

Youth Explorers and Youth Rangers Behaviour Policy

It is important that we put into place a set of policies and procedures with regards to behaviour during youth group sessions. This is to ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for all young people who join the group as well as the leaders and volunteers. Sessions are designed to be fun and engaging and we recognise that low levels of disruption amongst a group of young people may occur. Therefore, this behaviour policy is only intended to address behavioural disruptions that create a significant negative impact on other young people, the leaders or the group as a whole. This document outlines the behavioural expectations for all group members as well as what disciplinary actions may be taken should any disruptive behaviour arise.

We sincerely hope this behaviour policy remains for reference only and no disciplinary action ever need take place. However, it is important that all members of the group and their guardians are familiar with the group expectations and what action may be taken, if necessary.

Behavioural Expectations:

Members are expected to adhere to the following statement:

“Youth Rangers, Youth Explorers & Discover Nature Days are open and friendly groups that are welcoming to all and we expect each other to behave in a safe, sensible manner while showing respect for the opinions and beliefs of others at all times.”

Examples of expected behaviour:

- Willing to work with others as a team, no matter their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or level of ability.
- Listen respectfully when leaders are giving instructions.
- Behave sensibly and observe all safety rules.
- Respect the property of others, including that of other group members, the leaders and The Parks Trust.

Mobile phones are generally not permitted to be used during sessions. Participants may bring a phone with them for emergency contact purposes, but if they are based at the Centre (Youth Explorers and Discover Nature Sessions) they will be advised to leave their phone locked in an education centre during group activities. As most Youth Ranger sessions take place away from the education centres, Youth Rangers are permitted to carry a mobile phone about their person for the duration of the session. These are expected to remain on silent in a pocket or bag so as not to distract participants or interrupt the smooth running of the session.

Participants should only bring mobile phones at their own risk – The Parks Trust will have no responsibility over lost or damaged phones. There may be limited occasions where participants can use their phones to take a photo of an interesting find or of

the groups' achievement on a task and this will be agreed with the Youth Group Leader as appropriate.

Smoking or vaping is not allowed in our sessions.

Photography by participants of other attendees is prohibited.

Disciplinary Actions:

- (1) Verbal Warning – If a young person's behaviour is deemed to fall below the standard set above, we will take that person aside and issue a verbal warning.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour:

- Continual talking or verbal disruption when a leader has asked for quiet.
- Continuing disruptive behaviour after being asked to stop.
- Ignoring or refusing to follow instructions or rules, especially where safety is concerned.
- Being uncooperative, unfriendly or disrespectful towards fellow group members, leaders or volunteers.
- Using a mobile phone during group activities unless permitted by a member of staff.

- (2) Parent Involvement – If the behaviour is not corrected after a verbal warning has been issued or a more serious behavioural disruption occurs, youth group leaders will contact the parents of the young person involved to discuss the incident(s) that has taken place. Depending on the situation, this could involve asking the parent to collect their child early from a session.

Examples of more serious behaviour:

- Threatening language (including swearing).
- Threatening behaviour/bullying (not including physical violence).
- Intentional disregard of property leading to its damage.

- (3) Request to leave – If disruptive behaviour is still not corrected after both a verbal warning and discussion with guardians have taken place or the behavioural disruptions are severe enough to put oneself or others at risk of harm, whether emotionally, physically, or mentally, leaders will contact guardians to collect their child early from the session. Group leaders reserve the right to suspend or terminate the membership of the young person involved and refuse future access to activities.