



# Blossom Ireland Challenging Behaviour Policy

Blossom Ireland is a national organisation that serves children and their families with mild to moderate intellectual disability by providing fun, affordable innovative activities that enables them to be as good as they can be.

Blossom's challenging behaviour policy ties into the core values as an organisation:

- Open communication: Consistent and open communication with families.
- Family Centred: Activities are designed around the needs of the child and the family.
- Fun and safe: Activities are provided in a fun and safe environment.
- Professional: We operate at the highest level of professionalism and work with experts in childcare and related fields.
- Respectful, respect for the family is at the core of everything we do.
- Ambition for excellence we are ambitious about what we provide for the children and strive always for excellence in what we deliver.
- Maximising potential, we want the children who take part in our activities to maximise their potential with blossom Ireland.

## Definition of challenging behaviour:

*Culturally abnormal behaviour(s) of such an intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy, or behaviour which is likely to seriously limit use of, or result in the person being denied access to, ordinary community facilities."*

Ref: Emerson, 1995, cited in Emerson, E (2001, 2nd edition): Challenging Behaviour: Analysis and intervention in people with learning disabilities.  
Cambridge University Press

Blossom Ireland recognises that children with intellectual disability often experience difficulties with the following:

- Processing information
- Sensory overload
- Communication



- Lack of control
- High anxiety levels
- Difficulties tolerating changes to routines
- Issues with feeding and other health related issues
- Lack of inclusion within the wider community and access to the same activities as same age non-disabled peers
- Difficulty regulating emotions

Children with disabilities are more likely to experience frustration and may not be as well-equipped as same age non-disabled peers to communicate their needs and access things that they want. Blossom Ireland recognises that challenging behaviour has a function, and that what happens in the environment around the child including the way staff/family respond to challenging behaviour has a significant effect on future behaviour and the overall quality of life of the child.

### Proactive/preventative Strategies

Blossom Ireland aim to be sensitive to individual children's needs and use the screening information given by parents and discussion with parents and contact with children during observation sessions to make suitable environmental accommodations for each child. Preventative/proactive strategies may include the following accommodations: communication, accommodations for sensory needs, strategies to assist in motivation. If any known function for the behaviour has been established Blossom Ireland staff will aim to assist in teaching replacement skills and respond to the behaviour in a way that is in the best interests of the child.

### Staff Training

Staff working directly with the children will have received training in Positive Behaviour support prior to the start of the camp.

## Communication Protocol

### Parent communication

Before enrolment in camps children are required to attend an observation day with their parents. During this part of the induction process it is the parent's responsibility to tell the Services Coordinator about any ongoing or infrequent behavioural difficulties. This allows staff to make any environmental accommodations that need to be made and take a proactive approach to possible challenging behaviour.

For children who are returning for camps/groups it is expected that parents/guardians will keep staff updated and informed about any changes in behaviour or emotional issues. It is expected that



staff will be kept up to date on any other major life changes a child is experiencing so that accommodations can be made during camp time.

## Staff communication

It is the responsibility of the camp leaders to communicate any behavioural difficulties to parents on a daily basis through the daily communication notebook. Camp leader should be available to meet parents briefly before the next day's session for any follow up.

## Communication with Children

Accessible visual rules and expectations about behaviour during camp time will be made available to children at the start of the camp.

## Children leaving camp early

Under very rare circumstances it may be necessary to ask a parent to collect a child from camp before camp has finished. This is a last resort after preventative strategies have failed to have any impact on behaviour. The following circumstances may result in a child having to leave the camp early:

- Challenging behaviour is occurring and is harmful to the child or others.
- Challenging behaviour is occurring and after proactive and reactive strategies have been tried, is continuing to occur and is negatively impacting on other children's enjoyment of the camp.

## Follow up

A follow up meeting will be scheduled with parents/Guardians after the camp has finished and before the start of the next camp.