

BEHAVIOUR, PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Purpose

This policy sets out how behaviour will be supported and managed during mentoring sessions, which may take place in a range of environments including schools, the community, or transport. It also outlines the circumstances in which physical restraint may be used, in line with UK safeguarding law and Department for Education (DfE) guidance on *Use of Reasonable Force* (2013) and trauma-informed approaches to working with children and young people.

Principles

1. **Respect** – All participants will treat each other with kindness, fairness and courtesy.
2. **Safety** – The safety and wellbeing of the young person is always the first priority.
3. **Boundaries** – Clear, consistent boundaries are maintained to ensure trust and security.
4. **Engagement** – Sessions are most effective when young people are willing to participate.
5. **Communication** – It's okay to feel upset or angry, but these feelings should be expressed safely.
6. **Trauma-Informed Practice** – The mentor recognises that behaviour may be shaped by past experiences of stress, adversity or trauma. Responses will be calm, compassionate, and focused on helping the young person feel safe, understood, and supported.

If difficulties arise, I will:

1. Use de-escalation strategies (calm voice, giving space, distraction, offering choices).
2. Pause or adapt the session if needed.
3. Respond with empathy, acknowledging feelings and triggers, rather than only behaviour.
4. Inform parents/carers and relevant professionals if significant concerns arise.

Roles and Responsibilities

- As mentor, I am responsible for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the child during sessions.
- I will act within safeguarding guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, 2025) and the *Children Act* 1989/2004.
- I will use trauma-informed practices, recognising that behaviour is often a form of communication and that children need safety, trust, and consistency to thrive.
- I will seek advice and training to ensure my practice is safe, lawful, and child centred.

Expectations of Young People

- To speak and act respectfully towards the mentor, themselves, and others.
- To follow agreed instructions that ensure safety (e.g. road safety when in the community, seatbelts in the car).
- To communicate if they feel uncomfortable, upset, or wish to stop an activity.
- To attend sessions with an open mind and willingness to take part.

Expectations of the Mentor

- To provide encouragement, support, and strategies to help manage any difficulties.
- To model respectful, positive, and trauma-sensitive behaviour at all times.
- To ensure sessions are planned in line with safeguarding, safety, wellbeing and trauma-informed principles.
- To listen actively to the young person and take their views seriously.
- To provide encouragement, support, and strategies to help manage any difficulties.
- To avoid responses that may cause re-traumatisation (e.g. shouting, shaming, confrontation).

Managing Behaviour

- Minor issues (e.g. not following instructions, lack of engagement) will be addressed calmly and respectfully, with an opportunity to reflect and reset.
- Persistent difficulties will be discussed with the young person to agree positive strategies, using a trauma-informed lens to understand possible underlying needs.
- If behaviour poses a risk to safety, the session may be paused or ended early, and parents/carers and the commissioning body will be informed.
- Supportive strategies (not punishment) will be used to encourage positive choices, build resilience, and support emotional regulation.

Safeguarding and Recording

- Any safeguarding concerns will be reported in line with statutory safeguarding procedures.
- Notes of significant behavioural incidents will be recorded and shared with parents/carers and relevant professionals if necessary.
- Records will be written sensitively, with recognition of the young person's context and experiences.

Anti-Bullying

As part of creating a safe and supportive mentoring environment, bullying of any kind is not tolerated. This includes physical, verbal, emotional, or online (cyber) bullying.

Definition:

Bullying is behaviour that is:

- Repeated,
- Intentional, and
- Involves an imbalance of power (real or perceived).

This definition is often referred to as STOP (Several Times On Purpose).

Commitment:

- I will promote kindness, respect, and empathy at all times.
- Any incidents of bullying will be addressed immediately and sensitively.
- Where bullying is suspected or reported, I will listen carefully, take concerns seriously, and work with the young person, parents/carers, and relevant professionals to address it.
- Support will be offered to both the young person experiencing bullying and, where appropriate, to the young person displaying bullying behaviour, recognising that both may need help.
- Bullying will be approached using trauma-informed practices – seeking to understand underlying causes, promoting accountability, and restoring relationships where possible.

Actions may include:

- Discussing the incident openly with the young person in a safe, non-judgemental way.
- Agreeing on positive strategies to prevent further harm.
- Recording and sharing concerns with parents/carers and professionals where appropriate.
- If incidents occur in school or community settings, liaising with the relevant organisation so they can fulfil their safeguarding and anti-bullying duties.

Message for Young People:

Everyone has the right to feel safe, respected, and valued. Bullying behaviour will always be challenged, and support will always be given to those affected.

Physical Intervention (Restraint)

Definition:

Physical restraint refers to the use of reasonable, proportionate, and necessary force to prevent immediate danger of harm. It will only ever be used as a **last resort**.

When restraint may be considered:

- To prevent a child from running into traffic or another unsafe situation.
- To prevent serious self-harm.
- To prevent serious harm to others.
- To prevent behaviour causing significant danger (e.g., unsafe property damage).

Principles:

- De-escalation and communication strategies will always be prioritised before restraint.
- The minimum force, for the shortest time possible, will be applied.
- Restraint is never used as punishment or as a behaviour management tool.
- Trauma-informed approaches will always be prioritised, meaning de-escalation, empathy, and understanding triggers are the first response before restraint is ever considered.
- Where restraint is unavoidable, it will be done calmly and explained clearly to the young person to reduce fear and distress.

After an Incident

- The restraint will stop immediately once the risk has passed.
- The young person will be supported to calm, recover, and feel safe again.
- A reflective, supportive conversation will take place to understand feelings, triggers, and ways forward.
- Parents/carers and, where relevant, commissioning bodies (e.g., local authority) will be informed.
- A written record will be made within 24 hours.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and after any incident requiring restraint, to ensure it remains in line with statutory guidance, trauma-informed best practice, and the needs of young people.

Last review: September 2025