

Challenging Behaviour

Many children and young people today are unfortunately dealing with complex issues which can lead to them acting out in negative ways that are challenging for leaders and for other children / young people around them. Issues like separation, bereavement, bullying, eating disorders and addiction can have a huge impact on children and young people's self-esteem. We must be sensitive to their needs and remember that safeguarding is much broader than recognising, responding and reporting abuse but also about ensuring that all children have the help and support they need to deal with all of life's problems.

As leaders dealing with challenging or unacceptable behaviour we should always remember that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance. In order to ensure the safeguarding of children, adult staff and volunteers please follow the guidelines below with regard to challenging behaviour.

Dealing with children's challenging / unacceptable behaviour should never involve physical punishment or any form of degrading or humiliating treatment.

Guidelines for dealing with Challenging Behaviour:

- Agree clear behavioural standards and consequences for their breach in advance.
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate, emphasising safety as the concern.
- Ignore attention-seeking behaviour and focus on appropriate behaviour.
- Try to help the child / young person who is having a behaviour difficulty to name what they are feeling and attempt to find out what the problem is and work with them towards finding a solution.
- Talk to the child, in their own language, about choosing their behaviour, and make the child aware of the different consequences to the choices they make. Inform the child that they will be asked to leave the activity if their behaviour continues to be inappropriate.
- If necessary take the child to one side in order to discuss the problem and work together towards finding a solution. Re-integrate the child positively into the activity as soon as possible.
- In cases of extreme behavioural difficulties which pose a threat to the child, staff or other children / young people, take the child to one side and contact the parents immediately.
- Record and report any incident of extreme behavioural difficulty to the leader of the activity.
- Parents should always be informed of any behavioural issues.