

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

(Reasonable Force)



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Grange Park Primary School Positive Handling Policy

Rationale

At Grange Park Primary School, we believe that excellent personal and professional relationships between all the staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in our school. The vast majority of our pupils respond to the positive behaviour management employed by the staff. We have a very strong supportive and positive ethos around the school, but we acknowledge that there may be circumstances where staff may need to take action involving the use of reasonable, proportionate and necessary force to maintain safety and order. This policy follows the DfE guidance on the 'Use of reasonable force.'

The DfE guidance details that **'Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder.'**

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise however this would include:

- self - injuring
- causing injury to others
- committing a criminal offence
- putting others at risk
- 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 or outside a classroom during a teaching session.

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'. Supply staff must ensure that they are familiar with this school's policy. Appropriate guidance and training will be given. Authorisation is **not given** to volunteers, students on placement, visitors or parents

Training of Staff

Grange Park Primary School have received training, via in-school CPD and Educare, in positive behaviour management techniques, de-escalation including the ability to respond to 'risk behaviour' using non-verbal, verbal and, if required, physical approaches appropriate to the person, situation and level of risk.

Definition of Positive Handling

Positive handling should be seen as a range of strategies and techniques to reduce the risks to individuals through diversion, diffusion and de-escalation when an individual's behaviour is at risk of becoming extreme 'risk behaviour'. It also includes supporting an individual during the recovery after an incident. Restraint, physical intervention, of an individual should only be used when other techniques have failed or the risks or likelihood of harm are great and/or imminent.

1. Physical Contact

Grange Park Primary School does not operate a 'non-contact' policy with children. There are situations in which proper physical contact occurs between staff and pupils. It would seem reasonable that young children require opportunities for close contact, as long as this is within public view, sensitively carried out and age/person appropriate.

2. Physical/ Direct Intervention

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

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of reestablishing 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 physical restraint, 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.

In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate and effective physical restraint should be a last resort.

Types of Incidents

The incidents described in The Education and Inspections Act 2006 The Use of Reasonable Force to Control and Restrain Pupils fall into three broad categories:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury.
- Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.
- Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order or discipline.

Examples of situations which fall within one of the first two categories are:

- 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 damage or vandalism to property;
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- A pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others;
- A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

Examples of situations which fall into the third category are:

- A pupil persistently refuses to obey a request to leave a classroom because their behaviour is unacceptable or disruptive.
- A pupil is putting at risk the safety of their peers and staff.
- A pupil persistently refuses to re-enter the building after break/lunchtime.

Positive Handling Strategies - Directive Actions

When a child's behaviour is causing concern and may become volatile, de-escalation techniques should be employed. These include:

- Time out - some pupils may have agreements in place with members of staff that they can move to a quiet supervised area to calm down.
- Withdrawal - removing a child from an inflammatory situation to a quieter area to allow them to calm down. This may involve some physical direction through guiding the pupil by their hand, arm or shoulder to this quiet area.

If the above measures have failed to resolve the situation and there is a clear and imminent risk to individuals' safety or of serious damage to property then a physical intervention will be required. 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. Staff should work in teams, if available, to ensure the safety, care and welfare of all involved

When physical restraint becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff, if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to 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

- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil (see behaviour policy)
- 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
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil
- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)

Actions after an incident

Following any such incident, the events will be recorded in CPOMS. Parents will be informed of the details of the incident as soon as possible.

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
- Time spent at home if the pupil is very distressed

Injury to the Child

Any injuries to pupils, as a result of incidents involving physical intervention, will be recorded on the CPOMS incident using the body map. On inspection of the report, the Headteacher will seek advice and take the appropriate action.

Recording and Monitoring Incidents

Where physical interventions have been used, a record of the incident will be recorded in CPOMS. 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. This will be monitored by the Headteacher, as appropriate.

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. Such planning will address:

- Management of the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict)
- 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

Whistle Blowing

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 with the Headteacher, another member of the Safeguarding Team or with the Chair of Governors, 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. 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 guidance received from the Designated Officer (LADO).

Grange Park Primary School acknowledges the School's legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and pupils with special educational needs. School provides additional support, resources and/or provision for these pupils in line with their identified needs.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

[Behaviour and Relationships Policy](#)

Health & Safety Policy

[Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy](#)

[SEND Policy](#)

[Complaints Policy](#)

Also see [DfE guidance 'The Use of Reasonable Force, advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies.'](#)