



## Positive Language Policy

Setting's Name:	Morning Star Educational Centre
Date Last Reviewed:	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Date of Next Review:	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2025

**Objective:** This policy aims to foster a respectful, supportive, and positive environment by ensuring that all staff members use appropriate and constructive language when interacting with children. It outlines the standards for language use, addresses the use of inappropriate or hurtful language, and establishes procedures for disciplinary action in the event of violations.

### 1. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all staff members, including educators, administrative personnel, support staff, and volunteers, who have direct or indirect contact with children in the school, daycare, or educational setting.

### 2. Guiding Principles

- **Respect:** All interactions with children should demonstrate respect for their dignity, self-worth, and individuality.
- **Positive Communication:** Staff should use language that encourages, supports, and uplifts children. Constructive feedback is encouraged when guiding or correcting behaviour.
- **Non-Discriminatory Language:** Staff must avoid language that discriminates based on race, gender, religion, culture, disability, or any other protected characteristic.
- **Child-Centred Approach:** The well-being and emotional health of the child must always be the primary consideration when communicating.

### 3. Inappropriate and Hurtful Language Defined

Inappropriate or hurtful language includes but is not limited to:

- **Verbal Abuse:** Yelling, insulting, or using derogatory terms directed at a child.
- **Discriminatory Remarks:** Any language that demeans or belittles a child based on their identity, culture, or personal characteristics.
- **Humiliation or Sarcasm:** Comments intended to embarrass, shame, or degrade a child in front of peers or privately.
- **Threats:** Using language that intimidates or threatens harm as a way of enforcing discipline or compliance.

#### 4. Prohibited Behaviours

Staff members are strictly prohibited from:

- Using any form of offensive, belittling, or abusive language in any situation.
- Engaging in sarcastic, demeaning, or condescending tones when speaking with or about children.
- Making discriminatory comments or slurs, whether based on race, gender, religion, disability, or any other characteristic.

#### 5. Expected Language Conduct

- **Encouragement and Praise:** Staff should actively use positive reinforcement to motivate and build confidence in children.
- **Clear and Calm Communication:** When addressing behavioural issues, staff should use calm, respectful tones and be clear about expectations without raising their voices.
- **Empathy:** Staff members should listen to children's concerns and respond in ways that show understanding and support.

#### 6. Reporting and Addressing Concerns

If a staff member or child witnesses or experiences inappropriate language use, the following steps should be taken:

If you have witnessed this behaviour prior and have failed to report it straight away, you too will also be facing disciplinary.

1. **Immediate Reporting:** Report the incident to a supervisor, manager, or designated safeguarding officer.
2. **Documentation:** Record the incident in an incident log, detailing the language used, context, time, and individuals involved.
3. **Investigation:** A formal investigation will be conducted to assess the severity and context of the incident.

#### 7. Disciplinary Actions

Violations of this policy will be treated seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

Depending on the severity and recurrence of the inappropriate behavior, disciplinary actions may include:

- **Verbal Warning:** For a first-time minor offense, the staff member may receive a formal verbal warning.
- **Written Warning:** Continued inappropriate language use or more severe incidents will lead to a written warning being issued, to be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- **Suspension:** In cases of repeated or more severe language violations, the staff member may be suspended from duties pending further investigation.
- **Termination:** If the inappropriate behaviour continues after warnings or in cases of severe misconduct, termination of employment may result.

## **8. Training and Support**

All staff will receive mandatory training on effective communication with children, including:

- The importance of positive language.
- How to handle conflict and correction without using negative or hurtful language.
- Ongoing professional development workshops to maintain and improve communication skills.

## **9. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective. Any changes will be communicated to staff, and additional training will be provided as necessary.

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**By adhering to this policy, staff members are committing to creating a nurturing, respectful, and positive environment for children.**