



Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy

Written February 2024

Objectives

At Stapeley Broad Lane CE Primary School, we are committed to maintaining the safety and well-being of students and staff. This policy has close links with the Behaviour Policy. It is written to explain our procedures in line with:

- Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006
- British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) Code of Practice
- DfCS Guidance "Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils" November 2007
- Joint DfES/DH guidance issued July 2002, "The use of restrictive physical interventions for staff working with children and adults who display extreme behaviour in association with learning disability and/or autistic spectrum disorder"
- Local authority policies
- Behaviour support plan (for individual pupils)
- School Behaviour Policy and Practice.

School Expectations

In our school, we create a calm environment to minimise incidents that may require any physical intervention. We de-escalate incidents when they do arise. We only use physical interventions when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks of not doing so.

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in our school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff in school. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable, proportionate and necessary force may be required. The school acknowledges that physical techniques are only a small part of a whole-setting approach to behaviour management.

Positive Behaviour Management

All staff and volunteers adopt a positive approach to improving behaviour in order to reward effort and application, and build self-esteem, and promote a safe environment for students and staff. All staff work in partnership with those who know the child to help those concerned:

- Find out why this child behaves as he or she does
- Understand the factors that influence this child's behaviour
- Identify early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours are developing This approach helps to ensure that early and preventative intervention is the norm. It reduces the incidence of extreme behaviours and makes sure that the use of physical intervention is rare.

What is physical intervention ('reasonable force')?

The use of force is illegal if the physical circumstances do not warrant it. The force used should always be the minimum needed to regain and ensure safety and control for everyone involved or present. The Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Child protection/Safeguarding Policy.

Restrictive physical interventions may include:

- Bodily contact - where the physical presence of one or more people is used to control a pupil, e.g physically interposing between pupils; blocking a pupil's path; holding or 'shepherding' a pupil; using agreed, approved restricted holds
- Environmental – where a change is applied within the environment for example shutting a door or the use of locks or key pads to prevent access to a particular area.

Definitions of Positive Handling

Positive Handling describes 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. Risk assessment identifies positive prevention strategies and how a pupil may need to be supported in a crisis.

1. Physical Contact

Situations in which proper physical contact occurs between staff and pupils, e.g., in the care of pupils and in order to support their access to a broad and balanced curriculum. It would seem reasonable that young children do require opportunities for close contact, as long as this is within public view, sensitively carried out and age/person-appropriate.

2. Physical Intervention

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the arm or shoulder where the pupil is compliant.

This technique cannot be emphasised enough and in the hands of a skilful practitioner, many pupils can be deflected from a potentially volatile situation into a less confrontational situation i.e. it may be possible to “defuse” a situation by a timely intervention.

3. Physical Control / Restraint / Restrictive Physical Intervention

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. All such incidents must be recorded on the Positive Handling Form. If anyone is injured an accident/incident report must also be completed. Records of incidents must be given to the Headteacher/Deputy Head as soon as possible (by the end of the school day at the latest).

The level of compliance from the pupil determines whether or not the interaction is an intervention or a control/restraint/RPI. Restraint is defined by Team Teach as the positive application of force by staff, to overcome rigorous resistance, completely directing, deciding and controlling a person’s free movement.

In what circumstances can physical intervention be used?

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- self – injuring
- causing injury to others
- committing a criminal offence
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere within school (this includes authorised out-of-school activities).

The decision to use physical intervention will be taken in the context of the level of risk presented by the behaviour, the seriousness of the incident and the relative risks of the use of physical intervention compared with any available alternative. The use of physical intervention will take into account the characteristics of the pupil, including their age, gender, SEN, physical needs or disability, developmental level or cultural issues.

As teaching and non-teaching staff work ‘in loco parentis’ and have a ‘Duty of Care’ towards their pupils, they could be liable for a claim of negligence if they fail to follow the guidance within this policy. The use of Team Teach techniques is one of our control methods for reducing risks presented by children’s challenging behaviour.

The Last Resort Principle

At Stapeley Broad Lane, we proactively foster positive relationships and only use reasonable force when there is no realistic alternative. This means that we expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative. We expect staff to think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. There might be some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are no effective alternatives (a child is about to run in the road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives such as the use of assertiveness skills:

- Use a distracter such as a whistle or loud bell to interrupt the behaviour long enough for other methods of verbal control
- Withdrawal of attention(audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened

- Other techniques designed to defuse a situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour, in which case the incident could be dealt with later when emotions have de-escalated.
- The employment of other sanctions consistent with Stapeley Broad Lane's policy on behaviour.

Where physical interventions are needed to prevent injury to the student, other students or staff, or to prevent serious damage, these should be for the **minimum length** of time possible and using the **least possible** force. All staff must consider whether they are using reasonable force. In all circumstances, other methods should be used if appropriate and effective positive handling should be a last resort.

When positive handling becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

DON'T

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck, lying face down or pulling arms across the child's chest
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil

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 (see Appendix B). 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 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 a Pastoral Support Plan or SEND support form.

Staff Training

It is the policy of this school that all staff working closely with pupils are trained in the pro-active and responsive positive handling strategies and, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the School Behaviour Policy and Practice. In cases where a Positive Handling Plan is in operation, selected staff will be trained in any physical interventions to be used. These staff will be trained by the accredited provider and will be the only staff authorised to use the intervention. All teaching staff have received Team Teach training and use restorative practice to promote de-escalation techniques and strategies when managing difficult or challenging behaviours.

General Advice for Staff

- Be sure that you are aware of and complying with the school policy for behaviour and discipline and positive handling procedures.
- It is better to defuse situations wherever possible, as this prevents them from escalating to a level where force is necessary

- Send for the assistance of another member of staff as soon as possible, using the agreed call-out protocol (Red cards)
- All those involved should be de-briefed after incidents to explore more positive/effective responses to future difficult situations

Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. It is not enough to thoughtlessly apply rules without thinking through the likely consequences. The key principles are that any physical intervention should be:

- In the best interest of the child
- Reasonable and proportionate
- Intended to reduce risk
- The least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective.

Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning. Where possible, staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical interventions. They should only use the techniques and methods approved for use in this school.

Post-Incident Support

Incidents that require the use of restrictive physical interventions can be upsetting to all concerned and could result in injuries to the child or staff. After incidents have subsided, it is important to ensure that staff and children are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should, of course, be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded in accordance with school procedures. The school should take action to report any serious injuries to staff or students in accordance with LA guidelines (see First Aid and Medicines Policy and Practice).

We need to consider: - thoughts, feeling, emotions, - emotional 'first aid'

Stage 1 – Immediate 'Are you ok' This should occur before people leave to go home.

Stage 2 – De-briefing checking people have adjusted to an emotionally difficult event. This should occur within 48 hours.

Stage 3 – Counselling: formal support. Support is available when requested by a member of staff, however it is not imposed.

Post Incident Review

Focus on actions and behaviours:

- Who did what, when, why, how?
- What was the outcome?
- What does it tell us about what we already know about the young person?
- What have we learnt and what or how does this inform our practice?

Recording and Monitoring Incidents

The use of physical intervention in school is monitored to help staff learn from experience, promote the well-being of children in their care, and provide a basis for appropriate support. Monitoring can help the school to determine what specialist help is needed for children and to assess the appropriateness of the child's placement at the school. The use of physical intervention is monitored and evaluated regularly at Leadership meetings. Individual student risk assessments are reviewed annually.

Where physical control or restraint has been used, a record of the incident will be kept. This record should be kept in the Positive Handling file located in the Headteacher's office.

Appropriate documentation will be completed as soon as possible after the incident, prior to staff going off duty and be signed by all staff involved and the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

After the review of the incident, a copy of the details will be placed on the pupil's file as part of their educational record.

Parents/carers must also be notified and this is to be recorded on the form (Appendix - A).

Staff should:

- Inform a member of SLT as soon as possible
- Complete the school recording form carefully
- Take time to think about what actually happened and try to explain it clearly
- Complete all names in full
- Sign and date all forms

Complaints

The availability of a clear policy about reasonable force and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them.

Where the nature of any complaint made by a pupil, parent or other person in relation to the use of physical hold within the school indicates that an allegation of mishandling by a member staff, the school's complaints policy will be followed.

In such circumstances, the investigation of the complaint/allegation and any resulting action in respect of child protection, disciplinary or other procedures will be carried out in accordance with the school and LA guidance.

Authorised Staff

All teachers, staff and the Headteacher are authorised to have control or charge of pupils automatically, they have the statutory power to use reasonable force within the context of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the subsequent guidance 'The Use of Reasonable Force to Control and Restrain Pupils'.

Supply staff must ensure that they are familiar with this school's policy.

Appropriate guidance will be given if they have not undertaken Team Teach training.

Authorisation is not given to volunteers, students on placement, visitors or parents as they will not have control of pupils who may present with challenging behaviour, but will be supervised at all times.

Health and Safety of Staff

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, employees have a responsibility to report any circumstances which give rise to an increased risk to their Health and Safety.

Staff who have, or acquire, permanently or temporarily, any medical condition that may impact on their ability to carry out pupils' plans have a duty to report these to the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher immediately, as there may be an impact on their own safety and that of colleagues and/or pupils. This information will be shared on the staff notice board.

Through the provision of Team Teach training, the risk of harm towards staff is reduced but it is possible for some injury to be received. All such occurrences should be treated and subsequently recorded, on the Positive Handling Form/Accident Form.

Staff Support Following Incidents

Any member of staff or pupil at the school involved in or witnessing a serious incident involving the use of physical hold, may require additional support following the incident. Staff should ensure that they are fully recovered from an incident before resuming their duties and colleagues are encouraged to seek and offer support where it is deemed necessary.

Staff will be given the opportunity to debrief after an incident, if required. Where staff have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force, they should have access to support; this will be made available/supported through the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. Staff may also contact the Well-being Counselling Line.

Other Relevant Policies:

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff (Whistleblowing)
- Staff Induction

Appendix A



RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION – INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Student(s):

Year:

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Location of Incident:

Describe incident in detail:

Restraint described:

Why was restraint needed?

What did you do to try to defuse the situation before using restraint?

Was anyone injured? Yes/ No

If yes, was this recorded in the accident book? Yes/ No

Was the student checked for injuries by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident? Yes/ No.
Please complete body map (attached)

Member(s) of staff involved:

Adult witnesses to restraint:

Pupil witnesses to restraint:

This incident form was completed by _____

Designation of person completing report _____

Parent/carer was informed by telephone/letter (with pupil), letter (by post), personally (Please circle as relevant)

When were they informed? Time: Date:

Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action:

Copy this form to the pupil file on CPOMs. Original form to Headteacher.

Appendix B – Positive Handling Plan

Name:		D.O.B.		Date:	
Triggers /Behaviours / Situations likely to result in Physical intervention: <i>What is the behaviour like? When does it occur? Where does it occur?</i>					
Strategies to be used (where possible before physical intervention)					
Chill out time		Distraction		State alternatives /consequences choices/limits	Praise partial compliance
Give space		Reassure/success reminder		Other staff intervene	Repeat request
Talk calmly		Give a count		Planned ignoring	Remove stimulus
Verbal advice support		Negotiation		Contingent touch	Humour
Other strategies					
Preferred Handling Strategies to be used:					
Friendly Hold (arm around shoulder)				Shield	
Walking				Wrap	
Single Elbow				Double Elbow	
Standing				Ground	
Figure of Four				Chairs	
Other				'Get outs' that can be used when holding	
De-briefing process following incident: What care is to be provided. space, talk through etc					
Signatures Child (Where appropriate) Parent/Guardian Headteacher Date					
Review date					