

H & F Mencap

Positive Behaviour Management Policy

May 2017

Policy Statement

At HF Mencap we believe that children, young people and adults with learning disabilities that we support should be valued and be treated with mutual respect and dignity.

We also believe that the people we support flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and appropriate expectations and boundaries for their behaviour.

HF Mencap is committed to positive behaviour management and we endeavour to ensure staff are able to support service users in a safe and caring manner whilst safeguarding their own safety.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Children, young people and adults with learning disabilities often do not gain an understanding of socially acceptable behaviour as quickly as others. Therefore, at HF Mencap we consider this to be an area of extreme importance as it impacts on the person's wellbeing and environment around them including staff, parent/carers and their peers.

We promote positive behaviour through the following practices:

- Build strong and trusting relationships between individuals and staff
- Have an open relationship with parent/carers
- Support individuals to communicate using various methods.
- Encourage and support social skills by providing group activities
- Developing individuals strengths and likes to encourage positive behaviour
- Modelling positive and appropriate behaviour
- Giving praise and positive feedback
- Having consistent approaches and boundaries
- Staff to use a calm approach
- Talking through difficulties and discussing strategies with the person whenever possible
- Avoid confrontation
- Managing the physical and social environment effectively

Managing Behaviour Positively

Sometimes people may engage in behaviour that is inappropriate in a group setting as it challenges the service we provide. It may range from low key/non-disruptive self-stimulatory activities or unwanted physical attention to more extreme violent outbursts.

The reasons for these behaviours are diverse and can include communication difficulties or sensory sensitivities.

We manage behaviour through the following methods:

- Ensuring safety is paramount for all, according to our health and safety policy.
- Using positive and consistent approaches
- Involving parent/carers and multi agencies collaboration where possible, to discuss behaviours causing concerns and use a similar approach as other settings.
- Developing individual behaviour plans and risk assessments to support the person effectively and consistently.
- Support the person to manage his/her behaviour and where appropriate providing him/her with an alternative and more acceptable behaviour.
- Helping the person to understand the consequences of their actions and where possible to take responsibility for them.
- Avoid known triggers and situations that can cause anxiety.
- Provide regular training for staff in managing behaviour, manual handling and positioning and physical intervention.

There are times when staff are given information that is considered confidential about individuals where it impacts on their behaviour e.g. changes at home or medication – see confidentiality policy.

It is important to know that HF Mencap prohibits the following:

- **Corporal punishment**
- **Deprivation of food and drink**
- **Withholding medical treatment**
- **Any sanction with intent to humiliate or ridicule.**

Positive Physical Intervention

The use of physical intervention, to control or restrain people must be avoided wherever possible and if used must be because it was deemed reasonable, proportionate and necessary to protect the individual, others or property damage and is in the best interest of the individual and/or supporting adult.

Sometimes it is necessary for staff to use positive physical intervention in unplanned situations for instance to protect someone who is about to run into traffic or in the event of attacking another individual. There are also planned strategies to use physical intervention with individuals who display a pattern of disruptive/violent behaviour which can endanger themselves, others and property. The use of physical intervention by staff should be seen as part of their duty of care to those they are supporting.

Physical intervention is not under taken lightly it is part of a broad approach and is considered to be as a last resort when other strategies have been tried and failed with the person concerned (see *appendix 1*).

Every case is the subject of much thought and discussion between staff, parent/carers and other professionals. The intervention used must be reasonable, proportional and necessary to the circumstances. Staff also have the right to defend themselves from attack, provided the intervention used is proportionate to the situation. Any unplanned use of interventions should be reported to the line manager, documented and reported to the local authority.

Physical intervention strategies are set in place so that as far as reasonably practical the person will not sustain any injuries while at HF Mencap. However, this cannot be guaranteed.

If physical intervention strategies are used, it will be recorded on an incident form and daily report.

It is the responsibilities of the Director and Trustees:

- To assess the risk of the staff and people arising from the use of physical intervention.
- To ensure service managers are fully supported in decisions made where HF Mencap services are not appropriate with regards to individuals where the level of support needs are too great and pose a risk to other individuals, staff and property.
- To monitor safe system of work
- To ensure staff are adequately trained
- To ensure staff have access to appropriate information about the individuals with whom they are working with.
- To have a current behaviour policy, including reference to physical intervention
- To make appropriate resources available for the policy to be fully implemented
- To ensure that HF Mencap encourages calm and non-physically threatening atmosphere.

It is the responsibility of all staff:

- To have undertaken appropriate training before using any physical intervention.
- To ensure all other behaviour techniques including de-escalation/diffusion strategies are used before physical intervention.
- All staff must be aware of the content of the behaviour policy and the guidance contained within it.
- To follow behaviour plan of individual and to have had adequate training to carry out any physical intervention that is contained within plan.
- To act as a positive role model
- To ensure they contribute to a safe working environment for all.

Parent/carer Involvement

Full and open discussions of their child, young person or adult is offered and valued. If parents have any particular concerns regarding behaviour (or any other matter), they are encouraged to speak with service co-ordinator or service manager at the earliest opportunity. Parents will be contacted and informed.

At HF Mencap we endeavour to work as a team with our parent/carers in order to help support the individual person's needs and behaviour effectively.

Parent/carers are kept informed of any changes, progress or incidents in the following ways:

- Staff informs parent/carers at the end of each session what their person has participated in during the day.
- Parents are telephoned by manager and followed up via email or letter.
- Service managers contribute to multi-agency meeting e.g. reviews.
- Daily Reports

It is the parent/carers responsibility to:

- To support HF Mencap behaviour policy
- To act as good and positive role models
- And as far as it is possible to encourage positive and appropriate behaviours in their child, young person and adult to avoid the use of physical intervention.

Appendix 1

Useful Methods for Managing Behaviour

At HF Mencap we aim to create a safe and secure environment in which positive play and leisure experiences can be experienced. We need to balance the needs of the individual with the other people who attend our services in order for them to have positive experience at HF Mencap.

It is important for staff to recognise that they work as a team and that each member has useful experience and knowledge to offer. The value of full discussion of individuals behaviours that attend our service must not be underestimated whether on a more immediate briefing session at the start or end of a service or at a whole staff meeting, as these not only generate ideas and strategies, but also help staff to build consistency of management and support for one another in times of stress/difficulties.

Below are attempts to describe some useful methods that we use at HF Mencap to managing behaviour and to help reinforce more appropriate behaviours. This is by no means an exhaustive or exclusive list, but approaches that staff at HF Mencap have found useful in the past.

Positive Praise & Reward System

Staff at HF Mencap always ensures that praise is given to reinforce appropriate behaviour on a regular basis and does not necessarily have to be accompanied by a reward. Praise can be given by using words, smiling, signing or handshakes.

For some people who have communication and social difficulties a visual form of praise e.g. smile/'well done' may not be sufficiently understood whereas a sticker or reward of an activity might.

Reward systems tend to be on individual basis and HF Mencap will use the individuals preferred methods, which HF Mencap will liaise with other settings or parent/carers e.g. collecting tokens to gain individuals chosen activity or use of a tick list to complete task before moving on to preferred activity.

A reward system takes staff time to plan and write an appropriate procedure/ it then takes time for the individual to practice appropriate behaviour over a period of time. It is important that reward system has achievable and reasonable goal that is not too hard or easy to obtain. A consistent approach is the key and is to be shared with all staff and other professional and/or parent/carers.

It is important to note: we do not reward with food because we feel that food is a human right and is not seen as a reward.

Giving Choice

It is important that all people have the right to make their own choices whether this is using verbal or non-verbal methods by allowing an individual to have choice can reduce anxiety, frustration and/or distress

HF Mencap offer a range of choice making resources for example choosing boards, visual aids, now and next cards.

Communication Aids & Social Stories

Some people we support can become frustrated, agitated, anxious, confused etc if they are unable to communicate which can lead to challenging behaviour. In order to reduce this HF Mencap have created a range of communication resources that people with a lack of verbal or communication skills are able to use for example communication book, now and next, visual timetables, use of signing, emotion cards.

For some people they require a social story which gives a short description of particular situations, events or activities which include specific information about what to expect in that situation and why. The stories include pictures and/or words.

De-escalation & Diffusion including ignore and distract

This is a method that is used a lot within HF Mencap. More often than not staff tend to recognise if a person is becoming anxious/agitated or aware of certain triggers that can cause someone's behaviour to escalate. In these instance staff will distract and divert the behaviour by moving person from the situation, changing activity, change conversation subject, moving trigger from the room or divert their attention.

Ignore and distract is an effective response to behaviour which would usually require the individual to be reprimanded; however it is not an instinctive reaction for the inexperienced.

It involves ignoring the inappropriate behaviour while at the same time distracting the persons attention e.g. 'Look at'. Appropriate humour can also be employed to distract a person to 'break the mood' and help the person recover.

If this method is not sufficient then a person may need 'time out' away from others in order to calm and relax (for some people the use of a 1 or 3minn sand timer is a useful tool in this instance as it gives the individual some structure and time to self-regulate).

When carrying out this method it could require a change of face to help de-escalate the situation; however it is important that once the individual is calm to resort rapport with the staff member that moved away as this helps show the situation is over and it is a new start.

It is important for all staff who use this method to decide whether the persons behaviour is one that they can ignore, if there are different views on what can be ignored for example swearing or light pinching/tapping then this method cannot work as there must be a consistent approach.

Important: The ignore and Distract method must not be used where behaviour is dangerous and requires an immediate end, possibly physical intervention

Intensive Interaction & Sensory Diets

Many of children work well with staff on a 1:1 basis and enjoy intensive interaction activities and task. This approach involves the adult entering into the person's world by trying to attract and hold their attention by joining in with their activity without directing it and reducing demands on the individual, for example games with children and young people such as chase, peek-a-boo, number songs.

Carrying out sensory diet activities for the individual can also reduce anxiety and stress such as bouncing on a gym ball, popping bubble wrap and hand massage. This is based on individual's needs and desires and requires staff to liaise with other settings and/or parent/carers

Adapt Environment & Structure

We recognise that some individuals find the surrounding environment overwhelming which can lead to anxiety or pain etc. Staff are required to read individuals notes to find out if they have any sensory sensitive's and ensure these are taken into account when setting up activities or preparing to go out on trips.

Staff also try to create low arousal environments this means having clear and uncluttered rooms or low level lights and calming/no music.

Low level arousal extends to the staffs approach too and the way we engage with certain individuals

Also staff find that if something within the surrounding environment is a constant trigger for behaviour and where possible to remove the trigger or individual to reduce behaviour.

Creating a predictable environment can sometimes help reduce anxiety and this can be supported by creating an individual timetable for the person in order for them to know what is going on and when. The time table are adapted to suit the needs of the individuals.

Reference within Appendix 1:

Caroline Hattersley (2013)
Autism: Understanding Behaviour
National Autistic Society

Appendix 2

Positive Physical Intervention

At HF Mencap we adopt a least intrusive approach to behaviour management. Our preferred approach is to de-escalate/defuse with positive interventions, in a least intrusive and person centred framework.

Physical interventions are used where appropriate and where other methods have been exhausted (see appendix 1), however it is important to note that staff that have been trained appropriately are only authorized to use restrictive physical interventions.

The use of physical intervention is only used as a last resort and if it is in the best interest of the individual and if it was deemed reasonable, proportionate and necessary

We do use the method of gentle touch and guides around elbows and shoulders and manoeuvre the client from one area to another as a calm and friendly support. We find these interventions can be supportive and comforting particularly when individuals are nervous or distressed.

There are times when we may need to use more intrusive physical interventions, particularly when an individual presents a risk to self, others or property damage.

If physical intervention is required to be used on a regular basis with an individual then a behaviour and positive handling plan will be written and shared with parent/carers.

All positive physical interventions are recorded on an incident form and kept confidentially.

Care is also taken to record those interventions which are less successful and which should be avoided.

If an incident has taken place parents/carer will be informed by a manager. If there is any other individual that was involved will be de-brief if possible and parent/carers informed.

At the end of a session a de-brief lead by session co-ordinator with staff will take place to discuss the incident in more detail.

The Operations manager will then meet with session co-ordinator to discuss incident, decided if further action is required and review behaviour and positive handling plan.

Reference within Appendix 2:

Bernard Allen (2011)

Physical Contact care, comfort, reassurance and restraint

Steaming

Dept for Children, schools and families (2010)

Use of force guidance