

Witherley CE Primary School – Positive Handling Policy

Introduction

Staff at Witherley CE Primary School are trained to look after pupils in their care. Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow the school's Positive Handling Policy.

Only staff trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategy techniques through *Safer Handling* will use physical intervention techniques with children when necessary.

The term positive handling includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. 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.

The school takes seriously its duty of care to pupils, employees and visitors to the school.

- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care.
- The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables a school's staff to use such force as is reasonable. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force. Staff who have been trained are able to recognise and judge if the use of intervention is necessary in order to prevent serious harm coming to the child or other individuals through the child's actions.

Safer Handling

Safer Handling specialise in the delivery of accredited and nationally recognised Positive Handling and Physical Intervention award certificate for those working with children, young people or vulnerable adults. The training is both legally compliant and properly risk assessed and is well established across the UK. The courses teach staff a range of appropriate and effective physical skills, as well as, provides them with a concise Legal Briefing on their rights and responsibilities regarding the use of force. The focus of the training is always on de-escalating situations; however, it is important for staff to know how to safely and effectively intervene physically where necessary, in order to prevent a greater harm from occurring.

Staff undergo a one course led by qualified trainers with a refresher course undertaken every two years. Although any member of staff may be required to physically intervene with a pupil who is endangering themselves or others, we would expect accredited staff to take over as soon as possible.

Before using physical controls

- Showing care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiating and reasoning.

- Giving clear directions for pupils to stop
- Reminding them about rules and likely outcomes
 - Removing an audience or taking vulnerable pupils to a safe place
- Making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons
- Using positive guidance to escort pupils to somewhere less pressured
- Ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and call for help.

Restraint

At this school we only use physical restraint when there is no realistic alternative. We expect staff to risk assess and choose the safest alternative. It also means that we expect staff to experiment and think creatively about alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the child and that it reduces rather than increases risk. Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate.

Physical restraint must only be in accordance with the following:

- The child should be in immediate danger of harming itself or another person or in danger of seriously damaging property.
- The member of staff should have good grounds for believing this.
- Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied.
- Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before applying restraint. These staff can act as assistants or witnesses.
- Once safe, restraint should be relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control.
 - Restraint should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- Physical restraint should not usually be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate danger present to people and property.
- The restraint should be discussed with the child, if appropriate, and the parents at the earliest opportunity.

In addition, whilst or before intervention, staff should speak calmly as a way of reassurance e.g. I am doing this to keep you safe.

Responding to unforeseen emergencies

Even the best planning system cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. An unforeseen event may require an emergency response.

After that event, staff have a duty to plan ahead and prepare a risk assessment.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are required for pupils who exhibit extreme behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. When considering a pupil's behaviour, staff will think about the following questions:

- 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

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. Any particular physical techniques which have been found to be effective should be named, along with any alerts to any which have proved to be ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Positive Handling Plans should be considered along with the child's Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) and any other planning document relevant to the pupil. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special needs and social context.

Post Incident Debrief

Following a serious incident, it is the policy of the school to offer support to all involved. This is an opportunity for learning and time needs to be given for following up incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other peoples' perspective. It is difficult to devise a framework of support that meets the need of all staff. As individuals we all vary in how much support we need after an unpleasant incident. Generally, a member of senior staff would expect to talk to staff and children involved (if appropriate) in any incidents involving violence. If members of staff need time to rest or compose themselves, then the head teacher or deputy will make arrangements for the class group to be supported.

Recording

- All incidents of unacceptable behaviour should be recorded.
- All serious incidents or incidents involving restraint will be recorded on CPOMs

Within these recording strategies, all details must be recorded by witnesses within twenty-four hours and signed by at least two members of staff. The Head Teacher needs to be informed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head Teacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required.

Parents

When there is concern about a child, parents will be invited to contribute to a risk assessment and Positive Handling Plan. Written parental agreement will form part of this. Parents will be informed of the school's policies. Parents will be informed following serious incidents.

Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints will follow the school's complaints procedure.

Positive Handling Plan

Childs Name:	DOB:	Year Group:
Date Plan started:	Date Plan discontinued:	
Effective Strategies previously used		
Strategies not recommended		
Physical Interventions used effectively		
Physical interventions which are not effective/appropriate		