**West Sussex – Practice Guidance**

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years’ experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

**Rewards and Consequences (Sanctions)**

**Respecting and Valuing Children**

* Our children’s homes aim to provide an environment where children feel valued, respected and involved about important decisions that affect their lives.
* We will ensure all children have access to the activities and resources that other children would have access to, in line with our risk assessment processes.

**Positive Reinforcement and Consequences**

* We understand that some children respond positively to rewards that they value and that incentivising children can be a helpful way to explore behaviour in a communal environment. This only works if children genuinely value the ‘rewards’ on offer and enter into this process with transparency and clarity.
* Staff will work together with children to identify items, activities and incentives that are meaningful and motivational to them and together with staff, children will ascribe a different grading to rewards and when these might be acquired.
* Rather than operating a system of sanctions for poor behaviour, we prefer to think about ‘consequences’ as a means of supporting children to take responsibility for their actions. This encourages children to develop an awareness of the impact of their behaviour on others and begin to learn the skills of communal living.
* Children will be encouraged to discuss which consequences are most likely to be effective for them, and these will be attributed a grading as for rewards. Consequences may be a temporary withdrawal of an item the child values, or possibly restrictions to an activity they particularly enjoy. By choosing consequences themselves, children are far more likely to respond in a way that develops empathy and sustained change.

**Restorative Justice**

* We also promote a process known as ‘Restorative Justice’ which provides an effective and proportionate response to challenging behaviour and teaches young people the life skills they need to deal with conflict in a constructive way.
* At the core, Restorative Justice helps young people to understand how we make, maintain and repair relationships when things go wrong. A restorative approach helps to restore the balance in a just and acceptable way. In resolving the harm done to others, it helps to prevent it happening again.
* We therefore encourage our young people who have caused harm to acknowledge the impact of what they have done and give them an opportunity to make reparation. In turn, we also promote the idea that those who have suffered harm are given the opportunity to have their harm or loss acknowledged and amends made.
* Staff members are supported to identify when children are genuinely working hard to address any unwanted behaviours, and are skilled at seeing beyond ‘surface compliance’ – attempts to appear to be making changes in order to secure rewards.

**Non-approved consequences**

* The following actions may never be imposed upon children:
* Any form of corporal punishment; i.e. any intentional application of force as punishment, including slapping, punching, rough handling and throwing missiles;
* Any action relating to the consumption or deprivation of food or drink;
* Any restriction on a child's contact with his or her parents, relatives or friends; visits to the child by his or her parents, relatives or friends; or his or her access to any telephone helpline providing counselling or advice for children;
* Any requirement that a child wear distinctive or inappropriate clothes;
* The use or withholding of medication or medical or dental treatment;
* The intentional deprivation of sleep;
* The modification of a child's behaviour through bribery or the use of threats;
* Any sanction used intentionally or unintentionally which may humiliate a child or could cause them to be ridiculed;
* The imposition of any fine or financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum by way of reparation;
* Any intimate physical examination of a child;
* The withholding of aids/equipment needed by a disabled child;
* the sanction of a group of children for the behaviour of an individual child;
* Swearing at or the use of foul, demeaning or humiliating language or measures.

**Approved consequences**

* The following sanctions may be imposed upon children:
* Confiscation or withdrawal of a telephone or mobile phone in order to protect a child or another person from harm, injury or to protect property from being damaged;
* Restriction on sending or receiving letters or other correspondence (including the use of electronic or internet correspondence) in order to protect a child or another person from harm, injury or to protect property from being damaged;
* Reparation, involving the child doing something to put right the wrong they have done; e.g.: repairing damage or returning stolen property;
* Restitution, involving the child paying for all or part of damage caused or the replacement of misappropriated monies or goods. No more than two thirds of a child's pocket money may be taken in these circumstances if the payment is small and withdrawn in a single weekly amount. Larger amounts may be paid in restitution but must be of a fixed amount with a clear start and end period. If the damage is serious or the size of payment particularly large then the child's Social Worker should be informed of the matter;
* Curtailment of leisure activities, involving a child being prevented from participating in such activities;
* Additional chores, involving a child undertaking additional chores over and above those they would normally be expected to do;
* Early bedtimes, by up to half an hour or as agreed with the child's Social Worker;
* Removal of equipment, for example the use of a TV or video/DVD player;
* Loss of privileges, for example the withdrawal of the privilege of staying up late;
* Suspension of pocket money for short periods.

**Recording and information sharing**

* Rewards and Consequences will be represented in a personalised ‘Reward and Consequences’ Record that can be referred to when needed (see attached).
* Staff will use daily records, key working sessions and meetings to log and record when children have acquired rewards and consequences and the circumstances which led to these.
* Staff will celebrate areas of progress and success with all children and take every opportunity to share positive outcomes with anyone the child has identified they would like to be informed.
* Children will also be involved in identifying who they will ask staff to inform if there are situations where consequences are applied following an incident. Staff will also inform the child’s social worker, parent/carer and Advocate/Independent Visitor in line with our statutory duties

**Links to related documents:**

Behaviour Management

Rewards and Consequences Record

Offending and Anti-social behaviour