



## **PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

**Updated: November 2018**

### **1. Aim**

Flamingo Chicks is a community for children of all abilities and adults at risk and their families and carers. This policy aims to provide a guiding set of principles for all participants of our classes (children and adults) staff, volunteers and parents/carers to ensure a safe, fun and supportive environment during all our classes and workshops.

### **2. Principles**

Flamingo Chicks follows the social model of disability which states that disability is caused by the way society is organised rather than by a person's impairment or difference. Our policies are underpinned by this belief and as such:

- Our approaches to promoting positive behaviour will always be person centric recognising that each individual has different needs and requires a highly individualised approach to meet those needs.
- Our approach to supporting positive behaviour will always be based on an understanding that in our classes the participants have a range of physical and learning disabilities which affect their behaviour. As such our focus will always be on ensuring that all our staff, volunteers, parents and carers recognise and understand that there is often an underlying reason for challenging behaviour.
- We understand that behaviours are a form of communication and we aim to explore with the children, adults at risk and their families on how to support this in our classes, and what needs or wants the participant is trying to express. We recognise that for some participants settings such as our classes can be a sensory overload, so we have many techniques and tools that we can explore with a child or adult at risk to support this.
- We have a code of behaviour which we ask all adults at risk, parents/carers and their children to follow and practices for promoting positive behaviour.

### **3. Flamingo Chicks code of behaviour**

Our classes are open to all children and adults regardless of ability and are inclusive so welcome both disabled and non-disabled people. We recognise that all children and adults in our classes have different needs which will affect their behaviour so our code is not a set of rules but some guiding principles to help everyone support each other in our settings where possible.

### 3.1 Children, young people and adults try to:

- be kind
- listen to each other
- be helpful
- respect each other's differences

### 3.2 Parents and carers are expected:

- **To be open** with Flamingo Chicks about the needs of their child and any behaviours that may be considered challenging. This is to enable us to provide the best support possible for each child to ensure they get the most of their experience from Flamingo Chicks.
- **Be responsible for their child.** Understanding all the health issues, needs and limitations of all the children at Flamingo Chicks is something that is not possible for us to assess and take responsibility for. Therefore, a parent or carer is required to stay on the premises and supervise their child during community classes. Whilst we endeavour to maintain a safe and fun environment, individual responsibility must stay with the parent/carer in community classes in order to safeguard both the children and the future of the facility for everyone.
- **Be responsive to their child's behaviour.** Flamingo Chicks is not a specialist disability service and our volunteers and majority of staff are not trained in physical intervention. In our community classes if an incident occurs where physical intervention is required, it will be the responsibility of the child's parent or carer to respond quickly and appropriately. Lead teachers for our community classes receive Physical Techniques Positive Handling training and only in a emergency situation where a child is at significant threat of harm will they intervene to lead a child away from the situation while the parent of the child concerned is being sought.
- **Respect the views of other** parents, volunteers and staff at Flamingo Chicks. We expect parents to listen to each other's views and be polite to each other.
- To discuss any **safeguarding or behavioural concerns** you may have with either Katie Sparkes or Rosa Bladon. Please never allow allegations to go unreported.

### 3.3 Flamingo Chicks teaching staff and volunteers are expected:

- **To understand they are a role model** for the children and adults at risk in our classes and must demonstrate approaches which encourage positive behaviour for example, avoiding negative talk or ambiguity.
- **To create an open and supportive environment** which encourages positive sharing of tips and advice for promoting positive behaviour.
- **To take a collaborative approach to promoting positive behaviour.** Working with parents/carers to identify strategies to support all children in our classes.
- **To listen to and respect** all children, young people and adults at risk at all times.
- To treat children, young people and adults at risk **fairly and without prejudice or discrimination.**
- To respond to challenging behaviour in a **calm and controlled manner**

## **4. The Flamingo Chicks way: promoting positive behaviour**

Flamingo Chicks is open to all. We have all kinds of children in our classes, including children who are visually impaired and those with autism, cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome and other complex needs. We also welcome children with illnesses, such as those undergoing treatment for cancer, or that face other life challenges, such as those who have been bereaved or are in care. We are particularly proud that 23% of our Flamingo Chicks are not disabled, an outstanding achievement for us, highlighting our passion for inclusivity.

We recognise that the children and adults at risk in our classes all have individual needs which may affect their behaviour and aim to create an environment which is conducive to positive behaviour.

### **4.1 Staff and volunteer training**

Flamingo Chicks is an inclusive community not a specialist disability service. Our teaching staff and volunteers therefore are not disability experts but do receive inclusive practise training relevant to their roles as detailed below. Lead teachers for our community classes also receive Physical Techniques Positive Handling training.

All Flamingo Chicks teaching staff take part in twice yearly training days which cover topics including inclusive dance techniques; language and communication and strategies for promoting positive behaviour. Teaching staff are also provided with opportunities to shadow special school teachers to develop best practise and we invite independent inclusive dance practitioners into our classes to evaluate our techniques and provide recommendations and learnings.

Volunteers are the life blood of Flamingo Chicks and in our community classes the majority of children have a one to one volunteer dance helper to assist them to engage with the session. Volunteer dance helpers are able to build positive relationships with the child they are supporting, enabling them to respond proactively to challenging behaviour.

All our volunteers participate in Flamingo Chicks training before starting in a class which covers key elements of our practise including communication techniques and safe guarding.

### **4.2 Positive behaviour techniques and strategies**

Flamingo Chicks teaching staff are trained to use a variety of sensory tools, aids and communication techniques to enable all to engage with our classes in a positive manner. Techniques include:

**Recognising achievements** – we place significant value on recognising any element of effort or achievement, however small from a participant. Our teachers know the importance of giving praise for trying as well as achieving.

**Reinforcing positive behaviour** - we always enforce positive behaviour and celebrate/recognise even the smallest of achievements, to support this ethos we may use a behaviour reward scheme where a child will be given a token of reward (such as a sticker) for tasks they find hard during the session for example managing to sit in the circle for 5 mins.

**Pupil postcards** – a tangible record of success, rather like report cards at school, these are completed by our dance teachers to update parents on progress and highlight their child's achievements in class.

**Chill out space** – in each class setting teachers will assign an area of the room as a place for 'chill out' or to rest. Anyone who is feeling overwhelmed can choose to go to this part of the room when they need to.

**Repetition and structure** – each Flamingo Chicks class starts and finishes in the same way to enable the participants to become familiar with the class and settings.

**Communication** – all our teachers and volunteers understand the importance of clear communication. Using clear words to communicate, rather than long sentences.

**Tools** - some of the tools we may use to support a child during class could be a picture, symbol or object of reference timetable so they are aware of what's happening during a session, what is coming next and when the lesson is going to end.

**Time** - for some children an hour lesson may be too much so based on the child's needs this could be adapted or a quieter group may be offered.

## **5. Challenging behaviour**

Flamingo Chicks are committed to providing an inclusive community and have a duty of care to protect and keep safe all those that participate in our classes, parents/carers, volunteers and teaching staff.

We are committed to creating an environment which fosters positive behaviour but recognise that the participants in our classes have a range of physical and learning disabilities which affect their behaviour and incidents of 'challenging' behaviour may occur. Challenging behaviour may include:

- Aggression – hitting, biting, kicking etc
- Self-hitting
- Disruptive or destructive behaviour

When a child or adult at risk is showing behaviours which challenge theirs' or other participants experience at Flamingo Chicks the following steps will be taken:

### **5.1 Community classes**

1. If the behaviours do not present harm or risk to the individual, others or property Flamingo Chicks staff will firstly use distraction techniques or other separation interventions such as chill out time. Staff will observe the behaviour with a view to understanding how best to support the child or adult at risk during lessons. Advice may be sought from external specialists or professionals who support Flamingo Chicks work.
2. If the behaviour presents harm or risk to the individual, others or property action will be taken as immediately as possible in response to the behaviour. If an incident occurs where physical intervention is required, it will be the responsibility of the child's parent or carer to

respond quickly and appropriately. Lead teachers for our community classes receive Physical Techniques Positive Handling training and only in an emergency situation where a child is at significant threat of harm will they intervene to lead a child away from the situation while the parent of the child concerned is being sought.

3. In all cases, a personal behaviour plan will be drawn up with the parents/carers on how we as a group can best support the child to fully get the best experience from Flamingo Chicks. This will be done in a consistent holistic way, so that the parents, class teacher and the 1:1 support are all following the same plan of managing the behaviour. This plan will be reviewed and may need to be revisited weekly until the right approach is found for the child.
4. If the behaviour presented harm to the individual or others and/or restrictive physical intervention was required by the parent or carer, the incident must be recorded in the accident and incident book. This must be completed within 24 hours of the incident occurring. All incident forms must be handed to either Rosa Bladon or Katie Sparkes to be recorded. Flamingo Chicks staff and volunteers involved will be invited to a debrief meeting (either face to face or via telephone) to ensure they are supported after the incident and are fully engaged with the proposed strategies moving forward.
5. Flamingo Chicks do have a duty of care to all those attend our classes. If the individual is presenting persistent behaviour that puts either themselves or those around them at risk of harm or injury despite our best efforts to meet their needs and implement interventions, it may be that we need to ask that they are withdrawn from Flamingo Chicks.
6. A log of the incident and the personal behaviour plan and all interventions will be kept on Flamingo Chicks records.

## **5.2 School or community-based care settings**

1. If the behaviours do not present harm or risk to the individual, others or property Flamingo Chicks staff will firstly use distraction techniques or other separation interventions such as chill out time. Staff will observe the behaviour with a view to understanding how best to support the child or adult at risk during lessons.
2. If the behaviour presents harm or risk to the individual, others or property action will be taken as immediately as possible in response to the behaviour. Restrictive physical intervention will only be carried out by the school or settings trained staff.
3. In all cases, Sam McCormick, Head of Dance for Flamingo Chicks will contact the school or setting to discuss any strategies for supporting positive behaviour and managing the behaviour presented. These strategies will be discussed with the relevant Flamingo Chicks teachers and volunteers.
4. If the behaviour presented harm to the individual or others and/or restrictive physical intervention was required by the school or settings staff, the incident must be recorded in Flamingo Chicks accident and incident book. This must be completed within 24 hours of the incident occurring. All incident forms must be sent to Flamingo Chicks HQ (Sam McCormick, Rosa Bladon or Katie Sparkes). Flamingo Chicks staff and volunteers involved will be invited to a debrief meeting (either face to face or via telephone) to ensure they are supported after the incident and are fully engaged with the proposed strategies moving forward.

5. Flamingo Chicks will work closely with the school or setting to monitor the behaviour and success of strategies adopted.
6. Flamingo Chicks do have a duty of care to all those attend our classes. If the individual is presenting persistent behaviour that puts either themselves or those around them at risk of harm or injury despite our best efforts to meet their needs and implement interventions, it may be that we need to ask that they are withdrawn from Flamingo Chicks.
7. A log of the incident and the proposed plan of action and all interventions will be kept on Flamingo Chicks records.

## **6. Use of child protection procedures**

If anyone at Flamingo Chicks becomes concerned that a child may be at risk of significant harm or that he/she may present a risk of significant harm to other children, Flamingo Chicks child protection procedures will be followed which may result in a referral being made to the local authority children's or adult's social care departments.

Such a referral would be discussed with the children, young people and adults at risk and his/her family at the earliest possible opportunity, except in situations where this would possibly endanger a child's safety or interfere with a police investigation.

## **7. Signature**

I am signing to acknowledge I have read, understood and agree to the terms of the Flamingo Chicks Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

Signed by [Parent / Carer]

Name .....

Signature .....

Date .....