ELIZABETH HOUSE

Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust

Children's Behaviour Policy

Elizabeth House
2, Hurlock Street
London N5 1ED

Tel: 020 7690 1300
email: childrensactivities@elizabeth-house.org.uk

Children's Behaviour Policy

The purpose of this policy is to promote a positive environment while working with children

Elizabeth House environment and the atmosphere created within it can affect and influence the behaviour of the children who attend. Children will be more at ease, secure and happy if they sense they are being respected, listened to and treated fairly.

PRINCIPLES

- Every child has the right to play freely
- Everyone has a right to be listened to, to be valued, to feel and be safe. Everyone must be protected from disruption or abuse.
- The ASC/PS services have adopted a clear defined code of conduct regarding discipline
- It is expected that all playworkers will set excellent examples to the children/young people during their working day.
- We will seek to give every child a sense of personal responsibility for his/her own actions.
- We will have effective communication systems
- Where there are significant concerns over a child's behaviour we will follow through procedures and contacting parents or relevant carers to work together in active partnership to promote good behaviour.
- Actions may be recorded in a case file/plan
- Bad language is considered to be unacceptable behaviour
- We will seek advice and support from appropriate outside agencies

HVBT| Elizabeth House staff should be in control and aware of their behaviour at all times. We have a commitment to recognising the boundaries between personal and professional life and be aware of the need to balance a caring and supportive relationship with children and young people with appropriate professional distance. Our behaviour should be consistent with every child and adult.

It is vital that all staff develop and maintain the required skills and competence to do the job.

The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all children equally and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each child first before the aims of Elizabeth House.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable adult).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Take care not to develop close personal, relationships with the children and young people they are working with as this may be against the law, exploitative or result in preferential treatment.

- Not engaging in work-related activities for personal gain, or accepting gifts or favours from children, young people or local people that may compromise the professional integrity of the work.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

Practices to be avoided:
The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge of the senior playworker and the child's parents/carers. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event without formal consent.
- Avoid meeting and spending time with children outside of service hours in a social capacity.

Management of children's behaviour at Elizabeth House's After School Club and Holiday Playscheme

General Guidance
The guidance and regulations accompanying the children's Act (1989) state that corporal punishment (e.g. smacking, slapping, shaking) should never be used. It is permissible to take necessary physical action in an emergency to prevent personal injury to the child or to others or serious damage to property.

The Behaviour and Discipline policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:
- Anti-bullying policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Safeguarding and Child protection policy and
- Disability Discrimination Scheme.

Elizabeth House is committed to enabling all children to access free play successfully. This is an inclusive process. The way in which children, young people and adults behave has an intense effect on all the play/work that is carried out within the setting.

We aim to create an atmosphere where children are able to play fair, develop awareness and are sensitive to the needs of others. We request all staff, parents and children show respect and consideration for other people and their property.

Elizabeth House playworkers will offer praise and reward positive attitudes to behaviour and work to maintain fairness and consistency, whilst encouraging self-discipline. By promoting good

behaviour we can build positive relationships that encourages all (staff, parents and children) to have a shared understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour:

- Ensuring a safe, caring and friendly play areas
- Promoting good self-esteem, self-discipline and emotional intelligence
- Preventing bullying & harassment

The play provision wants to ensure that all children attending our provision have space, freedom and choice and that all children and staff show respect for each other and value diversity. Children are entitled to human rights. All children attending our out of school provisions have a right to play and enjoy what is on offer without fear of intimidation, harassment or physical or verbal abuse.

Staff should actively encourage and promote good behaviour by ensuring that they praise children privately and publicly. Positive behaviour of children will be encouraged and unacceptable behaviour will be discouraged.

Staff should endeavour to use a non-authoritarian approach to dealing with unacceptable behaviour. In this way they should appeal to a child's sense of fairness and should discuss with children any unacceptable behaviour.

Children should be encouraged to respect and cooperate with each other and with staff. The ground rules should be on display as a reminder and review/undated regularly. Staff should discuss children's behaviour at team meetings, the end of each day or when concerns arise. All staff should be made aware of any incidents that have occurred.

A record of reoccurring or serious incidents MUST be made in the incident book and reported to senior staff. Full details of any action taken MUST be recorded, dated and signed.

The role of the Children's service manager

It is the role of the Children's Service Manager is to put into practice the Centre's Behaviour Policy. It is also the responsibility of the Children's Service Manager to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all the children in the provision.

The Children's Service Manager supports the staff by implementing the policy, by setting the standards of behaviour, and by supporting staff in the implementation of the policy.
The Children's Service Manager has the responsibility for giving banned periods to individual children for serious acts of misbehaviour. For repeated or very serious acts of anti-social behaviour, violence or abuse the Children's Service Manager may permanently exclude a child.

The role of the Playworker

It is the responsibility of the playworker to ensure that the Elizabeth House rules are imposed during operational hours.

The playworker treats each child fairly and enforces the Code of Conduct consistently. The playworker treats all children/ young people with respect and understanding.
It is the responsibility of the playworker to record significant incidents of inappropriate behaviour in a playground incident form/folder.

Playworker have authority to sanction children as a last resort whose behaviour is unacceptable, who fail to follow reasonable instruction or co-operate.

The playworker liaises with external agencies, as necessary, to support and guide the progress of each child.

Discipline and guidance practices
Elizabeth House uses positive methods of discipline and guidance by focusing on positive reinforcement, redirection and as a last resort, time-out or exclusion.

Elizabeth House will not implement discipline measures that involve corporal punishment, isolation, or anything that may be detrimental to a child's self-esteem. To ensure the safety of everyone, children who show repeated challenging or threatening behaviour will be asked to take some time off for a period of time.

Elizabeth House reserves the right to permanently exclude any child of severe misbehaviour. Parents will be notified should these events occur.

Management of children's & young people's behaviour
(warnings & exclusions)

- All children should be dealt with fairly and with respect.
- Staff should maintain a calm and positive approach when dealing with incidents.
- Get the attention of the child/ren involved.
- Take the child/ren to one side, away from others.
- Listen to what they have to say regarding what has happened, what led up to the incident and the reason for their actions.
- Explain to the child/ren why the behaviour was not acceptable.
- Explain to them the consequences of their actions.
- Ensure the child/ren understand what is being said to them.
- Allow the child/ren to make amends and rejoin the group after the incident has been dealt with appropriately.
- In the case of serious incidents or ongoing issues we will give the child a warning that their behaviour is not acceptable.
- In the event of the behaviour carrying on and other children being at risk we will consider excluding the child for a period of time or permanently exclusion.
- Staff should inform the parent/carer of any serious or ongoing incidents or unacceptable behaviour and any action taken by staff.
- Staff should endeavour to work with the parent/carers to resolve any issues regarding their child's behaviour.

Behaviours which may signify emotional and behavioural difficulties
There are a number of behaviours which may signal the need for special provision. Most obviously these include bullying, disruptive behaviour and support with emotional management.

The most important cause of behavioural difficulties – limited self-esteem
The most important cause of behavioural difficulties in children is their limited self –esteem. Children often have life experiences which make them feel that they are not loved, cared for, valued or seen as special by others. This can inform their behaviour patterns, which may have a negative influence on the way people react to them, which ultimately reinforces their low self-esteem. A vicious circle is established, which many pupils lack the insight or the power to break.

Children with low self-esteem may display their insecurities by:

- Becoming either boastful or over self-critical
- Becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Looking for ways to avoid new challenges
- Finding it hard to relate appropriately to others and appearing uncomfortable in unfamiliar company or situations
- Experience difficulties in making friends

Damage and destruction of property
Children and young people who attend HVBT can have access to the resource and equipment they request when playing freely. We encourage all children to respect and care for the property of others. HVBT has the right to ask for payment for any item or property they feel has been damaged through deliberate destructive

Time out and exclusion of children
It is the policy of the play service that children will only be excluded as a last resort, when there is no alternative action to be taken and when it is felt that other children and /or staff are at risk.

In the case of serious incidents or ongoing issues staff will give the child a warning that their behaviour is unacceptable. All warnings must be recorded in the warning book. Three warning in the book will result to a time out period. The time scale for exclusion can be 1 day to full weeks.

By given three warnings staff will be able to show that they have made attempts to work with the child and that they have been given prior warnings.

Staff should discuss any time out & exclusions to warrant the time scale depending on the serious of the incident.

When dealing with challenging behaviour staff should consider the behaviour, other related factors and why it happened.

Whenever possible, staff should discuss the exclusion with a parent/carer. An exclusion form must be completed and sent to the parent/carer. Within the form staff should outline the reason for exclusion, the time period and behaviour agreement to re-attend the activity.
This extends to outings where a child will be excluded from attending outings.

Discipline is not a punishment, positive discipline is really essential.

Discipline Tips:

1. **Keep rules simple and understandable**. Before making a rule, ask yourself: is it necessary? Does the rule protect a child's health and safety? Does it protect the rights or property of others? Too many rules are hard, if not impossible, to enforce.
2. If it helps to get down on the child's level, try to make eye contact so you are face to face. Some children may find eye contact difficult and uncomfortable so do not force this on them but be sure to communicate clearly in a kind but firm command tell them what it is you want them to do. For example, "can you two play nicely together.'
3. **Stay calm.** A calm approach works best. Try to not over -react. If you feel angry leave the situation if you can. Calm down and find a quite space. Often this will help you find an alternative or solution to the problem. If you can't leave the situation, then mentally step back and count to ten. Don't get upset or start yelling. Don't start a confrontation; just keep repeating your expectation.
4. **Avoid arguments.** Be firm but try not to shout at the children (it's hard not too!) Discipline is not a game in which there is a winner and a loser. You should expect co-operation from the child and the child expects you to be fair. Respect the child enough to allow disagreements at times.
5. **Direct.** Try not to use the word 'OK' when giving instructions as this is a common phase mainly used in humour. Point out what needs to be done and when by, *for example 'The toys are on the floor. Pick them up before you get out another toy.'*
6. **Use humour -** a good laugh helps to break the tension. Instead of backing the child into a corner. Feel that you are in control and the space is safe. Let the child know that a problem can be work out.
7. **Don't let a problem build up over time.** Tell the child their behaviour is annoying to you or others members.
8. **Avoid criticism and nagging.** Lecturing or preaching can be very negative. Use one word reminders. Briefly, make certain that your expectation is clear and the consequences are understood. Implement consequences unemotionally and without further discussion.
9. **Don't give too many orders**. This can overwhelm children. Explain why some things have to be, but listen to their views. If you have to overrule, explain your decisions & why.
10. **Give one reminder.** Ask what did I ask you to do? If the child gives you a blank stare, then give them your full attention and tell them one more time, being very specific and firm.
11. **Give one warning.** Now is the time to tell the child what the consequence for non-compliance will be. Such as suspend privileges, recorded in the warning book, talk to parents etc.

12. **Praise the children when they comply.** Good communication at any age is an essential skill. Children need to know when they have got it right. This helps build self-esteem. Let the children know you appreciate their efforts.

Give the most attention to the good behaviour you want to encourage and ignore minor misbehaviour as much as possible. It's also a good idea to avoid harsh punishments and only use sanctions for serious misbehaviour.

Signed and reviewed:

Iqbal Ali, Deputy Centre Manager
Trustees

Policy Changes Tracking

Review date	Next review date
May 2026	May 2027

Behaviour Management Policy Update – May 2026

This Behaviour Management Policy was reviewed in May 2026 and updated to reflect current best practice in positive behaviour support, inclusion, safeguarding, trauma-informed approaches and partnership working with parents and carers. The policy remains aligned with the Children Act 1989, the SEND Code of Practice (0–25 years), EYFS requirements and Elizabeth House safeguarding policies.
The next scheduled review of this policy will take place in May 2027, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local authority procedures.