



# Heroes Centre LTD

## **Behaviour and Physical Contact Policy**

**July 2023**

## **Behaviour and Expectations**

Heroes Centre LTD provides a service that engages children and young people in education and activities. We acknowledge that some students may not be familiar with a school setting. As such, we operate a flexible, individualised behaviour policy that clearly sets out the expectations we have of our students, and appropriate restorative approaches should these expectations not be met. We believe that a structured individual behaviour support approach is the best approach for our students, in line with the bespoke nature of the provision that we offer.

## **Our expectations**

We expect all students to try, and in return we will respect their efforts.

In our setting, we achieve success by:

- Valuing Others
- Encouraging high aspiration and a love of learning
- Creating a safe learning environment
- Showing tolerance, respect and fairness
- Providing rewarding learning experiences
- Listening to and respecting others' views
- Offering diverse opportunities
- Appreciating and embracing diversity
- Recognising and celebrating all achievement
- Preparing for independence and future challenges

Good behaviour forms the basis of high-quality education and is essential for effective learning. We, therefore, ensure that the children and young people that we work with feel secure, and know where they can seek support should they need it. As staff, we help provide this security and knowledge, and as parents and guardians, we ask you to do the same. We have a collective responsibility to ensure that we maintain the well-being of the young people we work with. All we ask in return is that you, as a student, treat the people you interact with respectfully.

All tutors will apply the policy with consistency. All members of staff take responsibility for the behaviour and safety of students, and the management team are kept informed.

Communication with parents will be made in the event of serious or persistent breaches of our expectations. We have a duty to ensure our staff have a happy and safe working environment.

We endeavour to offer a holistic service which takes into account all of the needs of the individual, including their behaviour, which is why all behaviour support is compiled on an individual basis. It may be that we seek interventions in order that we can help the young people that we work with better understand the cause and effect of their behaviour.

### **Restorative Approaches**

We take the approach of using restorative justice rather than punitive sanctions for our students. A restorative approach focuses on mediation and agreement rather than punishment.

### **Severe/Dangerous Acts**

There are however some things that we must take a firmer approach to, for example, violent or threatening behaviour, or being under the influence of controlled substances. We will endeavour to support you, but we are here to provide an opportunity to continue education and have a duty to ensure that our staff feel safe.

If we believe that the student has committed a severe/dangerous act, we can:

- Terminate the lesson unless we believe that there is a greater risk of harm to you if we do so.
- If we believe that you may be in possession of anything that is defined as a weapon, we have a right to withdraw from the session to make additional referrals to the management team or to the police.
- If we believe that the risk is too great, we will ensure that we complete a risk assessment to enable us to continue providing education, however, this may mean that we have to take measures such as meeting/arranging sessions in public places.

## **Physical Contact**

Heroes has a No Touching Policy, but acknowledges there may be circumstances where touching is necessary. This is outlined below:

### **No Touching Policy:**

**Student-to-Student:** Students are strictly prohibited from engaging in any physical touching that may be deemed inappropriate or make others uncomfortable. This includes hitting, pushing, pulling, or any form of physical aggression.

**Teacher-to-Student:** Teachers are expected to maintain a professional boundary and avoid unnecessary physical contact with students. While appropriate and gentle touch, such as handshakes or pats on the back, can be suitable in certain situations, any form of physical contact should be limited to what is necessary for student safety and well-being.

**Student-to-Teacher:** Students are encouraged to express gratitude or appreciation through verbal means rather than physical touch. While respectful and appropriate physical contact may be suitable in some instances, such as a high-five or a handshake, it should always be initiated and welcomed by the teacher.

Circumstances where physical touching may be necessary:

### **Positive handling**

Heroes staff with a valid DBS can use positive handling in a range of normal daily interactions such as:

- giving guidance to children, such as how to hold a paintbrush or use climbing equipment
- providing comfort and emotional support, such as placing an arm around a distressed child
- providing intimate care, such as nappy changing or toileting in specific circumstances where parental consent has been obtained
- providing first aid.

Staff must always be aware and respect the fact that all children respond to physical contact and touch in different ways. Some children are over-demonstrative and may demand a great deal of affection and physical contact, while others may try to avoid it altogether. Where possible, **staff should avoid giving any physical comfort** when sought by a child. There may also be children who have experienced emotional, physical or sexual abuse and they will need very sensitive

support and care. Staff must also respect any cultural sensitivities to physical contact.

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of a physical or intimate nature is required and depending on their abilities, age and maturity should be encouraged to act as independently as possible. Staff should ensure that intimate care such as nappy changing and toileting, or changing wet clothes is carried out one-to-one by a child's key person wherever possible, staying visible to other practitioners but maintaining a child's privacy, for example, leaving the door ajar.

### **Physical intervention**

Physical intervention can include mechanical and environmental means such as high chairs, stair gates or locked doors which are used to ensure a child's safety.

### **Restrictive physical intervention**

This involves the use of physical intervention intentionally to restrict a child's movement against his or her will, reducing any risk to the child, other children or adults in the immediate area. In most cases, this will be through the use of the adult's body rather than mechanical or environmental methods.

Staff must only use restrictive physical intervention in extreme circumstances when children are in danger of hurting themselves, others or of causing significant damage to property. It should be used in the context of positive behaviour management approaches and alongside other strategies. Where possible, every effort should be made to avoid the need for physical restraint through dialogue and diversion. Staff should use the minimum restrictive force necessary to maintain safety and for as short a period as possible.

Restrictive physical intervention must never be used as a punishment or as an alternative to other methods which would be effective. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework states that staff must not use or threaten corporal punishment to a child, and must not use or threaten any punishment which could adversely affect a child's wellbeing. However, it says that physical intervention can be taken for the purposes of averting the immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if

absolutely necessary. Under these circumstances, staff will not be taken to have used corporal punishment and therefore will not have committed an offence.

It is important that any use of restrictive physical intervention is recorded as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident. It should also include any subsequent injury or distress and what was done in relation to this. Parents must be informed and given a copy of the record.

### **Practitioner concerns**

While physical contact is essential to the basic care routines and emotional wellbeing of children at nursery and early years level, many early years staff may still have several concerns such as:

- protecting themselves from potential safeguarding allegations
- balancing the emotional needs of the child with best practice
- using physical restraint with children when they are in danger or at risk of danger
- physical handling of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Staff must be consistent in their use of positive behaviour support, physical contact and restrictive physical interventions and therefore it is essential that they receive relevant training in these areas as well as having a secure knowledge of safeguarding. If staff identify behaviours relating to physical contact that are giving them cause for concern, they must report this to their designated safeguarding lead or another senior member of staff immediately.