

Behaviour Policy

Policy Statement

Young people flourish in an environment where expectations are clear and where they are free to express themselves without fear. Manchester Youth Zone (MYZ) aims to provide all young people with an environment where they can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

Behaviour at Manchester Youth Zone

In order to achieve the desired environment:

- Everyone at Manchester Youth Zone will provide a positive role model for young people with regard to friendliness, care and courtesy.
- All young people must agree to the MYZ Behaviour Policy.
- All staff and volunteers will ensure that they are consistent with the behaviour policy so that young people know clearly what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Staff and volunteers are aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a young person's additional needs. Where necessary these needs will be discussed with parents/carers.
- Manchester Youth Zone will take positive steps to avoid a situation in which young people receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.
- All behaviour problems will be handled in a developmentally appropriate fashion using the MYZ Behaviour Contract and procedure, recognising the individual young person's levels of understanding and maturity.

Staff and volunteers will not:

- Shout at young people, or raise their voices in a threatening manner.
- Physically punish young people or imply such behaviour by way of threat or suggestion.
- Use techniques to single out or humiliate young people either directly or indirectly.

When young people behave in an unacceptable way:

- They will be reminded of the behaviour contract and be supported to see why their behaviour or reaction was inappropriate and how they could act differently next time.
- In any case of misbehaviour, it will always be made clear to the young people in question that it is the behaviour and not they themselves that are unwelcome.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as carrying a weapon, racial or any other abuse or bullying, the unacceptability of this kind of behaviour will be made clear immediately.
- Where staff and volunteers are unable to control specific behaviour or if weapons are present the Lead Staff on duty will decide whether the police need be called and the session brought to a close.
- Physical restraint, such as holding, will be used only to prevent a physical injury to the young person and/or serious damage to the property. Any event of this sort must be recorded on an Incident Form and parents/carers informed the same day.
- When unacceptable behaviour is persistent parents/carers will be asked for support.

Behaviour Contract

By joining Manchester Youth Zone, each member agrees to the Behaviour Contract; to respect themselves, each other, the building and the equipment.

This includes:

- No fighting
- No swearing
- No stealing
- No bullying
- Not bringing weapons (including toy weapons) into the building
- No discrimination, ie. racism, sexism, homophobia
- No illegal substances or alcohol on site. No one can attend MYZ under the influence of a substance
- No smoking in the Youth Zone or in front of the building
- Look after MYZ, clean up rubbish, no vandalism
- Be safe and sensible, walk on the stairs and around the building, keep the entrance and fire exits clear
- Respect age restrictions
- No kissing or sexual activity

The following actions will be taken against any young person who does not keep to the Behaviour Contract.

1. A reminder

A member of staff will talk to the young person about their behaviour reminding of the expectations, but also to ask if there is a problem. We are aware that poor behaviour is often a symptom of a wider issue. At this stage we may offer support such as mentoring or a referral to a support service.

2. Informal discussion

An informal discussion with a staff member to go through what's expected will take place again and a short period of time may be agreed to monitor and review behaviour. We may also involve parents or carers at this stage.

3. Leaving the session early

For some behavioural issues, we may prevent the young person from taking part in an activity and ask them to leave the session to cool off. In this case they are free to return to the next session. We may also involve parents or carers at this stage.

4. Cooling off

Where a young person's behaviour is of greater concern, we will agree either a 2 week or a 4 week cooling off period. We will update parents/ guardians of this, outlining the reasons for the decision and we welcome parent/ guardian involvement in our decision making. Young people are expected to stay away from the building during the cooling off period and this will be enforced by extending the cooling off period.

Depending on the reason for the cooling off, a re-entry meeting to remind young people of the behaviour expected of them when in the building may be arranged and a phased return to sessions may be applied.

5. Termination of membership

If behaviour is persistently causing concern, we will review the young person's membership altogether. If it is agreed that their behaviour, and/or actions, could potentially put both the young person and others at risk, we will then make a decision which may be to terminate the membership, before informing the young people, parents and guardians.

If behaviour is of a criminal nature, we are obliged to report them to Greater Manchester Police.