



## **Behaviour Policy**

## Statement

Challenging Behaviour is any behaviour that challenges the service provided by New Pastures Care Farm (NPCF). Such challenges can take a number of forms. For the purposes of this policy challenging behaviour is taken to mean acts of violence and/or aggression towards learners/ people that use our service, volunteers or staff.

All NPCF staff, volunteers and service users have a right to be treated with respect and NPCF will not tolerate violence (definition below). We will take all necessary steps to ensure that staff, volunteers and all that attend our provision are safe while providing or using NPCF services. This includes responding to critical incidents, managing challenging behaviour and putting in to place policies, procedures and practices that ensure that such incidents are eliminated or minimised. NPCF will also record and review all incidents of such nature to ensure that its response is appropriate and in line with legal requirements and best practice.

## Definition

Challenging Behaviour for the purposes of this policy is defined as violent behaviour, or behaviour which has the purpose or effect of either violating another person's dignity, or making them feel intimidated, abused, threatened, degraded, humiliated, offended, vulnerable or helpless.

NPCF recognises that challenging behaviour can take many forms. This may include:

- Verbal assault,
- Threatening and/or abusive messages by phone or text.
- Psychological abuse including intimidation, bullying, humiliation, harassment or emotional blackmail.
- Persistent refusal to observe agreed rules and guidelines.
- Threats of physical or sexual assault.
- Actual physical or sexual assault
- Threats of damage to property/physical damage to property

Challenging Behaviour by members of staff or volunteers may be misconduct or gross misconduct and will be covered by the NPCF Disciplinary and Grievance policy.

## Policy

1. Risk assessments will be carried out on all people who attend the farm and will include specific questions relating to challenging behaviour.
2. Staff should take all necessary steps to avoid a situation arising.
3. Personal intervention should be used as a last resort and staff must ensure they do not use any form of physical force that could be construed as assault. Staff who do not conform to this policy may be subject to disciplinary action or criminal prosecution.
4. Personal intervention should not be used at any point as a means of punishment.
5. Staff may use personal intervention only where a person is going to directly harm or significantly injure themselves or other people.
6. In no circumstances should staff put themselves or others at risk of personal harm or serious injury.
7. All incidents must be reported.
8. Challenging Behaviour training, which includes personal intervention, is available for all staff.

## Procedures

### Prior to an incident:

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure their own health and safety. Staff should remain vigilant for situations that may escalate into an incident involving violence or that may trigger challenging behaviours and should take the necessary steps to avoid them if possible.

Risk assessments identify all possible behaviours that may challenge. Staff should acquaint themselves with individual assessments and abide by the mitigating actions and risk management processes identified for those risks.

NPCF recognises that people are individuals and that not everyone's behaviour is predictable all the time. Incidents will happen and they need to be managed appropriately.

### During the incident:

If a member of staff does not feel able to control or de-escalate a violent situation then they should not attempt to do so. Better to withdraw and call for assistance than to get involved and not be able to get assistance. If possible, remove other learners/Day Farmers and staff from the situation. All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to pass on information or concerns regarding the potential for violent incidents to occur. Such information must be taken into account when deciding how to deal with any person who is displaying violent or aggressive behaviour.

Reviewed by Katie Wootton September 25 – Next review September 2026 or sooner as required.

### Immediately following the incident:

Any member of staff or volunteer who has been involved in an incident should inform the Director and support the Director in recording all the events leading up to and including the incident and its immediate aftermath. The report is filed in an all individuals files involved in the incident and recorded in the Incident log book. The immediate support network for those involved in the incident, either directly or indirectly, will be informed. The Director, in consultation with the staff involved shall determine what happens next based on the severity of the incident.

### Classification of Incident:

The Director will determine whether the event is to be treated as low level, moderate or serious.

**Low Level** – single incident of challenging behaviour which has the purpose or effect of making the recipient feel intimidated, abused, threatened, degraded, humiliated, offended, vulnerable or helpless.

**Moderate Level** – repeated, persistent or sustained behaviour which has the purpose or effect of making the recipient feel intimidated, abused, threatened, degraded, humiliated, offended, vulnerable or helpless; threatening body language or behaviour, damage to property.

**Serious Level** – direct threats, physical aggression, assault, serious damage to property.

### Actions:

1. The Director or their nominated staff member will record the incident in the Incident log book. The record will include all details including date, time, place of incident, those present, who perpetrated the incident, circumstances leading up to the incident, any weapon used, and its classification and action planned.
2. Personal safety is paramount and the Director and staff will normally seek to isolate the individual to stop them harming others and seek to calm them down to stop them harming themselves whilst the immediate investigation is underway and assessments are being made.
3. Low Level Incidents – Informal discussion, or no action, may be appropriate.
4. Moderate Level Incidents – Formal discussion, involvement of service users and/or staff involved in incident, possible temporary exclusion from NPTC services.
5. Serious Level Incidents –
  - a) If a crime has been committed such as assault or criminal damage, NPCF will report to the police.
  - b) The individual responsible will be excluded with immediate effect from all NPCF services and a notification to this effect will be sent to all staff and relevant bodies.

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- c) A letter will be sent to the perpetrator advising them that they are permanently excluded from all NPCF services and that the police may be called if they try to attend any of its services.
- d) The Director will consider whether any further actions are necessary and whether any changes to operational policies, procedures and practices is necessary to prevent a reoccurrence.

6. Debriefing should be carried out by the Director as soon as possible after the incident. The support of other colleagues is crucial in the management of an incident and coping with the stresses involved. The development of skills and awareness in this area needs to be enhanced in supervision, team meetings and training. Debriefing must include:

- How staff feel now.
- How they might feel in a few days.
- A discussion about what can be done to support the member of staff.
- A discussion about what can be done to support the other person(s) involved in the incident.

7. Action to be taken by Director:

- Offer support to assaulted members of staff.
- Consider ongoing support and debriefing for service users involved.
- Consider any training implications.
- Discussion with colleagues which may be useful learning opportunity.
- Consider any learning/development implications of incident.
- Consider practical implications of incident.