

**Managing Young People’s Behaviour Policy**

**and**

**Guidelines for**

**Good Practice**

**June 2015**

**Providing positive activities, advice and support**

**to young people who need it the most**

**Effective Date:** June 2015

**Review Date:** Upon publication of B&NES’ Behaviour Strategy (late 2015)

**Version Control:** Version 1 (Draft)) – replaces Sanction Policy, July 2012

**Protective Marking:** None

**Responsible Officer:**Operational Manager

**1. Introduction**

Youth Connect works with young people in a variety of settings and expects everywhere a respectful standard of behaviour from young people and from staff, including volunteers. Staff are expected to set clear standards through their own behaviour and through drawing young people’s attention to the Code of Conduct which is on display in all youth hubs and the mobile provision, with locally agreed additions. Young people are asked to sign this when they register. Adherence to this Code will help foster a safe working environment for everyone. Activities and interventions with young people always include opportunities to reflect on their behaviour and its impact on others and to learn new behaviours and skills.

Where young people’s behaviour is disruptive, offensive, dangerous to themselves or others or otherwise unacceptable, staff need to take a consistent approach to addressing it. It is important that we do not become desensitised to challenging behaviour through overexposure. Young people should always be told when their behaviour is unacceptable and be given opportunities to put things right. However, sometimes staff need to intervene promptly to keep the situation safe, and then deal with the consequences afterwards.

This policy and associated guidelines provide clarity for staff about working with young people in all settings, including youth hubs, the mobile provision, other Council and community buildings and on residential activities.

## 2. Purpose and Scope

1. Commit to a safe working environment for young people and staff alike through positively managing behaviour
2. Set out clear guidelines for staff in dealing with difficult situations
3. Set out principles for responding afterwards to young people’s behaviour

**3. Policy**

1. All staff model positive, respectful behaviour towards young people and each other, in keeping with the Youth Connect Pledge.
2. All staff work towards maintaining positive relationships with young people and affirm their good behaviour.
3. All staff look for opportunities with young people to support the development of new positive behaviours and skills
4. Expectations of young people and staff will be clearly displayed in Youth Connect youth hubs and mobile premises and reviewed with young people when planning an activity
5. All staff working with young people who present challenging behaviour require induction training
6. Staff will never be alone in a building with a young person. Session leaders will plan safe levels of staffing and deployment for sessions so that staff do not find themselves in difficult situations without back-up. (*Need to consider one-to-one mobile provision)*
7. The Service will hold standard risk management plans for activities undertaken with young people. These will include actions for dealing with for challenging and unco-operative behaviour.
8. The Service will undertake risk management plans for any young people who are likely to be significantly challenging to the point where they may place themselves or others at risk. The Youth Connect Team Leaders will bring them to the attention of staff who work with these young people.
9. The following will not be tolerated and will be appropriately challenged by staff:

* Disruption to the smooth-running of a session, including refusal to follow instructions
* Threats of or damage to property
* Offensive language, including swearing and use of racist, sexist, homophobic or other abusive or devaluing terms
* Threatening language or behaviour
* Physical or sexual assault

1. Staff’s priority is to keep young people safe and the response to their unacceptable behaviour and those it impacts on needs to keep this uppermost. Staff also need to be mindful of their own safety.
2. Challenge will be at the most immediate level possible, taking account of previous behaviour and the needs of all young people and staff present.
3. If the response to a situation needs to be escalated, a more senior member of staff should be consulted wherever possible. Where a violent offence is being committed or illegal substances are being dealt (or it appears so), Police must be called.
4. Staff who have dealt with a challenging situation will need opportunity for debrief and support and may even need to leave a session early. A reflective log can be used to support this process. Other staff and young people may also need support. If the incident has been serious, the session can be ended early in order to attend to people’s immediate needs.
5. Where staff have had appropriate training, restorative approaches are to be used in managing and responding to unacceptable behaviour.
6. If sanctions are to be applied, they should be proportional to the behaviour and take account of the young person’s circumstances, age, gender, ethnicity, culture and understanding. Police may be consulted where it is unclear whether they need to be directly involved. Under no circumstances will corporal punishment, imposition of fines or restriction of liberty as a punishment (i.e. locking a young person in a room) be used. In highly exceptional circumstances, a young person may be locked in a room to keep others safe whilst Police are called, but they should be kept under observation to ensure they are safe.
7. Significant instances of poor behaviour will be recorded in young people’s notes and the record of the session. Where there has been harm to property or injury to someone (or a ‘near miss’), a health and safety notification must be undertaken. A full record must be made of any exceptional action taken. If the situation is of a racist, homophobic or disablist nature this should be recorded on the following form: insert link
8. Staff Supervision will provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on what has happened and what can be learned. Related training needs will be addressed in staff induction and reviewed through the Performance Development Review process

**4. Practice Guidance**

**4.1 Promoting positive behaviour**

The local policy for schools on the use of physical restraint promotes the adoption of primary and secondary preventative strategies.

Youth Connect’s approach to primary prevention asks staff to:

* Actively involve young people in the planning and review of services
* Maintain a positive culture and ethical practice
* Maintain a young person-centred approach
* Be clear about our expectations of young people when they first come into our Service, through what is said to them and through posters/leaflets and what we model through our behaviour
* Be clear what we can offer young people and what they can expect of us, through what is said and information available about the complaints procedure
* Plan sessions and interventions well, including where necessary, risk management plans for activities and individual young people
* Model courteous, respectful behaviour and providing clear information and/or verbal instructions
* Affirm positive behaviour – thanking young people and acknowledging what they have done
* Give young people opportunities for choice, a sense of achievement, positive encouragement and coaching
* Introduce small group discussion
* Use individual targeted sessions to encourage new behaviours and skills
* Promote staff awareness of their own reactions to aggressive or violent behaviour and the effect of their mood on others
* Respond consistently and use authority appropriately
* Share information with colleagues and keep records up-to-date so that colleagues know what has happened before

**4.2 Managing difficult situations**

When young people do not co-operate with what is asked of them, staff are responsible for maintaining a safe and positive environment for everyone. Secondary prevention involves recognising the early stages of behaviour patterns that may develop into confrontation. The responses to individuals or groups of young people who are challenging will depend on a number of factors including how well we know them, what their previous behaviour has been and the nature of work we are undertaking with them. Staff should always seek to deal with situations promptly, in a low-key way when appropriate, reminding young people of boundaries and expectations. Staff should be actively seeking to de-escalate situations and can be trained in techniques for doing this. The physical presence, perhaps of several staff or a more senior member of staff may help to de-escalate a situation.

Reasonable force can be used to break away from a dangerous physical contact initiated by a young person or to separate a young person from another who is being aggressive and there is a risk of injury or harm. There is no legal definition of reasonable force and it can only be judged in accordance with the circumstances. Relevant factors may include whether the response matched the circumstances, the degree of force used, the seriousness of any disciplinary breakdown and evidence that less intrusive methods had been tried beforehand. The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to the young person’s behaviour and the seriousness of the harm they may cause. The minimum necessary force must be used, taking account of these circumstances and also the age, cultural background, gender, stature and medical history of the young person.

**4.3** **Responses to Unacceptable Behaviour**

When order has been restored and young people are safe, the session leader will decide on whether any further follow-up or sanction is necessary. This may need to run alongside Police responses where they have been involved. Where possible, this must be implemented promptly, but if it is to include an exclusion, the Youth Connect Team Leader should be consulted (or the Operational Manager in their absence). In some instances, the Team Leader may advise awaiting the outcome of Police investigations.

Where a young person acknowledges their behaviour, a restorative approach to resolving the situation will always be considered. Other action can be taken to reinforce key messages. Sometimes it is believed that a young person has been responsible for a misdemeanour, but they do not acknowledge this – in these instances, the range of possible responses is more limited.

The response should be clearly recorded and communicated to the young person and to other staff. Responses may include:

* An apology (written or verbal) NB Not all young people have the emotional capacity to apologise and it may sometimes be more fitting to work with them towards an acknowledgment or explanation
* Personal commitment to good behaviour in the future. This may take the form of a written agreement.
* Agreement to put things right e.g. return an item of equipment or keys etc. If a young person is asked to pay for something, they must be given a receipt that clearly sets out how much they have paid and the reason for this. If they are aged under 16, their parent/carer must be involved in this.

However this does not always work so further action may be required:

* Verbal reprimand
* Written warning
* Temporary or longer-term exclusion from the premises or project.

4.4 **Guidance on when to decide which permitted sanction to use:**

On most occasions it will be up to the Team Leader, in liaison with the staff, to decide the best way to manage any unacceptable behaviour.

* Any unacceptable behaviour that requires a temporary or longer-term exclusion from the premises or project

or

* Refusal to accept exclusion given by the Team Leader.

Please discuss with the Operational Manager or the 11 – 19 Prevention Manager in their absence.

A clear record should be made of the sanction, with an explanation and this should be placed on a young person’s file. The Team Leader also needs to communicate the outcome of this to members of their team.

## 5. Right to complain

The young person or their parent/carer has the right to complain about how an incident has been managed or a decision taken by the Local Authority.

In the first instance, the young person or their parent/guardian should contact the Manager either verbally or in writing. If it cannot be resolved this way then they should be advised about the complaints procedure:

<http://intranet/Teams/children/cfs/Pages/ComplaintsProcedureforYoungPeople.aspx>

## 6. Guidance and legislation

1. The latest Department for Education guidance on the use of reasonable force in schools was published in July 2013 and is due to be updated in 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/355362/use_of_reasonable_force.pdf>

b. Bath and North East Somerset’s Guidance to Mainstream and Special Schools on the Use of Physical Restraint 2008 can be found here **-**  [Physical Restraint Guidance](file:///\\bathnes\corporate_s_drive$\Keynsham_S_Drive\Education\Youth&Community\Policies,%20Guidelines%20&%20Procedures\Policies%20guidelines%20and%20procedures%20-%20other%20Services%20&%20agencies\Physical%20Restraint%20Guidance%20-%20Nov%2008.doc).

c. The Human Rights Act 1998 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child state that all young people have the following rights:

* Respect for his/her private life
* Not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment
* The right to liberty and security
* Not to be discriminated against in his/her enjoyment of these rights

In light of this, the use of force should be avoided wherever possible.

d. Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers

The Local Authority Designated Officer isJackie Deas, Deputy Head of Safeguarding Jackie\_deas@bathnes.gov.uk

## Appendices

**Code of Conduct**

## 

**EXAMPLE BEHAVIOUR CONTRACT**

**We ask you:**

* To respect the building and equipment
* Not to use offensive language
* To treat everyone fairly
* To enjoy the hub and the activities
* Not to smoke in the building or in the grounds
* Not to bring illegal substances or alcohol onto the premises
* Not to bully or discriminate
* To ask staff if you are unsure about something or want support
* To be honest about accidents
* To accept individuals for who they are
* To share and take turns on equipment
* **We agree to:**
* Respect you as a young person and treat you fairly
* Speak to you in a way that you can understand and explain why we do things, honestly.
* To provide activities, Workshops and trips that we hope you will enjoy, at a cost you can afford
* We will ask you to follow the rules and treat others, the building and equipment with respect.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Youth Connect Worker**  **Name**  **Signature**  **Date** | **Young Person**  **Name**  **Signature**  **Date** |

**EXAMPLE EXCLUSION LETTER**

**To be printed on headed paper**

A. Person

01225 345678

AP/GB

12th Dec 2015

Dear  **(full name and date of birth to be added)**

I understand that you have been involved in a series of incidents at ***(youth hub)*** on ***(date).*** These include ***(list details, eg a fire in boys’ toilet (date), threatening behaviour (date)*** etc.

When we discussed this on **(date)** we agreed **(state what you agreed eg an apology letter)** etc if you are excluding the young people.

I am implementing a one month ban from the ***(Name)*** Youth Hub and its grounds which will take effect from ***(date)****.* A review will then take place on ***(date)*** at ***(time)*** to which you are invited to discuss your return. **Note: if a very serious incident/misdemeanour you may invite someone else to join you.** (Inform the young person who this will be and tell them you are inviting their parents as well.) This exclusion applies to the immediate surrounding areas of the Youth Hub, its entrances and exits and includes the outdoor court and car park. Should you ignore this letter and be found in the immediate grounds of the Youth Hub you may be involved in further action by Bath & North East Somerset Council.

**Or**

As you have ignored previous bans, a suspended one month ban will automatically be imposed if you are seen at the Youth Hub or immediate surrounding area before the permitted return date. This means that you must stay away from the Youth Hub for a period of one month before you are allowed to return (again offer a return meeting) see note above.

You have the right to appeal against my decision by speaking or writing to me at the above address.

I trust you will understand why this letter has had to be written and, if you disagree with my decision, you have the right to make an official complaint (please see details of how to do this).

Yours sincerely

Youth Connect Team Leader

Copy to parent/carer

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **YOUTH CONNECT EXCLUSION RECORD SHEET**  **Young person’s name:**  **Address:**  **Date of birth:**  **Project:**  **Date and time:**   |  | | --- | | **Nature of the Incident:** |  |  | | --- | | **Action agreed and reasons:** |  |  | | --- | | **Action Taken:** |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Staff member’s name:**  **Signed:**  **Date:**  **Date recorded on database:** | **Manager’s name:**  **Signed:**  **Date:** | |

## 

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **XXXX YOUTH HUB/MOBILE – BEHAVIOUR RECORD SHEET** | | | |
| **Name:** | **Age:** | | **Date:** |
| **Please tick the appropriate box below and provide brief details** | | | |
| **Reason** | **✓** | **Details** | |
| **Attitude to staff** |  |  | |
| **Refusing to follow instructions** |  |  | |
| **Verbal behaviour directed at staff** |  |  | |
| **Verbal behaviour directed at peers** |  |  | |
| **Aggressive behaviour** |  |  | |
| **Dangerous behaviour in the project** |  |  | |
| **Behaviour likely to cause safety concerns** |  |  | |
| **Other (please describe)** |  |  | |
| **Copy of Behaviour Record Sheet passed to:**  **Name ……………………………………………… Date ………………………………..** | | | |
| **Other relevant information (such as action taken):**  **What can be done to prevent this from happening in the future?**  **(Staff member and young person can suggest ways to make changes)** | | | |
| **Staff member’s name:**  **Signature:**  **Date:** | **Young person’s name:**  **Signature:**  **Date:** | | |
| If the behaviour is racist, homophobic or disablist, this should be recorded on the following: <http://intranet/Teams/children/learninginclusion/inclusionsupport/LearningSupport/Documents/Racist,%20Homophobic%20or%20Disablist%20Incident%20Reporting%20Form.doc> | | | |