

Leeds University Union

Behaviour Management Policy and Guidance for working with Children and Young People

Policy Produced by Volunteering and Community
July 2011

Review date: July 2013 (To be reviewed by the Membership Services Manager)

Leeds University Union

Behaviour Management Policy and Guidance for working with Children and Young People

Policy

Any student led volunteering project working with children and young people will work to this behaviour management policy. The Project Leaders will ensure that all volunteers receive training in this. This is to ensure that no child or volunteer is harmed physically or emotionally by uncontrolled behaviour during a Leeds University Union volunteering project.

For the purposes of this policy children and young people are considered to be any individual under the age of 16 and henceforth the word children will be used.

The following volunteer briefing will be given to all volunteers working on all volunteering projects with children.

Volunteer Briefing

The behaviour management policy has the following 4 steps which we all need to follow;

1. Establish the ground rules with the children, ensuring to cover the following:
 - We are always kind to each other
 - We don't shout
 - We don't swear
 - We don't push, hit, kick or do anything else violent
 - We don't run unless it's a running game
 - We take turns when playing games
 - We respect each other's personal space
 - We listen when one of the leaders is talking
2. Establish the method which will lead to quiet.
3. Explain the 3 strikes policy and what will happen if the ground rules are broken.
 - 3 Strikes and you're out!
 - STRIKE 1 → Warning
 - STRIKE 2 → Time Out No 1
 - STRIKE 3 → Time out No 2

- OUT → The child is not allowed to attend the weekly session for the next week or, if it is a residential project, is excluded for an activity, if the issue is less serious and sent home, if more serious. (If they have been excluded for an activity and break the rules again, the next step is to be sent home).
4. Use the ground rules consistently and act if broken using the 3 strikes policy.

In certain circumstances, when a child behaves in a very inappropriate way, steps may be skipped and the child immediately sent home. This type of circumstance would include; intentionally causing substantial harm to another child or volunteer and intentionally causing damage to the venue or equipment. If this is the case consult with the project leader and hand over to them.

Guidance Notes for Project Leaders to Follow and Explain to Their Volunteers

Ground Rules

Establishing the Ground Rules should be the first activity undertaken when starting a weekly club for the academic year or when beginning a residential. The volunteers and children should sit down together with a sheet of flip chart paper and pens and record what the children think the ground rules should be. The list below covers all of the important points. Volunteers and leaders should prompt to ensure all of these points are covered so you have them to use later.

You can make this into a game by getting the children into teams and see which team can think of everything on the list first, or by making it into some kind of word game where the teams have the first letter of each of the rules or have missing letters they have to fill in.

Once the ground rules have been established, get all children and volunteers to sign on the sheet to show that they agree to them. Stick them on the wall in a prominent place so you can refer to them if needs be. Remember to bring them each week if you run a weekly project.

If needs be, you can do a refresher of the ground rules later in the residential or after a few weeks of your project have passed in order to refresh everyone's memories, or if you want to change the action that everyone does when it's time to be quiet.

A method for achieving quiet

After the list has been created and you have ensured that all of the important points have been covered, put it to the group that you need a way of getting their attention when everyone's talking but that you do not want to shout. See if they can come up with suggestions of what you could do to get their attention.

One example of this is putting your hand in the air, then as the children notice they should stop talking and put their hands in the air. Gradually this will work its way around the group until all are quiet. Other ideas include clapping rhythmically, clicking fingers, lifting both hands and wiggling fingers. With older children you may wish to use something more subtle like putting hands in pockets or just the leaders raising their hands.

Three Strikes Policy

If any of the rules above are broken, a volunteer should say to the child in question, "You've broken one of the rules". They should inform the child which rule and refer them directly to the list the group came up with together. Re-explain why you have the rules. Follow this with a warning such as, "That's a first warning; if you break the rules again you'll have a time out for (3-5) minutes".

If a child breaks the rule again they should have a second longer time out (5-15 minutes). At all times explain to the child the reason for the punishment and what will happen if they misbehave again.

Note that if a child is on a time-out they should never be left on their own or in a one-to-one situation with a volunteer. It is also not good practice to state that you are sending them to the corner or to a "naughty step". Instead explain that they need a time-out and send them to be by themselves in the perimeters of where the rest of the group are, so that volunteers are still on hand to supervise them.

If a child is excluded from an activity on a residential, two volunteers should stay behind with the child while the rest undertake the activity. If the child is sent home, in the first instance, the parents should be called to collect them. If this is not possible, two volunteers should escort the child home.

Last Updated July 11