



'Learning Together'

LYNCH HILL SCHOOL PRIMARY ACADEMY

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

New : Jan 2014

Next Review: 2015

1. The Legal Framework

Physical intervention or positive handling should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force, as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself)
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

(Examples of possible situations are given in Appendix 1)

It may be used where the pupil is on school premises or elsewhere in the lawful control or charge of the school staff member (e.g. a school visit).

2.1 Definition of restraint/ Physical intervention

Physical intervention is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property. Physical intervention should only be carried out in the best interests of the child, reasonable, proportionate and necessary.

2.2 General policy aims

Staff at Lynch Hill School Primary Academy recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the strategies available to secure pupil safety / well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline. Our policy on restraint should therefore be read in conjunction with our Positive Behaviour, Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

2.3 Specific aims of the positive handling policy

To protect every person in the school community from harm

To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful

To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations

2.4 Training

Staff training on the use of positive handling shall be provided at regular intervals as recommended. The recommended training is Team Teach. Lynch Hill School provides training for staff members who have an increased risk of encountering situations where the use of force might be necessary.

3.1 Alternative strategies

There are some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (eg is a pupil is about to run across a road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives e.g. use of assertiveness skills such as:

- the *broken record* in which an instruction is repeated until the pupil complies
- use of a distracter, such as a loud whistle, to interrupt the behaviour (such as a fight) long enough for other methods of verbal control to be effective
- withdrawal of attention (audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened
- other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour or changing the activity (in these cases the incident can be dealt with later when emotions are no longer running high)
- changing the adult involved with the child
- the employment of other sanctions consistent with the School's policy on behaviour and discipline.

If you suspect that a pupil has a weapon and may resist a search or not surrender it, the Police must always be called.

3.2 Why use positive handling?

Positive handling should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him / herself or others. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical intervention would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the School's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in *loco parentis* and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well being. Failure to physically restrain a pupil who is subsequently injured or injures another, could, in certain circumstances, lead to an accusation of negligence. At the same time staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

3.3 Use of positive handling

Positive handling should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention or re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying positive handling, positive intervention or restraint (Appendix 1) although there is no absolute definition of this, as what constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary though it should be sustained for the minimum possible time.

In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective. Physical intervention should be a last resort.

When physical intervention becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Use intervention in line with the size, height and position of the child
- Involve another member of staff if possible, sending a message to the school office
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Swap places with another member of staff to give them respite from a difficult situation. All staff should immediately exchange places if given the codewords: **Help is available**
- 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
- Ignore a child's verbal requests
- Approach a child from behind
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck

3.4 Actions after an incident

Physical intervention often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. **A member of the leadership team should be informed of any incident as soon as possible** and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural IEP, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the SENCO and senior staff.

It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

All incidents should be recorded as soon as possible in the bound and numbered book, located in Leo's Pride. All sections of this report should be completed so that in the event of any future complaint a full record is available. A member of the leadership team will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

Following an incident a positive handling plan should be written or an existing positive handling plan may need reviewing. Positive Handling plans should be reviewed regularly.

4 Risk Assessments

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. At Lynch Hill School, we write Positive Handling Plans to identify particular strategies and techniques to support children. Such planning will address:

- Management of the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)

- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

5 Complaints

A clear restraint policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and social services department under child protection procedures.

It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

We will review this policy on a yearly basis.

Appendix 1

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force, positive intervention or physical restraint?

Examples of situations that may require restraint are when:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others
- a pupil absconding from a class or trying to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area
- a pupil behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson, sporting event or school visit

Appendix 2
Positive Handling Plan
Example

LYNCH HILL SCHOOL
POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN
(risk assessment)

INSERT PHOTO

NAME: Child Example
CLASS:

POSITIVES

(What they are good at and what they like)

- Child loves art
- She likes animals
- She is usually very polite and friendly
- Child is helpful and enjoys doing jobs for adults
- She enjoys learning
- Child has good ideas
- Child likes to bring things in from home to share.
- She is creative

TRIGGERS

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

- Child doesn't like change or unfamiliar people talking to her
- She is struggling with another pupil in Year 5
- She is struggling to accept her new school as she felt safe in her previous school and had friends
- Child doesn't like the school bells – but we haven't been as aware
- She doesn't react well to loud voices or staff being angry
- She find transitions difficult to manage such as coming in from break time.
- Child appears to find the school noisy and busy, she might be struggling to get used to how big the school is and how many children are in it.
- She made friends quickly but is now having difficulties with the friendship group
- She does not like to have discussions about her past or her family – it is still very raw and upsetting for her
- Following school behaviour policy for example taking kidzone away when her behaviour is unacceptable.

MODIFICATIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENT OR ROUTINES

(What we can do to prevent problems from arising)

- Child likes to be given jobs
- She sometimes needs Time Out or time in the Nurture room or sensory room/ quiet time
- She has 1:1 time after break times and lunch times to share any worries or stress

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

Call Nan if Child is putting herself in danger (leaving school/ behaving dangerously)
 Explain to her that she cannot leave the school premises because we need to keep her safe and that we care about her.

Verbal advice and support

Distraction – Guinea Pigs

Reassurance

Planned Ignoring

Contingent Touch

CALM script

CALM body language

Give take up time

Withdrawal offered - quiet time

Withdrawal Directed

Flexible negotiation

Involve new person

Choices offered

Limits set

Humour – NOT SCARCASM

Reminders of success

LEVEL OF RISK PRESENTED DAILY



LEVEL OF RISK PRESENTED DURING RESTRAINT



CHARACTERISTICS OF INCIDENTS

(key behaviours, attitude, etc)

1. she will run off and wander around the school
2. she may try to leave to go home
3. She has climbed onto the climbing frame and up the slide and the wrong side of the stairs – putting herself at risk.
4. Child gets angry and will speak rudely to people she feels are trying to stop her
5. She has threatened to slap, hit, punch and bite
6. She has thrown chairs
7. She has shouted at members of staff
8. She cries

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

If Child begins to get physically aggressive towards staff OR needs to be restrained to keep her safe then these physical techniques can be used only when necessary:

Call Nan/ Police if Child leaves the school grounds

Prevent her from leaving by blocking or holding her bike

Cradle Hug

T Wrap

Sitting on Chairs – to prevent her from leaving or behaving dangerously

Sitting on the Ground

Remove shoes

Single elbow

Double elbow

Double elbow cross

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

1. Once Child is calm, wherever possible, go back to join the rest of the class and re-engage with an activity.
2. The adults should clearly record the incident on an Alert form and the restraint form
3. Record the incident on the behaviour logs and verbally communicate with Nan.
4. Once there has been adequate time to calm down, explain to Child why she was held or prevented from leaving (to keep her safe), ask her how she felt, explain to her what the consequences of her behaviours are.
5. Where possible carry on as normal, make no more reference to the incident once it has been discussed.

NOTIFICATION

(Who have these plans and strategies been shared with)

Service User	Parents/Guardians	Placing Authority
Social Worker	Educational Psychologist	Doctor/Nurse
Area Child Protection Team	Key Staff	All Staff
Therapist		
SEBDOS		

NAMES

SIGNATURES

DATE

REVIEW DATE