



**SPORTS PARTNERSHIP**  
HEREFORDSHIRE &  
WORCESTERSHIRE  
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## **Managing Challenging and Unacceptable Behaviour Policy**

Employees, partners or volunteers who deliver sports activities to children may, on occasions, be required to deal with behaviour which should be considered as unacceptable. This behaviour could be in the presence of or directed at young people and could be perpetrated by participants, parents or other spectators. Unacceptable behaviour by coaches and other staff/volunteers is covered separately.

In producing this policy, the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.

### **Unacceptable Behaviour by Children**

SPHW has a code of conduct for coaches, who sign up to it on induction. There is also a code of conduct for children, produced with the involvement of children, which should be explained and given out at the start of sessions. It outlines what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and children should agree to abide by the code. By adopting this proactive measure children and young people will understand boundaries from the beginning and this will reduce the likelihood of incidences occurring.

In some instances children may exhibit challenging behaviours which arise from a medical or psychological condition and registration forms should have room for this information. Where it exists consultation should take place in advance between SPHW, parents/carers and, where appropriate, the children to discuss and adopt appropriate measures to manage the behaviour. SPHW will seek to work in partnership with parents/carers, and where necessary external agencies, to ensure that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely.

The following examples constitute unacceptable behaviour by children but it is not an exhaustive list

- Discrimination, prejudice, oppressive behaviour or language in relation to any of the following – race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political persuasion
- Stealing or deliberately damaging equipment or belongings
- Using inappropriate language
- Abusing or disrespecting other participants and or officials
- Disrupting sessions/activities
- Bullying
- Physically : pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching, etc,
- Verbally : name-calling, spreading rumours, constant teasing and sarcasm,
- Emotionally : tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring,
- Racially : taunts, graffiti and gestures,
- Sexually : unwanted physical contact or abuse
- Electronically: unwelcomed texting, e-mails and blogs

### **Disciplinary Measures**

SPHW employees, partners and volunteers will respond to unacceptable behaviours by using options that are proportionate to the actions, imposed as soon as is practical and fully explained to the child and their parents/carers. The response will be one or more of the following depending on the severity of the behaviour

- Time out - from the activity or group
- Reparation - the act or process of making amends.
- Restitution - the act of giving something back.
- Behavioural reinforcement - rewards for good behaviour, Sanctions or consequences for negative behaviour.
- De-escalation of the situation - talking through with the child.
- Increased supervision by staff/volunteers.
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future or continued participation
- Seeking additional/specialist support through working in partnership with other agencies to ensure a child's needs are met appropriately e.g. referral for support to Children's Social Care, discussion with the child's key worker if they have one, speaking to the child's school about management strategies (all require parental consent unless the child is felt to be 'at risk' or 'in need of protection').
- Temporary or permanent exclusion

The following are not permitted as a means of managing a child's behaviour:

- Physical punishment or the threat of such.
- Refusal to speak to or interact with the child.
- Being deprived of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or other essential facilities.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

### **Physical Intervention**

The use of physical intervention will always be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent a child injuring themselves or others, or causing serious damage to property.

Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction and with all other options discounted.

Physical intervention in a situation with a child/young person will be in the least restrictive way necessary to prevent them from getting hurt and for the minimum time. Contact should be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts. Staff and volunteers should never behave in a way which could be interpreted as sexual.

Physical intervention will NEVER be made as a punishment or to get children to comply with instructions and will not involve inflicting pain.

SPHW will provide training in physical intervention for staff or volunteers where necessary.

Any physical intervention used will be recorded as soon as possible after the incident by the staff/volunteers involved using the Incident Report Form and passed to the appropriate Named Senior Officer for Safeguarding as soon as possible.

A debrief for staff/volunteers, the child and parents will always take place following an incident where physical intervention has been used.

Staff/volunteers, children and parents will be given an opportunity to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment. The debriefing should include ensuring that the physical and emotional well-being of those involved has been addressed with discussions around the child's needs and what support will be necessary for continued safe participation in the group or activity.

It may also be necessary to talk through the incident with other children from the activity even if they were not directly involved in the incident. They may be fearful that it will happen to them in future or have been upset by seeing what has happened to others.

Staff and volunteers must make themselves aware of and understand the organisation/club's guidance about managing challenging behaviour to ensure that they are aware of ways in which they may need to intervene and are clear about the practice guidance in this area.

### **Unacceptable Behaviour by Parents, Carers or Spectators**

SPHW will use the same proactive measure, as that used for children, to prevent unacceptable behaviour by parents and adopt a Code of Conduct for parents/carers and spectators. This will be handed out before sessions or activities start. If parents wish to view proceedings clubs/organisations should

encourage this but with the proviso that they support the children by being enthusiastic and cheering them on, respecting everyone nearby, not shouting abuse and not laughing at or embarrassing any of the participants. When matches or competitions are in place parents and spectators should accept officials' decisions, even if they may appear to be wrong. Officials are human and will make mistakes from time to time but the vast majority are volunteers giving up their valuable time to ensure the children are able to enjoy healthy competition and should be accorded due respect.

The following examples constitute unacceptable behaviour by parents, carers and spectators but it is not an exhaustive list

- Discrimination, prejudice, oppressive behaviour or language in relation to any of the following – race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political persuasion.
- Forcing a child to participate in sport against their wishes
- Using inappropriate language
- Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control
- Shouting at and / or taunting a young person to 'keep control'.
- Coming on to the field of play
- Abusing or disrespecting other participants and or officials
- Questioning officials' decisions
- Bullying
- Physically : pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching, etc,
- Verbally : name-calling, spreading rumours, constant teasing and sarcasm,
- Emotionally : tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring,
- Racially : taunts, graffiti and gestures,
- Sexually : unwanted physical contact or abuse
- Electronically: Unwelcomed texting, e-mails and blogs

SPHW employees, partners and volunteers will respond to unacceptable behaviours by using options that are proportionate to the actions, imposed as soon as is practical