

## **Behaviour Management Policy**

### **Introduction**

A central focus of the work we undertake at Building Bridges will be that of working with young people in areas of anger management, conflict resolution and solution focused approaches to behaviour management. Our aim is to develop a staff team to a high degree of competency in these areas. We will provide staff with intensive training and support specific to the residential task and service users group to enable them to confidently manage behaviours.

### **Legislation**

Children act 1989

Department of Health 'Guidance on Permissible Forms of Control in Children's Residential Care' 1993

The Control of Children in Public Care: Interpretation of the Children Act 1989

National Minimum Standards Children's Homes 2001

National Minimum Standards Children's Homes 2014

Quality Care Standards 2015

### **General Principals of Behaviour Management**

**Include treating each child with understanding, dignity, kindness and respect: building, protecting and preserving positive relationships between each child and the adults caring for them. Understanding dignity, kindness and respect: building, protective and positive relationships between each child and the adult caring for them. Understanding each child's behaviour to allow their needs, aspirations, experiences and strengths to be recognised and their quality of life enhanced.**

### **Protection of Children Standard (12.1)**

**Children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe**

### **Managing Behaviour**

The Children Act 1989 clearly highlights that a major factor in managing the behaviour of young people are the quality of relationships between staff and young people. Research also highlights the importance of developing a positive ethos and culture within the home.

However, given the nature of the work involved with the young people we must accept that there will be times when young people will test the boundaries set by adults and will refuse to co-operate with individual requests and with general house rules.

Changing young people's behaviour which has evolved over a time involves a significant amount of input and time. The focus of this will be the development of positive relationships with the young person. Managing young people's behaviour involves applying measures, which are safe and acceptable and likely to aid the management of young people's behaviours.

### **Restriction of Liberty**

Section 25 of the Children Act 1989 forbids the use of secure accommodation, except in clearly defined circumstances. The use of secure accommodation can include locking a child in a room or part of a building to prevent him / her from leaving. Measures taken to prevent a child from leaving a building may constitute the use of secure accommodation and viewed as a restriction of liberty.

"There may be circumstances a child can be prevented from leaving a home if they are putting themselves at risk of injury, either physical, sexual or psychological. However any such measure should be proportionate and in place no longer than is necessary to manage the risk."

## Policies & Procedures

In such circumstances a rapid and structured risk assessment needs to be conducted of the immediate risks, foreseeable risks, taking into account care planning, behaviour management, and the individual child.

### **Violence and Aggression**

Generally there are predictors to violent and aggressive behaviour from young people. It is important that staff have all the relevant information relating to each child's behaviour. The information should be co-ordinated through the Placement Plan, and recorded on the young person's Risk Assessment and Behaviour Development Plan.

Communication and consistency is vital in managing such situations, consideration should be given to the following:

- Understanding possible triggers to violent and aggressive behaviour
- Discuss in all handovers potential areas of conflict that may arise in shifts ahead
- Discuss strategies to manage the situation if it arises
- Consider the environment and its impact
- What impedes managing challenging behaviour
- Inconsistencies in approaches to working with young people
- Poor communication
- Being verbally unclear
- Over reacting
- Inappropriate body language and physical stance
- Leaving an incident unfinished
- Having an audience to an incident
- Not being in control of your own anxiety levels
- Letting your own emotions impact on your responses to the situation
- What assists in Managing Challenging Behaviour
- Being clear about expectations
- Calmly offering young people choices and explaining likely consequences of their behaviour

When young people are becoming out of control giving them a clear message by offering a low emotional response that you are able to manage the situation.

- Awareness of house rules
- Appropriate verbal communication
- Using non-aggressive language

### **Staff Discipline**

Implementing measures to control young people's behaviour is a fundamental part of Residential Child Care Officers responsibilities. Therefore it is the duty of all staff to be aware of these guidelines. Restraint and the use of sanctions should be discussed within supervision and staff meetings. Imposed sanctions and the use of restraint will always be thoroughly investigated by the Registered Manager.

The following will not be regarded as a disciplinary matter:

Any action that was immediately necessary, in self defence, as a response to a physical attack which threatened life of limb.

- Any action in accordance with these guidelines
- The following will be regarded as a matter for discipline
- Hitting or smacking a child
- The malicious or deliberate infliction of pain

Policies & Procedures

- Bullying, intimidating or humiliating a child
- The use of any sanction that is prohibited within these guidelines or within the law
- If a member of staff suspects or witnesses any inappropriate use of sanctions or restraint it is their duty to report it to the Registered Manager
- Verbally aggressive language

**Staff Support**

All staff will receive regular supervision which provides an opportunity to discuss incidents leading to the need to physically restrain. All staff will be debriefed following all aggressive and violent incidents. This debriefing session will be recorded.

Outside support for staff will also be provided should this prove necessary and will be spot purchase.

**Strategies used by the home to manage young people's behaviour and improve outcomes**

The focus of the homes approach regarding how we help and support young people is to ensure that we continually have high expectations of young people and set realistic but appropriate targets for young people. We have a strong focus on preparing young people in their transition for leaving care and emphasise the importance of young people understanding that it is important that they have the skills needed when they leave care.

The home has implemented various strategies in an effort to promote positive behaviours, one of which is an incentive reward scheme which promotes learning new skills, motivating young people, assisting them in becoming independent.

Staff and young people agree specific targets from behaviour management plans that they focus working on for a period of seven days; this is then reviewed with young people in key working sessions, feedback and praise is given. Additional incentives can be earned.

Young people are also offered the opportunity to engage in semi-independent living skills this offers the option of earning incentives; these are saved up on a daily basis, the money young people save can be used to purchase items they may need when making the transition into leaving care or used on an activity of their choice.

Additional rewards can be agreed and discussed with young people and their key worker.

The home also uses the following sanctions to support young people to modify behaviour.

These include delayed pocket money for non-attendance in education, loss of educational bonus.

The use of restorative justice to avoid the unnecessary criminalisation of young people

Withdrawal of travel allowance and or supervised spending of pocket money for continued absent from care episodes.

Reparation is to be offered for criminal damage caused in the home. Loss of privileges, such as removal of electronic equipment from bedrooms, loss of activities, suspension of incentives for a period of time depending on level of damage, Loss of travel to friends.

If a young person persistently continues to smoke in their bedroom then supervised pocket money may be considered.

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