Positive Handling Policy

February 2024

Together we strive for excellence

POLICY CONTROL

Policy review frequency	Annual
Author	R Bruce (based on LBTH model policy)
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Headteacher signature	
Chair of Governors signature	

OUR VISION

Creating the change makers of the future

OUR VALUES

These are the values we teach and instil in our children:

We are **committed**

We are **curious**

We **challenge** ourselves

We **communicate**

We **collaborate**

We **care**

Together we strive for excellence

Moving and Handling Students Policy

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- Positive Handling and Safe Touch Policy
- Managing Allegations of Abuse Against Members of Staff Guidance
- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy
- Health and Safety Policy (incl. Arrangement 12: Manual Handling)
- Educational Visits Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

1 Policy Statement

1.1 Aim

This policy aims to ensure the health and safety, and wellbeing, of all students and staff in relation to moving and handling, as far as is reasonably practical, and to enable staff to comply with their legal duties of care, with relation to moving and handling.

At Cubitt Town Primary School the focus is on enabling, not prohibiting, student participation. This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any physical intervention that they undertake is carried out in a way that supports the school's values. In particular, it aims to describe the circumstances in which restrictive physical intervention is an appropriate response and how staff at the school will fulfill their responsibilities in those circumstances. The school will ensure that pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits, which govern behaviour in the school.

1.2 Principles

An effective behaviour regulation policy should secure an orderly and purposeful atmosphere in which activities and learning can take place. There may, however, be rare occasions when staff will need to use 'reasonable force' and the use of restraint or physical interventions in order to prevent injury, damage to property, the breakdown of discipline, or control children or young people for safety reasons.

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 or restrain a pupil.

The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. At Cubitt Town Primary School, restraint is used as a safety-measure, not a sanction. The purpose of any physical contact, including restraint, is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the person being held, along with anybody else whose welfare is being threatened.

1.3 Positive Behaviour Management

All physical interventions at this school are conducted within a framework of Positive Behaviour Management. Staff can minimise the likelihood of any incidents by:

- creating a calm, orderly and supportive school climate that minimises the risk of violence of any kind
- providing an active approach to teaching children how to manage strong emotions
- effective management of individual incidents .

The school's Behaviour Regulation Policy is intended to reward effort and application, and encourage pupils to take responsibility for improving their own behaviour. Part of our preventative approach to risk reduction involves looking for early warning signs, learning and communicating any factors which may influence poor behaviour and taking steps to divert behaviours leading towards foreseeable risk.

1.4 Minimising the Need to Use Positive Handling: De-escalation Strategies

All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and steps, which they can take to defuse and calm a situation.

Before using physical intervention always consider the following:

- Have you exhausted non-physical methods of intervention?
- Have you had regard for the pupil's level of understanding and age?
- As far as possible, have you made your intentions clear to the child?
- Have you discussed and agreed with parents the range of acceptable responses to their son/daughter's challenging behaviour?
- How important is the outcome? Does the benefit of achievement involving physical intervention outweigh not achieving without physical intervention occurring?
- Is there another adult present?
- Have you had appropriate Team Teach training?

The use of the following may exclude the need for physical intervention.

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation, reason and distraction.
- Give clear directions for pupils to stop using simple, clear statements.
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.

- Speak and move calmly and confidently.
- Well- chosen language is used to de-escalate situations.
- Remove an audience from the immediate location 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.
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help before the problem escalates.
- Planned ignoring - sizing up which behaviour needs intervention and which to ignore
- Giving a signal - 'the look', catching the child's eye or pointing to him/her when aware that misbehaviour is contemplated or beginning
- Coming closer and touching - having the pupil near an adult or giving a pat on the shoulder while making a limiting demand - proximity
- Showing interest - a student may be diverted from misbehaviour if an adult shows interest in the task
- Humour - kidding the pupil out of it - not sarcasm
- Offering help when the pupil is about to become frustrated
- Regrouping
- Changing activities - when tension mounts or interest flags
- Friendly appeal
  a) Appeal to a personal relationship;
  b) Warning of consequences - 'that's dangerous'
  c) Peer group reaction 'what will the others think?'
- Time out. Pupils are made to face away from the group, or sit distant from the group alone
- Distraction – refocusing attention to a new task or situation.

1.5 <u>When Positive Handling May Be Used</u>

Physical intervention should be avoided wherever possible and where it is needed, for example where pupils with severe behavioural difficulties present a risk to themselves and others, it must be in the best interest of the child/vulnerable adult and should be only the minimum required.

There are times when physical intervention is appropriate but it must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned as far as this is possible.

Section 550A of The Education Act 2006 under the heading Power to Restrain Pupils allows teachers and other authorised staff of a school to use reasonable force in accordance with the following:

- If the young person is in immediate danger of harming himself or others

- If the young person is in danger of seriously causing damage or vandalism to property
- Physical Intervention can be used when a pupil is engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at school or amongst any of its pupils whether in a teaching session or otherwise
- Committing any criminal offence (or for a child under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be classed as an offence for an older pupil).

Examples of situations that fall within these categories might include the following, if:

- A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- Pupils are fighting;
- A pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate significant damage or vandalism to property;
- Misuse of equipment or dangerous materials;
- Carrying and/or using weapons;
- A pupil is running in such a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others;
- A pupil absconds from class or tries to leave school (N.B. this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).
- A disruptive pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom; • A pupil is behaving a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.
- A pupil demonstrated behaviour which causes significant concern for the health and safety of a group or class.

Positive Handling may also need to be used for pupils with EBSA (Emotional Based School Avoidance) and Attachment, in order to prise a child off a parent to support separation at morning drop off.

1.6 <u>General advice for staff - Reasonable and Proportionate Use of Positive Handling</u>

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.

Positive Handling uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time.

The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled, and the nature of the harm they might cause.

When physical controls are considered staff should think about the answers to 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?

If staff can answer these questions it is more likely that a physical intervention will be judged to be reasonable and proportionate.

1.7 Positive Handling Procedure

The following guidelines must be followed in all positive handling situations:

1. If you are moving a pupil, tell them what you are going to do before you start.
2. Ensure that the transfer route and surface is stable and clear of objects.
3. Two people are required for any hoisting transfer.
4. Ensure the transfer is over the shortest distance possible.
5. Implement the principles for safer moving and handling
    - Plan and prepare
    - Keep close to the load
    - Create and maintain a stable base
    - Moderately flex back, hips & knees
    - Use a secure hold
    - Avoid twisting
    - Lead with the head
    - Move smoothly
6. A correct lift should be used at all times.
7. Any pain or injury should be reported to the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion.

1.8 Reasonable Physical Interventions

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.

1.9 Unreasonable Use of Force/Prohibited Forms of Restraint or Holding

It is not reasonable to use force simply to enforce compliance in circumstances where there is no risk. Nor is it reasonable to use any more force than is necessary to achieve a reduction in risk. Under no circumstances should pain be deliberately inflicted or

should pupils be deliberately subjected to undignified or humiliating treatment (this should not be confused with the unavoidable discomfort associated with some approved techniques for disengaging from assaults such as bites and grabs.)

Reasonable force DOES NOT include the following actions, or any others that may reasonably be expected to cause injury or be considered indecent. For example:

- Holding around the neck or collar
- Restricting a young person's ability to breathe
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Holding or pulling by hair or ear
- Locking a young person in a room
- Corporal punishment (or the threat of it)
- Any act or threat of an act, such as hitting, kicking, slapping, punching, prodding, poking, throwing an object, rough handling etc... which causes or threatens harm or the expectation of harm to a pupil
- Holding a child face down (supine holds should only be used for specific identified children, if it is the only safe way to hold the child.

A dynamic risk assessment will need to be made). The above actions are forbidden and could lead to disciplinary action against staff.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Who Can Use Positive Handling Strategies

Only members of staff in receipt of positive handling training are authorised by the Headteacher to use reasonable force, as a last resort, to control or restrain pupils. Authorisation is not given to volunteers, students on placement, short-term agency supply staff or visitors.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that staff are fully informed of the school's policy and understand what authorisation entails. The Headteacher will arrange training and guidance to staff as appropriate.

2.3 Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion

This person is responsible for:

- the assessment of the moving and handling needs of students in the school (on entry to the school and as and when changes occur);
- the writing of risk assessments and subsequent plans. This will be done in liaison with parents/carers, the student (where possible) and health professionals (where applicable);
- the maintenance of written risk assessment records; and

- ensure that the school has the necessary equipment.

2.4 Staff Responsibilities

It is a member of staff's legal duty to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do or not do.

Staff must therefore:

- work within their own limitations and not carry out any activity for which they are not competent;
- co-operate with their line manager in performing risk assessments for positive handling;
- use equipment provided e.g. hoists;
- follow safe working practices;
- not interfere with or misuse any equipment or aids that have been provided;
- not use any equipment for which they have not received appropriate training;
- follow training and instructions provided on positive handling;
- wear suitable clothing and footwear for positive handling (whilst still complying with the dress code); and
- report pregnancy or any medical conditions which may affect their ability to perform positive handling tasks.

Staff must report any unsafe situations to the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, or any other member of SLT. This includes things such as:

- faulty equipment – which should be labelled and immediately taken out of use;
- unsafe working practices; and
- environmental problems.

3 Safeguarding

3.1 If a member of staff has any concerns about a student's reaction to the positive handling process, or they notice anything during the procedure which causes concern they must follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report their concerns immediately.

3.2 If a student makes an allegation against an adult working at the school, this must be reported in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. Please refer to Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

3.3 An adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school must report this to the Headteacher or the DSL. If the concern is about the Headteacher it should be reported to the LADO. Please refer to Managing Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy for reporting procedures.