



Behaviour Management Policy

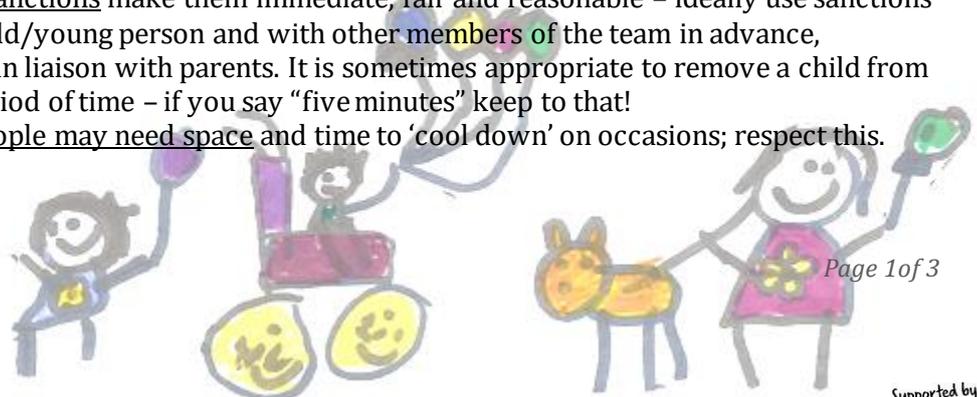
All of the children and young people we work with have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. When children/young people are being difficult these rights are just as important. The guidelines below are designed to support staff and volunteers, so they can respond with confidence when children/young people are difficult or challenging.

1. Prevention is always better than cure

- a. Get to know each child well. A strong relationship based on trust and respect is one of the most effective preventative measures.
- b. Involve the children in decisions about activities that are available, and about reasonable limits, appropriate to each child's age and understanding.
- c. Lead by example. Model respect for children and young people and for each other in all of your work.
- d. Encourage good behaviour. Notice and respond when children are being helpful or constructive or friendly or just quiet and co-operative. Use the faces cards to show that good behaviour is recognised and encouraged.
- e. Be consistent as far as you can, set consistent limits and find out about the limits the child is used to at home and elsewhere. Use the faces cards to highlight unacceptable behaviour. Talk with the parents to get to know any triggers or information which will help you manage their behaviour.
- f. Be clear. Children/young people need to be aware of what is expected of them. Problems often occur when expectations are unclear or unreasonable. Ensure you are using a method of communication the child/young person understands.
- g. Consult with Parents. Whenever possible, parents will be asked how they handle specific behaviour exhibited by their child.
- h. Avoid situations which are likely to upset an individual child/young person whenever possible, reasonable and appropriate.

2. In challenging situations

- a. Try to avoid head on conflict. Try distraction or compromise – diffuse the situation wherever you can, and stop it escalating. Use the faces card system if appropriate.
- b. Use the opportunity for the child to learn. Try and teach a positive alternative to an unacceptable behaviour, i.e. "Let's do this" rather than "don't do that!" always aiming to increase the child's own self control.
- c. Make a distinction between the child and the behaviour. "I do not like things being thrown" rather than "I don't like you now you've thrown that".
- d. Avoid confrontation. Make sure the child/young person has a way out of a confrontation without losing face, and make sure there are positive responses to acceptable behaviour.
- e. If you have to use sanctions make them immediate, fair and reasonable – ideally use sanctions agreed with the child/young person and with other members of the team in advance, wherever possible in liaison with parents. It is sometimes appropriate to remove a child from a situation for a period of time – if you say "five minutes" keep to that!
- f. Children/young people may need space and time to 'cool down' on occasions; respect this.



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- g. Recognise the child's feelings. It might be unreasonable to kick or bite or scream, but it is not unreasonable to feel cross or unhappy: help children find acceptable ways to express their feelings.
- h. Keep your own self-control. Be ready to ask for help from another person. If it is appropriate walk away from the situation, but remembering that not all children can safely be left unsupervised even for short periods of time.
- i. A change of staff/volunteer can sometimes diffuse a situation – recognise that this is not an indication of failure, it is often a way to give a child/young person a way out of a difficult situation without 'losing face'.
- j. If a child is presenting a risk to themselves, to others or to property, volunteers are not expected to use physical intervention. If needs be remove the other children from the situation and support parents to deal with the child

3. **When things are difficult**

- a. Do not go it alone. Ask for help, ideas or advice or just talk things over with someone.
- b. Do not issue sanctions which you cannot carry out.
- c. Do not smack or threaten or use any physical punishment.
- d. Do not use sarcasm, tease or belittle or shame a child/young person.
- e. Do not inhibit a child's freedom of movement unless they or others are at risk.
- f. Do not expect a child to communicate when they are upset; be patient and wait until they are calm. Once the situation has resolved, it is usually best to avoid discussing the incident further with the child. Discuss with senior staff strategies to avoid the situation recurring.
- g. Do not leave a child alone when they are upset unless you are sure they are safe, and only use 'time out' when this has been agreed with senior staff as appropriate for the child.
- h. Always complete an entry in the incident book with the session leader.

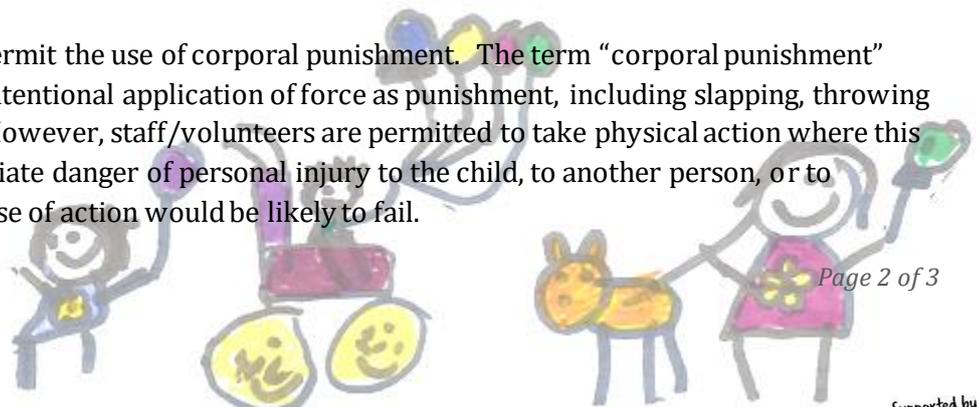
GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF POSITIVE INTERVENTION

Physical restraint is only permissible in circumstances where staff/volunteers are attempting:-

- 1. To avoid immediate danger of injury to the child
- 2. To avoid immediate danger of injury to another individual
- 3. To avoid immediate danger to property

where any other course of action would be likely to fail.

JIGSAW Thornbury does not permit the use of corporal punishment. The term "corporal punishment" should be taken to cover any intentional application of force as punishment, including slapping, throwing missiles and rough handling. However, staff/volunteers are permitted to take physical action where this is necessary to avert an immediate danger of personal injury to the child, to another person, or to property, when any other course of action would be likely to fail.



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Physical restraint should only be used as a last resort. If a child is presenting a risk to himself or others, any restraint should be gentle, with the minimum force necessary and for just long enough for them to calm down. The use of “holding” (which is a commonly used, and often helpful experience for a distressed child) is used if all other intervention is inappropriate or has failed, but only by staff trained in positive intervention techniques.

ALWAYS

- try other approaches first, e.g. talking, explaining, offering options
- use the minimum force necessary
- think about maintaining your own balance
- move with the direction of the child’s movement
- use your own body weight, but carefully
- stay in ‘safe’ places
- talk to the child, seeking to calm him/her down
- gradually relax and let go as soon as you can
- make a clear written record in the Incident Book
- talk to people about how you feel
- initiate positive rapport with child at the earliest appropriate time
- try to identify precipitating factors for behaviour, and plan with others how to avoid a recurrence of the situation

NEVER

- use restraint as a punishment
- grab or twist extremities
- apply pressure to the head, neck or chest
- try to cope alone if you need help
- show anger
- reject the child/young person

Written VLG/ March 2016
Review Sept 2017

