Supporting positive behaviour

At Jack and Jill we have a Social Development Policy which sets out our commitment to providing children with an environment that promotes positive behaviour and relationships.

From time to time in a pre-school setting we have to deal with inappropriate behaviour, it is important to remember that:

**‘We deal with difficult behaviours and not difficult children. If there is a problem behaviour, it does not follow that there is a problem child.’** (Mortimer, H. 2002)

We have added some information here that we hope you will find useful

We encourage children to:

·         Feel motivated and confident enough to develop to their best potential

·         Respect themselves and other people

·         Be able to make friends

·         Express feelings in appropriate ways

·         Do as they are nicely asked

·         Make a useful contribute to the group

·         Develop positive self-esteem

Experience demonstrates that appropriate behaviour is most likely where there are clear and consistent boundaries and the children know what is expected of them.

Children respond best in a calm and purposeful environment that has a familiar structure, but remember that it may take a while for routines etc. to become familiar.

Mutual respect, kindness and courtesy make the play environment much easier for the children to interact appropriately within. Again this may need to be learned in a variety of different contexts, for example, home and pre-school. Adults modelling this behaviour to one another and to children is a positive and effective way of encouraging appropriate behaviours.

Positive approaches can be used to raise and maintain children’s self-esteem. Children who hear a constant stream of “don’t” and “no” tend to stop listening and stop trying, thinking of themselves as ‘naughty’ and leaving them with a negative self-image. Children whose appropriate behaviour is positively reinforced through praise are more likely to repeat the behaviours which are attracting the attention. Positive remarks are encouraging and rewarding and leave children with a positive self-image.

Here are a few suggestions that may support children to change inappropriate behaviours:

·         Identify and avoid situations that are likely to cause a problem

·         Distract rather than confront

·         Make sure that the ‘activity’ the child is involved in is appropriate for their development level

·         Get their full attention before giving instructions / directions

·         Give positive attention before ‘trouble’ happens

·         Give a warning of changes of ‘activity’

·         Anticipate problem times and be a step ahead

·         Give clear directions

·         Show the child what to do as well as saying it

·         Choose a few simple rules and stick to them

·         Be absolutely consistent

·         Ignore attention seeking behaviour where it is safe to do so

·         Make it fun to behave appropriately!

**It is imperative, in the interest of preserving self-esteem, that the child knows that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable, not the child themselves.**