Positive Behaviour Policy – Sêr Bach

Purpose

At Sêr Bach, we are committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment where every child feels valued, understood, and supported. We recognise that behaviour can be expressed in many ways. Some behaviours positively support others, while some may reflect a child's unmet needs or developing skills.

We understand that behaviour is a form of communication. As Dr. Ross Greene states, *"Children do well if they can."* This means that when children display behaviour that challenges us, it is often because they need support, not punishment.

Creating a Positive, Calm and Respectful Environment

Children and adults thrive in environments where expectations are clear, consistent, and fair. At Sêr Bach, we aim to create a space where children feel safe to explore, learn, and play without fear.

We achieve this by:

- Providing a stimulating, engaging environment that encourages curiosity and learning
- Promoting respect for others, resources, and the environment
- Supporting children to communicate effectively and ensuring their voices are heard
- Modelling positive behaviour at all times

We recognise that children learn through imitation. Therefore, all staff act as positive role models, demonstrating kindness, patience, and respect in all interactions.

We also believe that a child's self-image is central to their behaviour. As Maxwell Maltz said, *"Change the self-image and you change the personality and the behaviour."* We work to build each child's confidence, self-esteem, and sense of belonging.

Key Principles of Our Approach

1. Connection Before Correction

We prioritise building strong relationships with children. Before addressing behaviour, we ensure the child feels safe, understood, and supported.

For example:

- Getting down to the child's level

- Using a calm, gentle tone
- Acknowledging feelings: *"I can see you're upset because you wanted the toy."*

As Dr. Bruce Perry explains, *"Regulate, relate, reason."* Children must feel calm and connected before they can respond to guidance.

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2. Supporting Children with Big Feelings
Young children often experience strong emotions but may not yet have the language or skills to manage them.

We support this by:

- Naming emotions: *"You look angry/sad/frustrated."*
- Validating feelings: *"It's okay to feel upset."*
- Teaching appropriate ways to express emotions

We understand that behaviours such as biting, shouting, or hitting are often linked to emotional overwhelm or frustration.

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3. Communication Support (Including Makaton)
We support children's communication using clear language alongside visual strategies such as Makaton.

This includes:

- Using signs for key words such as *stop*, *help*, *more*, and *finished*
- Supporting understanding through gesture and visual cues
- Helping children express needs when they feel overwhelmed

This reduces frustration and supports children in regulating their emotions.

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4. Consistency and Clear Expectations
Rules and expectations are discussed and shared with both children and adults. Staff apply these consistently so children feel secure and understand boundaries.

We:

- Reinforce positive behaviour through praise: *"You were very kind to share."*
- Provide simple, clear explanations: *"We use gentle hands to keep everyone safe."*

- Encourage children to take responsibility for routines and their environment

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5. Encouraging Positive Behaviour
We focus on recognising and reinforcing positive behaviours rather than highlighting negative ones.

We ensure that:

- Every child receives daily positive attention
- Children feel valued, loved, and respected
- Staff work together to avoid unintentionally reinforcing unwanted behaviour

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Responding to Individual Behaviour

We understand that all children develop at their own pace and may display behaviours that reflect their stage of development.

When behaviour occurs that is not appropriate, we will:

- Respond calmly, sensitively, and respectfully
- Focus on the behaviour, not the child
- Offer one-to-one support to help the child understand and learn
- Use “calm down time” with an adult where appropriate

We do not:

- Use physical punishment
- Raise voices in a threatening manner
- Isolate children by putting them in time out or outside a room.
- Use labels such as “naughty” or techniques that shame or humiliate

Where necessary, we will clearly explain why certain behaviours are not acceptable, particularly in serious situations, while maintaining a supportive approach.

Calm Down and Self-Regulation Support
Children may be supported with “calm down time” when needed. This is always done respectfully and with adult support.

Our approach includes:

- Staying with or within sight of the child
- Explaining calmly why they need time to regulate
- Using visual cues to support understanding
- Keeping the time appropriate to the child's age and needs
- Supporting the child to rejoin activities positively

We may also use Makaton and visual supports to help children understand and manage this process.

Proactive Strategies

We use a range of proactive techniques to support positive behaviour:

- **Distraction:** Redirecting attention before situations escalate
- **Learning to Wait / Turn-Taking:** Supporting children to develop patience and cooperation
- **Routines and Structure:** Helping children feel secure and understand expectations
- **Positive Choices:** Offering alternatives to guide behaviour
- **Connection Before Correction.** Making children feel safe, using positive touch, explaining feelings and giving guidance and boundaries.

These approaches rely on strong staff observation and understanding of each child.

Managing Recurring Behaviour

If behaviours occur regularly, we will:

- Record observations to understand patterns and triggers
- Work closely with parents/carers in a sensitive and supportive way
- Identify the underlying cause (the "function" of the behaviour)
- Develop a clear, consistent plan to support the child

Where appropriate, external professionals may be consulted to ensure the best outcomes.

We recognise that some behaviours may be linked to additional needs, and we will adapt our approach accordingly.

Undesirable Behaviours
We recognise that young children are still learning about relationships. Any behaviour that may be perceived as bullying will be addressed immediately.

We will:

- Support and comfort the child affected
- Help the child displaying the behaviour understand its impact
- Work with families while maintaining confidentiality
- Promote kindness, empathy, and respect

Staff Training and Consistency
All staff receive training in proactive behaviour strategies and work consistently as a team. Where needed, structured approaches (such as behaviour support plans) will be used to ensure consistency and clarity.

Partnership with Parents and Carers
We believe that strong partnerships with families are essential. We work closely with parents to:

- Share information and strategies
- Celebrate progress
- Provide consistent support between home and nursery

Summary
At Sêr Bach, we believe that children learn best in an environment where they feel safe, respected, and understood. Through connection, communication, and consistent support, we help children develop the skills they need to manage their emotions and behaviour.

As Maria Montessori said, *"Free the child's potential, and you will transform them into the world."*

Our role is to guide, support, and nurture that potential every day.

Written by	Date	Review date
Cheryl Thomas	18/03/2026	March 2027