. This encourages the development of self-confidence and self-esteem. Children need to know they are getting it right through adults using:

- Positive and warm body language
- Tone of voice
- Physical touch
- Praise and compliments
- Encouragement
- Attention
- Treats, rewards and privileges.
- Specific instruction e.g. well done for picking up the lego.

When children are praised and rewarded for positive behaviour they are more likely to repeat the appropriate behaviour again and eventually it will become habitual.

Use positive language

Say what you want not what you don’t want

The easiest way to remember this technique is to stay positive. Tell a child what you want him/her to do, instead of what not to do. Here are a few examples:

Don’t say: "Don't throw the truck.”
Instead: "The truck is for driving. You may throw this soft ball.”

Don’t say: "Don't climb with a toy in your hand.”
Instead: "I'll hold your toy while you climb.”

Don’t say: "Don't chew books.”
Instead: "We look at books. Take the book out of your mouth.”

Don’t say: "Don't shut the door.”
Instead: "Leave the door open.”

Don’t say: "Don't eat the crayon.”
Instead: "Crayons are for drawing.”
Set clear boundaries which are fairly and consistently applied by all. Be consistent and fair.

It is very important that in managing children’s behaviour we all give a consistent message about what is, and what is not, acceptable. We need to have in place a strategy we all understand and agree to – a strategy where everyone – children, practitioners and parents – plays by the rules.

Setting boundaries makes it clear that limitations do exist and teaches children that there are consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Having boundaries allows children to understand that adults will act in their authority, whether parents or practitioners, and helps to develop a sense of justice and fairness. Knowing that there are boundaries provides children with a safe and secure environment, thereby promoting good mental health. Verbal expressions of anger, disappointment, concern or sadness are best communicated by the prefix ‘I feel…’, rather than ‘You are…’

It is important that sanctions match the ‘offence’ and are used consistently by, and between, different adults. The child needs to know what the possible consequences might be of stepping over the line into inappropriate behaviour. Make sure all staff use the same sanctions for the same offence!

All children will step over the boundaries of good behaviour from time to time and adults need to think ahead and plan how to respond in the best possible way. The aim must always be to return children to the appropriate behaviour as quickly, and with at little fuss, as possible. However, sometimes it will take time and there will be fuss!

As adults we have to make it quite clear to children that we care enough about them to act and do something to stop their inappropriate behaviour. This makes them feel safe and secure within set boundaries.
Build respectful relationships
Positive behaviour is built primarily on good relationships and communication. Children have an inborn desire to please the people they love and care for and seek approval from them. If the relationships are wobbly or the communication is poor, either within the home or the early years setting, then the child is likely to use negative or challenging behaviour in an attempt to have their needs met.

Pre-plan
Practitioners will be most successful at promoting positive behaviour when they are able to anticipate and pre-plan what the behavioural issues might be in a certain situation and avert them. For example, if something different is happening in the setting on a particular day explain to the children exactly what is going to be different and what will happen. Children often misbehave when their routine is altered and they feel insecure, even if the routine is being altered because of something exciting or novel.

Springboard Starpoints
The Springboard Starpoints leaflet can support you to think about and plan for persistent, difficult behaviour. (appendix 3)

Prioritise what is important
Choose your ‘battlefields’ – some behaviours just fade away if they are ignored. If children are constantly being told, ‘no, no, no’, then the atmosphere in the setting becomes very negative. Choose to insist on boundaries when they are important and in other instances consider negotiation and compromise.

Meeting emotional needs
Human relationships are built on meeting the emotional needs that we all have for attention, acceptance, approval, comfort, security, encouragement, support, respect and affection. When our primary needs are met we feel happy and secure. When they are not met we can feel anxious, insecure and unhappy.

Often people choose to ‘act out’ through poor behaviour in order to demonstrate to others that their needs are not being met. This inappropriate behaviour is a message: ‘I have a need and no one is meeting it.’ It is important that practitioners discuss effective ways to meet some of these needs in children – if a child is misbehaving, it is worth reflecting on what the child needs before putting other strategies into place eg if a child has trouble sitting during a circle time activity, why might that be? It could be because that child is too young, is bored, needs the toilet, is hungry or thirsty. There are many reasons that need to be considered. A small group activity for your staff team (appendix 4) may help you to recognise and unpick a range of emotions and how to develop children’s vocabulary around feelings.
Ensure there is structure and routine
Routines and structures underpin a framework for good behaviour by allowing behaviours to become habits or just ‘what we do’, thereby reinforcing rules and creating an opportunity to practise responsibilities and exercise rights. Young children find routines safe and reassuring and are more likely to behave appropriately within structures they feel comfortable with. However, routines also need to be flexible to allow for individual children’s needs.

Have clear expectations
Rules that are just and fair are an important part of the daily life and routines of any community. They set the parameters which will ensure respect for the rights, duties and responsibilities of others as well as for oneself. The purpose of rules is to:

- clarify expectations and create limitations and boundaries
- teach appropriate behaviour
- provide security and safety
- protect rights and encourage responsibilities
- underpin morality/law/social order and make the link with ‘real life’ outside the setting.

When thinking about the rules or expectations a setting should have, it is important to consider:

- moral issues of right and wrong
- health and safety
- how we treat ourselves, others and property
- practical everyday life
- setting/family specific aspects.

Rules – Play safe, Play fair and Play hard
All settings have some kind of “Golden Rules” or “Dos and don’ts” established and displayed. Often these rules are too complicated and repetitious. Although it is important for children to suggest and be part of establishing these “rules”, the practitioner must “sift” them down to the three: safe, fair and hard. Some settings are using these already. Some have replaced play hard with “have fun learning” if they feel uncomfortable about using the phrase: “play hard”. The children and staff “sign up” to these three rules (hand prints is a good way) and they are displayed creatively, prominently and permanently to be referred to. This shows all children will have had input to the Full Value Contract and understand how behaviour and group issues can all fit into one of them.
Model behaviour
Some theorists would argue that all behaviour is learned and we certainly need to consider what children are learning from us as adults. When parents and practitioners model appropriate behaviour, children will pick this up and copy it. For example do you say please and thank you to your colleagues in the way that you’d like children to?

Teach behaviour skills
All early years settings are teaching and learning environments and part of the role of the setting is to teach behaviour in the same way as any other aspects of learning and development. Aspects to consider here include:

- What do children need to learn?
- How will we teach it?
- How will we check learning has taken place?
- How will we reinforce and build on past learning?
- How will we record that children have learned certain social skills?

Keep calm

When children misbehave it can ‘push our buttons’ and make us feel angry and resentful. Some children seem to ‘wind us up’ more than others. When we feel our professionalism and ability to cope and manage are compromised it can make us feel de-skilled. Similarly, parents can feel ashamed and anxious when they cannot easily manage their children’s behaviour. We all need support and a sounding board to talk through. Sometimes our behaviour towards a particular child can become a problem and it is important that we focus our concerns on the behaviour, not on the child himself.

Communicate – talk and listen
We are often under the impression that what we say in the form of words is the most important facet in communication. However, words are only a very small part of the communication process. Far more important is the tone of voice in which we speak and the body language we use. How much children hear, or feel that they are being listened to, is more dependent on our body language messages than the words we say or the speaking space we give to them. Be aware of the impression you are giving to children through your actions and expressions.

Negotiate and compromise
From about the age of three, children become much more able to negotiate and compromise and will be less likely to resort to tantrums or stubborn refusal if they are given some chance to gain ‘power’ through negotiation. Through this process, the adult is also building valuable skills of ‘either/or’ thinking.
Some Key strategies that support all children to learn how to manage their own behaviour

Adults can use a range of strategies to promote positive behaviour and manage inappropriate or challenging behaviour in young children.

Fighting and conflict

Learning how to deal with conflict is a necessary skill for children to acquire. Children are also learning to ‘self-regulate’ – becoming able to tolerate a feeling of distress (Perry, 2001). This involves a child in either waiting until the need is met (for example, feeling hungry, but being able to wait for lunch in five minutes), or in being creative and beginning to problem solve. Providing a structured, predictable environment, with warnings for changes in routine, and then appreciating children when they manage to ‘self-regulate’, will all help: ‘Well done for waiting your turn so patiently.’

As long as children are not hurting each other, it can be useful to wait before stepping in – to see if they come up with their own solutions, however small. Praise them if they manage this, and talk about it later in a small group, so other children have the opportunity to learn. The most common reason for conflict between children is over toys or resources.

A structured approach to conflict resolution can support children to develop their own problem-solving skills, in turn, leading them to become independent problem solvers.
The Six Steps of Conflict resolution – a problem solving approach

1. **Approach Calmly**
   Breathe. Place yourself between the children on their physical level. Use a calm voice and gentle touch. If an object is involved in the conflict say something like “I'm going to hold this while we talk about the problem.”

2. **Acknowledge Feelings**
   Give recognition to the feelings children are expressing by using simple descriptive words. For example “You look upset”

3. **Gather Information**
   Ask the children open ended questions that will help you find out what exactly the problem is. Questions like “What’s happening?” or “What’s the problem?” or “What’s going on?” are useful at this stage. Repeat children’s words back to them to help them clarify their thoughts.

4. **Restate the Problem**
   Say exactly what the problem is. Use words like “so the problem is….” Use the needs and details the children have described.

5. **Ask for ideas for Solutions** and choose one together. Say something like “What do you think we can do to solve this problem?” Listen and let the children come up with their own ideas. Respect and explore all of the ideas even if some of them seem unrealistic. If children say they can “share” explore this idea further so that everyone is clear how the sharing will happen.

6. **Be prepared to give follow-up support**
   When children have reached a solution check that they are both OK with it. Summarise what is going to happen by saying something like “so you’re going to …… and you’re going to…….” Then acknowledge the children have solved their problem by saying words to the effect of “You did it! You solved the problem!” This helps to build children’s confidence in their capabilities as problem solvers.

**Using Conflict Resolution Strategies**

**Stop! - Say and sign the word**
Don’t get into an argument, speak with a quieter voice and stay calm. Try to stay relaxed and be aware of your body language. Give parallel eye contact at the child’s level, be direct and be clear – ‘I said “stop” and I meant it.’

‘No’ is a word that parents use when there is an emergency "No! Don't run across the road!” for example. When 'No' is used as part of everyday boundary setting with children, it loses its effect. Children start to ignore it. So when an emergency happens, they ignore the most important word, (or do the opposite because they're challenging that boundary). 'Stop' lends it self to explaining 'why’ the child should stop the behaviour.
Choices

Give a clear choice, ‘You can choose, either tidy up now or when everyone else has heard the story – which would you like to do?’

Four-part challenge

- Describe the offending behaviour: ‘When you do…’
- State your feelings: ‘I feel…’
- State the effect: ‘When you do that it…’
- Ask for input: ‘What can we do about it? ‘How can you help…?’

Distraction

Many young children can be diverted from poor or inappropriate behaviour by giving them focused attention or simply turning their attention to something else.

You will find yourself using non-judgemental commentary, along the lines of: ‘You really wanted the toy, and when you grabbed it, Izzie hit you, and now you are so cross you want to hit her back! I can’t let you hit Izzie, but I can help you talk to her about what you’d like.’

As children learn to tolerate some frustration and anxiety, they will be less reactionary, and impulsive. Be ready to step in and model for children how to wait for a turn: ‘Let’s wait here by the table, until they’re finished, then we can have a go.’ The key is to be a child’s ally in these situations, rather the rule maker who says: ‘Stand there and wait your turn!’

Where conflict is more serious, for example, children are being verbally abusive or racial comments are being made, help them see things from a different perspective through the use of a story. This will also give them some ‘emotional distance’, making it safer for them to begin to consider their actions.

Recognise children’s physicality

Is there lots of throwing, hitting or kicking? Provide ways for them to express this through games and activities such as throwing wet sponges again the wall, hitting balls or targets, building with blocks, banging with saucepans and wooden spoons, squirting runny paint on to large pieces of paper, kicking balls. Sing songs or play movement games to practise stopping, starting and waiting, encourage children to work in pairs, on their own or as part of a group.
Further Ways of Supporting Children to Problem Solve and Promote Positive Behaviour

- Make time for fun, laughter, jokes and special time.
- ‘Tune-in’ to what children’s schemas might be and use this knowledge to inform planning. (Nutbrown, 2007)
- Have a celebration tree – record individual children’s achievements on paper ‘leaves’ and hang on to the tree.
- Use children’s names and simple language to appreciate behaviour you like. ‘I like how you put all those blocks away Sasha!’
- Role-model strategies and provide guidelines for students, parents and volunteers about how to support positive behaviour, and make sure they use children’s correct names.
- Report achievements and positive behaviour to parents within earshot of their child. This will also help to build positive relations with parents.
- Say, ‘Yes, we can get the trains out, once we’ve finished tidying up these blocks’, instead of ‘No, we must tidy-up first!’
- Consider the effects of too much stimulation, colour and sound in the environment, and aim to keep the setting as calm as possible, with soothing colours, and natural resources. (King, 2007)
- Smile at children, and tell them how much you like them, and enjoy spending time with them.
- All behaviour needs to be taken in context. Although there are some general rules and guidelines, it is important that each child’s individual situation is considered, and any plan to deal appropriately with behaviour must begin with observation, and some detective work. Taking time to get to know a child, for example, what’s happening at home, their interests and passions, as well as spending time with, them will help.

Quiet time – as opposed to ‘Time Out’

Quiet time should not be confused with naughty spot or naughty step!

Quiet time may be a helpful strategy which can be used to modify persistent, unwanted, challenging behaviours within the home or setting. It is based on the premise that all children seek approval and have a need for attention from the adults around them. If children are threatened with losing this approval and attention, albeit only temporarily, it can support them to modify their inappropriate behaviour.

Quiet time involves removing the child from whatever they are doing and insisting he/she sits alongside you in a safe place for a short period of time. A child can be taken to quiet time without the whole group knowing and it is most effective when you simply and calmly walk up to a child and ask them to come and be quiet.

Quiet time is not about making a child feel bad but an opportunity to be taken away from the situation as a consequence of unwanted behaviour. This approach is more likely to end the unwanted behaviour rather than temporarily distract a child from it. Make your children aware of ‘Quiet time’. Pick a good time to introduce it.
Rules of quiet time for children aged 3 years plus

- You will have quiet time if …………….... (make children clear of why)
- You will be given only one warning
- Quiet time means you will have to sit / stand alongside adult (can be indoors or outdoors)
- Quiet time is for 1 minute for every year of a child’s life – a sand timer is useful here
- You are not to talk to anyone when you are in quiet time

Toddlers – Very young children can sometimes benefit from having a quiet time away from stressful and upsetting situations but they are not developmentally able to understand rules.

Implement quiet time if a child is not responding to usual strategies such as ‘Conflict resolution’, ‘Stop’, ‘Choices’ etc.

- The adult in these circumstances should ignore the child during quiet time and offer no eye-contact or conversation. This is an opportunity for the child to calm down – to possibly think and reflect on his/her behaviour but you should not say this
- The length of time out should ideally match the age of the child, for example, for a three-year-old child use three minutes.
- Quiet time needs to be used consistently for unwanted behaviour and as part of a behaviour management plan involving parents/carers. You may find you are using it several times a day at first, but this will become less frequent as a child adjusts to this approach.
- If a child tries to leave quiet time, or gets upset, take their hand and put him/her back into quiet time, for the first time you can say, you will need to sit in quiet time, but any time after that, don’t speak to him/her, just take him/her back.
- When quiet time is over you can tell the child that quiet time is over and add ‘thank you for sitting so nicely’. Then direct the child to what you want them to do, which may be to do what you asked them to do before quiet time.
- If this child then behaves appropriately in the next few minutes offer clear affirmation and praise.
- Apply the approach fairly and consistently

If the approach is not modifying the child’s behaviour and other positive approaches likewise, you should with parental permission consider referring the child to the Area SENCO team for inclusion support N.B. It is important that ‘quiet time’ is used appropriately and sparingly as a last resort to support a child to have time to calm down sitting alongside an adult,
Boys: Getting it Right from the Start

How to channel boys’ natural exuberance and enthusiasm

The physical learning environment indoors and outdoors needs to be planned and organized to support boys’ learning. We need to create an enabling environment, which celebrates the characteristics of boys and celebrates their natural enthusiasm and energy. (appendix 5) is a Learning Environment checklist that focuses on increasing boys’ engagement and motivation.

Barriers to Boys’ Learning that can affect behaviour

As a setting discuss barriers to learning that specifically affect boys which can include:

- Gender-biased resources
- Gender biased adult talk – do you talk to boys and girls differently?
- Lack of parental understanding of issues relating to boys' underachievement
- Lack of positive role models
- Low self-esteem
- Issues around emotional intelligence
- Adult expectation – do you hear yourselves saying “ah well, boys will be boys?”
- Boys' lack of development in fine and gross motor skills
- Adults' lack of awareness of issues related to gender and achievement
Some challenging behaviours

Biting
Biting is a common behaviour in young children between the ages of 14 months to two and a half years of age. Most biting occurs in toddlers, who have no or limited language, but usually stops as language and social skills develop.

Children may also bite because they are hungry, teething, angry or bored. They may not have enough space, be overcrowded or not enough access to enough favourite toys / experiences. Biting may be initiated by transitions, such as a new baby in the family or giving up a dummy, by worry or stress, or because they are in an appropriate environment or expectations are too high.

Useful questions to ask: When and where did it happen? Who with? What happened before? What happened afterwards? Why do you think it happened? What is behind the behaviour – how do you think the child feels?

We may feel awkward or defensive, in response to questions from parents of ‘bitten’ children, for example, do we tell them who the ‘biter’ is? We may also be unsure of how to support the parent/s of the child who is biting.

If a child bites

- Comfort and take care of child who has been bitten, in a ‘low-key’ calm way. (The biter may not realise how much it hurts). Tell the bitten child: ‘That must be sore, let’s get a cold cloth.’
- To the biter, say in a firm, but gentle voice ‘It’s not OK to bite, biting hurts. If you want to bite, you can bite a cracker or a toy, but I can’t let you bite Tom.’
- Encourage the biter to ‘make amends’ in some way; help get a cold cloth, a tissue or teddy for comfort.
- Do not insist on ‘sorry’, unless the biter genuinely wants to do so.
- Support the bitten child to say ‘No, don’t do that’ and to ask for a hug/soft touch.

Strategies to use

- Make a point of giving positive attention and affection to the ‘biter’ throughout the day.
- Provide snacks and drinks regularly.
- Make sure there is more than one of a favourite toy.
- Arrange furniture and resources to make space and room for play.
- Be on hand often to help children set simple limits – say ‘mine’, or ‘no, my toy’, and model for them how to negotiate and take turns.
- Be aware of changes taking place at home, and help children to deal with these by talking, ‘You miss your dad while he’s away.’ ‘It can be a bit scary when you move to a new house.’
- Discourage ‘play biting’ at home, but do share concerns and strategies with parents. Behaviour will change if everyone works together.
- Never bite a child back.
- Teach children how to gain positive attention.
- Develop a ‘biting policy’, and a leaflet with guidelines to support parents and practitioners.
- Reassure parents that biting is a common occurrence, and a phase that their child will move through. (Do not say, ‘This is one of the worse cases I’ve seen’ – even if it is!)

**Creative ideas to try**

- Provide crunchy snacks – apples, carrot sticks, cucumber, toast, rice and corn crackers.
- Introduce a puppet or persona doll story about biting, along with the idea of a ‘biting’ basket containing objects that are safe to bite or mouth – jam jar lids, flannel, new plastic dog toy, rubber door stop, tough beanbag.
- Provide a treasure basket for seated babies (six to 10 months) and heuristic play resources for one- to two-year-olds.
- Provide teething rings of all shapes and sizes.
- Plan simple rhyme and singing sessions for short amounts of time with small groups of children.
- Provide interesting natural play materials to pinch, poke and squeeze – playdough and clay.
- Model how to say sorry appropriately with other practitioners/children.
- Take photos of children being caring, gentle or respectful of each other, and make a display, perhaps linking to the themes of the EYFS
- If biting persists, ask the child’s parents to visit a dentist, HV or GP.
Struggling to share and take turns
Young children are not always ready to share, though if we re-phrase this as ‘turn-taking’, and are inventive with games to facilitate this, some sharing is possible. First, we must allow children time to develop and experience the concept of ‘ownership’. So, having a peg or box / drawer where children can place special toys from home is ideal.

A simple photographic game of baby photos on a flap, with the ‘grown-up’ picture beneath, can help to explain ‘who belongs to whom’. Once a child learns that sharing does not necessarily mean they have to give their one precious toy away, sharing becomes more of a possibility.

- Help children develop confidence in turn-taking with simple games and songs like ‘Two little dickie birds’, but have six birds in a bag. Sing the song and share the game with six children. Other songs include ‘Five little monkeys jumping on the bed’.
- Ask children to hand round plates of fruit, where there is plenty for everyone to have three to four pieces. Model politely saying please and thank you as you do this.
- Positively reinforce any spontaneous turn taking, but rather than saying, ‘Good boy or good girl’, say ‘I like how you’re taking turns, well done!’
- Help children to join in and develop friendship skills, ‘Could you give this book to Jo as I know he wanted to read it when we were finished?’ or, ‘I think they need some more blocks for the train they’re building… here are some.’

Strategies and ideas

- Provide pots of bubbles to blow in the wind.
- Have colourful ribbons to dance and sing with.
- Include simple board games that are fun to share with one other.
- Try using parachute games.
- A well-resourced role-play shop, with plentiful supplies of boxes, tins, paper bags, tills, pens and paper will provide lots of opportunities for sharing and turn taking.
- Help children to negotiate how turn taking can work:
  - ‘Nikhil loves the trains, can he have Gordon for one minute, as long as he gives it back? I can put the egg timer on for you.’
  - ‘Let’s write a list of names of who wants to have a go. How long shall we each have – two, three or four minutes?’
- Tell a simple story about two children or puppets fighting over a toy, and invite children to help ‘sort it out’, and come up with ideas to solve the dispute.
**Tantrums**

A child’s screams and hitting can be alarming, but tantrums can be common in many young children under the age of five. Remind yourself this is normal development and stay calm! Tantrums are a bit like a rain barrel with too much rain. In the same way, emotions can be too much for a child to hold, and they overflow.

Tantrums can happen when a child, used to a relaxed approach at home, joins a setting with clear limits and well-defined boundaries. Children are learning to deal with their emotions, and need our help to do so.

Ideas to try:

- Consider the ‘useful questions to ask’ – When and where did it happen? Who with? What happened beforehand? What happened afterwards? Why do you think it happened? What is ‘behind’ the behaviour – how do you think the child feels?
- Try distracting a child if you know a tantrum is brewing.
- Utilise the outdoor area fully.
- Remind yourself that limits are important, it’s OK to stick to them.
- Children find it hard to wait too long, so make sure routines run smoothly.
- Could they be hungry, tired, or becoming ill?
- Offer cuddles, a cosy story time or gentle songs to ward off a tantrum

If a tantrum occurs:

- It may help to avoid eye contact.
- Make sure child is safe and keep other children ‘out of the line of fire’.
- Reassure visitors and other children that this is normal and the child needs to express some strong feelings.
- Do not try to reason with or have a conversation with a child in the throes of a tantrum.
- You may, depending on the child, be able to hold him, rock him or reassure him to help him calm down.
## Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADHD</td>
<td>Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult support</td>
<td>An adult helping a child with a particular need. This may be physical, emotional or verbal support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>Autistic Spectrum Disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>The way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundaries</td>
<td>Guidelines, rules or limits that are set. Boundaries identify what are reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave around each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMHS</td>
<td>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>intelligence The ability to reason with emotions and to use those emotions to enhance thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender biased</td>
<td>When an environment, curriculum or interaction promotes one gender unfairly above the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>General Practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual</td>
<td>Usual, established, done as a habit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HV</td>
<td>Health Visitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privilege</td>
<td>Reward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflecting</td>
<td>To think deeply or carefully about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>relationships Positive rapport that supports and values individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanction</td>
<td>A threatened penalty for disobeying a law or rule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schema</td>
<td>A organized pattern of thought or behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Confidence</td>
<td>The belief in one’s skills and one’s abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>An emotional response to oneself i.e. how much one feels worthy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Regulate</td>
<td>A child’s ability to manage powerful emotions, and maintain focus and attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>Plan of action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>A change in setting. During their earliest years, children may experience many transitions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- From home to childminder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- From home to non-maintained setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Between non-maintained settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- From room to room in a day nursery as they grow older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- From non-maintained setting to maintained nursery or school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- From home to maintained nursery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- From home to full-time school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As defined by Ofsted (Ofsted Inspection schedule 2012)

“Children whose needs, dispositions, aptitudes or circumstances require particularly perceptive and expert teaching and, in some cases, additional support, disabled pupils, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and those who have special educational needs

- boys
- girls
- groups of pupils whose prior attainment may be different from that of other groups
- those who are academically more or less able
- pupils for whom English is an additional language
- minority ethnic pupils
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- looked after children
- pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
- young carers
- pupils from low income backgrounds
- other vulnerable groups.”  (END)
References

- Perry, B D (2001) *Self-Regulation: The Second Core Strength*
- King, J (2007) *The Environment in your Nursery – The Effect of Sound and Colour on Young Children*
- McTavish, A (2007) *Feelings and Behaviour – A Creative Approach*
- Nutbrown, C (2007) *Threads of Thinking: Young Children Learning and the Role of Early Education* Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd

Useful books and resources

**Biting**

- Teeth are not for Biting by Elizabeth Verdick, Free Spirit Publishing, USA (2003)
- So Much by Trish Cooke and Helen Oxenbury, Walker Books (2008)
- Bootsie Barker Bites by Barbara Bottner and Peggy Rathman, Paperstar Books (1997)
- Creating Places – *Community Playthings*
- *Communication Friendly Spaces* by E Jarman (2007)

**Sharing**

- Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister, North-South Books (2007)

**Tantrums**

- Angry Arthur by Hiawyn Oram and Satoshi Kitamura, Red Fox Picture Books (1993)

**Teaching expertise**

- A website of Optimus Professional Publishing, offering free *education resources, articles* and *e-bulletins*, advice and guidance, knowledge sharing and ideas
Managing behaviour

3.52. Providers are responsible for managing children’s behaviour in an appropriate way. Providers must not give corporal punishment to a child. Providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by any person who cares for or is in regular contact with a child, or by any person living or working in the premises where care is provided. Any early years provider who fails to meet was taken for the purposes of averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child’s behaviour if absolutely necessary. Providers, including childminders, must keep a record of any occasion where physical intervention is used, and parents and/or carers must be informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

3.53. Providers must not threaten corporal punishment, and must not use or threaten any punishment which could adversely affect a child's well-being.
## Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Managing feelings and behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Unique Child: observing what a child is learning</th>
<th>Positive Relationships: what adults could do</th>
<th>Enabling Environments: what adults could provide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Is comforted by touch and people’s faces and voices.</td>
<td>• Find out as much as you can from parents about young babies before they join the setting, so that the routines you follow are familiar and comforting.</td>
<td>• Learn lullabies that children know from home and share them with others in the setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Seeks physical and emotional comfort by snuggling in to trusted adults.</td>
<td>• Use calming processes such as rocking or hugging.</td>
<td>• Have a cozy, quiet place for babies to be calm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Calms from being upset when held, rocked, spoken or sung to with soothing voice.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide comfortable seating such as a sofa or cushions for baby and key person to be together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shows a range of emotions such as pleasure, fear and excitement.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Suggest to parents bringing something from home as a transitional comfort object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reacts emotionally to other people’s emotions, e.g. smiles when smiled at and becomes distressed if hears another child crying.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Birth - 11 months

- Uses familiar adult to share feelings such as excitement or pleasure, and for ‘emotional refuelling’ when feeling tired, stressed or frustrated.
- Grows ability to soothe themselves, and may like to use a comfort object.
- Cooperates with caregiving experiences, e.g. dressing.
- Beginning to understand ‘yes’, ‘no’ and some boundaries.

### 8-20 months

- Is aware of others’ feelings, for example, looks concerned if hears crying or looks excited if hears a familiar happy voice.
- Growing sense of will and determination may result in feelings of anger and frustration which are difficult to handle, e.g. may have tantrums.
- Responds to a few appropriate boundaries, with encouragement and support.
- Begins to learn that some things are theirs, some things are shared, and some things belong to other people.

### 15-26 months

- Establish shared understandings between home and setting about ways of responding to babies’ emotions.
- Make sure the key person stays close by and provides a secure presence and a refuge at times a child may be feeling anxious.
- Support children who are anxious on separating from their parents by acknowledging their feelings and reassuring them.
- Demonstrate clear and consistent boundaries and reasonable yet challenging expectations.

- Help young children to label emotions such as sadness or happiness, by talking to them about their own feelings and those of others.
- Be aware of and alert to possible dangers, while recognising the importance of encouraging young children’s sense of exploration and risk-taking.
- Reduce incidents of frustration and conflict by keeping routines flexible so that young children can pursue their interests.

- Choose books and stories in which characters help and support each other.
- Duplicate some materials and resources to reduce conflict, e.g. two tricycles or two copies of the same book.

---

Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements and their order should not be taken as necessary steps for individual children. They should not be used as checklists. The age/stage bands overlap because these are not fixed age boundaries but suggest a typical range of development.
### Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Managing feelings and behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Unique Child: observing what a child is learning</th>
<th>Positive Relationships: what adults could do</th>
<th>Enabling Environments: what adults could provide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Fleet and gregarious | **22-36 months** | **Support children’s symbolic play, recognising that pretending to do something can help a child to express their feelings.**  
**Help children to understand their rights to be kept safe by others, and encourage them to talk about ways to avoid harming or hurting others.**  
**Help children to recognise when their actions hurt others. Be wary of expecting children to say ‘sorry’ before they have a real understanding of what this means.** | **Have agreed procedures outlining how to respond to changes in children’s behaviour.**  
**Share policies and practice with parents, ensuring an accurate two-way exchange of information through an interpreter or through translated materials, where necessary.**  
**Provide areas to mirror different moods and feelings - quiet restful areas as well as areas for active exploration.**  
**Provide books, stories, puppets that can be used to model responding to others’ feelings and being helpful and supportive to them.** |
| Aware of own feelings, and knows that some actions and words can hurt others’ feelings.  
Begins to accept the needs of others and can take turns and share resources, sometimes with support from others.  
Can usually tolerate delay when needs are not immediately met, and understands wishes may not always be met.  
Can usually adapt behaviour to different events, social situations and changes in routine. |  |  |

**30-50 months**

- Name and talk about a wide range of feelings and make it clear that all feelings are understandable and acceptable, including feeling angry, but that not all behaviours are.  
- Model how you label and manage your own feelings, e.g. “I’m feeling a bit angry and I need to calm down, so I’m going to…”  
- Ask children for their ideas on what might make people feel better when they are sad or cross.  
- Share your own concern and respect for others, living things and the environment.  
- Establish routines with predictable sequences and events.  
- Prepare children for changes that may occur in the routine.  
- Share with parents the rationale of boundaries and expectations to maintain a joint approach.  
- Model and involve children in finding solutions to problems and conflicts.  
- Collaborate with children in creating explicit rules for the care of the environment. |

|  |  |  |
|  |  | **Provide photographs and pictures of emotions for children to look at and talk about.**  
**Use Puppets to help children consider feelings, ways to help others feel better about themselves, and dealing with conflicting opinions.**  
**Make available a range of music that captures different moods.**  
**Put in place ways in which children can let others know how they are feeling, such as pegging their own photo onto a feelings tree of feelings faces washing line.**  
**Provide familiar, predictable routines, including opportunities to help in appropriate tasks, e.g. dusting, setting table or putting away toys.**  
**To support children with SEN, use a sequence of photographs to show the routines in the setting.**  
**Set, explain and maintain clear, reasonable and consistent limits so that children can feel safe and secure in their play and other activities.**  
**Use pictures or consistent gestures to show children with SEN the expected behaviours.**  
**Provide materials for a variety of role play themes.**  
**Provide a safe space for children to calm down or when they need to be quiet.**  
**Provide activities that help children to develop safe ways of dealing with anger and other strong feelings.** |

Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements and their order should not be taken as necessary steps for individual children. They should not be used as checklists. The age/stage bands overlap because these are not fixed age boundaries but suggest a typical range of development.
### Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Managing feelings and behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Unique Child: observing what a child is learning</th>
<th>Positive Relationships: what adults could do</th>
<th>Enabling Environments: what adults could provide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Understands that own actions affect other people, for example, becomes upset or tries to comfort another child when they realise they have upset them.  
• Aware of the boundaries set, and of behavioural expectations in the setting.  
• Beginning to be able to negotiate and solve problems without aggression, e.g. when someone has taken their toy.  

**Early Learning Goal**  
Children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others’ behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.  

| • Talk about fair and unfair situations, children’s feelings about fairness, and how we can make things fair.  
• Model being fair, e.g. when choosing children for special jobs.  
• Be alert to injustices and let children see that they are addressed and resolved.  
• Affirm and praise positive behaviour, explaining that it makes children and adults feel happier.  
• Encourage children to think about issues from the viewpoint of others.  
• Ensure that children have opportunities to identify and discuss boundaries, so that they understand why they are there and what they are intended to achieve.  
• Make time to listen to children respectfully and kindly, and explain to all the children why this is important. Children will then know that they will be listened to when they raise injustices.  

| • Plan small group circle times when children can explore feelings, e.g. help children to recall when they were happy, when they were excited, or when they felt lonely.  
• Provide activities that require give and take or sharing for things to be fair.  
• Use Persona Dolls to support children in considering fair ways to share and get on with each other.  
• Involve children in agreeing codes of behaviour and taking responsibility for implementing them.  
• Provide books with stories about characters that follow or break rules, and the effects of their behaviour on others.  
• Carefully prepare children with SEN, such as those with autistic spectrum disorder, for any changes to their routine. |

---

Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements and their order should not be taken as necessary steps for individual children. They should not be used as checklists. The age/stage bands overlap because these are not fixed age boundaries but suggest a typical range of development.
Springboard Starpoints

Developing good behaviour in children with delayed language or learning skills

- Remember all the good things they do
- Praise and reward - give them lots of attention, a clap a pat or a hug
- Limit your language
- Give clear rules - speak slowly, quietly and simply
- Be consistent
- Plan and prepare - set them up to succeed
- Avoid difficult situations
- Give choices - two clear-cut options
- Be ready to divert
  - give them something new to do
- Slow down - don’t try to do too much
- Give them lots of time to finish what they’re doing
- Tell them what to do, not what not to do!

The Big Star

Points to think about when dealing with persistent, difficult behaviour.

**Setting** - Check the setting or situation where the behaviour is happening - is it too noisy or busy or bright? Is it over-exiting or overwhelming? Is it as safe as it needs to be - stair gates in place, sharp edges padded, electric sockets protected etc.

**Trigger** - Are there any triggers which can be avoided? Are there certain things which the child cannot resist throwing, reaching out and grabbing, pushing over - if so, make sure the child cannot get near the temptations.

**Action** - Turn the unwanted action into a positive, so you can tell them what to do, not what not to do. ‘Clap your hands’, Kick the old cushion’, ‘Feet on the floor’

**Response** - Then you can Reward the positive behaviour with praise, claps, a tickle or a special fun toy. Avoid giving any eye-contact or verbal attention for the unwanted behaviour.

Appendix 3
In a Preschool Playgroup, a group of children had built some large cardboard boxes to represent a ship. They had put on hats and were pretending to be pirates, fighting with swords. Jim, whose language skills were still limited, looked on, then ran up and pushed the boxes over and waved his arms in a threatening manner, upsetting the others.

What do the Springboard Starpoints have to say?

Identify the Trigger
The preschool staff felt that there was no trigger to this behaviour, but in fact the other children’s language and their complex imaginative play was beyond Jim’s level of understanding. He wanted to join them but did not know how. Such a situation can cause frustration and low self-esteem. A staff member took him to the book-corner where they found a picture of a pirate ship. She then showed him which part of the Cardboard box model represented the ‘Bridge’. She found him a hat and gave him a hoop, then told the other children that Jim was going to be the Captain for 5 minutes, steering their ship. Because she kept her language very simple and to the point, backed up with the picture of the ship, Jim was able to understand and felt very important in the role he was able to play.

Remember the Starpoints

Tell them what to do, not what not to do
Limit you Language
Set them up to succeed

A 4 year old boy would suddenly run towards any long haired girl of his size or smaller and pull her hair hard. He would then look on with interest and say, ‘She’s crying! Why’s she crying?’ over and over again.

What do the Springboard Starpoints have to say?

Consider the Action
The child’s social and emotional skills understanding had not yet developed to the stage where he could consider the feelings of others or control his impulse to reach, grab and feel, much as a baby would do as part of exploring its environment. He was fascinated by the result but did not deliberately plan to hurt the other child. In fact, he felt the need to ‘test’ the reactions of children lots of times, to find out if his act would have the same result.

Obviously, it was important that he should not be allowed to hurt others, so Mum, Dad and his various nursery workers had to learn when the ‘danger times’ were, at which point they needed to be in firm control. They were able to take him by the hand and ask him to carry something or do something to help them, keeping his hands busy. They were then able to praise him dramatically for being so helpful. They also needed to give him positive play opportunities to reach grab and feel different textures and materials and to feed his instinctive urges to discover new effects of his actions.

Remember the Starpoints

Praise and reward the good things (while preventing the unwanted behaviour)
Terry, a 3 year old with delayed communication skills, would run and push his little sister, pull her hair and pinch her. He would do this to other children at nursery too. He would laugh if they cried or even more if they tried to retaliate. He would run away excitedly, when an adult came to deal with the situation.

What do the Springboard Starpoints have to say?

Consider the Response
Terry did not yet know how to play with other children yet he had the urge to make contact with them. He discovered that his physical approaches always brought a dramatic response from his peers, and that he also gained a lot of adult attention, which he could turn into a game.

Mummy, Daddy and other carers had to train themselves to give as little attention as possible to the unwanted behaviour, by giving him no eye-contact or speech, and by firmly but silently taking him to sit quietly for a minute, where he could not enjoy the reactions of the children.

They also had to help him to make appropriate contact with others. They planned regular activities where they could support him to play little turn-taking games with another child, and to hand toys or equipment to them. They helped him to hand out stickers to children to put on their coats. They taught him to kick a ball to another child. In all these activities, they praised every moment of positive play, and gave him lots of fuss and attention.

Remember the Starpoints

Tell them what to do, not what not to do .................
Be ready to divert ....................... Praise and reward

A mother was very distressed by the fact that whenever she took her son to the local Soft Play Fun Centre, he would run up to other children and push and hit them, even scratching their faces. He had delayed language skills, and whenever she tried to tell him off, he just got more excitable.

What do the Springboard Starpoints have to say?

Consider the Setting
Noisy, brightly coloured areas are often over-stimulating for excitable children. Also the mother had no chance of taking control here since she was too big to get to a lot of the areas. The child was not yet able to control his impulsive behaviour enough to make appropriate contact with other children in this setting.

By taking the child to the local park with a football, along with one other child and his parent, the mother was able to teach him to have fun with another child in a well controlled setting. Later they were able to take the two children to a small swing and slide area, which was neither crowded nor noisy, and where the mother could easily reach her child at all times if it were necessary to divert him from rough, impulsive acts.

Throughout these successful playtimes, she made sure that she gave him her undivided attention and lots of praise for every good kick of the ball or whizz down the slide.

Remember the Starpoints

Avoid difficult situations ............ Set the child up for success
Be ready to divert ....................... Praise and reward
Springboard Starpoint Stories

A mother did not know how to react when her 3 year old with learning difficulties hit her on the face. This frequently happened when her mother picked her up when collecting her from nursery or when she bent over her to change her nappy.

What do the Springboard Starpoints have to say?

Identify the Trigger
The child still had limited control over her emotional reactions and seemed to find the close face-to-face contact which occurred in these situations very intense and over-whelming.

She was already in a heightened state of tension, because Mummy was returning after a period of absence. Her instinct, then, was to hit and, having done so, she quite enjoyed the attention she got (even though Mummy was trying to tell her off!)

To avoid triggering this behaviour, Mummy had to train herself to keep a bit more distant at these times. She no longer picked the child up to give her a cuddle at the end of the nursery session, but took hold of her hands so they could jump up and down together to welcome each other. When she did need to carry her child, she gave her something to hold which kept her hands busy, while Mummy made sure that she kept her face more distant and did not make close the eye-contact which the child found over-excit- ing.

Remember the Starpoints

Tell them what to do, not what not to do ......................
Be ready to divert ............................. Praise and reward

Springboard Starpoint Stories

A 3 year old had suddenly learnt to climb and found it easy to get up on the kitchen worktop then climb to the highest shelf to get at the biscuit tin. If Mum saw him, she would run anxiously telling him to get down and lift the biscuit tin down so he could have one when he was at floor level. If dad saw him, he would lift the child down and tell him not to climb.

What do the Springboard Starpoints have to say?

Change the Action and the Adults’ Response
Both parents were trying their best to teach him not to climb the kitchen cupboards, but without success. With Mum, his climbing brought instant reward of her anxious attention and a biscuit afterwards. With Dad, it had become a great game of ‘Catch me if you can’, and saying ‘No more climbing’ to a child with limited understanding of negatives yet was counter-productive – all the child understood in that sentence was ‘climb’!

First, Mum and Dad had to sit down and decide on a consistent plan. They realised that their child had an urge to use his new skill, so they decided to take twice a day to a climbing frame in the nearby park. They also got hold of some old strong cardboard boxes for climbing in and out of in the garden, where Mum and Dad could play ‘Catch me’ games with the child, praising all his good climbing skills.

They made sure that he was not able to go to the kitchen unless one of them was there and then, whenever he looked tempted to climb, they promptly said ‘Feet on the floor’. They kept a favourite little clockwork train handy, so that whenever he kept his feet on the floor they could wind it up for him to play with, diverting him and rewarding him at the same time.
A 4 year old who was able to feed himself found it difficult to sit still at the table at mealtimes so that frequently his spoon, fork, cup, plate would all end up on the floor. This behaviour had built up so that he was soon arriving at the table looking for things to throw.

The family mealtimes were otherwise a calm setting with a consistent routine. The child would promptly leave his play to run to the table when asked.

What do the Springboard Starpoints have to say?

Change the action to a positive one

On reflection, the parents realised that they should no longer call the child to the table when the meal was ready, but slow things down a bit by giving him a warning that in 5 minutes it was time to wash his hands for tea. He was then taken, slowly, to wash his hands and then to the table.

As soon as he sat down one of the adults led a little finger game or rhyme (sometimes just ‘Clap your hands, wiggle your fingers, touch your nose etc; sometimes singing ‘Tommy Thumb’) ending with the instruction ‘Hands on your knees’. Then he was given his plate and fork. He was frequently reminded ‘Plate on the table’ and ‘Fork on the plate’, when he was not using it, and as long as he was complying with this expectations, he was given lots of attention and praise for his good eating. If his plate of fork ended up on the floor they took it away quietly, giving him as little attention as possible.

At first, the parents could only do this when two of them were available, so they worked on it during a holiday period. They also chose to target a quick tea time meal so the child was not expected to sit still for long. That way, one parent could sit close to him to calmly ensure that the child did not have a chance to throw things, then get him a favourite toy to play with when he was finished.
Staff training - Small group activity
Acknowledging Feelings

To be able to recognise a range of emotions, children need to be supported to develop their vocabulary around feelings.

ACTIVITY
In a group of five, build the tallest free standing tower you can in 10 minutes

Our emotional behaviour affects our interactions with others. For this activity allocate a different persona (see below) to every member of the group. They should take on the role of their persona throughout the activity.
The main purpose of the activity is to explore the range of feelings experienced. How did the other members of the group make you feel?

1. Negative persona
When you are participating your responses should be strongly negative

Eg “I strongly disagree with what you are saying”
Eg “I think you are wrong”
Eg “I don’t think you understand the task!”
Eg “That won’t work”

Physical responses are important too – try folding your arms across your chest and frowning.

2. Disinterested persona
You try not to get involved and if you are asked to respond you say

Eg “I am not sure”
Eg “I don’t know”
Eg “I suppose so”

Physical responses are important too – try sitting a little back from the group, yawning, checking your watch.

3. Eager to please persona
You agree with everyone’s ideas and you want to help your team-mates as much as possible. When asked to respond you say things like

Eg “What a good idea!!”
Eg “No problem, I’ll do it!”
Eg “Yes, you’re right!”
Physical responses are important too – smile, nod in agreement, be quick to offer help

4. Controlling/dominating persona
OK so there has to be someone in charge and you think it should be you as secretly you think you know best! - no matter if other people think you are bossy.

You make sure everyone is on task and constantly give people instructions

Eg “Right, lets do it like this”
Eg “The best way is to….”
Eg “Put the tape here”
Eg “You do this”
Eg “Don’t do it that way, do it this way..!”

Physical responses are important too – try some of the following:- keep talking, stand or sit in the middle of the group, lean forward.

5. Mediating persona
Inevitably, there will be conflict in a team at some point. You try to make it OK between people and keep the group harmonious.

You smooth things over, find compromise.

You may say things like

Eg “why don’t we work together…?”
Eg “I think what she is trying to say is…..”
Eg “Is there another way of looking at this?”
Eg “Come on, let’s not argue about this…”

You keep your arms unfolded to seem unthreatening and smile encouragingly. Keep calm!

At the end of the activity
In your groups discuss the range of feelings experienced during the activity.

Children need to be supported to understand the range of feelings they are experiencing. They need to develop their vocabulary around feelings. Happy and sad are not enough!
Range of feelings children experience
# Learning Environment Checklist - Maths Area

## Traditional Resources

- A Variety of objects for sorting, classifying, ordering and counting
- Unifix cubes, multilink
- Shapes
- Coloured mats
- Sorting trays
- Plastic numbers of different types
- Pegs, baskets
- Compare bears
- Dice
- Paper, squared paper
- Coloured pencils, felt pens
- Buttons
- Shells
- Animals
- Boxes
- Beads
- Cotton reels
- Sorting circles
- Gift bags
- Linking elephants
- Sand timer
- Number line
- Tape measures
- Scales
- Calculators

## Resources to increase boys’ engagement and motivation

- Different sized characters, vehicles from popular culture laminated and used for sequencing, counting, ordering and for creating meaningful number lines.
- Boy friendly objects for sorting, classifying, ordering and counting:
  - Cars
  - Frogs
  - Caterpillars
  - Butterflies
  - Assorted minibeasts
  - Pebbles
  - Fir cones
  - Conkers
  - Acorns
  - Use dinosaurs, keys
  - Score boards – skittles
  - Coloured elastic bands – geometric boards
  - Individual whiteboards and pens
Learning Environment Checklist – Book Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Resources</th>
<th>Resources to increase boys’ engagement and motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provide children with a limited choice of around 15 books that are changed on a</td>
<td>• Photograph books with simple text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regular basis</td>
<td>• Novelty books – scratch and sniff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The book area should include a selection of the following:</td>
<td>• Comics and magazines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Story/picture books</td>
<td>• Story props for child to hold or wear e.g. Percy the Park Keeper’s hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Board books</td>
<td>• Toys from popular culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hard back books</td>
<td>• Posters/photographs (large scale works best)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information texts</td>
<td>• Posters of book characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Traditional rhymes and stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Core books and rhymes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Magnetic story props/magnetic board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Books made by children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pop up books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Song and music books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dual language texts as appropriate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Finger and action rhymes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Puppets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Environmental print</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comfortable seating adult sized sofas are best</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Learning Environment Checklist - Writing Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Resources</th>
<th>Resources to increase boys' engagement and motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scissors/erasers/paperclips/rulers/hole punch</td>
<td>Stamps and ink pad e.g. dinosaur, ghost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaries</td>
<td>Magna doodles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address books</td>
<td>Tomy Aqua Mats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forms</td>
<td>Wavy scissors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post cards</td>
<td>Envelopes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeting cards</td>
<td>Character wrapping paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Files</td>
<td>Football wrapping paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stapler/fastener/sellotape/Pritt stick/masking tape</td>
<td>Blank cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of different types of paper in a variety of sizes</td>
<td>Variety of blank books with examples of homemade completed books e.g. lift the flap, zig-zag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alphabet cards</td>
<td>Sticky label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message pad</td>
<td>Post its</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name cards</td>
<td>Pencil tops in the shape of monsters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post box</td>
<td>Paper with popular culture motif or character on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real stamps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pencils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured pencils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fibre tip pens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wax crayons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pencil sharpener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastels and chalks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Learning Environment Checklist - Investigation Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Resources</th>
<th>Resources to increase boys’ engagement and motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● A selection of natural objects such as cones, shells, bark, conkers, twigs and stones</td>
<td>● Things to assemble and to disassemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Living things – plants goldfish or mini-beasts (snails, ants, worms)</td>
<td>● Clocks, clockwork items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Items to investigate – magnets, magnifying lenses, colour filters, binoculars, mirrors</td>
<td>● Torches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● A selection of information texts</td>
<td>● Kaleidoscopes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Materials for floating and sinking</td>
<td>● Periscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Different textures – fabrics and tactile materials</td>
<td>● Fossils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● A selection of things to touch, smell</td>
<td>● Feathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Digital camera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Paper, pencils, felt pens, coloured pencils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Learning Environment Checklist - Block/Construction Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Resources</th>
<th>Resources to increase boys’ engagement and motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● People</td>
<td>● Tool set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Vehicles</td>
<td>● Spirit levels, tape measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Animals</td>
<td>● Large cardboard boxes, tubes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Construction kits</td>
<td>● String</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Wooden blocks</td>
<td>● Writing materials including chalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Hard hats</td>
<td>● Labels, Post-its</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Alphabet cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Blue tac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Straws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Lolly sticks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Learning Environment Checklist - Small World Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Resources</th>
<th>Resources to increase boys' engagement and motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Play people, farm animals, Wild animals</td>
<td>• Figures from popular culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Floor mats including seaside, road, farm, jungle or zoo</td>
<td>• Writing materials, Labels, Post-its, Alphabet cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Train set</td>
<td>• Figures from popular culture laminated with speech bubbles attached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dolls house with furniture</td>
<td>• Party banners, wrapping paper, party tablecloths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Garage and vehicles</td>
<td>• Netting, materials with boxes underneath to give different levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Airport with planes and helicopters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Natural materials e.g. fir cones for trees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Learning Environment Checklist - Creative Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Resources</th>
<th>Resources to increase boys' engagement and motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Powder paint, ready mixed paint and block paints in a variety of colours, to include skin tone</td>
<td>• Character wrapping paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paint pots, pallets, trays, easels, brushes in a variety of lengths and thicknesses</td>
<td>• Cellophane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A selection of objects to print with, including natural and familiar everyday objects</td>
<td>• Natural material – twigs, fir cones, leaves, gravel, sawdust, mixed beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wool, ribbons, string, assorted sized fabric pieces with different textures</td>
<td>• Shaped and coloured past e.g. dinosaur, Disney, car etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PVA, Pritt stick, paste, sellotape, masking tape</td>
<td>• Writing materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tools, scissors, stapler, hole punch</td>
<td>• Labels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pens, pencils, crayons, chalks, pastels and charcoal</td>
<td>• Post-its</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paper and card in different shapes, sizes, textures and colours, name cards</td>
<td>• Alphabets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Items for three dimensional work – boxes tubes, yoghurt pots, trays, corks</td>
<td>• Popular Characters to copy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Learning Environment Checklist - Home Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Resources</th>
<th>Resources to increase boys' engagement and motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crockery/cutlery</td>
<td>Tool kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooker/hob</td>
<td>Jars with lids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock</td>
<td>Screws to sort and organise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable rack and vegetables</td>
<td>Party materials from popular culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sink</td>
<td>Link the home corner to a book or a story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty container and packet</td>
<td>Consider alternative role-play scenarios indoors and outdoors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirror</td>
<td>Shoe shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-away menus</td>
<td>Spaceship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice-board</td>
<td>Castle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers, books, magazines, cookery books</td>
<td>Pet shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea-towel</td>
<td>Batman cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing up liquid and sponge</td>
<td>Fire station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone and telephone directory</td>
<td>Take away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bed/cot</td>
<td>Garage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushchair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teapot and kettle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fridge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked salt-dough food, pasta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fir cones/conkers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table and four chairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit bowl and fruit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note pads, Post-its, paper, pens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plants – real and plastic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron and ironing board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking utensils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television/music system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photograph frames</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressing up clothes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>