

# Thomas Coram Centre and Nursery School

## Personal, Social and Emotional Policy



Thomas Coram Centre  
and Nursery School  
49 Mecklenburgh Square  
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Reviewed every two years

## **Introduction**

Personal, emotional and social development underpins learning and development in all areas of life and across the curriculum. At Thomas Coram, we are committed to promoting a positive sense of self for all children in our care. We stress the importance of parents, family and the wider community in this process.

## **What is Personal, Social and Emotional Development?**

Personal, social and emotional development is about understanding who we are and where we fit in. It is about respecting and valuing others as well as ourselves. To do this, children need to develop a sense of self, which includes positive self-esteem and confidence. Personal, social and emotional development includes our relationship with the world around us, and spiritual and moral development.

**Personal development** is about starting to understand ourselves, and developing a sense of self and independence.

**Social development** is about starting to understand the people around us, building relationships and learning how to be part of a group. It involves learning about the values and expected behaviour in our communities.

**Emotional development** is about starting to understand our own emotions and how to use them positively. It is also about understanding the emotions of others.

**Spiritual development** is about developing a sense of awe and wonder and starting to understand the sacred dimension to life. It is about developing a personal set of beliefs and values and understanding, which for some people is related to a particular religion.

**Moral development** is about starting to understand about fairness and justice. It is about respecting the rights of others.

## **What is Self-regulation?**

Self-regulation is the ability to understand and manage your own behaviour and reactions. It involves the ability to remain calm, cope with big emotions, adapt, and respond appropriately. Self-regulation helps children to learn, behave well (control impulses), get along with others and be able to take turns in conversation, share toys, and express emotions in appropriate ways. Self-regulation helps children become independent because self-regulation gives children the ability to make appropriate decisions about behaviour and learn how to behave in new situations.

Self-regulation is a process that grows and matures. It begins to develop rapidly from the age of two years old and continues to develop into adulthood.

- **Toddlers** can wait a short time for food and toys. But toddlers might still snatch toys from other children if it's something they really want. Tantrums happen when toddlers are overwhelmed by strong emotions.
- **Kinder children** are starting to know how to play with other children and understand what's expected of them. Children are getting better at controlling their own wants and needs, imagining other people's perspectives and seeing both sides of a situation. This means, for example, that they might be able to disagree with other children without having an argument.

There are many things that influence self-regulation. Lived experiences, the way in which children are parented, attachment types, sensory processing and adverse childhood experiences, to name but a few. Early years practitioners and teachers support children to recognise their feelings, find coping strategies and self-regulate by including include talking, planning, problem-solving and role-modelling.

### **Our Aims**

We aim to support children to enable them to:

- Develop a strong sense of self and feel good about themselves
- Feel secure within their families and in the community
- Understand and express their emotions
- Understand the feelings of others and to empathise with them appropriately
- Negotiate and compromise
- Become increasingly independent in meeting their personal needs
- Acknowledge their own successes and disappointments and those of others
- Respect the culture and beliefs of others
- Appreciate the world around them and care for their environment

At Thomas Coram we have identified three strands which our policy focuses on:

- Self- esteem and independence
- Respecting and valuing our beliefs and culture and those of others
- Appreciating the world around us and our place in it

We have identified the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to each strand and the adult's role in promoting learning and development in each of these strands.

## 1. SELF ESTEEM AND INDEPENDENCE

<p><b>Knowledge &amp; understanding to be developed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing that they are valued as a person in their own right</li> <li>• Knowing that we have emotions and that it is acceptable to express them appropriately</li> <li>• Knowing that others also have feelings and Emotions</li> <li>• Knowing about ways in which we can care for our physical needs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ways adults at Thomas Coram will promote this:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an atmosphere of trust through developing secure attachments shown through body language that the child is welcome and valued</li> <li>• Follow the child's lead in the showing of affection</li> <li>• Give positive feedback whenever possible</li> <li>• Give praise and encourage children to notice the achievements of others</li> <li>• Have times of day to share achievements</li> <li>• Give the child opportunities to share her/his achievements and disappointments with others</li> <li>• Provide opportunities to work in pairs and small groups</li> <li>• Be aware of the importance of arrival and departures (separation at start and end of daily sessions)</li> <li>• Be aware of the importance of friendships. Encourage friendships between children</li> <li>• Ensure that there is a predictable and appropriate routine which enables the children to feel secure</li> <li>• Ensure that the physical environment is warm, welcoming and reflects the diverse culture and communities the children come from</li> <li>• Help child feel safe to express, acknowledge, label and work through emotions, calm down and to talk about the feelings when appropriate</li> <li>• Help the child to demonstrate different emotions</li> <li>• Give support - physical, emotional or verbal according to the child's needs</li> <li>• offer the child alternatives for expressing emotions when needed - banging a cushion / kicking a ball</li> <li>• Support children when they are in conflict</li> <li>• encourage children to negotiate for themselves when appropriate</li> <li>• Offer support and strategies if the child is unable to reach a conclusion on their own</li> <li>• Give positive feedback when a child does something caring for others</li> <li>• Encourage child to think about how their actions have upset someone, if necessary explain, and talk about how the child can make amends</li> <li>• having consistent, firm, and fair boundaries for behaviour applied throughout the Nursery</li> <li>• Support and encourage developing independence skills - give children time to do things for themselves.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skills to be acquired</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to express feelings and emotions</li> <li>• Ability to understand emotions e.g. joy, sadness, anger in one's self and others</li> <li>• Ability to negotiate and argue one's own point of view</li> <li>• Ability to deal with disappointment or loss</li> <li>• Ability to concentrate and persist</li> <li>• Ability to be part of a group</li> <li>• Independence skills such as feeding and dressing</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Attitudes to be encouraged:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidence in initiating own play and joining in new activities</li> <li>• Confident about joining in with others</li> <li>• Wanting to care and share</li> <li>• Feeling remorse and wanting to make amends</li> <li>• Desire to be independent in caring for own physical needs and a sense of pride in doing so</li> <li>• Taking responsibility</li> <li>• Acknowledge the achievements of others</li> <li>• A sense of justice, respect and fairness</li> </ul>	

## 2. RESPECTING AND VALUING OUR BELIEFS AND CULTURES

<p><b>Knowledge &amp; understanding to be developed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding that there are different cultures, beliefs and religions within the community and the wider world</li> <li>• Understanding that there are places of worship</li> <li>• Starting to understand the stories and traditions associated with community and religious festivals</li> <li>• Starting to understand the traditions and practices associated with different cultures and religions</li> <li>• Starting to understand the values, standards and expected behavior in the community and the wider world</li> <li>• Understanding own place in family and in the community</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ways in which adults at Thomas Coram will promote this:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showing families using the nursery school that we are keen to learn about their cultures and ensuring that we keep ourselves well informed</li> <li>• Encouraging parents, staff and campus to share their own cultural or religious traditions</li> <li>• Responding with genuine interest</li> <li>• Ensuring that we have equipment, artefacts, materials and pictures from various cultures in the nursery environment and understand their significance</li> <li>• Helping the children learn about and celebrate festivals appropriately</li> <li>• Talking with the children about the different communities and religious traditions and beliefs represented in the nursery school</li> <li>• Exploring rites of passage and key life events, such as births, birthdays, weddings, moving to new key worker...</li> <li>• Using daily life to explore beliefs and cultures, for example giving children time to experience and explore mealtimes and talking with them about the cultural importance of food -sharing and caring for each other</li> <li>• Visiting places of worship in the community</li> <li>• Showing by our own behaviour a respect for social conformities</li> <li>• Using parents' names in greetings</li> <li>• Displaying children's birthdays</li> <li>• Making a special place for key groups</li> <li>• Visiting community buildings, open spaces etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skills to be acquired:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to raise questions</li> <li>• Ability to recognise differences and similarities</li> <li>• Ability to acknowledge the achievements of others</li> <li>• Ability to imagine the experience of others</li> <li>• Ability to make connections between our own lives and those of others</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Attitudes to be encouraged:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong sense of self as a member of different communities</li> <li>• Openness</li> <li>• Curiosity about those around us</li> <li>• Interest in local communities</li> <li>• Trust</li> <li>• Respecting and celebrating difference</li> <li>• Empathy and care for others</li> </ul>	

### 3. APPRECIATING THE WORLD AROUND US AND OUR PLACE IN IT

<p><b>Knowledge &amp; understanding to be developed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing that we have a relationship with the world around us</li> <li>• Understanding about pattern and order in the world</li> <li>• Knowing own worth, value and uniqueness</li> <li>• Starting to understand about our own values and beliefs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ways adults at Thomas Coram promote this:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a variety of experiences to show the richness and diversity there is in a child's world</li> <li>• Respecting that sometimes children need a little time and space to be alone and quiet</li> <li>• Providing an environment which facilitates this, having available an assortment of soft cushions and blankets</li> <li>• Encouraging children to reflect</li> <li>• Encouraging children's sense of awe and wonder</li> <li>• Making time to contemplate and modelling this for the children</li> <li>• Showing children how to care for resources and helping them to create their own rules for doing this</li> <li>• Showing the children how to care for living things such as plants and animals</li> <li>• Introducing the idea of re-cycling resources</li> <li>• Encouraging children to develop a sense of their own uniqueness by drawing their attention to things that make them special</li> <li>• Encourage children to feel a sense of connection with the natural world by giving them plenty of opportunities to explore nature and to marvel</li> <li>• Helping the children to develop their own values and belief by talking to them about what is important to them</li> <li>• Encouraging a sense of joy in life and living</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skills to be acquired:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ways of caring for the natural world - plants, animals and resources</li> <li>• Ability to be still</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Attitudes to be encouraged:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiet contemplation and reflection</li> <li>• Appreciation of being alone and still</li> <li>• A sense of wonder and marvel at the world including nature, the elements and the seasons</li> <li>• A sense of joy</li> <li>• Curiosity about life and life events</li> <li>• Responding to significant events</li> <li>• Care for the world around us</li> </ul>	



## SIGNIFICANT STEPS IN PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Age/stage	Characteristics at these age / stage of development
Toddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning to be able to say what she/he is feeling</li> <li>• enjoys imaginative play with adults</li> <li>• through imaginative play starting to understand how other people behave</li> <li>• goes to the lavatory independently with sensitive support</li> <li>• able to dress themselves if clothes are straightforward</li> <li>• enjoys taking part in family and community traditions and festivals</li> </ul>
Kindergarten Younger children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using imaginative play to understand how others might feel</li> <li>• beginning to develop a gender role</li> <li>• interested in making friends</li> <li>• learning to negotiate</li> <li>• experimenting with taking control</li> <li>• able to imagine all sorts of things and ways, become fearful</li> </ul>
Kindergarten Older children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has developed a sense of self</li> <li>• understands about some of the rules of their community</li> <li>• can control feelings and hide them</li> <li>• can think about the feelings of others</li> <li>• can take responsibility</li> <li>• have a sense of fairness and forgiveness</li> </ul>

### Promoting Positive Behavior and Self-Regulation at Thomas Coram

#### Our Aims

We aim to support children to enable them to:

- Show respect for themselves and others
- Show appreciation for others and what they do for us, for example saying "Please" and "Thank you"
- Feel and show remorse when they have hurt someone, whether physically or emotionally
- Make amends in a way appropriate to their stage of development
- Make successful relationships with their peers
- Be able to negotiate, take turns and share

#### The Adult's Role in Supporting this

- To praise positive behaviour as much as possible
- To encourage a sense of responsibility by asking a child to pick up something they have dropped or to help them mend something they have broken
- To support a child to make amends according to the circumstances and their stage of development e.g. get a tissue, help rebuild a model
- To have clear, consistent boundaries and explain these to the child in a way they will understand
- To show by our own behaviour, respect for each other and the children and parents



- To offer a child alternative ways to channel their aggression eg. banging a cushion or piece of clay

### **When conflicts occur**

Sometimes children will become involved in conflicts. These can take the form of:

1. Hurting someone physically eg. biting, hitting, kicking, throwing things at people
2. Hurting someone verbally eg. name calling, racist remarks, shouting
3. Emotional sarcasm, threats or manipulation
4. Showing disrespect for the property of others
5. Showing disrespect for the feelings of others eg. not waiting a turn, spoiling someone's work

When children are under five it is unlikely that the types of behavior described above are an example of bullying, as this involves a persistent intention to hurt, intimidate or persecute and occurs over time. The judgement about how best to respond to unacceptable behaviour should be made according to the child's age and stage of development, bearing in mind that 4-year-olds and 2-year-olds respond very differently. Factors such as how tired the child is and events happening at home should also be considered.

It is important to encourage parents to share these events and changes at home with the key worker eg. a parent being in hospital etc. If the behavior is uncharacteristic your reaction may be different to when a consistent pattern of behavior has been recognized and a strategy agreed.

### **The Adult's Role**

- Approach, quieten and calm the situation
- Try to stop the behaviour, especially if someone is being hurt or is in danger
- Comfort the child who is the victim- this may mean someone else does this while you deal with the other child
- Acknowledge children's feelings
- Gather information from the children involved
- Try to find out the reasons for the behaviour
- Restate problem for the children
- Ask for ideas for solutions from the children
- Depending on the children's level of maturity help them to resolve the dispute themselves
- Help the children to choose a solution
- Explain clearly and in language appropriate to the child's level of understanding what it is that is unacceptable.
- Label the behaviour rather than the child e.g. "*That was an unkind thing to do*" instead of "*You unkind boy/girl*"

- Help the child to make amends appropriately eg. comforting the victim, getting a tissue, mending the broken toy, model
- Whenever possible use positive language eg. 'We can run in the garden,' rather than "Stop running indoors'
- Tell the child clearly what will happen if they do not stop this behaviour eg. moving the child to another area to get involved in something else
- Give follow-up support

### **Strategies to Assist the Adult**

- Get down to the child's level
- Try to maintain eye contact to emphasise that you are serious
- Use a firm and controlled voice rather than shouting
- Don't embarrass or humiliate the child
- Call a colleague for help if you have been hurt or if you feel yourself getting upset or angry
- Deal with behaviour immediately and then drop it

### **Safety**

It is the adult's role to judge the safety of what a child is doing and to decide the appropriate response. This decision should balance the need of the child to explore and stretch their strength and abilities with the risk of them injuring themselves. This can sometimes vary according to the adult's own personal confidence and experience so a consensus of opinion may need to be taken for certain areas e.g. climbing trees.

If a child is repeatedly climbing on a piece of equipment deemed to be unsafe then a review of the experiences being offered may be needed. For example, there may need to be opportunities to climb elsewhere or a child may need more opportunities to go outside.

### **If the Problem Persists**

- Discuss at end of day review
- Talk to parents to discover if this behaviour is repeated at home
- Agree a strategy to be used at nursery and home and share this with all staff involved
- Review after an agreed time and agree further strategies
- Monitor behaviour and record observations
- If behaviour persists, consult outside agencies in consultation with parents.

### **Bullying**

*'Bullying is defined as a deliberate act done to cause distress solely to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It is regular and ongoing.'*  
(Camden Anti Bullying Policy).

The children at Thomas Coram are very young and not at the stage when their behaviour would be described as bullying.

We are aware that the roots of attitudes and behaviours, including bullying, start in the early years and we are committed to doing all we can to address this. We believe that establishing and maintaining an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to is vital for the prevention of bullying. This means ensuring that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty. We include activities and opportunities, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from bullying.

When incidents occur which we believe are bullying we follow Thomas Coram Anti-Bullying Policy.