



Positive Handling

Introduction

The Governing Body and Management of the school recognise the serious implications for all concerned when the use of physical intervention becomes necessary. In particular they acknowledge the stress and very real anxiety that such actions can and do generate in children and young people, parents and staff. The production of this policy and guidance will ensure everyone has a positive and safe way to respond to the use of physical intervention.

This policy has been formulated to ensure that children and young people, parents, staff and the Education and Libraries Directorate and other agencies are fully aware of the context for the school's response to behaviour that requires physical intervention. Further it is designed to provide detailed guidance for all concerned regarding the use of holding, escorting and restraint, including when it is appropriate to physically intervene and what strategies must be used in so doing.

Key Aspects of Policy are:-

Clear and unequivocal emphasis on the rights of children to be kept safe at all times.

Physical intervention should only be used when all else has been tried and the situation is likely to become dangerous for children and staff.

Staff need to keep themselves safe at all times.

Past experiences of children will affect the way they respond to physical interventions. Those with a history of physical or sexual abuse will often have painful and disturbing memories triggered by such interventions.

Children with the above experiences could also experience adverse reactions to witnessing physical interventions.

All actions must be conducted in the context of the school's policy.

Staff have a right to be trained in the use of physical interventions.

Clear and accurate records of the antecedents, behaviour and consequences must be maintained.

A fundamental issue to be considered in the use of any form of physical contact with a child or young person is their absolute right to be both 'touched' and 'not touched'. It is clear that for some young people who may have had experiences of abuse in the past the issue of being touched in any way must be managed sensitively. Similarly for some young people their need for emotional support and comfort may at times extend to being physically comforted and this too must be managed appropriately. In the light of these examples the judgements that all adults must make before touching any young person are as follows:-

- Is the physical contact truly in the best interests of the child?
- How do I feel about this level of contact? What is in this for me?
- Is this appropriate given my knowledge of the young person?
- What would be the consequence of not making physical contact?

Whenever possible strategies for physical contact/intervention should be detailed within a plan formulated with the young person. The actions might then be properly reviewed.

It is the responsibility of everyone at Sandhurst Primary School to ensure that the environment is calm and safe for all. Children and young people have the responsibility to recognise when their behaviour is likely to compromise this situation and to have due regard for the comfort, safety and well being of all within the school community. Parents must be encouraged to support the school in the provision of a safe and happy community by discussing with their son/daughter the need to be sensitive to the needs of others in the school. Home school contract will be one way that this is achieved especially as it would set clear expectations for both parents and the school from the point of admission.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented and maintained through:

- The recruitment and selection of staff which will be governed by the principles enshrined in the Warner report 'Choosing with Care'.
- As a minimum the selection process will ensure that references are sought and obtained from the most recent employer, appropriate police checks are conducted prior to the employee having substantial unsupervised access to children; list 99 and the DOH consultancy list are checked; interview techniques go beyond the standard formal interview and include opportunities for the candidates to engage in focused debates designed to provide insights to their individual values and beliefs.
- The provision to every member of staff and Governor a copy of the policy document.
- Introduction of all new staff will ensure that there is an opportunity for detailed study and discussion of the policy with senior staff and ongoing discussion within the staff group.
- Managers have in place systems to identify individual and group training needs; ensure a consistent interpretation of policy and practice; support the formulation of personal development contracts.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document the terms holding, escorting and restraint will be defined by the outcome, which is intended when the physical intervention is applied.

- *Escorting* – the intention to move a child away from a particular area. The degree of force will determine when this becomes a restraint i.e. when the child has no choice but to move under the directions of staff.
- *Holding* – the intention is to keep the child in a particular place see above for when this becomes restraint.
- *Restraint* – the intention is to overpower the child because they have lost all control and are a danger to themselves and or others or property.

Holding and Escorting

To be used to discourage and redirect from unwanted behaviours which are likely to lead to loss of control by the young person resulting in severe disruption to the orderly environment, damage to property, damage to self and or others.

Staff should use their judgement in using this method as to whether it is likely to lead to

full-scale restraint. Factors for consideration will be the likely reaction of the young person based on the most recent and accurate information available and the content of any plan; the environment i.e. the impact of onlookers, events immediately preceding the incident and whether the young person has been misusing alcohol or drugs.

It is important that at all times the young person is made aware of what is expected of them and that as soon as there is a genuine attempt to comply with such expectations the hold be ceased. Always the amount of force that is used should be the minimum necessary to successfully achieve the desired outcome as defined above.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint should only be used when all other strategies have been tried and found to be unsuccessful. In the first instance staff should always attempt to diffuse the situation by:

- Appropriate use of voice in terms of pace, volume and tone.
- Adjustment of body position to ensure minimum threat to the young person and maximum safety for staff, generally a sideways stance.
- Facial expression eye contact is positive and calming.
- Appropriate use of humour.
- Making clear the expectations of all concerned in the incident and the likely consequences if behaviour deteriorates further.
- Seeking help from other staff to diffuse the situation.

When restraint is used it should always be USED WITH CARE

URGENTLY	required to prevent immediate possibility of harm or damage to self, others or property.
SAFE	using only the minimum of force necessary.
EFFECTIVE	not if it will make the situation worse.
DECENT	Great care must always be taken to avoid sensitive areas of the body.
WITNESSED	every effort must be made to ensure the presence of another member of staff as witness and assistant.
DEPENDENT	of size the method of restraint used must depend for its efficacy on the techniques and not the relative sizes of staff member and young person.
TIMED	the restraint should only continue for the minimum time for it to be effective.
HARMLESS	it must always be an act of care and control and never punishment.
CALMING	the intention is to help the young person regain their self-control, there should always be a calming dialogue to that end.
APPROPRIATE	to the circumstances, only when all else has failed, only for as long as necessary.
RECORDED	all incidents of restraint must be recorded.
EXPLAINED	reasons for the restraint and resolution of the incident should be conducted with the young person as soon after the incident as will be effective. All restraints should be

discussed at the earliest opportunity by the staff concerned and a senior member of staff.

The above has been adapted from material used by the Hesley Group

Support for Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that safety and well being of all members of Sandhurst Primary School community at all times. This responsibility must extend to themselves in the first instance. It is therefore essential that staff make a judgement quickly about the safety of using a hold or restraint. They should only proceed if they have determined that all else has been tried and failed, that there is likely to be serious harm to persons or property if nothing is done or that the good order of the environment will be severely disrupted. Finally that they can apply the hold or restraint safely for the young person and themselves.

In circumstances where staff judge that they are unable to apply restraint satisfying the above condition of safety they should quickly send for another member of staff and do what they can to contain the situation. It should be remembered that the children and young people at Sandhurst Primary School are active members of the community and as such should be encouraged to go for help when the circumstances dictates to be necessary.

Staff that have had to use physical intervention will be offered the opportunity to discuss their feelings about the incident as soon after completion of the recording pro-forma as is helpful. It is an expectation that all staff acknowledge the importance of using a senior member of staff to discuss the issues raised for them personally by using physical restraint.

Exclusion

- The Head Teacher can exclude a pupil but can only do so in line with the requirements within the current Government guidelines and following any other amendments from the LA. For all exclusions, the Exclusion Officer must be informed. This is done via the Digital Front Door found on Kelsi
- If a pupil's behaviour continues to be disruptive or violent and is identified as being a serious breach of the school's behavior policy, in spite of applying all the suggested and agreed measures, and is undermining the quality of teaching and learning for other pupils and, if allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school then procedures for the exclusion of the pupil will commence.
- Parents will be notified of the reason for the exclusion and invited to discuss the matter with the Head Teacher and SENCo. Before the child is re-admitted to school, a meeting between the parents, school and any other outside agencies that are involved will be arranged. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss strategies and a way forward to ensure that the offending behaviour pattern is not repeated. A written record of the discussion, and commitments to the agreed plan, by the parents, the child and the school, will be made. One copy will be kept in the school's record and one sent to the parent.

- The Headteacher will inform the governors of fixed term exclusions of more than 5 days.
- Parents have the right to make representation about all exclusions to the governors.
- Governors' Discipline Committee meets to consider a fixed period exclusion of more than 15 days in any one term.

Use of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is only used to prevent a pupil causing harm to himself/herself or others, seriously damaging property, or committing an act which risks harm to people or property. Alternatives to physical restraint should always be considered and tried prior to handling a child. Some of the key points are listed below, but staff must also refer to the Positive Handling Policy.

- Only the minimum necessary force should be used and every effort made to avoid injury to the child
- Physical contact and restraint should never be used in anger
- Restraint should continue for no longer than is necessary
- Where at all possible, more than one adult should be present
- No adult should be expected or required to restrain a child, if by doing so they will put themselves at risk
- Children who require complex or repeated physical management will have a written positive handling plan which has been agreed by parents and relevant external agencies
- All incidents will be recorded by individual staff and the child will be asked to record a written reflection of their behaviour
- Staff dealing with such children should be trained in proper and safe methods of restraint.

The Governors and managers of the school will support the actions of staff in the use of physical intervention provided that they have been conducted in the context of this policy.