ACHIEVING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

(Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour)

Policy Aim

At St Michael's Pre-School we believe all behaviour is a form of communication. Our aim is to understand what children are telling us through their actions and to support them in learning how to express their feelings in positive ways.

We support children's behaviour using a nurturing, therapeutic and developmentally informed approach.

Key Principles

- **Behaviour is communication** – We look beyond the behaviour to understand what the child is feeling or needing.
- **Relationships first** – Warm, trusting relationships help children feel secure and able to learn.
- **Co-regulation before correction** – We help children calm down before talking about what happened.
- **Focus on recovery, not shame** – We never use punishment or shaming. We help children to repair and feel good about themselves again.
- **Consistency** – All staff use the same calm and supportive approach.

Understanding Behaviour

Children show us how they feel through their actions, words, and body language. When behaviour is challenging, we take time to find out:

- What may have triggered it (tiredness, hunger, changes, emotions).
- How we can help the child regulate and feel safe again.
- What support they might need going forward.

Our Approach

Step 1: Pause and Observe

- Stay calm and use gentle body language.
- Watch and listen before responding.
- Try to understand the feeling or need behind the behaviour.

Step 2: Co-Regulate

- Offer comfort and reassurance.
- Use calm tone, soft facial expressions, and speak at the child's level.
- Use visuals or props if needed to support understanding.

Step 3: Reflect and Repair

- Once calm, have a short 1:1 chat:
    - "I can see you were upset when…"
    - "Let's think what we could do next time."
- Help the child understand how to make things right (apology, action, or repair).

Step 4: Reconnect

- Reinforce that the child is valued and loved.
- Praise small steps towards positive choices.
- Help the child rebuild confidence and self-esteem.

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5. Preventing Unwanted Behaviour

- Provide clear, consistent routines and boundaries.
- Use visual timetables and calm transitions.
- Anticipate and redirect before frustration builds.
- Plan for individual needs – sensory breaks, quiet spaces, or adult support.

- Encourage emotional literacy (naming feelings, using books, puppets, mirrors).

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6. Language and Communication

- We remember that only **20% of communication is words** – our tone, body language, and gestures are powerful.
- Staff always make sure their non-verbal communication matches what they say.
- We use kind, calm voices and **speak at the child's level**.

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7. Avoiding Shame

- We do **not** use "sad face" boards, "naughty chairs," or public behaviour charts.
- Instead, children are supported privately and kindly.
- The focus is always on moving forward and learning from the experience.

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8. Positive Reinforcement

- We focus on effort, kindness, and improvement.
- We celebrate achievements through positive comments and encouragement.
- We help children recognise their own progress.

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9. Supporting Each Other as a Team

- Staff share reflections in team meetings.
- We model calm, respectful communication with children and each other.
- We use a consistent shared approach:
    1. **Connect** – "I care about you / I can see you're upset."

2. **Acknowledge** – "You really wanted that toy."
3. **Limit** – "I can't let you throw it, but we can…"
4. **Move on** – "Let's see how we can fix it together."

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10. Partnership with Families

- We work closely with families to share ideas and strategies.
- We always talk to parents in a positive, supportive way.
- We offer guidance for home that reflects our calm, connection-based approach.

POLICY REVIEWED AND UPDATED IN SEPTEMBER 2026