**Reflection policy**

When implementing "reflection" in our setting, it's crucial to ensure they are short, consistent, clearly explained to children, used only when necessary, and occur in a designated calm area, with the primary focus on helping the child self-regulate and understand the reason and need for reflection, rather than punishment; ideally, a brief "time-in" with a caregiver to discuss appropriate behaviour should follow the reflection time once the child is calm.

Key points for effective Reflection:

* **Clear expectations and communication:**
  + Define specific behaviours that warrant a need for reflection and clearly explain them to children at their level.
  + Use simple language and visual cues to reinforce the rules.
  + Establish a designated "reflection" area that is calm and not overly stimulating.
* **Appropriate duration:**
  + Follow a guideline of one minute per year of age for the reflection duration.
  + For younger children, very short reflections (around 1-2 minutes) are often sufficient.
  + Use a timer to ensure consistency and to signal when the reflection time is over.
* **Positive approach:**
  + Avoid using phrases like "naughty chair" and instead focus on the concept of taking a moment to calm down. We do not use the word naughty.
  + When the reflection time is over, calmly re-engage with the child and offer positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviour.
* **Before implementing reflection time:**
  + Give a verbal warning before initiating a reflection, allowing the child a chance to correct their behaviour.
  + Try redirection or positive reinforcement strategies first, especially with younger children.
* **During reflection time :**
  + Do not engage in conversation or argue with the child during the time out.
  + Monitor the child to ensure their safety but avoid unnecessary interaction.
* **After a time out:**
  + Once the child is calm, briefly discuss what happened and why they were placed in time out.
  + Offer support and guidance on how to make better choices next time, do not force a meaningless ‘sorry’ as this will cause more distress. If the child has understanding and a ‘sorry’ is a positive desired action then it can be used.
  + Praise positive behaviours to encourage desired actions.

Important considerations:

* **Individual needs:**

Adapt the reflection approach based on each child's age, developmental level, and individual needs.

* **Staff training:**

We will ensure all nursery staff are well-trained in implementing reflection consistently and appropriately.

* **Collaboration with parents:**

We will always discuss our reflection policy with parents if it has been needed to be used and seek their input on managing their child's behaviour.

Key points about using reflection with young toddlers:

* **Developmental stage:**

Most toddlers **under 2** lack the cognitive ability to grasp the concept of a reflection and why they are being disciplined.

* **Distraction is better:**

For younger children, redirection and distraction are often more effective ways to manage challenging behaviour.

* **Potential for frustration:**

Putting a young child on reflection can further escalate their frustration and distress.

Alternatives to reflection for under 2’s:

* **Positive redirection:** Offer a different activity or toy to shift their focus.
* **Simple verbal warnings:** Clearly state what behaviour is not acceptable.
* **"Time-in":** Sit with the child and offer comfort and support during a difficult moment.
* **Physical closeness:** A hug or holding can help calm a young child.

Signed on behalf of the setting by:

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AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Rachel Beresford, Director

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