

1 minute guide: Understanding and Managing Behaviour in Early Years.

What does the EYFS says about managing children's behaviour?

3.58. Providers are responsible for supporting, understanding, and managing children's behaviour in an appropriate way.

3.57. Childminders are responsible for supporting, understanding, and managing children's behaviour in an appropriate way.

The statutory requirements do not identify any specific approach to managing children's behaviour. It is up to individual settings to decide which approach works best for you.

There are a variety of factors which can influence a child's behaviour, these could include frustration, basic needs not met (tired, hungry, cold), inappropriate expectations, parenting, relationships, and the child's environment. The pandemic has also had a significant impact on children's wellbeing, and this is often displayed as challenging behaviour. Remember that any significant changes to children's behaviour should be recorded and you should consider whether these might be related to safeguarding concerns.

When deciding on your approach to behaviour management you will need to consider what typical behaviour looks like at each age and stage of child development. When choosing strategies to manage children's behaviour you will need to be mindful that one strategy will not work for all children, and you may need to use a variety of strategies depending on the individual needs and level of understanding of the child.

Do I need a policy?

The EYFS does not require providers to have a written behaviour policy. However, you will need to ensure a consistent approach to behaviour across the setting, and so it is good practice to have a written record of the agreed procedures which you can share with both staff and parents.

Physical Intervention

The EYFS states:

3.59 Providers must not give or threaten corporal punishment or any punishment which could negatively affect a child's well-being. Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by anyone who is caring for or is in regular contact with a child, or by anyone living or working in the premises where care is provided. Any early years provider who does not meet these requirements commits an offence. A person will not be considered to have used corporal punishment (and therefore will not have committed an offence), if physical intervention was taken to avert immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary.

3.58 Childminders must not give or threaten corporal punishment or any punishment which could negatively affect a child's well-being. Childminders must take reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by anyone who is caring for or is in regular contact with a child, or by anyone living or working in the premises where the childminding is taking place. Any childminder who doesn't meet these requirements commits an offence. A person will not be considered to have used corporal punishment (and therefore will not have committed an offence), if physical intervention was taken to



avert immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary.

It is important that you have clear guidelines for any physical intervention in the setting. You need to agree with all practitioners what physical intervention might look like and when it is appropriate to use it. Practitioners should only use physical intervention to prevent children from injuring themselves or other, or damaging property. Where physical intervention has taken place, there must be a written record of the incident and what intervention was used. The parents must also be informed as soon as possible. You may want to seek additional training for practitioners on physical intervention.

Partnership with Parents

It is important that you are proactive in addressing any behavioural concerns with parents. Parents will want to see that you are supporting their child in the setting and working with them to enable them to support at home. Record any meetings and ask parents to sign the notes. This will show how you have supported parents and will be useful evidence to show during your inspection.

Ofsted

The Early Years Inspection Handbook states that your inspector must have access to;

“All logs that record accidents, exclusions, children taken off roll and incidents of poor behaviour”

You should have a written record of any incidents of poor behaviour and any action you have taken to address it. This may include incident forms, behaviour observations and meeting notes.

Off-rolling is the practice of removing a child from the setting without using a permanent exclusion, when the removal is primarily in the best interests of the setting, rather than the best interests of the child. This includes pressuring a parent to remove their child from the setting. While it may not always be unlawful, **Ofsted believes off-rolling is never acceptable.**

Available Support and Advice

There are a number of professionals and agencies who can offer support if you are struggling to find effective ways to manage a child's behaviour. Some can offer support in the setting and some can offer support for parents in the home. You can get general advice about managing children's behaviour in your setting without the need for consent. However, you would need parental consent before speaking to professionals about a specific child.

Early Years Team (SENDO/SENCO)

Health – Health Visitor

Early Help – Early Help Coordinator

Family Hub – Parenting Support



