

## **Behaviour Support and Intervention**

### **Policy & Procedures**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

At Over The Wall we aim to create a positive, fun and supportive experience for children and young people affected by serious illness. Our primary role is to create a physically and emotionally safe environment for all our campers. We view all behaviour as a form of communication, and through a range of proactive measures we aim to promote positive behaviour at every opportunity. We recognise that challenging behaviour may present itself at camp, and aim to de-escalate this with safe, proportionate and child-centred strategies and interventions.

Policy Date:	June 2018
By:	James Snowden - Camper Wellbeing Coordinator
Reviewed:	Natalie Marshall – Director of Services
Status:	Active
Review:	June 2020

## **1. Introduction**

Over the Wall aims to create a supportive and engaging residential camp experience that is physically and emotionally safe for the children and young people (hereafter referred to as 'campers') participating in the programme. Our goal is to ensure that each and every camper gains as much as they can from their camp experience and we endeavour at all times to make this a reality.

We strive to create an environment where positive behaviour is supported and encouraged but we recognise that there may be occasions when we encounter behaviour that requires additional support or intervention.

This policy sets out the steps we take to create a supportive, empathic and restorative environment where behaviour is viewed as an opportunity for learning and growth. It will outline the progressive measures and strategies our staff and volunteers may take when responding to challenging behaviour, ensuring all responses are safe, proportionate and child-centred.

This policy has been guided by the latest expectations and guidance set out by the Department for Education (2013b and 2016), including the *Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children: National minimum standards* (Department for Education, 2013a). It also utilises the examples of good practice outlined by Tom Bennett in his independent review of behaviour in schools (2017).

## **2. Minimising the Likelihood of Challenging Behaviour Presenting**

### Promotion of Camps and Advertising

We promote Over The Wall camp as a positive environment for campers, with their safety as our primary focus. We make it clear in the promotion of our camps that any potential camper must have the social and emotional ability to participate in a group setting and team activities with children of their own age. We also specify that potential campers must be able to communicate their needs independently. We make it clear that we are unable to accept campers who have learning, behavioural or social communication needs that would prevent them from participating in age appropriate group activities. These criteria are displayed on promotional materials and our website.

## Application Forms and Screening

The camper application form is comprehensive and seeks to actively identify any psychosocial and behavioural issues which may impact on a camper's ability to participate in the camp experience. This includes identifying how the camper interacts with peers and adults; if there are any concerns around a camper's mental health; the camper's home circumstances and other agency involvement; and identifying any known diagnoses or disorders. Our staff assess all applications and make contact with parents/carers and/or education, health and social care professionals to clarify any psychosocial or behavioural issues experienced by a child or young person. Through this comprehensive assessment we aim to identify those who may be experiencing psychosocial or behavioural difficulties which we would be unable to adequately meet or respond to in the camp environment, or which may impact upon the wellbeing and safety of that individual and others.

## Volunteer Selection and Training

We take great care to ensure that the volunteers who attend our camps are suited to the role and, in the context of this policy, are calm and responsible individuals who can communicate well with, and relate to, our campers.

Each volunteer has to submit an application form providing reasons why they wish to attend camp, and detailing the skills and experience they have in supporting children and young people. They are asked to provide examples and referees who can confirm these attributes. After a desktop selection process we obtain written references and then carry out face-to-face interviews in order to ensure that all our volunteers meet our stringent criteria for attending camp. As a final measure we obtain enhanced criminal records checks on each potential volunteer.

Every new and returning volunteer is provided with comprehensive training on a range of issues, including the contents of this policy. Through this training we aim to ensure the all volunteers understand, share and feel confident implementing Over The Wall's approach to promoting positive behaviour.

## Team Agreement

The importance of having consistently high expectations of the children and young people who attend our camps is outlined in Standard 2 of the Department for Education's national guidance (2013a). These high expectations are shared with our campers from the moment they arrive at camp. Campers are placed in teams with peers of a similar age and, during the first day, are asked to create a Team Agreement, with the support of their volunteers and Team Leader. This agreement aims to create a set of mutually agreed expectations and responsibilities which explicitly promote positive behaviour. For example, the agreement may include expectations such as treating others with respect, listening to each other's' opinions and supporting each other when faced with challenges. By involving campers in the creation of this agreement, it is hoped that they feel empowered and gain a sense of ownership over its contents. This agreement is signed by all campers and volunteers in the team and prominently displayed in the team's common area, where it can be referred to throughout the week.

## Activities

Over The Wall provides a full and diverse programme of activities which aim to capture the attention and interest of our campers. Our activities are built around a model of Therapeutic Recreation, used by all SeriousFun camps, whereby every camper is challenged at an appropriate level and is able to achieve success. Appropriate rest periods are also facilitated throughout the day to allow campers to sustain their energy levels throughout the week. More information on our model of Therapeutic Recreation can be found on our website ([www.otw.org.uk/therapeutical-recreation](http://www.otw.org.uk/therapeutical-recreation)).

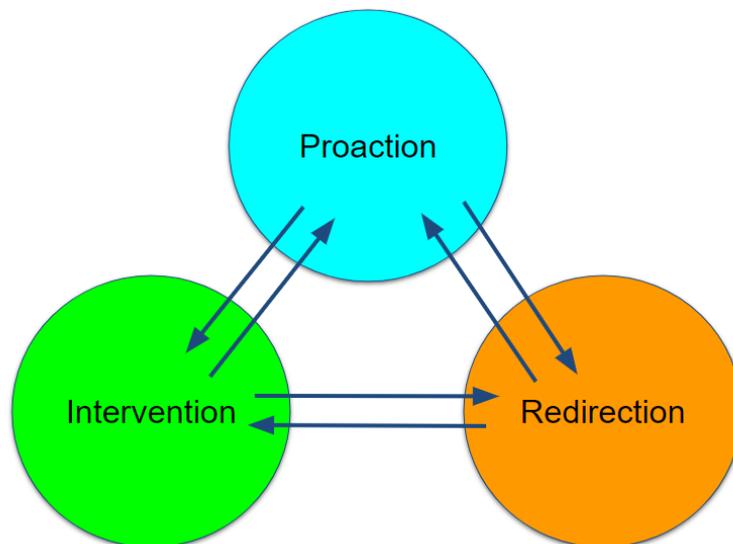
## Volunteer to Campers Ratio and Early Intervention

OTW operates a staff/volunteer to camper ratio of at least 1:1 and we make it clear in our training and policies that volunteers accompany campers at all times. This ensures our volunteers are able to quickly identify any potential concerns or issues around behaviour, allowing them to respond before concerns escalate.

### 3. Behaviour Support Model

Over The Wall aims to create a culture of positive behaviour (Bennett, 2017), where all behaviour is seen as a form of communication. Our Behaviour Support Model exists to promote an empowering and empathic environment where our campers are offered individualised support, encouragement, responsibility and choice. As outlined in the Department for Education's national standards (2013a), we believe that, wherever possible, our campers should be encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour, in a way that is appropriate to their age and abilities.

We aim to minimise opportunities for challenging behaviour to present at camp by implementing a range of proactive strategies and approaches, whilst being aware that it may also be necessary to redirect behaviours before they escalate. We also recognise that there may be times where intervention is the most appropriate cause of action. Our Behaviour Support Model (below) allows for fluid transitions between the three stages of Proaction, Redirection and Intervention, recognising that our response to challenging behaviour will be fully dependent on the needs of the camper at that time.



Proaction - implementing approaches and strategies to minimise the likelihood of challenging behaviour presenting itself at camp.

Some examples of Proaction:

- Being familiar with Camper Profiles, to develop a deeper understanding of each camper's needs.
- Having high expectations of our campers. These expectations should be shared and mutually agreed when creating Team Agreements.
- Developing consistent routines and structures, particularly during transition times and before bed.
- Developing positive, meaningful and trusting relationships with campers.
- Listening to our campers' thoughts and views using active listening skills.
- Engaging campers in challenging and stimulating activities.
- Role modelling positive behaviour and interactions.
- Being camper focused - putting camper needs at the centre of everything we do.
- Recognising, praising and reinforcing examples of positive behaviour.
- Breaking down tasks and instructions into smaller, more manageable chunks.
- Communicating and sharing concerns with staff and volunteers, to allow support to be planned and provided before concerns escalate.

Redirection - facilitating opportunities for a camper to change a potentially challenging or inappropriate behaviour into a positive behaviour, without directly addressing the challenging or inappropriate behaviour.

Some examples of Redirection:

- Having 'back pocket' games and activities available to offer a camper, for example card games, balls or bracelet making items.
- Using friendly challenges or team tasks.
- Using humour to create a non-threatening and positive tone.
- Offering campers choices so they feel they have some control.
- Offering campers alternative roles and responsibilities.
- Planning to ignore attention-driven behaviour, and focussing on the positive behaviours a camper displays.

Intervention - directly addressing the concern or behaviour with the camper. If possible, a plan will be formulated in advance of any intervention that may be required.

Some examples of when Intervention is appropriate:

- When the physical or emotional safety of the camper or other campers/volunteers/staff is at risk.
- Inappropriate language, abuse or threats are being made.
- Inappropriate touching or kissing.
- Stealing, destruction of personal or camp property.

#### **4. Intervention**

The approaches and expectations set out by Over The Wall, as outlined above, aim to create a camp environment in which positive behaviour is expected, and which minimises the likelihood of staff or volunteers needing to intervene with challenging behaviour.

However, we recognise that there may be occasions when an intervention is appropriate and/or necessary. We also recognise that staff and volunteers have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to protect others from physical and emotional harm, and to avoid acts that could result in an injury being caused.

Outlined below is a progressive model of intervention to be followed by our staff and volunteers. The physical intervention guidance is in line with the advice offered by the Department of Education (2013b).

##### Verbal Intervention

In the first instance, staff and volunteers will make use of appropriate verbal interventions. These interventions will take into consideration the age and needs of the child, and will be delivered calmly and proportionately. Restorative conversation techniques will be used to encourage the camper to recognise, reflect on and adjust their own behaviour.

##### Physical Intervention - No Contact

If it is necessary and appropriate to support such verbal intervention, staff and volunteers may use their bodies to create a physical barrier or block to prevent behaviour that may

cause injury or harm. In such action there is no physical contact between the person blocking or acting as a barrier and the camper.

#### Physical Intervention - Contact

In certain circumstances staff and volunteers need to exercise their duty of care to prevent injury to any person. In these circumstances, and only in these circumstances, will it be appropriate to physically make contact with the camper to prevent them or others coming to harm.

Appropriate measures of physical intervention include:

- leading a camper by the hand or arm,
- leading a camper by placing a hand in the centre of the back,

As outlined in the Department for Education's national standards (2013a), in such cases, the absolute minimum amount of contact and force should be applied and calm communication should continue until the situation has de-escalated. Such intervention should be an act of care. Calmness of approach and in the tone and use of language should be maintained, and where possible the camper should be informed of the physical interventions being made. Over The Wall staff and volunteers are not trained in using methods of restraint.

## **5. Medical Team Notification**

Staff and volunteers will already be aware of the camper's physical abilities and limitations through Camper Profiles and should consider the best approach relevant to their condition before engaging with the camper.

If it is possible before any physical intervention takes place, a member of the Medical Team should be contacted and advice sought and adhered to regarding any physical intervention to be taken. This can be done by radio communication on a secure channel. If this is not possible, the Medical Team will be notified immediately after any incident where physical intervention has been used. The camper should be examined by a member of the Medical Team in these circumstances.

## **6. Post Incident**

Once the incident has de-escalated a member of staff (Camper Wellbeing) and/or volunteers should move the camper(s) to a safe, quiet space and re-build rapport, seeking to understand the cause and other factors surrounding the incident, from the camper's perspective.

Immediately thereafter, if not already aware, the senior member of Over The Wall staff on site should be notified. An Incident Form will be completed and an appropriate member of staff will notify the camper's parents or guardians of the incident and discuss any further action that may be necessary.

When appropriate, all campers and volunteers should be given an opportunity to discuss incidents that they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by, with an appropriate member of staff.

Our goal is for all campers to complete their session at Camp successfully and to leave with lasting positive memories. Any decision to send a camper home will only be taken after all other possible actions have been considered and/or actioned. A camper may also be sent home if it is deemed that Over The Wall cannot keep them physically or emotionally safe, or effectively meet the camper's psychosocial needs. The senior member of Over The Wall staff on camp will make the final decision on sending a camper home, in liaison with the Camp Session Coordinator and Camper Wellbeing. The camper's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be included in the decision making process as necessary, and informed of this decision as soon as possible.

Once the decision has been made the senior member of staff, or individuals delegated by them, will liaise with –

- the camper's parent(s) or guardian(s) to ensure they understand the reason the decision has been made and to ensure the appropriate travel arrangements can be made.
- the camper's Team Leader and/or volunteer team to ensure all of their belongings are packed and ready.
- the Medical Team to ensure any medications are returned.

The senior member of staff on site, and other appropriate members of staff, will fully debrief the incident with staff and volunteers, in order to understand and learn from the incident, and to reflect on the actions taken. The findings of this debrief will be summarised in the Incident Form.

## **7. Bullying**

Over The Wall takes all allegations of bullying seriously, and will fully investigate any indications or incidents of bullying at camp. If any instances of bullying are suspected or found, Over The Wall will act proactively and intervene positively, with the aim of engaging with those who bully and those who are bullied (Department for Education, 2013a).

## **7. Training**

All staff and volunteers will receive training on OTW's Behaviour Support Model and policy requirements as outlined herein.

## **8. Responsibility and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually for currency and accuracy by the Director of Services or individual delegated by them. This does not prevent any changes taking place to this policy at any other time due to changes in practice or legislation.

## **9. Referenced Documents**

Bennett, T. 2017. *Creating a Culture: How school leaders can optimise behaviour*. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/602487/Tom\\_Bennett\\_Independent\\_Review\\_of\\_Behaviour\\_in\\_Schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/602487/Tom_Bennett_Independent_Review_of_Behaviour_in_Schools.pdf)

Department for Education. 2013a. *Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children: National minimum standards*. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/226197/residential\\_holiday\\_schemes\\_for\\_disabled\\_children\\_NMS.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/226197/residential_holiday_schemes_for_disabled_children_NMS.pdf)

Department for Education. 2013b. *Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies*. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/444051/Use\\_of\\_reasonable\\_force\\_advice\\_Reviewed\\_July\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf)

Department for Education. 2016. *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff*. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/602487/Tom\\_Bennett\\_Independent\\_Review\\_of\\_Behaviour\\_in\\_Schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/602487/Tom_Bennett_Independent_Review_of_Behaviour_in_Schools.pdf)