





Christleton Primary School
Be the best you can be

**Positive handling
Policy**

Date of Policy	March 2017
Policy Reviewed	
Next Review	March 2020
Signed Head teacher	
Signed Chair of Governors	

Christleton Primary School

Positive Handling Policy

Introduction

Positive Handling at Christleton Primary School (defined as the full range of strategies used to manage behaviour including where necessary physical intervention) is seen as a proactive response to meet individual pupil needs and any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way that staff exercise their responsibilities and the range of behaviour management strategies used.

The policy has been developed in response to The Education and Inspections Act 2006 section 93, which reinforces, supersedes and replaces previous guidance. It also takes cognisance of joint guidance issued by the DfES and Department of Health, and follows the guidance for 'The Use of Reasonable Force to Control or Restrain Pupils'.

The policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies and guidance relating to interaction between adults and pupils, in particular the school behaviour policy.

The policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils who may display physically aggressive or violent behaviour. This statement includes information on the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils.

"Adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour, and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions"

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Who Work With Children and Young People in Education Settings (DCSF March 2009)

Objectives

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are valued in our school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the discipline and class/pupil management 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. Christleton Primary School acknowledges that physical techniques are a very minor part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management and that such actions will be rare and only used when deemed to be absolutely necessary.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school:

- Clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where use of force is necessary
- Are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

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).

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 application of any form of physical control inevitably carries an attached risk of unintended harm and this places staff and the school at risk of potential litigation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow this policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

Staff must be aware that they are responsible for:

- assessing risks (dynamic risk assessment) related to individual circumstances which may arise in the course of their day-to-day duties
- are required to justify their decisions in writing through the recording and reporting procedures outlined later in this document.

Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working in this school has a right to:

- recognition of their unique identity;
- be treated with respect and dignity;
- learn and work in a safe environment;
- be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse.

Pupils attending this school and their parents have a right to:

- individual consideration of pupil needs by the staff who have responsibility for their care and protection;
- expect staff to undertake their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies;
- be informed about school rules, relevant policies and the expected conduct of all pupils and staff working in school;
- expect IBP's to be designed to achieve outcomes that reflect the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern and others affected by the behaviour requiring intervention
- be informed about the school's complaints procedure.

The school will ensure that pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits, which govern behaviour in the school.

Use of Physical Handling

No legal definition of reasonable force exists however for the purpose of this policy and the implementation of it in Christleton Primary School:

- Positive Handling uses the **minimum** degree of force necessary for the **shortest period of time** to prevent a pupil harming himself, herself, others or property.
- 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.
- Staff would be expected to follow the pupil's IBP / Risk Assessment in the first instance to manage an incident/challenging behaviour
- If this was unsuccessful and the situation continues to escalate staff would then be expected to employ other techniques that they have been trained in.
- Only if all of the above have been tried and are unsuccessful should staff even consider any other form of restraint. The overriding consideration should still be the reasonableness and proportionality of the force used.

All the techniques used take account of a young person's;

- age
- gender
- **level of physical, emotional and intellectual development**
- special needs
- social context

They also provide a gradual, graded system of response.

Where behavioural records and/or risk assessment identifies a need for a planned approach, plans (IBPs) are written for individual children and where possible, these will be designed through multi agency collaboration and, with parental consent, shared with other agencies/services supporting the child to facilitate consistency of approach so far as is possible.

Minimising the Need to Use Force

At Christleton Primary School we constantly strive to create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of force. In addition to this, pupils who present with persistent challenging behaviour and have been awarded IPF or a statement will work with a 1:1 support assistant who will work closely with the SENCO and classteacher in supporting the IBP and associated behaviour targets.

Through the PSHE curriculum and the SEAL programme, pupils learn about feelings and managing conflict, where this is appropriate to their level of development. The ethos further promotes independence, choice and inclusion; pupils are given maximum opportunity for personal growth and emotional wellbeing.

Reasonable force should only be used when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.

Prevention of unsafe behaviour will be enabled through:

- The deployment of appropriate staffing numbers;
- The deployment of appropriately trained and competent staff;
- Avoiding situations and triggers known to provoke challenging behaviour;
- Creating opportunities for choice and achievement;
- Developing staff expertise through a programme of Continuous Professional Development;
- Staff employ 'diffusion' techniques to avert escalation of behaviour into violence or aggression

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 (see appendix). If anyone is injured an accident/incident report must also be completed. Records of incidents must be given to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher as soon as possible, and 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 as the positive application of force by staff, in order to overcome rigorous resistance, completely directing, deciding and controlling a person’s free movement.

Strategies: Time-Out / Withdrawal / Emergency Physical Interventions / Recovery

Time out

This involves restricting the child’s access to positive reinforcements in a room or area which they may freely leave. It is a specific behaviour management technique and does not necessarily mean time spent out of the class/group, but rather refers to a withdrawal of attention and/or things they find rewarding. It could be as simple as turning away from a child who is attention-seeking, or positioning a child away from the class/group. This withdrawal of attention could also be achieved by sending a pupil to another class/group or a quiet area.

Withdrawal

Which involves removing the child from a situation that causes anxiety or distress to a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities. This can mean removing a child from the class/group, to allow them time to calm down or to prevent a situation from escalating. They may need time away from staff and pupils (either on their own or in another class/group) in order to break the cycle/pattern of their behaviour or to reduce their level of anxiety/distress. The arrangement of “quiet time” shall be negotiated between the child and staff involved.

Emergency Physical Intervention

May be necessary if a situation arises that was not foreseen or is uncharacteristic of the pupil. Members of staff retain their duty of care to pupils and any response, even in an emergency, must be proportionate to the circumstances. Staff should use the minimum force necessary to prevent injury and maintain safety, consistent with the training that they have received. Following any such incident, a risk assessment will be devised (or the existing one updated) to support effective responses to any such situations which may arise in the future.

Wherever possible assistance will be sought from another member of staff.

Recovery

Pupils who may be distressed by events can be offered the following support:

- Quiet time taking part in a calming activity
- Quiet time away from the incident/trigger
- Resuming their usual routine/previous activity as soon as possible, especially for pupils with special needs
- Time with a member of staff to debrief the incident

Injury to the Child

Whilst the physical techniques are intended to reduce risk, there is always risk when two or more people engage to use force to protect, release or restrain. Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the child, but any injury will be reported using the ‘Positive Handling Form’. Any injuries to pupils as a result of incidents involving restraint will be reported to the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher and parents / carer.

A number of staff are trained in First Aid. Any may be called upon to implement First Aid or seek further guidance in the event of an injury or physical distress arising as a result of a physical intervention.

Staff: Authorised Staff / Health and Safety / Training / Support

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 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 at staff meetings.

Through the provision of 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 Training

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that training in the use of positive handling is available to staff and is kept up to date. The school provides training for all appropriate staff and the Headteacher retains a list of all those staff trained. The list is reviewed on an annual basis.

No member of staff will be expected to use techniques without appropriate training. Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken. Arrangements will be made clear as part of the induction of staff and training will be provided as part of on-going staff development.

Most school staff working directly with pupils will receive appropriate training as the school is considered to be a low risk setting. Training is required for most staff as they are expected to be able to actively support each other, and pupils, if an incident occurs and a child needs physical intervention to keep themselves and/or others safe.

However, if staff are unable to support physically they are expected to support with de-escalation.

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. Where staff have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force, they should have access to support; this will be made available by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. Staff may also contact the CWAC Counselling Line.

Recording and Monitoring Incidents

Recording

Where physical control or restraint has been used, a record of the incident should be made and the Child Protection Officer should be made aware of the incident. This record should be kept in the Positive Handling section located in Safeguarding Confidential File.

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. Other agencies must be informed where appropriate.

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.

Monitoring

Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Headteacher to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour may require the use of reasonable force.

Monitoring of incidents will take place on a regular basis (at least termly) and the results used to inform planning to meet individual pupil and school needs. The Headteacher will present an annual summary of incidents that have involved the use of force to the Governing Body.

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Review of IBP/Risk Assessment

Visits Out of School

Health and Safety remains a priority and staff should carry out risk assessments for pupils prior to each visit into the community. Due consideration should be given to the following:

- Is the pupil able to cope with the demands of the proposed visit?
- Are there sufficient, suitably trained staff - particularly if there should be an incident?
- How will you contact school to get extra help if necessary and how will you get back?

Whistle Blowing

Whilst the training provided to all staff, encourages the use of help protocols and reflective practice, it is acknowledged that under some circumstances, physical intervention can be misapplied. Staff are reminded that part of their duty of care to pupils includes the requirement to report any such matters which cause them concern in relation to pupil management and welfare. Any such concerns should be raised in accordance with the whistle blowing policy, in order to allow concerns to be addressed and practice improved.

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.

Appendix 1 Physical Handling Form

Name of Child
Date of Birth
SEN status
Date
Description of incident and reason for positive handling
Team teach techniques used
Description of any injuries to the above child or others (also to be recorded in first aid book)
Member of leadership team informed