

# **Dynamics Gymnastics Managing Challenging Behaviour Policy**

## **INTRODUCTION**

During Dynamics Gymnastics classes, staff may occasionally be required to deal with a child's challenging behaviour. On such occasions, staff will respond in line with British Gymnastics guidelines which aim to promote good practice and to encourage a proactive response to supporting children to manage their own behaviour. The British Gymnastics guidelines are summarised within this policy.

## **PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

Dynamics Gymnastics classes are planned and structured around each whole class group but also take into consideration the needs of individual gymnasts as necessary. Should the Class Manager/Head Coach deem that any members of the group are likely to present any difficulties in relation to the tasks involved, the other participants or the environment, strategies to manage those risks are agreed in advance of the session among the staff and parents/carers as necessary. One such strategy may involve increasing the number of adults to safely manage and support the session e.g. the parents/carers may be asked to sit in on the class where additional coaches are unavailable.

When children are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist expertise or support, this is discussed with parents/carers. Dynamics Gymnastics seeks to work in partnership with parents/carers, and where necessary external agencies, to ensure that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely.

## **RESPONDING TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR**

When responding to challenging behaviour, Dynamics Gymnastics staff will aim to respond proportionately to the actions as soon as is practicable. The unacceptable behaviour and sanction will be fully explained to the child involving parents/carers as necessary. In dealing with challenging behaviours, Dynamics Gymnastics staff may use one or a combination of the following strategies:

- Time out - from the activity, group or individual work.
- Reparation - the act or process of making amends.
- Restitution - the act of giving something back.
- Behavioural reinforcement - rewards for good behaviour, consequences for negative behaviour.
- De-escalation of the situation - talking through with the child.
- Increased supervision by staff/volunteers.
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future or continued participation.
- Seeking additional/specialist support through working in partnership with other agencies to ensure a child's needs are met appropriately e.g. referral for support to Children's Social Care, discussion with the child's key worker if they have one, speaking to the child's school about management strategies (all require parental consent unless the child is felt to be 'at risk' or 'in need of protection').
- Temporary or permanent exclusion.

If there is any gymnast for whom sanctions are frequently necessary, the Class Manager/Head Coach will review the child's needs with the parents/carers and in some cases others involved in supporting or providing services for the child and his/her family. In this way an informed decision can be made about the child's future or continued participation. As a last resort, if a child continues to present a high level of risk or danger to him or herself, or others, he or she may have to be suspended or prohibited from participating in Dynamics Gymnastics classes.

## **PHYSICAL INTERVENTION**

Dynamics Gymnastics staff will avoid the use of physical intervention unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent a child injuring themselves, others, or causing serious damage to property and will result from a conscious decision-making process which has ruled out or explored every other option in order to manage the situation and ensure safety.

If a member of staff does physically intervene in a situation with a child/young person, they will aim to do so in the least restrictive way considering:

- Contact should be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts. Staff/volunteers should never behave in a way which could be interpreted as sexual.
- Any form of physical intervention should achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern.
- Staff/ volunteers should consider the circumstances, the risks associated with employing physical intervention compared with the risks of not employing physical intervention.
- The scale and nature of physical intervention must always be proportionate to the behaviour of the young person and the nature of harm/ damage they might cause.
- All forms of physical intervention should employ only a reasonable amount of force – i.e. the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property - applied for the shortest period of time.
- Staff/volunteers should never employ physical interventions which are deemed to present an unreasonable risk to children or staff/volunteers.
- Staff/volunteers shall never use physical intervention as a form of punishment.
- Physical intervention should NOT involve inflicting pain.

Where children are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require physical intervention this is discussed with parents/carers and where necessary Dynamics Gymnastics will seek advice from or to work in partnership with external agencies (e.g. Children's Social Care) to ensure that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely. This may include asking for the provision of a suitably trained support worker/volunteer or accessing staff/volunteer training in physical intervention.

Any physical intervention is recorded as soon as possible after the incident by the staff/volunteers involved using the Child Protection Incident Report Form and passed to the Welfare Officer as soon as possible. As physical intervention can provoke strong feelings, a timely debrief for staff, the child and parents/carers will take place following the incident so everyone has the opportunity to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment. The debrief will conclude with an action plan agreed by all parties about the child's needs and continued safe participation in Dynamics Gymnastics classes.

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