

Behaviour Support Policy

Version History

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Brief Description of Changes
Original	Feb 19		
2025/1	September 25	Board of Management	Added onto new template and annual review
2026/1	September 26	Board of Management	Yearly review and updates

Policy Owner

Head of Children and Young People

Purpose and Scope

YMCA East Surrey ensures, so far as reasonably practicable, to adopt a consistent and positive approach to supporting children's and young people's behaviour. This policy outlines how Children and Young People Services staff will take responsibility to support children and young people to manage their behaviour, manage any behaviour which may challenge fairly, implementing behaviour support strategies where appropriate and manage persistent behaviour which challenges while also ensuring that workers do not put themselves in vulnerable positions where their actions could be misinterpreted as inappropriate behaviour. This policy aims to provide staff with guidance on appropriate responses and behaviour towards children / young people.

Definitions

- ▶ MAPA - Management of Actual or Potential Aggression

Relevant Legislation or Governance Requirements

- ▶ Working together to Safeguard Children 2026
- ▶ Education Act 1996
- ▶ Children and Families Act 2014
- ▶ Early Years Statutory Framework 2026
- ▶ Department for Education - *Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2013*
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf

Related Policies and Procedures

- ▶ Safeguarding Children Policy
- ▶ Safeguarding Adult Policy
- ▶ Accident and incident policy
- ▶ Complex Health Needs Policy
- ▶ Health and Safety Policy

Policy Requirements

YMCA responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for behaviour support within YMCA East Surrey is that of the Chair of the Board.

However, during delivery of YMCAES CYP Services, staff must be aware of their individual responsibilities in managing behavior which may be challenging. Furthermore, staff must recognize their own professional limits when dealing with challenging behaviour, and acknowledge when an alternative professional response (e.g., police) is required.

How teams support behaviour which challenges will vary across the different CYP settings, but all settings will understand their responsibilities of dealing children and young people who have emotionally charged behaviour. Furthermore, while it is important to be fair and consistent, we recognise that some children and young people face additional challenges which can impact their behaviour, for example those with Additional Needs and Disabilities (AND). In this case the YMCA will decide what reasonable adjustments are needed as to how the behaviour management policy is applied.

YMCA East Surrey recognises that children and young people are learning to deal with a range of emotions and feelings and have a variety of different needs. Staff acknowledge this and work with the children and young people to find a positive solution for behaviour management. Therefore, when dealing with behaviour which challenges, staff use consistent:

- ▶ Language
- ▶ Positive reinforcement
- ▶ Consequences
- ▶ Rules
- ▶ Agreements
- ▶ Expectations

Every child and young person have the right to be treated fairly in all circumstances, therefore, where appropriate, staff consult with the children and young people about rules, which helps children and young people understand the effects of their behaviour on themselves and others, challenges bullying, encourages responsibility and turn taking.

Staff support children and young people to develop a sense of caring and respect for one another, and support them to build caring and cooperative relationships with other children and adults by:

- ▶ Ensuring that they promote acceptable behaviour and respect for others
- ▶ Ensuring that unacceptable behaviour, such as bullying or name calling will be dealt with consistently
- ▶ Reinforcing and praising good behaviour
- ▶ Ensuring that activities are varied, well planned and structured, so that children / young people are not easily bored or distracted

Children / young people will always be given the opportunity to make amends for their behaviour and, unless it is judged inappropriate, be able to re-join the activity. Where possible attempts should be made for the child or young person to have actions and behaviours discussed away from other service users.

Training

All CYP Services staff receive regular behaviour management training, ensuring they have the full understanding and acknowledgement of their role in managing behaviour which

challenges, along with behaviour management and support tools and techniques. If staff feel that they require more training, then they should raise this with their line manager who should then seek to source appropriate training.

Types of behaviour which may challenge

There are varying levels of incidents of behaviour which challenges that may be seen within YMCA CYP Services settings:

- ▶ Disengaged behaviour may indicate that a child or young person is bored, unsettled or unhappy. With sensitive interventions, staff will often be able to re-engage a child in purposeful activity.
- ▶ Disruptive behaviour describes a child or young person whose behaviour prevents other children from enjoying themselves. Staff will collectively discuss incidents and agree on the best way to deal with them and detail this in a Behaviour Management Strategy Plan.
- ▶ Unacceptable behaviour refers to non-negotiable actions and may include discriminatory remarks, violence, bullying or destruction of equipment. Staff will be clear on consequences which will follow on from such behaviour (detailed in the child / young person's Behaviour Management Plan), including in the first instance, temporarily removing a child or young person from the activity session.

Severity levels of incidents of behaviour which challenge

- ▶ Level One - Minor incidents: e.g., name calling, disrespecting equipment, incorporation, etc.
- ▶ Level Two - Minor incidents: e.g., reoccurrences of above behaviours which have been dealt with, but child not responded to. Irregular incident of the below which do not cause serious harm and the child recognises as unacceptable behaviour.
- ▶ Level Three - Serious incidents: e.g., physical abuse of another child/adult, using discriminatory language or behaviour, compromising safety of others, etc.

If unsure then the Coordinator or Manager of the setting will assess the behaviour and decide which level it is.

Behaviour management and support strategies

Each CYP Services setting will apply appropriate behaviour management and support strategies to ensure the safety and well-being of the child / young person, other children and young people and members of staff, depending on the severity of the incident and/or behaviour.

Behaviour management at YMCA East Surrey is structured around the following principles:

- ▶ Positive behaviour will be reinforced with praise and encouragement
- ▶ Negative behaviour will be challenged in a calm, but assertive manner

In the first instances of behaviour which challenges, staff where appropriate and dependent on the overall wellbeing of the child / young person, and other children and young people, will:

- ▶ Not ignore the behaviour
- ▶ Not confront poor behaviour with anger
- ▶ Re-direct children / young person's energies by offering them alternative and positive options
- ▶ Withdraw other children, young people or adults from the situation

- ▶ Remove any equipment/ furniture that may cause injury to themselves or others
- ▶ State the behaviour that was observed, and it was unacceptable
- ▶ Explain to the child / young person what the consequences of their actions is
- ▶ If appropriate contact the parent / carer

When a child / young person attending displays concerning behaviour which challenges, the staff teams refer to the Behaviour Procedure (Appendix 1) which highlights the steps to be taken and our overall ethos of encouraging and reinforcing positive behaviour.

If not already done due to information provided prior to attendance, then after concerning or reoccurring incidents of behaviour which challenges, the CYP Services teams complete individual Behaviour Plans and associated risk assessments for the child / young person. Within this document detailed person-centred scenarios and behaviour management strategies are listed, with descriptions of the behaviour and associated risks. This plan will be made in conjunction with parent / carers as well as this child / young person if appropriate and with appropriate team members. This plan will be a continuous working document and regularly discussed and adapted at both team and parent/carers meetings.

Parent/carers will be informed of any incidents and subsequent action plans formulated by the team in response to their child / young person's behaviour.

Management of Serious or persistent behaviour incidents that challenge procedure

If an incident of behaviour which challenges is deemed serious (Level 3), and/or behaviour which challenges persists, the following actions may have to be taken:

1. Meetings with parent/carers, and if appropriate the child / young person
2. Cautions
3. Cooling off periods (i.e., temporary exclusion)
4. Full permanent exclusion

If a behaviour is deemed to be unmanageable / unsafe within the setting, the following advice from a suitable senior person it may be that a parent / carer is asked to come and collect their child immediately.

A record of all conversations and actions taken will be saved on MyConcern safeguarding system.

1. Meetings with parent/carers

Staff will aim to discuss incidents and concerns with parents/carers privately at the earliest possible opportunity to help identify the causes of behaviour which challenges and share strategies for dealing with it. If appropriate, the child or young person will be invited to attend. The strategies discussed will be specific to that child and may range from appropriate adaptations within the setting, reduced session times, an understanding about when it reaches a certain level that the parent / carer may need to collect that child or provide contact details and permission for someone who is available to collect. Staff will also discuss with parents a range of options which may include how that child can be supported within the setting e.g. payment/funding for additional staffing or suitable alternative provisions.

2. Cautions

If appropriate the next stage will be the child / young person or their parent / carer will be given a caution about the behaviour, which is a formal warning that aims to carry a deterrent effect and reduce the likelihood of behaviour which challenges continuing.

The caution will either be:

- ▶ Simple caution – the child / young person or their parent /carer is warned that their behaviour is unacceptable, and if it continues, more serious steps will have to be taken
- ▶ Conditional caution – with specific conditions attached to the caution, which will have finite duration of time.

3. Cooling off periods

A cooling off period is a finite duration of time where a child or young person will not attend a CYP Services setting. This provides YMCA East Surrey with the opportunity to plan with the parent/carers and other professionals for re-integration into the setting or alternative setting if appropriate. At this stage any risk assessments and Behaviour Management Plans which are in place will be reviewed and if required adapted.

4. Full exclusion

YMCA East Surrey provides fully inclusive settings, however there are times when full exclusion is the right course of action, once all other options have been exhausted. YMCA East Surrey will work with the parent/carers, and relevant professional bodies (such as health, social care and education) to put in place support for the child or young person outside of the YMCA's settings including accessing a new, more appropriate setting.

YMCA East Surrey acknowledges that every child / young person is unique and that one process may not work for everyone. If the person responsible feels that a different course of action is required, then this will be discussed with a Senior Manager.

The use of physical intervention

YMCA CYP Services believe that under no circumstances must physical punishment be used.

Before reaching the stage where the use of physical intervention to manage behaviour which may challenge arises, staff will have used all possible non-physical actions, such as dialogue and diversion, to deal with the behaviour.

If physical intervention may be required, then the child / young person will be verbally warned that physical intervention will be used if they do not cease their unacceptable behaviour.

Staff will use restrictive physical interventions only as a last resort and only then if they have reasonable grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent a child from significantly injuring themselves or others or to prevent serious damage to property (see Appendix 3).

Recording behaviour management

After any intervention and management of behaviour which challenges, the actions taken by staff, and details of the incident itself, must be accurately recorded on YMCA East Surrey's MyConcern Accident and Incident Reporting Software (see Accident and Safeguarding policies).

Training

Staff are made aware during their induction or behaviour management training that only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied. For example, diverting a child / young person by leading them away by a hand or by an arm around their shoulders, never grabbing a child / young person by the wrist. Staff should aim for side-to-side contact with the child / young person and ensure there is no restriction to the child's ability to breathe.

YMCA East Surrey also offers additional non-physical intervention training for staff who require additional training to manage behaviours which may challenge (see Appendix 2).

Tactile Contact

It is difficult to draw up prescriptive procedures governing tactile behaviour due to the wide range of physical contact and the variety of different circumstances that may arise in any Children and Young People services.

However, physical contact in a professional setting at YMCA East Surrey is only acceptable in the following categories:

- ▶ Restraint – minimum restraint should only be used as a last resort when a child or young person is violent towards another person or is in danger of hurting themselves
- ▶ Reassurance – a minimum level of contact is permissible to provide essential first aid or to comfort and reassure a child or young person who requires first aid or who is significantly emotionally upset.
- ▶ Support – physical support is acceptable when deemed necessary (e.g. due to a child's / young person's disability) or by qualified coaches in a sporting context, and in accordance with appropriate governing body's guidelines.

If it is necessary to use physical contact in one of the situations outlined above, then every effort must be made to ensure that it takes place in the full view of another adult. Physical contact should not take place between a child and a member of staff in private.

If a child or young person is being comforted or reassured the member of staff should ask permission before making physical contact.

When a child or young person initiates unacceptable physical contact which will vary depending on the age and ability of the child / young person, the member of staff should gently move away, taking extreme care to do so in a tactful way that will not lead to a feeling of rejection.

It is recognised that across YMCA we work with a range of children and young people including very young children and those with additional needs some of which may need extra support in certain activities. If staff have any questions or queries regarding appropriate support, then they should ensure you check with senior person on the scheme or contact your areas behaviour support coordinator (see below).

The following behaviour would be considered unacceptable from a YMCA East Surrey member of staff in a professional setting:

- ▶ Any physical violence towards a child or young person
- ▶ Any physical disciplinary action towards a child / young person or smacking, even in fun

- ▶ Cuddling or hugging a child / young person (unless in cases of severe emotional distress and when the child / young person is accepting of this)
- ▶ Play fighting or horse play between workers and children / young people
- ▶ Carrying children / young people, piggy backs, etc. (when not required due to age or ability)
- ▶ Initiating holding hands with a child / young person where it is unnecessary, for instance in a safe indoors environment with a child / young person who is confident enough not to need such reassurance.

YMCA East Surrey's Behaviour Support Co-ordinators are:

The appropriate Senior CYP Manager

- Childcare and Children's Activity Manager for Preschools, Creche, YKids After School and Holiday clubs as well as Sports and Recreation
- Disability Services Manager for Short Breaks (Yippee and Yip4Youth) and Lifeworks Learning Hub
- Emotional wellbeing and Mental Health Manager for Heads together counselling, community wellbeing team, Evidence based therapies, Family wellbeing service, Waves and Step Forward.
- Family and Youth Work Manager for Family Centres and Youth work

Roles and Responsibilities

Monitor:	Head of Children & Young People Services
Approve:	Board of Management
Endorse:	Children & Young People Advisory Group
Propose:	CEO
Draft and review:	Childcare and Children's Activity Manager

Implementation and review

This Policy is reviewed annually and disseminated to staff on HealthboxHR and SharePoint.

Appendix 1

Behaviour Procedure

How do we manage behaviour at YMCA CYP settings?

We promote positive behaviour using positive reinforcement. This is done by using a mixture of positive language and encouragement, communication with parents and rewards.

At some settings, we use a 'star sheet' to monitor and track positive behaviour. Examples include:

- Being kind to their friends
- Being helpful
- Sitting nicely on the bus
- Being polite
- Sharing the toys

Staff are encouraged to reward what is positive behaviour for the individual child / **young person**. For example, a child / **young person** who may sometime get angry but has tried really hard not to on that day would be rewarded. Some settings also have our 'star of the day'. There is a star of the day in each group. The star of the day receives a certificate and a star on their sheet.

What do you do for the children and young people who struggle to show positive behaviour?

At some settings we use support plans that are personally tailored to the child / **young person**. We use the feedback of staff, parents and the child / **young person** themselves to create these. We focus on their hobbies, interests and passions to create a unique plan for the individual child / **young person**. The plans also highlight potential behaviour triggers and how these can be avoided. We ask our parents to sign off on their child / **young person's** plan, ensuring we are all working together for the best interest of the child / **young person**.

Dealing with Behaviour deemed as Level 2 or Level 3

With all behaviour that is categorised as being Level 2 or Level 3 a MyConcern record is filled in by the member of staff who witnessed or dealt with this. This is then communicated to the child's parents / **carers who receive a parent notification slip which they sign and then this is added to the My Concern Record. The Scheme coordinator then reviews the My Concern record.** If the incident is deemed serious enough or the number of MyConcern entries is deemed to the level that a **coordinator/ Manager** feels appropriate they **will then follow the above Management of Serious or persistent behaviour incidents procedure.**

Appendix 2

Use of MAPA (Management of Actual or Potential Aggression)

If physical intervention is required to manage behaviour, staff will ensure that the use of any restrictive physical intervention is used as an act of care and control, and never punishment. Restrictive physical interventions will not be used purely to force a child or young person to do what they have been told and when there is no immediate risk to people or property.

Throughout the use of physical intervention, a dialogue will be maintained with the child at all times, so that the member of staff can explain what they are doing and why they are doing it. Staff will make every effort to avoid the use of physical interventions if they are alone with the child.

The force of the restrictive physical intervention will be always appropriate to the age, size and strength of the child or children involved. As soon as it is safe, the restrictive physical intervention should be gradually relaxed to allow the child or children to regain self-control.

If a member of staff is not confident about their ability to contain a particular situation or type of behaviour, consideration will be given to calling the Manager or, in extreme cases, the police.

When physical intervention has been used

Where a member of staff has had to intervene with any use of restrictive physical intervention to restrain a child or young person, the Manager will be notified, and the incident recorded on MyConcern within 24 hours. Then a countersignature will be required by a member of staff who was present when the intervention took place. The incident will be discussed with the parent/guardian at the earliest possible opportunity and a copy of the MyConcern given to the parent/guardian if requested.

Staff should be encouraged to complete a reflective exercise with their line manager and should be given support when required.

Information recorded should be used to review the child's Behaviour Management Plan and associated risk assessment, so the risk of needing to use restrictive physical intervention is reduced.

This appendix must be read in conjunction with Surrey County Council Guidelines on Behaviour Management and Touch, and the use of restrictive physical interventions, section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and YMCA East Surrey's Safeguarding children policy, see also: Department for Education - *Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2013*

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf

Appendix 3

Understanding the risks of physical restraints

Risks of Restraint: Warning signs and correction actions

	Warning Signs	Corrective Actions
A	- Shouts and swears at staff to 'Let go.' - Attempts to struggle free and/or injure self or others. - Is hostile and aggressive to self or others.	Treat as IMPORTANT. Manage the prevailing risk and follow the <i>Opt-Out Sequence</i>SM. Consider letting go as soon as possible, or reduce the level of restriction and/or change the position of the person.
B	- Complains of difficulty breathing. - Complains of feeling sick and/or vomits. - Voids bladder and/or bowels. - Complains of pain or discomfort. - Limbs positioned awkwardly; not moving within normal range of motion; and/or sounds of crepitus. - Becomes distressed and/or cries. - Continually struggles; becomes increasingly hot/flushed/sweaty.	Treat as URGENT. Immediately assess level of restriction and check to ensure you are not impeding or restricting breathing. Check movement of limbs and signs of fracture/dislocation. Follow the <i>Opt-Out Sequence</i>SM and consider letting go as soon as possible; reduce the level of restriction; and/or change the position of the person so they are seated upright, reclined (recumbent), or in a position that is not impeding or restricting breathing. Encourage person to relax and to take sips of a cold drink—assess hydration needs. Call for help—an independent person not involved in the physical restraint is often best to assess what is happening and what action needs to be taken. Refer person to medical practitioner as soon as possible for further assessment.
C	- Unresponsive to requests or instructions. - Loss of or reduced consciousness. - Abruptly/unexpectedly stops struggling or suddenly calms down. - Sudden change in breathing pattern. - Has a seizure of epileptic or non-epileptic origin. - Blueness of lips/fingernails/ear lobes (cyanosis). - Tiny pinpoint red dots/bruises (called petechia) on the skin, particularly on the upper chest, neck, face, and around the eyes.	Treat as a MEDICAL EMERGENCY. The term Medical Emergency¹ should be used as a verbal prompt for staff to stop the restraint immediately and: - Call for emergency medical assistance. - Follow the basic life support (BLS) algorithm as outlined in national and international resuscitation guidelines.

¹At any time, if any staff member is concerned about the individual's welfare and safety, they should clearly state 'medical emergency'. The term 'medical emergency' is an instruction for everyone involved in the restraint to immediately let go of the individual and begin the necessary emergency aid.