

# Behaviour Support & Emotional Regulation Policy

**Creative Makers**

**Policy Review Date:** 01.01.2026

**Next Review Date:** 01.01.2027

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## 1. Policy Statement

At Creative Makers, behaviour is understood as a form of communication. We recognise that children and young people attending our provision may experience difficulties with emotional regulation, anxiety, sensory processing, communication, or past educational trauma. For many learners, behaviour that may appear challenging is an expression of distress, overwhelm, unmet need, or difficulty processing the environment.

Our approach is relational, trauma-informed and rooted in respect. We do not use punitive or shaming practices. Instead, we focus on understanding the reasons behind behaviour, supporting regulation, and helping children develop safe and effective ways to express themselves.

We are committed to creating an environment where children feel emotionally safe, understood and supported.

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## 2. Aims of This Policy

This policy aims to:

- Promote emotional safety and wellbeing
  - Support children to develop regulation skills
  - Reduce anxiety and overwhelm
  - Provide clear, consistent and predictable boundaries
  - Ensure staff respond to behaviour in a calm and supportive manner
  - Prevent escalation through early understanding of need
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## 3. Our Behaviour Ethos

We believe:

- All behaviour has meaning
- Children do well when they can
- Emotional regulation must come before learning
- Relationships are the foundation of positive behaviour
- Safety, dignity and respect are non-negotiable

We prioritise connection over correction. Staff focus on co-regulation rather than control.

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## **4. Understanding Behaviour**

Children may show signs of distress through:

- Withdrawal or shutdown
- Refusal or avoidance
- Emotional outbursts
- Verbal or physical frustration
- Restlessness or sensory seeking

These behaviours are viewed as signals that a child may be overwhelmed, anxious, dysregulated or struggling to communicate a need.

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## **5. Preventative Approaches**

We reduce behavioural distress by:

- Maintaining calm, low-demand environments
- Using predictable routines
- Providing visual structure where helpful
- Offering sensory supports
- Allowing movement and regulation breaks
- Keeping group sizes small
- Building trusting adult-child relationships

Staff remain aware of individual triggers and early signs of dysregulation.

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## **6. Supporting Emotional Regulation**

When a child begins to struggle, staff will:

- Use a calm tone and body language

- Reduce verbal demands
- Offer space or a quieter area
- Provide co-regulation support
- Validate feelings without judgement
- Offer choices where appropriate

Children are never shamed for emotional distress.

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## 7. Boundaries and Expectations

While our approach is nurturing, we maintain clear boundaries to ensure safety for everyone.

We expect:

- Respect for people and property
- Safe use of equipment
- Kind and inclusive behaviour

Expectations are communicated calmly and consistently. Children are supported to understand expectations rather than punished for not meeting them.

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## 8. Responding to Incidents

If behaviour escalates, staff focus on safety first. Responses may include:

- Reducing sensory input
- Removing audience or triggers
- Offering quiet space
- Staying present without confrontation

Staff avoid shouting, threats, humiliation or physical control unless there is immediate risk of harm.

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## 9. Physical Intervention

Physical intervention is used **only as a last resort** and solely to prevent immediate harm to the child or others. Staff are trained to use the least restrictive approach possible and incidents are recorded and reviewed.

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## 10. Repair and Reflection

After an incident, staff support the child to:

- Reconnect with a trusted adult
- Reflect when calm
- Understand impact in a safe way
- Restore relationships

This is done gently and at the child's pace.

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## **11. Exclusion**

Creative Makers aims to avoid exclusion wherever possible. However, if behaviour presents ongoing serious risk and all supportive strategies have been exhausted, placements may be reviewed in partnership with families and referring schools.

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## **12. Working with Families**

We work collaboratively with families to understand behaviour patterns and share strategies that support consistency and regulation.

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## **13. Staff Support**

Staff receive training in:

- Trauma-informed practice
- De-escalation
- Co-regulation
- Understanding neurodiversity

Staff wellbeing is also supported, recognising that calm adults create calm environments.

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## **14. Policy Review**

This policy is reviewed annually or in response to changes in practice or guidance.

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**At Creative Makers, behaviour is not punished — it is understood, supported and guided with care.**