**BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

## Policy Statement

This policy outlines the conduct SILVER LINE HOMES [SLH]-Purley expects from all our staff and volunteers. This includes bank staff and students on work placement as well as anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

This policy aims to help us protect all children from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made. It is based on the views of children and young people and also in line with the Children’s Homes (Regulations) 2015 guidance for children’s homes, and Quality Standards;

The Positive Relationships standard (Regulation 11)

*Expectations of standards of behaviour should be high for all staff and children in the home. These standards should be clear and unambiguous. Children should be supported to develop understanding and empathy towards each other. Positive behaviour and relationships should be reinforced, praised and encouraged; poor behaviour should be challenged and discussed*

Behaviour Management Policies and Records (Regulation 35)

*requires each home to prepare and implement a behaviour management policy. This policy should describe the home’s approach to promoting positive behaviour and the measures of control, discipline, and restraint which may be used in the home. These measures should be set in the context of building positive relationships with children.*

This policy is underpinned by:

Regulation 7 – The children’s views, wishes and feelings

Regulation 19 – Behaviour Management and Discipline.

Regulation 20 – Restraint and deprivation of liberty

Regulation 35 – Behaviour Management policies and records

It is unreasonable to expect children not to misbehave from time to time. Whether it is toddler-like temper tantrums or direct challenges to staff’s authority by a child, there will always be times when staff need to employ the use of control and discipline. Good order is also a necessary aspect of family life to enable children to develop in a safe and secure environment.

This policy seeks to provide all involved with a framework within which positive behaviour can be promoted and managed while protecting children and staff alike.

Caring for looked after children can be a complex, difficult, stressful yet rewarding task. SLH-Purley recognise that staff need relevant information, support and training to assist them in offering good quality care to children. The home recognises that children in our care require staff who have the skills, knowledge and abilities to manage their behaviour appropriately if they are to be able to take advantage of the "life chances" which they are afforded.

Support given to a child who is living at the children’s home must ensure that the child is safeguarded and protected, and that the welfare of the child is paramount. Children in Care are all subject to individual circumstances, which can result in feelings of hurt, fear and sadness. Such feelings, together with previous experiences, can at times be expressed in behavioural terms. At the same time, children will grow up into a world where people will not always take account of their difficult past experiences. They need to be able to act with consideration for others and for themselves.

The aims of this policy are:

* To demonstrate shared practice across the organisation
* To outline specific steps that are taken in certain situations
* To outline the measures taken to counter bullying
* To provide all involved with a framework within which positive behaviour can be promoted and managed while protecting children and carers alike.

**Promoting Positive Behaviour: Good Order and Discipline**

Good order and discipline are essential and inevitable components of life in a children’s home and therapeutic community, and in promoting positive behaviour. The aim must be to create an environment that gives a firm structure and sense of order to the lives of the children in our care, in which they can develop to their full potential. The establishment of an environment with recognised and accepted routines to the daily lives of the children in the Home is an essential element in helping to promote positive behaviour.

The lack of such an environment, and the associated control and discipline, can have a detrimental effect on all those operating within the Home. The children existing in an unintegrated state are unable to experience the staff as ‘holding them in mind’ and may well act out their resulting anxieties and panic in a violent or disruptive way. Reliable lack of routines and structure causes children to experience further difficulties in their lives. It is important that a balance is achieved between establishing and maintaining a structured environment with recognised routines, and a flexible approach that allows for a child’s needs to be met. If there is too much structure in the Home, there is a risk that it will become an institutionalised environment in which the children are entirely dependent upon the Home and the staff working there. The result is that the children are not allowed to test the rules, boundaries and guidelines. They may blindly follow everything that is laid down.

There is evidence that the testing of authority and boundaries is an important process of any child’s healthy physical and emotional development, helping to promote self-identity, self-respect and respect for others. All children need to learn and know the boundaries of acceptable behaviour in order to live alongside others and become part of their community. This is no less applicable to children living in care as it is to those living with their own families.

If there is too little structure to the routines of the day in the Home, the children may be faced with insufficient rules, boundaries and guidelines to test, or with constantly shifting and changing parameters around what is and what is not acceptable. This type of environment encourages the development of insecurity amongst both staff and children as order breaks down and a degree of anarchy takes over. This situation may mirror the circumstances that existed in the environment from which the child has been removed and is obviously an unhealthy state of affairs.

Through the use of subtle and obvious routines, and a minimum of laid down rules set by the children themselves in consultation with the staff at the Home, and taking in to account the child’s individual needs, we manage to maintain the necessary balance between structure and flexibility.

Care of children should be maintained on a basis of promoting good personal and professional relationships between staff and the children, offering some security and confidence, enabling the children to mature. Control is a small, but important, element of this relationship. This can be difficult to achieve in an environment such as exists in our Home, where the needs of the children change and vary enormously, and where the differing values, attitudes and skills of the staff team caring for the children have to be reconciled. Measures for good order and discipline and for promoting positive behaviour should be imposed according to the emotional (as opposed to chronological) age, level of understanding and level of functioning of the child.

The issue of positive behaviour and good order and discipline in a group living situation is of utmost importance to both the staff and the children concerned. It confronts them daily and it has the potential for enormous growth or enormous destruction, for the individuals concerned and for the Home as a whole. The Registered Manager is therefore given a wide measure of discretion within these guidelines, as guidelines cannot and should not be seen to replace the need for sound professional judgement when impromptu decisions are required.

Staff caring for the children living in our Home recognise that good and effective communication, understood by all, backed up by consistent and just actions, is the key to promoting and maintaining good order and discipline and promoting positive behaviours. Violence and acting-out behaviour should be understood as the result of a breakdown in communication.

**Basic Measures of Promoting Positive Behaviour**

The main ideas and concepts on which the Behaviour Management policy is based are set out below.

* Everyday management of children’s behaviour is based on fostering an atmosphere of positivity and achievement. This can include making the children aware of progress throughout their placement, sharing this in Group Meetings, with other staff, or on display in the form of certificates on the wall, using handover to give positive feedback and using incentive schemes and similar systems.
* Staff are also responsible for establishing appropriate daily routines that include children in identifying, setting and monitoring their own boundaries’ and those of peers.
* Staff need to work as consistent models of positive behaviour by remaining calm, showing they know what to do next and stating clear, consistent, reasonable expectations using appropriate tone, expression and language.
* Total, inflexible systems of reward and punishment are not acceptable. Decisions about control are based upon the needs of individual children, not a predetermined regime.
* Control is both negotiated with the child, and enforced. An open, thoughtful exchange of views and reasons between staff and children is vital. The more such matters are discussed with the child concerned the better will be the quality of relationships between staff and children.
* No child is permitted to administer punishment to any other child.
* Communication, dialogue and the establishment of a positive, trusting relationship between the adult and the child are sought at all times. These make it possible to promote positive behaviour and achieve good order and discipline without the use of further measures. Helping a child to understand why there is a need for rules and boundaries will help them to appreciate their responsibility in keeping to them.
* It is not our practice to always avoid situations in which challenging behaviour is likely to occur.

It is expected that staff will practice to:

* encourage socially acceptable behaviour
* assist young people in recognising the consequences of their behaviour
* develop the young person’s positive coping strategies
* assist young people in recognising their feelings and the impact of these on their behaviour
* maintain and build relationships, sense of self-worth, motivation and experience of success, ensuring that all children and young people feel valued
* assist young people to develop resilience
* develop inner control so that in time they will learn self-control and are motivated towards improved behaviour
* Staff should develop a shared approach to interactions, rewards and sanctions that is made explicit and open to children
* There should be regular reviews of the ways management strategies are working
* Staff should use a range of ways of managing situations
* Staff should be mindful of maintaining the balance between criticism and praise. Children are more likely to use suggestions towards change if these are made in a positive way suggesting what a child might do rather than what they should not do, and talked about in small doses alongside praise for success and achievement
* Staff (including managers) should regularly discuss what reparations, rewards and sanctions are being used to ensure that they are safe as well as effective
* Reparations, rewards and sanctions will be more successful if they are applied fairly and in the context of relationships between adult and child which are based on mutual respect.

All staff employed by Silver Line Homes-Purley should strive to provide a positive environment for the children in their care by:

* being good role models of positive behaviour
* Praising and rewarding positive behaviour (either through simple verbal praise or planned reward systems)
* encouraging an atmosphere of mutual respect between adults and children
* ensuring that all children feel valued

**Prohibited Measures of Good Order and Discipline**

The following measures of good order and discipline are completely unacceptable to the management of the Home and **will not** be used under any circumstances;

* Corporal punishment (any intentional application of force as punishment, including slapping, striking, cuffing, shaking, throwing missiles, rough handling and any form of physical violence)
* Physical or emotional rejection of a child. It is the behaviour that is unacceptable, not the child
* Deprivation of food or drink
* The restriction or refusal of parental contact or contact with friends including communications i.e. letters and telephone calls[[1]](#footnote-1).
* Requiring a child to wear distinctive or inappropriate clothing
* Use or withholding of medication or medical or dental treatment
* Use of accommodation to physically restrict the liberty of any child
* Imposition of fines, and totally inflexible systems of reward and punishment
* Intimate physical searches

**Reparations, Rewards and Sanctions**

Wherever possible and appropriate we always seek to implement a meaningful form of reparation over issuing any form of sanction. There are some instances where a sanction is the most appropriate means of supporting a child to understand incidents of wrongdoing, such as forgoing the privilege of being driven in the Homes car for one day if they have displayed dangerous behaviour whilst in the Homes car. This would always be followed up by supporting some form of learning through use of key work sessions, to help the child understand the wider risks and implications of their behaviour. Individual children will have personalised strategies for making good a situation.

These include-

* Meaningful and appropriate reparation
* Time-out (or “taking 5”)
* Additional Key work sessions or time with a member of the Management Team
* Hearing what the community feel about the impact of their behaviour
* Having a meeting with the Registered Manager to discuss ways damage could be repaired or compensated for
* Having a meeting with a director to explore further consequences of behaviour
* Positive behaviour is rewarded through individualised incentive schemes whereby children can achieve extra activities or items of their choosing or a special treat with their key worker

All such sanctions are logged for monitoring and inspection by the Registered Manager, Service Manager and other regulatory bodies including the Independent Person when they conduct their monthly visits to the Home under regulation 44 of the Children’s Homes [England] Regulations 2015.

It is important to recognise that children living in care will not always respond to discipline in the way that children in the community may respond. There are a number of aspects to this:

* They may have been through experiences that have led to them having an extremely low view of themselves.
* They may feel failures, worthless and deserving of punishment.
* They may be accustomed to punishment and to having nothing.
* They may find it difficult to use intrinsic or social rewards.
* They may find it difficult to maintain motivation and relationships with adults and peers.
* Difficult behaviour is often a means of coping with difficult emotions and extreme situations
* Every child is different and management strategies need to be individualised and tailored to the particular child and their current situation. Approaches are likely to need to change over time.
* Children will need repeated opportunities to learn positive coping strategies.

Principles which seek to guide staff in promoting positive behaviour and managing behaviour effectively are:

* Praise for all good behaviour
* Seeking to reward good behaviour
* Adopting a non-confrontational approach
* Establishing a good relationship / rapport with children based on mutual respect
* Establishing house rules which are consistent, explicit and applicable to all children within the Home
* Acknowledging and appreciating the past life experiences which children bring
* The use of age, and developmental stage-appropriate sanctions - *but only when necessary, not as routine*
* Receiving training which covers both the origins of behaviour and standard techniques/strategies
* Having access to resources
* Working within a multi-agency context
* Working with the child and enabling the child to express their wishes and feelings

**Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention**

We recognise that there are times when emotional pressure upon a child reaches a point where restrictive physical intervention remains the most immediate way to support that child. This is the case even where there is high quality caring relationships and a skilful and qualified staff team. The team of staff caring for the children in our Homes undertake a demanding and stressful task, working in close proximity to children who may present some very raw emotions and always with the possibility that explosive situations may arise. The handling of these situations and of volatile children generally, calls for immediate decision making, level headedness, sensitivity, and the capacity to retain thinking.

We are aware of the potentially damaging experiences of trauma, physical violence, and abuse that many of the children in our care have had to cope with in the past, and the potential for these past experiences to be re-enacted in their present lives. With this in mind, the team endeavours to be proactive in diffusing potentially violent situations and strive to use all their skill and knowledge as a team to intervene in a situation before the need for physical restraint arises. This includes regular discussion of issues relating to control and methods of intervention during team meetings, personal performance reviews, supervisions, and other forums.

When agreed attempts to reduce tension have been unsuccessful, and when other alternatives have failed or are entirely unsuitable, the adults will need to take control of a child who is at risk and unable to control themselves.

Whilst we recognise that restrictive physical intervention is a recognised strategy of control (provided it is used as indicated in the Children Act 1989, the relevant regulations and Quality Standards and local authority policy and agreed procedures and with reference to Use of reasonable force: Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2013)[[2]](#footnote-2) , and also reference to the Ofsted guidance document Positive Environments in which children flourish (March 2018)[[3]](#footnote-3), it should be used rarely and only as part of a total response to the child. It should serve as an immediate help to a child to re-establish self-control. In itself, restrictive physical intervention has no intrinsic therapeutic value and remains a measure of control of last resort.

Restrictive physical intervention is only used in our Homes to prevent likely injury to the child concerned or to others, or likely serious damage to property.

If, and when restrictive physical intervention is deemed absolutely necessary, clear expectations and requirements are followed;

* Restrictive physical intervention is never carried out by an adult who has lost their temper. Instead, a colleague takes over responsibility for the situation allowing the adult to remove themselves and regain control.
* Where possible, colleagues are informed of the situation and remain present to give support and to provide means for monitoring and witnessing the situation.
* Where possible, other children who may form an “audience” are taken away from the scene.
* Where possible, the child concerned is informed of the need to use restrictive physical intervention.
* In every case, no more strength should be used than is necessary to achieve the desired objective - the child should be repeatedly offered the opportunity of exercising their own control in resolving the situation.
* Physical retaliation by an adult against a child is absolutely unacceptable, constitutes a safeguarding issue, and will result in disciplinary action and/or summary dismissal of the adult.
* Adults would not use restrictive physical intervention to protect the fabric of the building, furniture, equipment, or fittings where this would put their own physical safety, or that of the child, at risk.
* Other children never assist in carrying out a physical restraint.

All staff are made aware during their induction training of the policy on the use and techniques of restrictive physical intervention and the circumstances in which they may be used. No staff member is expected to take part in carrying out, or assisting in, a restrictive physical intervention, unless they are competent to do so, and have received the recognised NFPS training. In addition, regular in-house “refresher” sessions are held to provide ongoing practice and review of the procedures involved, including alternative non-physical interventions.

## Upholding this policy

You should always follow this policy and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you.

If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave SLH-Purley. We may also make a report to statutory agencies such as:

* The Local Authority Children's Social Care Services in whose area the placement is located (LADO)/ Social Worker;
* OFSTED; and
* Police.

If you become aware of any breaches of this policy, you must report them to the Register Manager/Responsible Individual or a member of the Senior Management team. If necessary, you should follow our Whistleblowing Procedure and Safeguarding and Children Protection’s Procedures.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. It is recognised that in some circumstances restrictions may have to be placed on contact with certain individuals where it is an agreed plan or for protection. Where this is the case, and contact restricted, a note must be kept on each occasion on the child’s individual file. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/444051/Use\_of\_reasonable\_force\_advice\_Reviewed\_July\_2015.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/693446/Environments\_where\_children\_can\_flourish.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)