



Positive Handling Policy

June 2014

Approved by GB: June 2014

Next review due: June 2017

Policy Statement

Staff with a duty of care operate in exceptional circumstances where it is sometimes necessary to act outside the norm, any physical intervention should be based upon providing the maximum amount of care, control and therapeutic support. There is no legal requirement to have a policy on the use of force, but it is good practice to do so.

Duty of Care

Both employers and employees have a duty of care. All members of school staff have a legal power to use “reasonable” force to:

- Remove disruptive young people from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction.
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event, trip or visit.
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their behaviour to disrupt others.
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground.
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Introduction

The term ‘Positive Handling’ includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. Included in this framework are a small number of responses which may involve the use of force to control a pupil. The term ‘physical restraint’ is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. These are referred to as ‘Restrictive Physical Interventions’ in national Guidance (DfS/DoH 2002).

A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

Pupils with severe behavioural difficulties sometimes present a risk to themselves and others. The Education and Skills Act 2006 describes the circumstances in which teachers and others authorised by the Head teacher may use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils.

Examples of when such action may be reasonable are to prevent injury to people, damage to property or the breakdown of discipline.

This protocol is designed to provide guidance only. It should be considered alongside recent national guidance. It is designed to help staff to ensure that any actions they take are reasonable, proportionate and necessary.

Positive Behaviour Management

All physical interventions at school should be conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. Part of the preventative approach to risk reduction involves looking for early warning signs, learning and communicating any factors which may influence bad behaviour and taking steps to divert behaviours leading towards foreseeable risk. Pupils should be encouraged to participate in the development of their own Positive Handling Plans by focusing on positive alternatives and choices. Parents should also be encouraged to contribute. However, if problems arise, staff have an additional responsibility to support all pupils when they are under pressure and safely manage crisis if and when, they occur.

Alternatives to Positive Handling

A member of staff who chooses not to undertake a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk. For example;

- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help.
- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason.
- Give clear directions for pupils to stop.
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.
- Remove an audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place.
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons.
- Use positive touch to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressured.

Modifications to Environment

Consideration should be given to obvious hazards.

For Example:-

- How is the availability of pointed implements (including pens, pencils, compasses and darts) controlled?
- What small items are available to an angry pupil who may be tempted to use them as missiles?
- What objects are available to be used as blunt instruments?
- Do they all need to be left out all the time?
- Are there sharp edges or corners which present a risk?
- Is the design arrangement or furniture safe and appropriate for pupils who exhibit extreme behaviour?
- Is there a comfortable place to sit with an agitated pupil?
- Are protocols in place to encourage angry pupils to take themselves to a safer place?

The Last Resort Principal

Positive handling techniques are only used when there is no realistic alternative and have considered in the **first instance de-escalation, diversion and diffusion strategies**.

Proactive Physical Interventions

It is sometimes reasonable to use physical controls to prevent extreme behaviour from becoming dangerous provided that it is an agreed part of the Positive Handling Plan. Examples of this are where a pupil has shown ritual patterns of behaviour, which in the past have led to the child becoming more distressed and violent. In such circumstances it may be reasonable to withdraw the child to a safer place when the pattern of behaviour begins, rather than wait until the child is distressed and out of control. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the best interest of the child and that it reduces, rather than increases, risk.

The school has documented risk assessment procedures in place (see appendix 1,2 & 3).

Reasonable and Proportionate

Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. When physical interventions are considered staff should consider the following questions:

- How is this in the best interest of the pupil?
- Why is a less intrusive intervention not preferable?
- Why do we have to act now?
- Why am I the best person to be doing this?
- Why is this absolutely necessary?

Team Teach

Team Teach remains committed to the term 'positive handling' to describe a broad spectrum of risk reduction, strategies. Positive handling is a holistic approach involving policy guidance, management of the environment and deployment of staff.

It also involves personal behaviour diversion, diffusion and de-escalation. Restraint is only a small part of the framework.

Health and Safety

If dangerous behaviour presents a significant risk of injury to people, there is a legal Health and Safety issue to be addressed. Dangerous behaviour should be regarded just as seriously as dangerous equipment. Dangerous occurrences should be reported to the person responsible for Health and Safety in the school. All have shared responsibility to identify risk, communicate potential risks and take active steps to reduce risk wherever possible. It is recognised that it is not possible to entirely remove risk.

As a minimum requirement, in order to comply with health and safety legislation, each employee has a responsibility to ensure that they are conversant with school and policy and guidance, and to co-operate to make the school safer. It is also a requirement that they participate in training if they are directed to do so. This does not necessarily mean that all staff can be involved in all the physical activities. The non-physical aspects of positive handling training are crucially important to.

When considering a pupil's behaviour staff should consider the following:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this pupil's behaviour?
- Have we got all the information we need to conduct a risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan as a result?
- What further steps can we take to prevent dangerous behaviour from developing?

Structures

The school ensures the following support structures are in place:

- IEP's and Behaviour Support plans kept on file and accessible to ensure all relevant information about each pupil is available to all members of staff working with them.
- Use of help protocols and language to remind all staff of availability of colleagues to offer help including change-overs of staff during a crisis situation with a pupil.
- Debrief sessions after a crisis with the pupil(s) involved, reflecting on how crisis was managed by all involved and identifying any points for review or learning.
- Debrief sessions for all staff to share experiences, concerns and access support from each other, led by a member of the SLT.

Positive Handling Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Positive Handling Plan. The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. If particular physical techniques have been found to be effective they should be named, along with alerts to any which have proved ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Positive Handling Plans should be considered alongside the statement and any other planning documents which relate to the pupil. They should take account of age, gender, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special need and social context. Positive Handling Plans should result from multi-professional collaboration and be included in any Pastoral Support Plan, Individual Education Plan and/or Parenting Contract or Order.

Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and it is recognised that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to make a dynamic risk assessment.

The key principals are that any physical intervention should be:

- in the best interest of the child;
- reasonable and proportionate;
- intended to reduce risk;

Where possible, **staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference** to physical interventions.

Post incident support structure for pupils and staff

Following a serious incident, the school should offer support for all involved. (Any incident requiring staff to use Positive Handling would be considered serious at Churchfields Junior School). Individuals should take time to recover from a serious incident. Until the incident has subsided the only priority is to reduce risk and calm the situation down. Staff should avoid saying or doing anything which could inflame the situation during the recovery phase. Immediate action should be taken to ensure medical help is sought if there are any injuries which require more than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded using the school's internal systems. It is important to note that injury in itself is not evidence of malpractice. Time needs to be allocated to follow up incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective. Parents will be notified whenever a serious incident occurs.

Complaints

It is not uncommon for pupils to make allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force following an incident. Schools have a formal Complaints Procedure which pupils/parent(s) should be reminded of with the procedure and encouraged to use the appropriate channels. If an allegation is made against a teacher the quick resolution should be a priority to the benefit of all concerned. At any stage of consideration or investigation, all unnecessary delays should be eradicated. Advice should be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) regarding allegations against staff.

Training

Teachers and anyone authorised by the Head teacher who are expected to use planned physical techniques should be trained. The local authority has adopted the Team Teach Model of training. All training courses have been fully accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) in accordance with DfE and

Department of Health guidance. Positive handling training is always provided by qualified instructors with rigorous guidelines. The level of training recommended is related to the level of risk faced by the member of staff. The level of training required is kept under review and may change in response to the needs of our clients. Once trained, staff should practice and rehearse regularly.

Recording

A serious incident must be recorded. A log of any serious incidents are kept in the school office. All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the written record which should be completed within 24 hours.

Staff should:

- Take time to think about what actually happened and try to explain it clearly.
- Complete all names in full.
- Sign and date all accounts.

Records will be retained and cannot be altered, but may be added to after the 24 hour period. They may be kept for many years and could form part of an investigation at some time in the future.

Serious Incident Reports should not be completed until the individuals concerned have recovered from the immediate effects of the incident. They should not be rushed. A record is written into the Incident Log. This refers to supporting sheets and other relevant information.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head teacher should ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required. The school incident log is open to external monitoring and evaluation.

Follow up

Following an incident, consideration may be given to conducting a further risk assessment, reviewing the positive handling plan, behaviour management policy or this positive handling policy. Any further action in relation to a member of staff, or an individual pupil, will follow the appropriate procedures. (See staff disciplinary and pupil behaviour policy).

Other relevant policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Behaviour Policy
Staff Disciplinary Policy
Health & Safety Policy
Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Review

This policy is reviewed by staff and governors every three years. Parents are most welcome to request copies of this document and comments are invited from anyone involved in the life of the school.

Appendix 1 Risk Assessment Checklist

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR ASSESSING AND MANAGING FORESEEABLE RISKS FOR CHILDREN WHO PRESENT CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

Name of Child.....

Class Group.....

Name of Teacher.....

School.....

IDENTIFICATION OF RISK	
Describe the foreseeable risk	
Is the risk potential or actual?	
List who is affected by the risk	
ASSESSMENT OF RISK	
In which situation does the risk usually occur?	
How likely is it that the risk will arise?	
If the risk arises, who is likely to be injured or hurt?	
What kinds of injuries or harm are likely to occur?	
How serious are the adverse outcome?	

ASSESSMENT COMPLETED BY:

.....

SIGNATURE.....DATE.....

Positive Handling Plan Checklist

NAME:

UNIT/CLASS:

POSITIVES (What they are good at and what they like)

TRIGGERS (Common situations, which have led to problems in the past)

MODIFICATIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENT OR ROUTINES (What we can do to prevent problems from arising)

PREFERRED DE-ESCALATION STRATEGIES (What tends to calm things down)

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Verbal advice and support | <input type="checkbox"/> | Distraction | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reassurance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Planned ignoring | <input type="checkbox"/> | Contingent touch | <input type="checkbox"/> | CALM script | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CALM body language | <input type="checkbox"/> | Giving take-up time | <input type="checkbox"/> | Withdrawal offered | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Withdrawal directed | <input type="checkbox"/> | Flexible negotiation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Involve new person | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Choices offered | <input type="checkbox"/> | Limits set | <input type="checkbox"/> | Humour | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reminders of success | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |

LEVEL OF RISK PRESENTED (1 to 10)

1 10

PREFERRED PHYSICAL TECHNIQUES (Combination of least intrusive and most effective)

- | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Cradle Hug | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wrap | <input type="checkbox"/> | Half Shield | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single Elbow | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Double Elbow | <input type="checkbox"/> | Figure of Four | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sitting on chairs | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sitting on the ground | <input type="checkbox"/> |

FOLLOW-UP (Where, when and how to debrief and repair after an incident)

NOTIFICATION (Who have these plans and strategies been shared with?)

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Service User | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parents/Guardians | <input type="checkbox"/> | Placing Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> | Psychologist | <input type="checkbox"/> | Doctor/Nurse | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Area Child Protection Team | <input type="checkbox"/> | Key Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> | All staff | <input type="checkbox"/> |

CHILD VIEWS (Has this been discussed with the pupil, if so views)

NAMES:

SIGNATURES:

DATE:

REVIEW DATE:

EVALUATION OF BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PLAN & SCHOOL RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY		
Measures set out	Effectiveness in supporting the child	Impact on risk
Proactive interventions to prevent risks		
Early interventions to manage risks		
Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes		
ACTIONS FOR THE FUTURE		

PLANS AND STRATEGIES EVALUATED BY:

RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD:

DATE:
