

# Aleph Preschool Behavior Guidance Policy

Early childhood is a time of rapid growth and development. As children learn and grow, they may exhibit behavior that is challenging and need guidance to learn a different way of behaving and responding to situations they encounter.

Aleph Preschool's primary concern is the safety and well-being of all children in care. Our behavior guidance policy acknowledges that all behavior has a function, the developmental stages of the children in care, and the importance of preventing concerning or disruptive behavior when possible. It also provides processes for staff to follow when concerning behavior occurs, how it will be addressed in the classrooms and with families, and how it will be managed if behavior becomes an ongoing concern.

## Behavior Management

The best tactic in reducing challenging behavior is prevention. Aleph Preschool teachers and administrators take many proactive, purposeful steps to do this, including:

- Setting up classrooms and offering materials in an appropriate way for the developmental age and abilities of children in care
- Offering ample materials and equipment to give children options and opportunities to try new and interesting experiences
- Providing the required number of staff to supervise the children in the classroom and ensure that they can intervene, as developmentally and situationally appropriate, if a conflict arises
- Ensuring teachers are knowledgeable about child development and how development can look different across children
- Cultivating caring, open and respectful relationships among teachers, families and children
- Encouraging teachers to observe children regularly, get to know the children and their families, and be curious about behavior and the context within which it occurs
- Offering teachers opportunities to care for themselves and their mental health, so they can provide the best care possible for children in their care

## Behavior Intervention

When challenging or concerning behavior occurs, teachers address it in a calm manner. They intervene and address behavior when it happens including, for example, a safe space to calm down, words to use with another child, active listening to help a child describe the problem they are experiencing, and physical comfort.

Teachers share information as is appropriate with families through Tadpoles, email, phone or in-person conversation. When necessary, teachers and administration will document what happened using incident and/or injury reports.

Aleph Preschool staff will maintain confidentiality when notifying families of behavior that involves another child.

## Ongoing Challenging Behavior Concerns

While challenging behavior is often normal for young children, it may rise to the level of “ongoing challenging behavior” based on the nature, frequency, intensity, duration, and related factors of a non-typical or non-developmentally appropriate behavior for the age group of the child.

If a child displays a pattern of concerning, problematic or hurtful behavior, administration will ask the family to meet for a conference to discuss the situation. During the conference, the administration, teachers, and family will develop a plan to address the behavior and work together to implement it.

Families are expected to partner with teachers. This includes sharing information from observations at home, pertinent information about the child’s growth, development, and factors that may impact or influence behavior. Parents are expected to collaborate with teachers to implement suggestions and strategies at home that teachers provide. Parents are expected to work with APS to, together, implement meaningful strategies to reduce the frequency of persistent ongoing challenging behaviors.

Teachers may request additional information, resources, or support to help them provide care and use interventions to support children. This could include strategies such as requesting an observation from the Aleph Preschool Early Childhood Director or an outside entity, working with our Occupational Therapist and Speech Therapist, asking the family to seek a medical examination or diagnostic testing, and/or expect parents to seek additional outside support. Parents are expected to seek external evaluation or testing with reasonable expediency and are expected to be in contact with APS administration on the timeline for evaluation and associated results or diagnostic context.

After an initial conference, a follow-up conference will also be held to discuss progress on the noted behavioral concern. This does not take the place of periodic check-ins with the student’s care team, but instead provides a place of reflection for all parties to discuss if Aleph is able to best serve the student.