



Violence, Aggression and Challenging Behaviour

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Purpose of this policy

This policy outlines how staff and mentors should respond to violence, aggression and challenging behaviour. It is designed to ensure that situations are handled safely, calmly and professionally, while protecting young people, staff and others.

MENT4 recognises that some young people may present with challenging behaviour. Staff must respond in a way that maintains safety, respects the young person and upholds professional boundaries.

What we mean by challenging behaviour

Challenging behaviour may include:

- verbal aggression or threats
- shouting or swearing
- refusal to engage
- disruptive behaviour
- intimidation
- physical aggression
- damage to property
- risky or unsafe behaviour

Behaviour may be linked to emotional needs, past experiences or external pressures.

Core principles

When responding to challenging behaviour, staff must:

- prioritise safety
- remain calm and professional
- avoid escalation
- maintain clear boundaries
- treat the young person with dignity
- respond consistently and fairly
- follow safeguarding procedures

Staff must not respond with aggression, intimidation or punishment.

De escalation

Staff should aim to de-escalate situations wherever possible.

This may include:

- using a calm and steady tone
- giving clear and simple instructions
- allowing space and time for the young person to regulate
- avoiding confrontation or power struggles
- acknowledging feelings without agreeing with harmful behaviour
- redirecting attention where appropriate
- reducing stimulation or pressure

Early intervention can prevent situations from escalating.

Setting boundaries

Clear boundaries must be maintained.

Staff should:

- explain expectations clearly
- be consistent in enforcing boundaries
- avoid making threats they cannot follow through
- follow agreed consequences where appropriate
- avoid prolonged negotiation

Boundaries should be firm but respectful.

Physical safety

Staff must not put themselves or others at risk.

Staff must not:

- use physical force unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent immediate harm and in line with training
- engage in physical confrontation
- attempt to restrain a young person unless trained and authorised

If there is a risk of harm, staff should:

- create distance
- remove others from danger where possible
- seek support
- contact emergency services if required

Managing serious incidents

If behaviour becomes serious or unsafe, staff should:

- prioritise safety
- end the session if necessary
- follow emergency procedures
- inform a line manager or relevant lead
- report the incident
- follow safeguarding procedures where appropriate

Serious incidents must always be reported.

Supporting the young person

After an incident, staff should aim to support the young person to reflect and move forward.

This may include:

- discussing what happened
- helping them understand the impact of their behaviour
- identifying triggers
- exploring alternative responses
- reinforcing expectations

This should be done at an appropriate time, once the situation has calmed.

Impact on staff

Challenging behaviour can affect staff wellbeing.

Staff should:

- access support after difficult situations
- discuss incidents in supervision
- not carry stress or pressure alone
- seek guidance when needed

MENT4 aims to support staff through difficult experiences.

Recording and reporting

All incidents involving aggression or challenging behaviour must be recorded and reported.

This includes:

- what happened
- who was involved
- actions taken
- any injuries or risks
- follow up required

Accurate recording supports safeguarding and learning.

Working with partners

Where appropriate, MENT4 may work with:

- schools
- families
- social workers
- youth services
- other professionals

to support behaviour and manage risk.

Information should be shared appropriately and in line with confidentiality and safeguarding procedures.

Breaches of this policy

Failure to respond appropriately to challenging behaviour may place people at risk.

This may lead to:

- supervision or additional training
- review of practice
- formal action where necessary

Final note

Challenging behaviour is often a form of communication. Staff should respond with calmness, clarity and care, while maintaining safety and boundaries.

By managing behaviour well, we create safer environments and support young people to grow and make better choices.

This document has been approved by:

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A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to be "L. Peters".

Helping young people discover what they are MENT4

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