



BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

(Young People Accommodation)

May 2026

1. Application of this document

- 1.1. The purpose of this document is to define our position on challenging and risky behaviour, to identify and promote positive and compassionate approaches to practice in this area and to give guidance to staff who support young people who display behaviours that may challenge.
- 1.2. YMCA St Paul's Group (YMCA SPG) does not condone violence and aggression towards staff, customers, residents, children and young people or members of the public, who access our services.
- 1.3. However, we recognise each young person we support has a specific set of needs and some young people need extra support to live full and rewarding lives. Some of the young people we support have complex behaviours and can display behaviours that may challenge or may be risky. This can have a negative impact on their participation in everyday life, their self-esteem, and their relationships with others.
- 1.4. This document should be read alongside our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy & Procedures.
- 1.5. This document applies to all legal entities within the Group.

2. Definition

- 2.1. Throughout this document, the terms “challenging behaviour” or “behaviours that may challenge” or “risky behaviour” are used. The definition of these terms which YMCA St Paul's Group have adopted is as follows:
 - ▶ Behaviour that may challenge, that is of such an intensity, frequency, or duration, as to threaten the quality of life and / or the physical safety of the individual or others and is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion.
 - ▶ Behaviour which has a negative impact on a young person's quality of life – to the extent that their development, life opportunities, relationships with others and their confidence and self- esteem may be negatively affected.
 - ▶ A threat to the safety of the young person or others i.e., staff, members of the public or other supported individuals.

3. Positive Behaviour Support Approach

- 3.1 We have adopted a supportive, compassionate, and positive behaviour approach to support young people who display challenging behaviour.
- 3.2 Positive behaviour support involves a person-centred approach to support the young person with their challenging behaviour. A ‘multi-facet’ approach ensures the whole

young person is recognised and supported, and recognises that all persons, including young people, may display facets of 'self' that could be identified as 'angry', 'frustrated', 'sad', 'frightened', 'stressed', 'driven' and or 'compassionate'.

- 3.3 Positive behaviour support adopts a position that all challenging behaviour has a purpose and serves a function for the individual. The focus of the approach is to understand the reasons for the behaviour and use this as a basis to develop support plans and strategies which will support the young person to develop self-compassionate coping strategies, that supports positive move on steps from their challenging behaviour and means to be able to express and meet their needs in a more caring, respectful, and considerate way.
- 3.4 Positive behaviour support adopts a holistic young person-centred approach to behaviour change and does not accept any punishment or punitive based approaches, however consideration to the suitability of a placement, or further support strategies discussed with the placing authority, and or young person's social worker can be discussed if the challenging behaviour is continual and or warrants police intervention, and/or if the behaviour is having a serious on-going detrimental effect on the service or other supported young persons. In a case such as this, all efforts to support the young person in the most understanding and compassionate way towards resettlement must be upheld.
- 3.5 Behaviour cannot be seen as separate from the individual's whole life and changes to the individual's support, activity, opportunities, and relationships will need to be made in order to support the young person to change their behaviour. This is with a view to assessing, recognising, and considering, or the potential of, the young person's past traumatic experiences, that perhaps led them to become a 'looked after child' or care leaver.
- 3.6 When supporting a person who displays challenging or risky behaviour staff are expected to always:
- ▶ Show understanding, respect, and compassion to the young person.
 - ▶ Provide non-punishment-based support.
 - ▶ Commit to the belief that, with the appropriate support and approach, our services can support their needs, or can point the young person to the support of community-based resources and support services that may benefit their support journey.
 - ▶ Recognise that even the most difficult behaviours have a value to the young person, in terms of their growth in understanding of their own 'self'.
 - ▶ See the challenging behaviour in the context of the young person's whole life and their life experiences, inclusive of past trauma and abuse, that may give cause to their current challenging behaviour, and how we are able to support them to feel safe, listened to, acknowledged, and supported.
 - ▶ Recognise that if challenging behaviour continues to occur regularly, we must look at the support we are providing and recognise where the support and approaches may need to change or adapt in order to support the individual young person.

- ▶ Promote an inclusive, fulfilling and positive lifestyle for the young person, regardless of the behaviours they may present.
- ▶ Work in a collaborative and respectful manner with other agencies or persons, such as family, involved in the young person's life.

4. Advanced planning

- 4.1. Strategies should be in place to pre-empt and manage challenging behaviour, that meets the compassion focused ethos, and in the least restrictive way. Personalised young person risk assessments and risk management plans will be created on Inform, and can be updated in support meetings, reviews, and or if risks change, or incidents occur. The young person's profiles should be updated, and pictures changed, if necessary (see Support Pathway Policy & Procedure).
- 4.2. Staff must refer to this information if an incident occurs. It is also vital that staff update contact notes and support meeting logs, on Inform. Keeping young person's notes updated supports developing a clear account of their movements, behaviour, interactions, and the steps taken as much as is possible, within the remit of supported housing. This information is of importance in challenging behaviour situations, as to develop an information log which can inform staff of specific steps or strategies that may be beneficial towards supporting the individual young person, and or to build a picture of challenging behaviour patterns, which could provide vital information in situations where evidence or reporting systems may be required.

5. What to do if a Young Person displays or engages in or with challenging behaviour

- 5.1 If the challenging behaviour results in an incident it will be classed as Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), and the ASB Policy and Procedure should be followed for reporting purposes. It is important that all incidents and occurrences of challenging behaviour are recorded on Inform (as a CCIA). This will escalate the incident to the appropriate senior staff member(s). Alert all staff in the setting to the incident if appropriate.
- 5.2 If the young person was injured or harmed or was seriously at risk of being harmed as the result of their challenging behaviour, the manager will need to follow internal procedures relating to the reporting on Inform of an injury.

6. Managing situations and de-escalation

- 6.1 Challenging Behaviour incidents can be very stressful for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- 6.2 The following steps are to be followed in de-escalation of an incident of challenging behaviour:
 - ✓ Be compassionate, supportive, empathic, and non-judgmental.

- ✓ When someone says or does something you perceive as irrational, try not to judge, or discount their feelings. Whether or not you think those feelings are justified, they're real to the other person. Pay attention to them, listen to the young person.
- ✓ Keep in mind that whatever the person is going through, it may be the most important thing in their life at that moment.
- ✓ Respect personal space, as much as is possible within the remit of a supported accommodation environment.
- ✓ If possible, stand half to one metre away from a person who's escalating. Allowing personal space tends to decrease a person's anxiety and can help prevent acting-out behaviour.
- ✓ If you must enter someone's personal space to provide support, explain your actions so the person feels less confused and frightened.
- ✓ Use non-threatening non-verbal's, such as being aware of body language. Adopting a calm pose, with hands down, and if possible, showing the young person to a quiet space such as an office, away from others.
- ✓ The more a person loses control, the less they hear your words - and the more they react to your non-verbal communication. Be mindful of your gestures, facial expressions, movements, and tone of voice. Keeping your tone and body language neutral will go a long way toward defusing a situation.
- ✓ Focus on the young person's feelings, which can help to bring them into the present moment. Acknowledge what they say, for example if they say they are angry or frustrated, say 'I understand that you are feeling angry and frustrated right now'.
- ✓ Facts are important, but how a young person feels is the heart of the matter. Yet some people have trouble identifying how they feel about what's happening to them.
- ✓ Watch and listen carefully for the young person's real message.
- ✓ Try saying something like "I hear that you are identifying with your angry, sad or frustrated self, and that's ok to feel like that." Supportive words like these will let the young person know that you understand what's happening - and you may get a positive response.
- ✓ Remain calm, rational, and professional. While you can't control the young person's behaviour, how you respond to their behaviour will have a direct effect on whether the situation escalates or defuses. Positive thoughts like "I can support them in a compassionate way" will help you maintain your own rationality and calm the young person down.
- ✓ Avoid overreacting and stay professional at all times. It may be beneficial to receive support from a colleague, however, not if it is felt this will escalate the situation negatively. You can ask the young person if they are ok with your colleague joining the conversation.
- ✓ Ignore challenging questions as answering challenging questions often results in a power struggle. When a young person challenges your authority, redirect their attention to the issue at hand.

- ✓ Ignore the challenge, but not the young person. Bring their focus back to how you can work together to solve the problem.
- ✓ Set limits. If a young person's behaviour is belligerent, defensive, or disruptive, give them clear, simple, and enforceable limits. Offer concise and respectful choices. A young person who's upset may not be able to focus on everything you say. Be clear, speak simply, and offer the positive choice first.
- ✓ Choose wisely what you insist upon. It's important to be thoughtful in deciding which rules are negotiable and which are not. If you can offer a young person options and flexibility, you may be able to avoid unnecessary altercations.
- ✓ Use silence for reflection. We have all experienced awkward silences. While it may seem counterintuitive to let moments of silence occur, sometimes it's the best choice. It can give a young person a chance to reflect on what's happening, and how they need to proceed. Silence can be a powerful communication tool.
- ✓ Allow time for decisions. When a young person is upset, they may not be able to think clearly. Give them a few moments to think through what you've said. A young person's stress rises when they feel rushed. Allowing time brings calm.

- 6.3 YMCA St. Paul's Group does not use restraining of young people to deal with difficult behaviour.
- 6.4 Calling the police must be the last resort unless the situation escalates so that there is concern for people's safety. This can be the safety of the young person, yourself, colleagues, other young persons or residents, customers, or the public.
- 6.5 Letting the young person know that it is your intention to call the police if the situation does not de-escalate may result in the situation calming down. However, if there is serious concern for overall safety, then asking a colleague to call the police is the action to follow.
- 6.6 After any challenging behaviour incident, there must be a period of de-escalation, where notes / records must be written up, de-brief with manager and team members, and the opportunity to talk through what happened with the young person. This opportunity to talk with the young person is vital, as it may hold potential to support the young person in their growth and development of understanding of themselves, their triggers, what facet of self was playing out, and the opportunity to identify compassionate mind training coping strategies, that could support them in the future.

7. Contacting the Police

- 7.1 Unfortunately at times the behaviour may be of such severity that maybe the most suitable action is to contact the police. When calling the police staff must be prepared to give the following information:
- ▶ Staff name
 - ▶ what has happened

- ▶ young person's name
- ▶ young person's age
- ▶ time of incident
- ▶ placing authority / Social Worker contact details

7.2 Do not hesitate in contacting the police in threatening situations. Call 999 if someone is at risk of harm.

8. Reporting an incident of challenging or risky behaviour

8.1 A full report must be written regardless of the outcome, raising a CCIA on Inform.

8.2 The manager and any staff members involved in the incident must write a joint incident report detailing:

- ▶ The date and time of the report
- ▶ What young person / staff / witnesses were involved in or to the incident
- ▶ What exactly happened and what actions were taken
- ▶ What additional support does the young person or the staff need following the incident
- ▶ Does the risk assessment require a review?

8.3 If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff must co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.

8.4 Depending on the outcome of the incident OFSTED may need to be informed. The Registered Service Managers and/or the Nominated Individual will make the decision on whether OFSTED need to be informed. When raising a CCIA on Inform, staff need to tick a box if they believe it should be raised as a Regulation 27 report to OFSTED, and if in doubt contact the Registered Services Managers.

9. Warnings

9.1 In some situations, it is necessary to give young people warnings.

9.2 There is a separate guidance sheet for staff on warnings and levels.

10. Behaviour risk assessment tool – Safety & Wellbeing

9.1 Where a young person continues to engage in and display challenging behaviour, this tool will assist staff to determine the:

- ▶ likelihood the behaviour will adversely affect the young person themselves;

- ▶ and the level of risk to the safety or wellbeing of YMCA St Paul's Group staff, other young people, staff, other service users/ customers and the public.

9.2 This process involves determining the level of risk associated with the behaviour and the potential impact or adverse outcome.

9.3 In order to assess the level of risk, it is important to consider the available information including, but not limited to:

- ▶ information held by YMCA St Paul's Group about the young person;
- ▶ the known behaviour(s) of the young person;
- ▶ the young person's individual Behaviour Support Plan (if they have one); and or their Home Star support plan and risk assessments / risk management plan
- ▶ YMCA St Paul's Group knowledge of the young person's individual circumstances, including their previous care and support history;
- ▶ any information provided from the placing authority, social services, social worker, or support agency;
- ▶ the remit and or ability of YMCA St Paul's Group to implement adequate controls and actions to reduce or manage the behaviour risk.

9.4 A risk assessment process (see risk matrix below) is required prior to identifying an appropriate response or intervention for a young person engaged in persistent challenging behaviour.

Impact of the Behaviour	How Likely is it that the behaviour will occur again				
	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
A behaviour that causes insignificant impact on the safety or wellbeing of others, self and/or YMCA SPG community that causes minor disruption and does not lead to injury or physical harm.	Low Risk	Low Risk	Low Risk	Low Risk	Low Risk
A behaviour that causes minor impact on the safety or wellbeing of others, self and/or YMCA SPG community that requires a response to de-escalate the situation or ensure the safety of the young person or other people and/or reduce environmental risk.	Low Risk	Low Risk	Medium risk	Medium risk	Medium risk
A behaviour that causes moderate impact on the safety or wellbeing of others, self and/or YMCA SPG community that has the potential to require an immediate response to avert an adverse outcome and reduce risk to the young person or others.	Medium risk	Medium risk	Medium risk	High risk	High risk
A behaviour that causes major impact on the safety or wellbeing of others, self and/or YMCA SPG community that has the potential to cause significant injury; or an outcome that requires an emergency first aid response/ medical treatment.	Medium risk	Medium risk	High risk	Extreme Risk	Extreme Risk
A behaviour that causes serious and critical impact on the safety or wellbeing of others, self and/or YMCA SPG community that has the potential to cause serious injury that requires an emergency response, medical treatment, or a behaviour that is illegal.	Medium risk	High risk	High risk	Extreme Risk	Extreme Risk

- 9.5 Where possible, controls and actions to mitigate the risk of challenging behaviour should be prioritised. Examples of appropriate control measures/ actions are:
- ▶ additional 1:1 support
 - ▶ monitoring
 - ▶ a collaborative behavioural management support plan (young person and staff member)
 - ▶ increased staff presence in locations that attract negative behaviour
- 9.6 Once actions/ controls have been identified and put in place, a risk level assessment should be determined. Assessing the risk level without controls and actions might be assessed as 'High', however, once controls and actions are in place, the risk level may be assessed as 'Medium'.

Risk Level	Definition
Low Risk	Behaviours that typically require a differentiated response Can be managed by routine procedures — mitigate and monitor, plan permanent controls in the long term
Medium Risk	Behaviours that typically require a differentiated response Action to mitigate risk — interim controls to be identified to reduce risk until permanent solutions are in place
High Risk	Behaviours that typically require a focussed response Immediate action required by site manager or senior - prioritise behaviour management plan and risk assessment issues; monitor closely and review regularly
Extreme Risk	Behaviours that typically require an intensive response Immediate action required - emergency procedures in place e.g. call 999, ensure safety of self and then others

- 9.7 The Risk Action Table below is provided only as a guide to assist managers and staff in their decision making.
- 9.8 Staff will use their professional judgment in balancing all the information known to them about the specific situation; about the young person; contextual to the known behavioural risk; and to ensure that they take action aimed at reducing or treating the risk around the challenging behaviour and supporting the young person to make positive choices.

Risk Action Table	
Risk Level	Possible Actions
Low risk These behaviours are those that typically require a differentiated response.	• Identify behaviours and plan to monitor the behaviour. • Review weekly or monthly as appropriate to ensure the level of risk remains low. • Communicate any concerns to the placement Authority and or Social Worker.
Medium risk These behaviours are those that typically require a differentiated response.	• Implement risk mitigation controls and actions. • Develop and implement a Behaviour Support Plan. • Review the Behaviour Support Plan as required. • Communicate any concerns with the Placement Authority and or Social Worker.
High risk These behaviours are those that typically require a focussed response.	• Immediately respond to reducing the risk and reporting any potential illegal behaviour or risks through the appropriate channels and to the police if necessary. • Notify the Placement Authority and or Social Worker that the young person's behaviour is cause for serious concern. • Implement immediate risk mitigation controls and actions. • Develop and implement a Behaviour Support Plan. • Review the plan on a regular basis (at least once a month). • Review the associated risk on a regular basis. • Convene a Multi-Disciplinary meeting if appropriate.
Extreme risk These behaviours are those that typically require an intensive response.	• Immediately respond to reducing the risk and reporting any potential illegal behaviour or risks through the appropriate channels and to the police if necessary. • Ensure that the young person and/or others are safe and no longer at ongoing risk. • Notify the Placement Authority and or Social Worker that the young persons behaviour is cause for serious concern. • Implement immediate risk mitigation controls and actions. • Develop and implement a Behaviour Support Plan. • Review the plan on a regular basis (at least weekly). • Review the associated risk on a monthly basis. • Convene a Multi-Disciplinary meeting if appropriate.

9.9 Managers and staff may also need to consider any identified risk within a workplace health and safety context, including identifying any risk that remains unmanaged or untreatable and escalating those issues to their line manager.

9.10 From a workplace health, safety, and wellbeing perspective it is important to balance the risk to staff, young people, other residents and customers, and the public, and ensure that, so far as possible and practicable, the safety of everyone who accesses a YMCA St Paul's Group site is protected.

10. Reporting and Review

10.1 This document will be reviewed at regular intervals as part of the Safeguarding and ASB reporting and review process.

10.2 All incidents are regularly reviewed by the Head of Housing, Care & Support and Safeguarding Leads to consider relevant action (including procedure and risk assessment reviews), continued investigation processes and training needs. Any breaches or lapses in best practice must be brought to the attention of the executive team and follow up investigation processes determined and actioned.

10.3 Data and appropriate reporting methods will be used to inform the senior management team and will include the following:

- ▶ Number of incidents
- ▶ frequency of incidents
- ▶ external agency involvement
- ▶ investigation outcomes