



Behaviour Management

REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

Regulation 11: The Positive Relationships Standard
Regulation 19: Behaviour Management and Discipline
Regulation 20: Restraint and Deprivation of Liberty
Regulation 12: The Protection of Children Standard
Guide to Quality Standards (8.11-8.15)
Guide to Quality Standards (9.33- 9.61)

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Use of Restraint and Physical Intervention Procedure
Countering Bullying
Admission
Safeguarding

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1. Introduction:

This policy seeks to provide a framework for all those involved with the care and education of our children and young people. This is a framework within which unacceptable behaviour can be managed and positive behaviour is promoted. In an environment which protects children and carers alike.

Caring for children who are looked after can be a complex, difficult, stressful yet rewarding task. The Headstart Group recognise that carers need relevant information, support and training to assist them in offering good quality care to children. The Headstart Group recognises that children in care require carers who have the skills, knowledge and abilities to manage and support our children young people's behaviours appropriately.

Any behaviour support given to a child who is living in one of our children's home must ensure that the welfare of the child or young person is paramount and they are safeguarded and protected at all times. All of our children and young

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people bring their own unique set of individual circumstances and experiences. These circumstances and experiences will have impacted on a child/young person's emotional and physical state and well-being; resulting in feelings of hurt, fear and sadness. Such feelings, together with any previous experiences maybe expressed through behaviour. At the same time, children will grow up into a world where people will not always take account of their difficult past experiences. We will help our children and young people to act with consideration for others and for themselves.

The Positive Relationship Standard (Reg 11.1) requires that our service helps children to develop, and benefit from relationships based on:

- a. Mutual trust and respect;
- b. An understanding about acceptable behaviour
- c. Positive responses to other children and adults.

Reg 11.2 sets out the expectations on staff to support the social, emotional and behavioural needs of the children and young people whom we care for.

Our expectation is that staff:

- Help children to develop socially aware behaviour at the home, in the community and in education,
- Encourage each child to take responsibility for their behaviour, in accordance with their age and understanding
- Help each child to develop and practice skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone.
- Communicate to each child expectations about children's behaviour and ensure that each child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding
- Understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and ensure that staff have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop therapeutic practice in order to achieve and maintain positive relationships
- Staff are actively engaging in supervision (see supervision policy) and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of the children and help the children to do the same.
- Deescalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children (see policy on Dealing with violence and aggression) via a proactive and well informed therapeutic practical and informative interventions.
- Each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relations with others, and every child is supported to learn essential social skills in preparation for adult life.

2. Proactive therapeutic approach

Our approach to boundary setting with each child/young person is implemented in a proactive manner. Our staff team have an exceptionally detailed approach to collecting and recording information, which allows the service to be proactive in supporting the young people's behavioural needs. Any aspect of boundaries that our young people might need support with are proactively managed rather than through a meaningless and counterproductive rigid approach.

Additionally our therapeutic ethos and practice values and promotes positive relationships between the young people and staff. This allows staff to build appropriate, professional yet very positive and caring relationships with our young people in order to positively influence their overall development. Through these positive relationships staff are able to be observant and identify any underlying issues that might be a contributory factor in any challenging behaviour the child/young person may present. Hence through a proactive and consistent approach our staff team are able to meet a child's need in a proactive manner which ultimately bypasses the stage where our young people might become heightened as a result of a need not being met

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA): Our Therapeutic Approach is based on the principles and theoretical values of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). <https://uk-sba.org/about-behaviour-analysis/>

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All staff are expected to complete an initial 40-hour on-line training and complete a thorough assessment with our (BCBA) qualified practitioner. Staff are then given a minimum of two supervisions each month to monitor progress, evaluate incidents and support staff wellbeing. Within the ABA Therapeutic approach our young people are taught through positive reinforcement to learn positive behaviour patterns by rewarding positive behaviours in order to reinforce this behaviour to become a permanent pattern.

Our young people are supported to continue and also increase positive behaviours and through this engagement and therapeutic support they learn that harmful and challenging behaviours do not achieve the same outcome such as: Instant reward for getting something correct. Hence through rewards and positive reinforcement our young people are able to see value in positive behaviour. Through our therapeutic support our young people learn new skills and behaviour patterns.

When our children feel safe, encouraged and appropriately rewarded, they will thrive and develop their social skills by showing value to socially appropriate and acceptable behaviour within different environments such as:

- At the home, where group living requires all members of the group to accept and see value in a balanced and fair environment.
- At school, where all of our young people are able to understand that their education is an essential process in learning skills that will allow them to have a better quality of life in the future
- In the community, where our Young People will be able to engage and be part of in a constructive socially acceptable and safe manner.

Thrive: THRIVE <https://www.thriveapproach.com/> promotes children's and young people's positive mental health by helping adults know how to be and what to do in response to their differing and sometimes distressed behaviour.

Based on established neuroscience, attachment theory and child development, the Thrive Approach provides training and an online profiling and action-planning tool to equip adults with the knowledge, insights and resources needed to develop the relationships that help children and young people to flourish and learn. All staff receive ongoing support and training to ensure THRIVE is embedded in all our work practice.

3. Encouraging and Rewarding Children

Promoting Positive Behaviour: Clear boundaries and expectations are essential components in promoting positive behaviour in the therapeutic environment in our children's homes. We aim to create an environment that gives a firm structure and sense of order to the lives of the children in our care. This will support them to develop to their full potential. The establishment of an environment with recognised and accepted routines to the daily lives of the children and young people is an essential element in helping to promote positive behaviour.

Whilst children bring their own values and behaviours to placements, carers also play a key role in influencing children's behaviour. The culture of the home, generated by the staff, is crucial. Staff are supported and trained to understand, manage, and deal with young people's behaviour including encouraging children to take responsibility for their behaviour and help them to learn how to resolve conflict in a therapeutically informed, supportive, and positive manner.

We operate a consistent, fair and proportionate system of rewards and sanctions to reinforce positive behaviour. We aim for our system of rewards and consequences/sanctions to be appropriate and meaningful to the children and young people to whom they apply.

Our system of reward will be realistic and sustainable, and clearly promote the positive behaviours sought from an individual child or young person in order to be meaningful. The system will also have some parity with other rewards which the child might be able to earn outside the home (for example at home or in school) in order to minimise the risk of creating failure situations for a child or young person by creating unrealistic expectations.

Each child/young person is likely to have individual behavioural targets to which they are working towards. Our system of reward ensures that children and young people are able to value simple praise as a reward, and thus understand that a tangible material reward cannot always be an expectation. Praise and reward is given and recorded on a daily basis for the promotion and achievement of individual behavioural targets.

Over time, as children achieve developmental milestones, aspects of enhancing learning with such rewards should be reduced. Children should be expected to incorporate their learning into a natural day to day life experience and staff will support them to achieve more for the same or a similar reward.

Staff will ensure that children know and understand their own individual targets. Parents, social workers, carers and other people involved in the care and education of the child/young person will also be made aware of the reward and sanctions systems, expectations relating to such, and the individual goals and targets to which the child they care for/work with is focussing on.

4. Sanctions/Consequences

At Headstart our Therapeutic Model through ABA promotes and rewards positive and appropriately engaging behaviours through immediate and meaningful rewards. However, consequences are part of our pragmatic understanding of life. Hence, when the implementation of a consequence is warranted, our staff will firstly reflect with the young person to support him/her to understand what and how change to negative behaviour wrong and how, then decide what is the appropriate and most effective consequence that ultimately will support the young person to learn from that experience and help them to transition back into the desired behaviours and engage in their day to day routine and positive behaviours.

We believe where there is a restrictive, unsupportive, discouraging and punishing environment/culture, this may result in significant and possibly permanent developmental delays and disruptions to the welfare of children and young people. Therefore our therapeutic ethos and input is comprehensive in informing our practice of promoting positive behaviour.

Our system of sanctions will be realistic and proportionate and clearly promote the positive behaviours sought from an individual child or young person in order to be meaningful. Managers must be confident that sanctions are fairly applied and are never disproportionate or emotive. Staff may not use any sanctions that do not comply with legal requirements.

Wherever possible and appropriate we always seek to implement a meaningful form of reparation or restoration over issuing any form of formal sanction. There are some instances where a sanction is the most appropriate means of supporting a child to understand incidents of wrongdoing, such as forgoing the privilege of being driven in the Homes car for one day if they have displayed dangerous behaviour whilst in the Homes car. This would always be followed up by supporting some form of learning through use of Keywork Sessions, to help the child understand the wider risks and implications of their behaviour. Each child/young person will have personalised strategies and agreed sanctions/consequences.

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5. Individual Behaviour Support Plans and risk assessments

We will create an Individual Behaviour Support Plan for each child/young person. This is a plan which sets out any known or predicted challenging behaviours of the child, known factors likely to trigger the behaviour, agreed strategies to manage the behaviour, arrangements for recording the behaviour and strategies taken to manage it. Strategies should be agreed with children where possible and their social worker and parents where appropriate. All children and young people will also have a specific risk assessment relating to any known challenging behaviour. This risk assessment includes information about: history/evidence of Risk, what practical strategies are in place, action to be taken to minimise risk, what therapeutic approaches can be applied to support the reduction of this behaviour, risk factors escalate during an incident, what is the contingency plan, key work sessions to support positive behaviour and minimising the risk of challenging behaviour. Individual Behaviour Support Plans and risk assessments will be reviewed and amended accordingly following any incident. These plans and risk assessments are overseen by our clinical team.

6. Physical intervention

Headstart Care believes that good personal and professional relationships between staff and children are vital to promote positive behaviour. It is recognised that most children respond positively to clear boundaries and expectations of behaviour that is practised consistently by staff. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required. Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff:

- (i) clearly understand the policy and practice regarding the use of physical intervention and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary and
- (ii) are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

Definitions

a) Physical Contact Situations in which proper physical contact occurs between carers and children, e.g., young children who are upset or ill

b) Physical Intervention Positive Handling. This may be used to divert a child from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a child by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

c) Restrictive Physical Intervention. This will involve the use of physical intervention/ reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to children, staff, carers, or risk of significant damage to property.

At Headstart Care only staff who have undertaken the Team Teach training can undertake any form of restrictive physical intervention (please see Team Teach risk assessments for each young person)

Physical intervention uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a child harming himself, herself, others or property.

A reflective discussion session will take place with all staff and young people involved in all incidents that require a physical intervention. When these discussions are carried out is determined on an individual needs basis and always within regulatory time frames.

7. Prohibited measures of control, discipline and restraint

The following measures of control, discipline and restraint are completely unacceptable to the management of the Home and will not be used under any circumstances.

- Corporal punishment (any intentional application of force as punishment, including slapping, striking, cuffing,
- Shaking, throwing missiles, rough handling and any form of physical violence).
- Physical or emotional rejection of a child. It is the behaviour that is unacceptable, not the child.
- Deprivation of food or drink
- The restriction or refusal of parental contact or contact with friends including communications i.e. letters and telephone calls¹.
- Requiring a child to wear distinctive or inappropriate clothing.
- Use or withholding of medication or medical or dental treatment
- Use of accommodation to physically restrict the liberty of movement any child (unless this is required for safeguarding reasons, where the child/young person may be at risk of injury by leaving the home to carry out gang related activities, use drugs or to meet someone who is sexually exploiting them or intends to do so. Any such measure of restraint must be proportionate and in place for no longer than is necessary to manage the immediate risk).
- Imposition of fines, and totally inflexible systems of reward and punishment.
- Intimate physical searches.

8. Countering Bullying

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our children in order that they can come to terms with their past in a relaxed, safe and harmonious atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is totally unacceptable. However, we recognise that many of the past experiences of the children living in our Homes have been far from positive in regard to appropriate ways of interacting with others. In the past, the children may have regularly been on the receiving end of bullying behaviours by adults and peers, and that this will have affected their own ideas on how to interact with others.

It is accepted that many of our children will, at some point in their placement with us, show potential to bully others, or to be at risk of being bullied by others. We therefore view the issue of dealing with and preventing bullying as a part of the therapeutic task of the Home and of the organisation as a whole that needs to be addressed in a sensitive yet effective way. This will take into account the needs of the children, their past experiences and their current stages of development. If bullying does occur, we aim to empower any child to feel safe to tell an adult, and know that these incidents will be dealt with sensitively, promptly and effectively for all involved. Effective anti-bullying work starts well before any specific incidents of bullying are identified. (see our countering bullying policy for more details)

9. House Rules

The Children's Guide to each home within Headstart will set out the 'house rules'. The children and young people will be involved in developing and agreeing these 'house rules'. These 'house rules' should be explained to any newly admitted children, with the reasons for the rules. And they should also know that the rules are for everyone. Ideally these expectations should be known to children before they are placed.

10. The Planning Framework: Admissions

Matching: At the matching stage, any known challenging behaviours should be considered, together with any risk posed to the child and /or adult carers and/ or other children in placement.

The Initial Impact Assessment, Initial Placement Plan, Placing Authority Care Plan, Positive Behaviour Support Plan, and 24 hr plan must all be accessible to the adult team working in the Home.

Placement Planning: It is essential that adults caring for the children in the Home receive the relevant background written information on the child. All pre-placement information and documents provided to and obtained by the Home are saved to the child's individual Case Records Folder. All team members are made aware and guided to read the available information and familiarise themselves with this.

Where possible, as many members of the team as possible should be involved in creating the Initial Impact Assessments, and be informed of information arising from the Initial Placement Planning Meeting. Any known difficult behaviour which the child has and where particular behaviour is indicated for the future should be discussed by the team at the first available team meeting. The Positive Behaviour Support Plan and Safeguarding Risk Profile should be completed as soon as practical after the child is placed at the Home, and all team members are responsible for reading these and familiarising themselves with the content.