



# Manchester Young Lives

## Behaviour Policy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Manchester Young Lives (MYL) Behaviour Policy is designed to support the way in which all staff, volunteers, children and young people working for or using Manchester Young Lives' facilities can interact together in a positive and supportive way. It aims to promote an environment where everyone feels valued and respected and strives to ensure that each young person is treated fairly and well.

The primary aim of the Behaviour Policy is promoting good relationships, so that people can work together with the common purpose of engaging in positive education and learning.

The policy aims to contribute to a framework in which:

- High quality learning/ play & recreational activity takes place.
- Staff, children, and young people feel safe and secure.
- Appropriate support is made available.
- Children and young people take responsibility for their actions.
- Legal requirements concerning child protection and criminal activities are met.
- Appropriate behaviours and progress are continuously monitored.
- Children and young people understand fully the system of sanctions applied to inappropriate behaviour.

## 1. MISSION AND VALUES

Manchester Young Lives works to promote the social and educational inclusion of children and young people. We believe everyone can improve their life chances through learning and make a successful transition to adult life given the right opportunities, support and guidance.

Values we believe in

**Opportunity** for all

**Diversity** is celebrated and desired

**Respect** for those we are working with

**Integrity** in our actions

**Compassion** with those who are less fortunate

## 2. OUR APPROACH

**Behaviour is a form of communication**

- Behaviour is anything that a person does that we can see or hear.

- When we feel frustrated, upset, or misunderstood we can struggle to respond to these feelings which can result in less acceptable behaviours.
- It is the job of MYL staff to ‘tune in’ to identify what our young people are trying to communicate.
- Once a young person feels understood and cared for, they can learn to express their emotions in a more acceptable way.
- Staff at MYL respond to concerning behaviours by:
  - Having a non-judgmental, curious, and empathetic attitude toward behaviour
  - Focusing on the underlying feelings and emotions that drive certain behaviours.
  - Viewing a child displaying concerning behaviour as vulnerable not troublesome

### 3. RELATIONSHIPS

#### **Relationships are at the heart of what we do.**

At MYL, we understand that relationships are key to how we feel and behave. Many young people at MYL experience low self-worth. It is the job of staff in the school to build up the self-esteem of students by nurturing, promoting, and modelling positive relationships. We believe that:

- Young people who feel valued are much less likely to display inappropriate behaviours
- Young people’s interactions with adults from the moment they step into the building are positive, respectful and help young people feel that they are safe

### 4. ATTACHMENT AND TRAUMA AWARE

MYL believes poor attachment or experience of trauma leads to young people struggling to learn and often displaying concerning behaviours. It is the responsibility of all adults in MYL centres to be attachment and trauma aware and to help provide a secure base by:

- Being available as a trusting adult for the young person.
- Helping the young person feel that they belong
- Helping the young person to manage their feelings
- Working with young people to build self-esteem

### 5. BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS

MYL acknowledges the need for an approach that balances nurture and structure. We believe that:

- Young people need clear routines, boundaries, and responses to help them feel safe, protected, and cared for.
- Young people have the right to feel safe and a right to learn.

- Different feelings are acceptable but not all behaviours are.
- Understanding behaviour, a form of communication does not mean that young people do not experience consequences for their behaviour.
- High expectations should be maintained for all young people and they should be supported to meet them.

## 6. OUR RESPONSE

At MYL we always disapprove of the behaviour never the young person. Each centre is expected to have clear and well communicated reward and consequence systems in place. We believe that being fair is not about everyone getting the same but everyone getting what they need. It is therefore not always possible to respond to behaviours in the same way. However, it is useful to have a guiding framework for response to good and poor behaviour.

### Responses to positive behaviour

It is vital that the majority interactions with young people have with staff are positive:

- All young people should be greeted with positivity when they first enter the building.
- Smile and greet young people as they enter the lessons or work groups.
- Take the time to find out about their interests and show genuine interest.
- All young people should be told something they have done well in each session.
- Praise should be specific e.g. “well done for giving it a go even though you were unsure”
- Some young people find public praise difficult to accept. Find ways to praise individuals on a 1-1 basis.
- All young people attending our school should have at least one phone call home a week informing their parent/carer of something positive they have done or successful achievement.

### Responses to concerning behaviours

Whatever concerning behaviour a child is displaying we should always follow the 3 R's

- **Regulate** – calm and soothe the young person (young people are not always able to reason when they are in a state of anxiety or distress).
- **Relate** – validate feelings and label them – help young people label their emotions to manage their behaviours, it is important that we ‘name it to tame it’.
- **Reason** – set limits on their behaviour and problem solve with the young person. Once a young person is calm, we can reflect on the situation with them and problem solve to discuss the consequences.

### Repairing relationships

Restorative approaches focus on repairing the harm that has been done through conflict. Through our restorative approaches practice we hope to develop young people's ability to empathise, reflect and take responsibility for their own actions and ultimately find more positive ways to deal with conflict and upsetting emotions. This approach should be used some time after the event (such as at the end of the day) when the young person is calm and able to reflect.

A restorative response to an incident of conflict involves asking the following questions:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking and feeling at the time?
- What do you think and how do you feel now?
- Who has been affected by this?
- What is needed to put things right?
- How can we make sure this does not happen again?

Responses that are not attachment aware:

- Dismissing a child or young person's feelings by telling them they are over-reacting, being silly or wrong.
- Using shaming language or sanctions.
- Using tokenistic praise.
- Telling children or young people how they are feeling.
- Being confrontational with our verbal or body language.
- Ignoring the child/young person.
- Using many words which can overwhelm them.
- Using a points or public reward system.
- Isolating or leaving a young person on their own when they are distressed.
- Expecting young people to self-regulate by themselves.

## **7. BULLYING**

Bullying at MYL is not tolerated and a strong consistent message is given by all staff that everyone has the right to be safe from physical harm, name calling, intimidation or disrespect.

The young people at MYL have a high level of supervision throughout the day so any opportunity for bullying is limited. All incidents are dealt with either by a discussion, withdrawal from the class or in extreme cases a fixed term exclusion. This includes any bullying which takes place on the journey to and from school. More serious cases will always be discussed with parents/carers. In all cases, however the staff use the incident to bring about a change in the young person's behaviour by talking through alternative strategies or by trying to develop empathy for the victim through a restorative approach.

## **8. TIMEOUT**

Time out is a system which is used as a positive means by which a young person can withdraw from the main class or activity to an alternative space for a short time, when his/her behaviour is regarded as unacceptable and a calming period is needed. The young person returns to the class or activity when he/she feels able to continue to work and engage without disrupting the group or after a set amount of time e.g., 1-5 minutes.

Time out is NOT a punishment; it is purely a means by which the lessons or activities can continue, and the young person can reflect upon his/her own behaviour or calm down away from the situation.

If a young person needs more time to calm down, they may be asked to go to a quiet space, they will be accompanied by a member of staff who will stay with them until they return. If the young person asks for privacy, the member of staff will observe them from a safe distance provided the young person is safe to be alone. This again is not a punishment but an opportunity to gain control and change their behaviour in private.

## **9. IMPLEMENTING REASONABLE FORCE/SAFE HANDLING**

Physical intervention must only be used when all other options for de-escalation strategies have failed. Staff should have tried negotiation, diffusion, and de-escalation strategies as well as containment in a safe area, without the need to hold, before intervention where possible.

The staff at MYL have a duty to protect the safety of others. All MYL staff are authorised to use physical intervention in the following circumstances:

- A young person is endangering the safety of another child or young person.
- A young person who is endangering themselves.
- A young person is endangering the safety of an adult.
- A young person is causing/attempting to cause criminal damage to property or the building.

All physical intervention should be carried out in such a way to safeguard the young person and staff well-being in line with MYL Safe Handling Policy, and be used for the minimum amount of time possible to bring the situation under control. A restraint form will also be filled in by those involved explaining why it was used, parents will be notified by telephone.

## **10. LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS**

MYL school centres are secure environments with a main entry point. Should a young person leave the building during the school day, we will make every effort to get them to return. However, should they leave the grounds MYL staff will not pursue them further, as this may cause the young person to run to get away. If they move out of our sight or walk/run away MYL staff will contact the police to safeguard the young person and then will make every effort to contact parent/carer. Parents/carers are then asked to contact MYL should the young person return home.

## **11. PASTORAL SUPPORT**

Each class teacher is responsible for the pastoral support of the young people attending MYL School. Many young people at MYL will experience difficulties in the home, the community or both. Close liaison with parents/carers, other agencies, MSPRU and home schools where appropriate is essential if problems are to be resolved and progress made. Strong links are maintained through regular contact and liaison.

## **12. DAMAGE**

In the case that a young person has caused property or building fixtures e.g. Windows/doors to be damaged on the premises, the young person's parents/guardians will be asked to contribute to the cost of the repair or replacement of the property. The decision will be made at the discretion of the Centre manager after careful consultation with the teaching and support staff, and consideration of the circumstances. Any decision to pursue legal recompense should be referred to the Deputy Principal, Head of Children & Young People's Services or Youth Programme Manager as appropriate.

## **13. POLICE**

Police intervention will be sought in circumstances where a young person has caused excessive damage to the building or has assaulted a member of staff or other young people, has failed to respond to de-escalation techniques or is in grave danger of harming him/herself. Police may also be called when there is persistent harassment, which could result in a crime being committed, could interfere with normal daily routine, or threaten the good order of MYL.

## **14. PROHIBITED ITEMS**

Deputy Principal, Centre Managers and other authorised staff have the authority to search young people should they believe they are in possession of prohibited items; these include:

- Knives and weapons
- Drugs or Alcohol
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

## **15. POST INCIDENT RECORDING, SUPPORT AND LEARNING**

As soon as is reasonably possible after an incident, staff will fill out an incident report.

If the incident which has resulted in a Fixed Term Exclusion (FTE) this will be reported on FTE reporting form. A letter will also be completed and sent to the parent/carer.

When the situation has calmed, post incident learning and support will take place between all parties involve. This should include (if appropriate) a discussion about strategies that the young person could use in the future.

## 16. STAFF WELL-BEING

Manchester young lives acknowledge that to build effective relationships with young people we need to prioritise our own emotional well-being and have an awareness of our own triggers. Asking adults to walk towards young people in distress and to hold uncomfortable or upsetting feelings requires emotional resilience from our staff

MYL has a responsibility to give staff the right support to equip them to help young people manage their behaviour responses and emotional self-regulation. Staff should feel safe and encouraged to talk about how their work impacts on their emotions and vice-versa.

MYL Board of trustees supports staff by offering:

- Appropriate and regular training to support them in their understand and approaches to working with young people
- A safe and non-judgemental work environment.
- A chance to de-brief when staff have the opportunity to reflect on incidents without fear, blame or retribution.
- Peer support.
- Access to supervision on a regular basis

## 17. COVID- 19

All young people attending MYL services will be expected familiarise themselves and to fully comply with COVID 19 safety measures in place at any time in all centres; updates will be subject to change, as necessary.

Specifically, all young people are expected to maintain social distancing, hygiene (hand washing) and face coverings as appropriate.

Any incidents such as biting, or spitting will be considered a serious breach of MYL COVID safety measures and will dealt with through the Disciplinary system and likely include a recorded warning and contact with parents / guardians. For any incident requiring physical restraint by staff this is likely to include a fixed or permanent exclusion from MYL services.

## BEHAVIOUR POLICY APPENDIX

Our responses need to be based on our knowledge of a child, we aim to identify, support, and de-escalate at the early signs of distress.

Underlying communication	Behaviour	Possible responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't feel safe</li> <li>• I don't trust you</li> <li>• I don't know how I feel</li> <li>• I feel rubbish or stupid</li> <li>• I feel anxious or scared</li> <li>• I feel sad</li> <li>• I feel angry</li> <li>• I can't cope with my difficult feelings</li> <li>• I feel overwhelmed</li> <li>• I need to escape</li> <li>• I need to protect myself</li> <li>• I don't know whether I still exist</li> <li>• I need you to attend to me to feel safe and loved</li> <li>• This is the only way I know to make you like me</li> <li>• I need to be in control to feel safe</li> <li>• I don't have the skill your expecting</li> <li>• I don't believe you won't leave me</li> </ul>	<p><u>Low level behaviours</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast breathing</li> <li>• Restlessness</li> <li>• Still body posture</li> <li>• Clenched fists or jaw</li> <li>• Rapid or high-pitched speech</li> <li>• Continually talking, asking questions</li> <li>• Making noises</li> <li>• Not sitting still</li> <li>• Leave their seat</li> <li>• Talking under breath</li> <li>• Taking to their peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response to attachment-seeking by moving closer to the young person, using their name, and acknowledging their need e.g.</li> <li>• "I haven't forgot you Sam. I will finish marking this work and come to you"</li> <li>• If appropriate use a soothing touch (maybe a hand on the shoulder)</li> <li>• Offer a timeout</li> <li>• Offer sensory support such as stress ball</li> <li>• Move things on without making demands e.g. "it can be hard to stay calm when were not sure what to do, maybe we can try the next question together and come back to this one later"</li> <li>• Use "I wonder ....." to help a young person identify feelings, e.g. " I'm wondering if you are shouting "its boring " because you feel scared about getting the answer wrong?" (use this technique 1-1 so as not to embarrass)</li> <li>• Validate their feelings e.g. "I know what that feels like. It can be scary to have a go in case you fail at something." "I know its hard to thin right now" "I'm sorry that it's made you angry"</li> <li>• Use I might to help them problem solve "you might find it helpful to take 4 deep breath and then try again.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Mid-level behaviours</u></li> <li>• Refusal to do work</li> <li>• Refusal to follow instructions</li> </ul>	<p>See responses above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiet correction 1-1 with the young person to avoid public shame</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-compliant behaviour</li> <li>• Disrespectful language</li> <li>• Lying</li> <li>• Minor damage to building</li> <li>• Argumentative</li> <li>• Non-directed swearing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge their feelings of unfairness</li> <li>• Re-phrase requests so they don't imply a demand, e.g. "put your books and pens away" try "we can go on break once the classroom is tidy"</li> <li>• Try to problem solve with the young person E.g. if they have broken a calculator, they don't get to use another one next session</li> <li>• Try a light tone of voice to suggest a young person has another go at using different words</li> <li>• Give choices about what will happen next calmly, repeating as often as needed</li> <li>• Repeat your request or expectation and don't become drawn into an argument.</li> <li>• Use distraction</li> </ul>
	<p><u>Harmful behaviours</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggressive/threatening racist/homophobic/sexist language.</li> <li>• Damage to school property.</li> <li>• Threats</li> <li>• Throwing objects</li> <li>• Kicking objects</li> <li>• Kicking, hitting, spitting</li> </ul>	<p>See responses above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use self-regulation techniques to keep yourself calm</li> <li>• Make sure your hands are visible, palms towards the young person so they know you will not hurt them</li> <li>• Keep your body posture, facial expressions, and tone of voice calm</li> <li>• Keep our distance so the young person does not feel trapped.</li> <li>• Use low, slow, strong voice.</li> <li>• Speak rhythmically like you would to a baby.</li> <li>• Narrate what you see in a clam voice e.g. "I can see you are feeling frustrated right now"</li> <li>• If a young person needs to be removed ensure they are with an adult who can support them to self-regulate.</li> <li>• Do not chase a young person unless they are in danger as it can seem like an attack. Reassure them "I am still here when you are ready"</li> </ul>