

Dealing with Aggression and Violence Policy

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Regulations and Standards:

The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015:

- Regulation 11 - The positive relationship standard.
- Regulation 19 - Behaviour management and discipline.
- Regulation 20 - Restraint and deprivation of liberty.

This HND Children's Care LTD policy sets out the procedures to follow and gives guidance on how to respond to aggression and violence.

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1. Introduction:

Children who encounter difficulties in their developmental cycle require sensitive and responsive care to address their needs. Often such children will display difficult, risk taking and challenging behaviours that may include violence or aggression; therefore, it is imperative to remember that no area of managing challenging behaviours should be viewed



in isolation.

The most effective method in promoting positive behaviour management of children is by developing strong and secure relationships between the children and adults caring for them. HND Children's Care LTD staff must be able to set and maintain safe, consistent, and understandable boundaries for the children in relation to acceptable behaviour.

It is acknowledged that some children will present challenging behaviour. It is therefore imperative to establish what are and what are not acceptable standards of behaviour and that these standards are fully understood by both the children and the adults caring for them.

The potential consequences for contravening acceptable standards of behaviour should also be known and fully understood by the children and adults caring for them. Where homes accommodate children with a history of violence, aggression or abuse, managers must ensure that the environment and culture of the home promotes and supports positive behaviour and must also ensure that strategies and staff training are in place which encourage such behaviour through de-escalation of conflicts. Staff should be supported and trained to manage their own feelings and responses to the emotions and behaviours presented by children and understand past experiences and present emotions that are communicated through their behaviour.

2. Referral:

For many children, acts of aggression and violence may have been evident prior to coming to us.

Managers should ensure that:

- Information is sought as to any known behaviours that were considered an act of violence and or aggression.
- A description of the behaviour should be sought and ascertained whether it could have been attributed to an event in the child's life at that time, or whether this is a pattern of behaviour over time.
- The home will undertake an impact assessment to ascertain if the placement is best suited for child. This assessment also depicts the potential effects of the new placement on the current resident group, taking into accounts their needs and care plans.

3. Admission Stage:

At the point of admission to HND Children's Care LTD LTD staff should ascertain the following:

- What previous intervention strategies have been used to manage the behaviour?
- What interventions had positive outcomes?
- What interventions triggered further acts of aggression or violence?



4. Risk Assessments:

For more detail, see 'Risk Taking and Assessments Policy'.

With this level of understanding, managers should be able to:

- Undertake a written risk assessment with supportive guidelines for staff.
- Ensure all staff are provided with training on how to deflect and manage aggression and violence, as a result of the risk assessment.

All children must have a placement plan, drawn up by the home, before or as soon as practicable after the child is placed. Where behaviour difficulties are identified either at the point of placement or thereafter, the strategies for managing and promoting positive behaviour must be incorporated into the plan - if necessary, there should be a separate detailed behaviour management plan.

5. Reporting and Recording:

In any recording or reporting, managers must make clear the behaviour to which they expect staff to apply the term violent and / or aggressive.

Reports should provide the following information:

- What was happening at the time?
- Who was present?
- What happened?

Managers should ensure that staff consider the following areas prior to reporting an act of aggression or violence:

- Staff would need to question their own behaviour and responses.
- Has the child responded inappropriately to a feeling or act against them where the right to be angry was acceptable, but the response / behaviour was not?
- Did this occur with a specific person with whom it is known they have difficulty?
- Had the child received visitors or contact from family / friends at the time of the incident or shortly before or after?

Managers will ensure that staff explore all of the above and look for any triggers before they label a child aggressive or violent.

Accurate and descriptive records allow evaluation to take place and may show triggers or events that may not have been initially identified. This critical assessment of a situation will ensure that future reports of behaviours, which can 'label' a child aggressive or violent will be based on factual and evaluative reporting.

6. Agree Terms to be applied to Specific Behaviours:

The terms "violence" and "aggression" have many definitions. It is likely that if staff were asked individually what acts they felt constituted violence or aggression that these would



differ considerably across the group. Similarly, if the question was asked of children, it is likely that their interpretation and views would differ widely.

Managers should ensure that:

- Staff discuss what behaviours they feel describe the terms aggressive and violent.
 - Children are asked what behaviour they feel describe the terms aggressive and violent.
- It is essential that managers agree with their staff what constitutes acts of aggression and violence.

Where reasonable to do so, staff and children should participate in discussions together.

Staff are made aware that discussions with children are a constructive way to ensure that they understand how others perceive behaviours.

7. Follow up After an Incident:

Whenever an act of violence or aggression has occurred the manager should ensure that both staff and children, at an appropriate time, are allowed to discuss the incident and its impact on themselves and others in the group (debrief / reflection).

Managers should:

- Action a plan in order to prevent it happening again and agree a way forward for the child to deal differently with their feelings.
- Discuss with staff how they dealt with the situation and, if required, how they could deal with the situation differently in the future.

Managers must consider involving staff in developing procedures to include collating data emanating from incidents and periodically undertake a review with a view to amending the home's policies, training strategies, routines, and methods for promoting positive behaviour amongst children.

8. Level of Risk:

Managers need to ensure that procedures are in place for responding to incidents and that they match the level of risk.

Staff who are exposed to the risk of violence and aggression need training on the procedures to follow in the event of an incident. It is important that they are aware of the criteria for initiating procedures and are free to do so when they feel under threat.

If the level of risk is such that the continuing placement of the child is threatened, may be at risk of coming to an end, the home's manager must draw this to the attention of the Social Worker and Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), who may decide to convene a Looked After Review.

9. Actions for Staff following a Violent Incident:



Staff must promptly report any incidents of violence to managers or supervisors, including threats as well as physical acts of aggression and / or violence. An incident report form must be completed for themselves and the child.

A decision should be made between the staff member, the manager and child about whether to report matters to the Police, see '[Emergency Services Policy](#)'.

End.