

Moor House Management Board



Policy 006 – Acceptable Behaviour Policy – Draft 2

Introduction

Moor House Adventure Centre is committed to providing a fair, consistent and accessible service for all of our customers. However, Moor House Adventure Centre has to balance this by providing a safe working environment for our staff and volunteers to operate within and to ensure that our work is undertaken in an efficient and effective manner. We ask therefore that you treat our centre, staff, and volunteers with respect.

On occasions, customers may make unreasonable demands that could affect the services we provide to other customers, or communicate with us in a manner which causes offence to our staff or volunteers. Where this occurs, Moor House Adventure Centre reserves the right to manage customer contact in an appropriate manner to protect our staff and volunteers and to maintain the effectiveness of our service to other customers.

This policy sets out our approach to managing those customers whose actions or behaviour are considered unacceptable and are either having a harmful impact on our staff or their ability to provide a consistent level of service to other customers.

Equality and diversity

Moor House Adventure Centre recognises that, in some circumstances, customers may have a mental health problem and / or other disability where it may be difficult for them to either express themselves or communicate clearly and / or appropriately. Where unacceptable behaviour is evidenced under these circumstances, Moor House Adventure Centre will consider the individual needs and circumstances of the customer and our staff before deciding on how best to manage the situation.

Scope

This policy covers all areas of work undertaken by Moor House Adventure Centre and all of our staff and volunteers and covers all internal and external customers.

Defining unacceptable behaviour

What is deemed to be unacceptable behaviour will often differ depending upon the individual(s) involved and their particular circumstances. For the purpose of this policy examples of unacceptable behaviour are grouped under two broad headings, as follows:

1. Aggressive, abusive or offensive language or behaviour

Moor House Adventure Centre operates a zero tolerance policy with regards to aggressive, abusive or offensive language or behaviour. All of our staff and volunteers have the right not to be subjected to aggressive, abusive or offensive language or behaviour, regardless of the circumstances.

Examples of this behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- Threats of physical violence
- Swearing
- Inappropriate cultural, racial or religious references; and
- Rudeness, including derogatory remark

Violence is not restricted to acts of aggression that may result in physical harm. It also includes behaviour or language (written or spoken) that may cause staff to feel distressed, threatened or abused.

2. General unreasonable behaviour

On occasions, our customers may make unreasonable demands through the nature and scale of service they expect or by not following reasonable requests or by not following Moor House Adventure Centre Policies or procedures.

Some of our customers may not, or cannot, accept that Moor House Adventure Centre is unable to assist beyond the level of service that has already been provided or make amendments to specific policies or procedures. For example, customers may persist in disagreeing with the action or decision taken in response to a request they have made or an action or omission they have undertaken.

The method or tone in which these communications are received may not in itself be unreasonable - it is the persistent behaviour in continuing breach policy or procedure or continue to make demands that is considered to be unacceptable.

What amounts to generally unreasonable behaviour or demands will always depend on the circumstances surrounding the behaviour and the seriousness of the issues raised by Moor House Adventure Centre.

Examples of this behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- Failing to follow Moor House Adventure Policies or Procedures or any reasonable request made by Moor House Adventure Centre staff or volunteers
- Demanding amendments to Policies or Procedures that are unsafe or reduce the quality of Moor House Adventure Centre services
- Repeatedly contacting or insisting on speaking to a particular member of staff who is not directly dealing with the matter
- Excessive telephone calls, emails or letters
- Persistent refusal to accept a decision
- Persistent refusal to accept explanations

Dealing with unacceptable behaviour

In Person

None of our staff or volunteers has to tolerate any abusive or aggressive language or behaviour in person. Where this occurs, all of our staff or volunteers have the right to remove themselves from further contact and refer the matter to the Centre Manager. However, before taking such action, it

Is reasonable to expect that the customer is warned that their conduct is considered to be offensive and to allow them the opportunity to moderate their behaviour.

Telephone calls

None of our staff or volunteers has to tolerate unacceptable behaviour over the telephone. Where this occurs, all of our staff or volunteers have the right to place callers on hold or to end the call. However, before taking such action, it is reasonable to expect that the customer is warned that their conduct is considered to be offensive and to allow them the opportunity to moderate their behaviour.

Where a call is terminated by a member of staff or volunteer, they must log the details of the call, noting the reason for terminating the call. The matter must also be reported to their immediate manager in order to ensure fairness and consistency of approach.

Emails and letters

As with telephone calls, none of our staff or volunteers has to tolerate unacceptable behaviour communicated via email or letter. Where there is a legitimate request for information contained within the communication, irrespective of the language used, it is reasonable to provide that information. But at the same time the customer will be warned that their conduct is considered to be offensive and will not be tolerated in the future.

Where no legitimate information is being requested, staff or volunteers do not have to respond to an abusive email or letter. However, it would be good practice to issue a warning that the conduct is considered to be offensive and will not be tolerated in the future.

It is appreciated that some staff may feel uncomfortable responding to abusive emails and letters. If this is the case, they should refer the matter to their line manager who may take matters forward on their behalf.

Threats received to our staff

We take any threat to our staff or volunteers very seriously. In such circumstances, the matter must be immediately reported to a line manager, who will work with the staff member or volunteer in question to ensure that all necessary steps to ensure their wellbeing are taken. The incident must also be reported to the Centre Manager and the Moor House Management Board.

Any request to supply evidence of the threat (for example, copies of correspondence) to the third party or the police, must be directed to the Moor House Management Board to administer in conjunction with the Data Protection Act.

Threats received involving third parties

On occasions, threats may be made against third parties - for example, against an individual, customer group or alternatively their premises. In such circumstances, the matter must be taken seriously and immediately reported to the Centre Manager and the Moor House Management Board. The matter must also be reported to the third party in order for them to take matters forward as they see fit.

Any request to supply evidence of the threat (for example, copies of correspondence or voice recordings) to the third party or the police, must be directed to the Compliance Team to administer in conjunction with the Data Protection Act.

Available actions

Where a customer behaves in an unacceptable manner (as defined in this policy), Moor House Adventure Centre will exercise its right to restrict access to its services and / or take action against the customer.

The following restrictions are available:

Action	Authorised by
Warn the individual that their behaviour is not acceptable and given them an opportunity to change their behaviour in future.	Moor House Centre Manager
Cancel, suspend or curtail an activity delivered by Moor House Adventure Centre staff	Moor House Centre Manager
Cancel, suspend or curtail an activity delivered by the customer party	Moor House Centre Manager
Ask the customer to leave Moor House Adventure Centre	Moor House Centre Manager
Suspend access to Moor House Adventure Centre, on a temporary basis, for the purposes of investigating the behaviour	Chair of the Moor House Management Board
Suspend, on a temporary or permanent basis the customer's access to Moor House Adventure Centre, after an investigation of has taken place	Moor House Management Board
Block telephone calls and / or emails from being received	Moor House Management Board

Those responsible for authorising these actions must satisfy themselves as to the nature and seriousness of the unacceptable behaviour by speaking to those involved.

The precise nature and action will be appropriate and proportionate to the nature of the unacceptable behaviour and the circumstances of our staff and the customer. Wherever possible a reasonable degree of access to our service should be maintained, for example by limiting access to specific services only (such as the Scout and Guide Shop during opening hours).

When making a decision to suspend or curtail an activity or suspends a customer's access, we will take into account whether the unacceptable behaviour was specific to a named individual(s) or the entire customer group.

The Moor House Management Board may also choose to refer the matter to the police where a criminal offence has been threatened or committed. This does not remove the ability for individual staff members to report a matter to the police if they wish.

Letting the customer know about the action

Where action to address a customer's behaviour is being taken in line with this policy, the customer must be told of the decision. Wherever possible this should be by letter or email but may be done by telephone and supported by a suitable note in the relevant file. The communication should be from the authorising person or body.

The communication should inform the customer of the following:

- The reason why we consider their behaviour to be unacceptable;
- Details of any earlier warning(s) issued about their conduct;
- The restriction(s) we are imposing; and, if appropriate;
- How long the restriction(s) will last

The customer must also be informed of their right of appeal and how to do this.

A copy of the letter or email issued to the customer should be sent to the Moor House Management Board.

The Administration Manager is responsible for ensuring that the case file record reflects the decision to restrict contact. The Centre Manager is responsible for maintaining a register of restrictions in place, which will be made available to appropriate staff.

Scout Association membership

Where the customer involved is also a member of the Scout Association, their line manager and the County Commissioner will be informed of any action taken.

Where the Moor House Management Board believes that the behaviour could constitute gross misconduct or calls into question the person's suitability to hold Scout Membership, they will refer to the situation the County Commissioner.

Customer complaints

Customers are entitled to make a formal complaint about any action taken under this policy, by complaining to the Chair of the Moor House Management Board. The Scout Association's complaints process will be used to investigate and resolve the complaint, as outlined at <https://members.scouts.org.uk/Complaints>.

Monitoring and reporting

The Moor House Management Board will monitor this policy from time to time to ensure that it is being applied in a fair, reasonable and consistent manner. The Moor House Management Board will also monitor the outcomes of the policy against the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics: age, sex, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability and sexual orientation.