

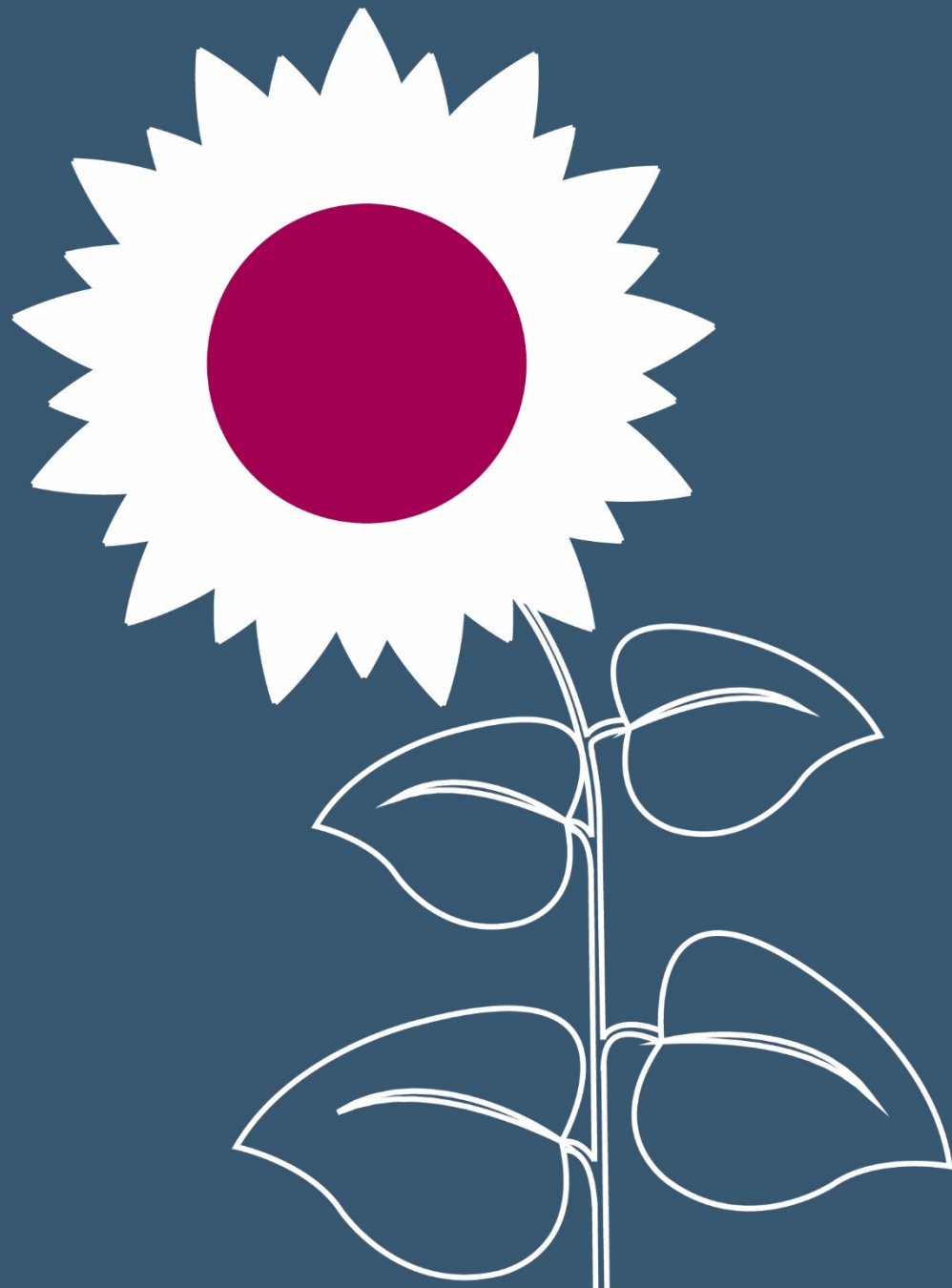


City of  
**Stoke-on-Trent**

# Behaviour Management and Permitted Sanctions

Tri x 5121 July 2022

Review July 2023



# Residential Procedures Behaviour Management Policy

The Fostering Service protects each child or young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 When looking after children it is necessary to appropriately balance the rights of children with the requirement to exercise proper parental care, guidance and control.
- 1.2 The following is the recommended policy and practice to be adopted in Stoke-on-Trent City Council Fostering Services to ensure it meets its statutory responsibility to provide positive and safe intervention with young people.
- 1.3 The most effective means of controlling and guiding children is through sound relationships and nurturing care which help generate a level of mutual respect and encourage children and young people to develop acceptable responses.
- 1.4 Sanctions should be designed to influence the young person's behaviour in the future and not to inflict punishment. They should not intimidate, humiliate or frighten the child or infringe any of the child's human rights.

**The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** applies to all children and young people aged 17 and under. Rights include:

- The inherent right to life.
- Preservation of his or her identity
- To live with or have contact with birth parents
- Receipt of information and expression of views
- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Privacy of self or correspondence
- Protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.
- Alternative care away from the birth family that provides continuity in a child's upbringing and has regard to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.
- Highest attainable standard of health
- Benefit from social security
- Standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.
- Education
- Rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
- Protection from economic exploitation and child trafficking
- Protection from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances
- Protection from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse
- Protection from torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

1.5 In selecting a sanction, account should be taken of the appropriateness of the sanction to the misdemeanour, and of the age, maturity, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, understanding, physical condition and circumstances of the child or young person.

1.6 Sanctions should never include:

- Corporal punishment
- The denial of significant contacts
- The denial of attendance at significant cultural and religious events
- Deprivation of normal food or drink
- The wearing of distinctive/inappropriate clothing
- Sleep deprivation
- Withholding of medical/dental treatment or equipment of a disabled child
- The prolonged isolation of the child or young person from peers or normal routine
- The locking of doors
- Monetary fines - although the reduction of pocket money for reparation can be used as a sanction
- Sanctions should be time limited and flexible enough to be reviewed and rescinded at any time

The Fostering Service provider shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that:

- a) no form of corporal punishment is used on any child placed with a foster parent;
- b) no child placed with foster parents is subject to any measure of control, restraint or discipline which is excessive or unreasonable; and
- c) physical restraint is used on a child only where it is necessary to prevent likely injury to the child or other persons or likely serious damage to property.

**Fostering Services Regulations 2010**

## 2.0 Positive Behaviour Management

2.1 It is important for children to live in safe and nurturing environments. These are established by carers having clear routines and sensible rules. They also need to employ strategies for managing behaviours that threaten to disrupt the home environment by contravening these routines and rules.

### **De-Escalation**

2.2 To be prepared for potentially difficult situations, foster carers need all the relevant information about the child including any behaviour that has caused concern in the past and any 'triggers' that can lead to an aggressive outburst. This information should be covered in the placement planning meeting and recorded in the child's placement plan.

2.3 When faced with a volatile situation, foster carers should try to stay calm and not raise their voice. De-escalation strategies foster carers could employ include:

- Walking away to defuse the situation if there is no immediate risk to self or others
- Verbal advice, support, encouragement and reassurance (reminding of past successes)
- Distraction (Activity, key word, job to do)
- Humour
- Change of task
- Negotiation (Delayed compliance)
- Contingent touch (hand on shoulder, guide away)
- Inform of desired behaviour
- Remind of rights and responsibilities
- Remind of rules, boundaries and limits
- Give choices, options and consequences (get out with dignity clause)

#### **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

2.4 Positive behaviour may be promoted by employing the following strategies:

- **Praise:** Praise any positive behaviour, however small, so the child/young person gets a clear message about what is expected of them and to enhance their self-esteem. The recommended ration is Praise 5:1 Discipline.
- **Ignore Negative Behaviour** so the child/young person does not get attention for inappropriate behaviour
- **Reproof:** Explain to the child/young person that their behaviour is not appropriate or acceptable
- **Reprimand:** Explain to the child/young person that their behaviour is not appropriate or acceptable and that there will be consequences if it does not change

## **3.0 Sanctions**

3.1 Sanctions should only be imposed as a last resort where it is not possible to use other more positive methods of control.

3.2 Caution should be exercised to ensure that sanctions are not imposed repeatedly with little or no effect or where they may act as positive reinforcement of unacceptable behaviour.

- 3.3 Before imposing a sanction, foster carers must be satisfied that:
- The child/young person was capable of behaving acceptably and understands what was required of him/her
  - Other positive behaviour management strategies have not or would not work in the circumstances
  - The sanction is relevant, fair, timely and does not last longer than necessary
  - The sanction will encourage acceptable behaviour
  - The child understands the relevance of the sanction
  - The sanction is individual to the child and does not affect any other child in placement
- 3.4 Sanctions should be specific, immediate, consistent, achievable, time limited and proportionate to the seriousness of the act committed.
- 3.5 Foster carers should never threaten to impose a sanction that they are not prepared or able to enforce.

## 4.0 Approved Sanctions

- 4.1 **Control of Pocket Money:** In certain circumstances, for example, where a young person is misusing pocket money by making unsuitable purchases or in circumstances where it might be appropriate for a reasonable parent to stop a child's pocket money, it is permissible not to give all the money to the child immediately. Any delay in pocket money should not exceed two thirds of the child's normal allowance. Withheld money may be retained until its return is considered suitable. However, it would normally be expected that the young person should begin receiving normal pocket money again within one month of the start of the sanction.
- 4.2 **Reparation and compensation** may be made where an offence of damage or theft would make such a sanction appropriate, but this should be reasonable with regard to the young person's means rather than necessarily seeking to cover the cost of the damage or loss.
- 4.3 **Chores:** The child may be required to undertake extra chores, or to carry out suitable tasks. These must be reasonable given the age and abilities of the child, and must not necessitate prolonged isolation of the child from its peers or normal routine. An explanation should be given to the child and the sanction recorded.
- 4.4 **Supervision:** The child may be placed under extra supervision by the foster carers, both on and off the premises for a time-limited period.

- 4.5 **Removal of Possessions:** If a child's own possessions are used in a way that causes a nuisance to others, the possessions may be removed for an appropriate length of time and returned on an undertaking of responsible use. Where possessions are dangerous or are used in a dangerous manner they should be confiscated and kept in a safe place.
- 4.6 **Withdrawal of Privileges:** These may include exclusions, activities, edible treats and favourite pastimes which do not form part of the normal routine of the child. The sanction must be specific and time limited.
- 4.7 **Amendment of Routine:** The child's normal routine may be amended in a number of ways, all of which must be specific and time limited. For example:
- The child's bed time may be brought forward, though care must be taken that the child is not required to go to bed at a wholly inappropriate time of day.
  - Contact with friends may be delayed or postponed subject to review as contact can never be withdrawn.
  - The child may be required to leave the usual activities in the home and spend time in their bedroom or other suitable room. The level of supervision should be such that the child is not unduly isolated and doors must never be locked.
- 4.8 **Grounding:** It is appropriate to tell young people that they are not allowed out as a sanction providing it is specific and time limited.

## 5.0 Physical Intervention

- 5.1 There may be occasions where a situation is so serious that physical intervention or enforced isolation may be necessary. This should only be in extreme circumstances when all other methods have failed. Consideration should be given in Placement Planning Meetings to circumstances that may require physical intervention/ enforced isolation and the agreed method of intervention should be recorded in the placement plan and explained to the child.
- 5.2 Before any form of physical intervention is used all of the following requirements must be satisfied:
- There is a belief that injury or damage is likely in the predictable future
  - The intervention is immediately necessary
  - The intervention is a last resort after a de-escalation techniques have been attempted
- 5.3 The intervention must be the minimum necessary to achieve the objective. When the child has calmed down, the child should be given an explanation for why the intervention was used.

5.4 There are three broad categories of physical intervention:

- **Presence:** A form of control using no contact, such as standing in front of a child/young person or obstructing a doorway to negotiate with a child/young person; but allowing the child/young person the freedom to leave if they wish.
- **Touching:** This includes minimum contact in order to lead, guide, usher or block a child/young person; applied in a manner which permits the child/young person quite a lot of freedom and mobility.

- **Holding:** This includes any measure or technique which involves the child/young person being held firmly by one person, so long as the child/young person retains a degree of mobility and can leave if determined enough. **PRACTICE GUIDANCE**
  - Intervention must not impede breathing or intentionally inflict pain or injury or threaten to do so.
  - It should not be used in a way that may be interpreted as sexual
  - Vulnerable parts of the body e.g. neck, chest and sexual areas should be avoided

5.5 Only those who have been trained in methods of Holding approved by the authority may use them but **in an emergency** the use of force by others may be justified if it is the only way to prevent injury or serious damage to property.

5.6 If a foster carer believes physical intervention may escalate the situation or place anyone at unacceptable risk they must seek the assistance of another adult or, if necessary, contact the police

## 6.0 Reporting and Recording

6.1 If Presence or Touching is used as a physical intervention this must be recorded in the foster carer's daily log which will be signed by the supervising social worker at their next visit.

6.2 If Holding is used as a physical intervention, the supervising social worker and the child's social worker must be notified within 24 hours or as soon as practicable, unless it has been previously agreed that it is not necessary to do so. The child's social worker must make a decision about whether to inform the child/young person's parent(s) and if so who should do so.

6.3 All incident of Holding must be recorded in writing on:

- Accident, Injuries and Illness Form
- Foster Carer's Daily Log
- Young Person's file

6.4 The record must include:

- Date and time of incident
- Location of incident
- Name of child/young person
- Names of people present
- The events that led up to the need for physical intervention
- Any substance use involved
- An exact description of the actions taken by the foster carer, the nature of the physical intervention and its effectiveness
- The outcome including any injuries caused to or reported by the child/young person
- How the incident was resolved

6.5 The Incident Form should be sent to the supervising social worker as soon as practicable. The supervising social worker should forward the form to the Principal Manager Fostering.

6.6 The Principal Manager must notify Ofsted if any of the following occur during or as a result of holding:

- The police are called to provide assistance
- A child/young person has a serious injury or accident
- The death of a child
- A serious complaint is made against the foster carer
- There is a suspicion or allegation of significant harm

## **7.0 Medical Examination**

7.1 If there are apparent or reported injuries as a result of a physical intervention the child/young person should be given the opportunity to see a registered nurse or medical practitioner. The offer of medical examination together with the outcome should be recorded on the Incident Form and in the Daily Log.

7.2 If a registered nurse or medical practitioner is seen they must be informed that any injuries may have been caused by the use of physical intervention.