



Ardley Hill Academy

Positive Handling Policy

Policy Name	Positive Handling policy
Frequency of review	Biannually
Status	Non - statutory
Reviewed on	February 2021
Reviewed by	Full Governing Body
Next review	February 2022

Rationale

Staff at Ardley Hill Academy are trained to look after children in their care. Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent young people from:

- hurting themselves or others;
- seriously disrupting good order in the school or in the location where their education is taking place;
- causing damage to property

The term 'Positive Handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. Included in this policy are a small number of responses which may involve the use of force, to control, or restrain a pupil.

At Ardley Hill Academy, we only use 'physical restraint' when there is no realistic alternative. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically, they will follow this Positive Handling Policy. The term 'physical restraint' is used when a control is used to overcome active resistance. These are referred to as 'Restrictive Physical Interventions' in national guidance (DfES 2003).

A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties; within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

Children with severe behavioural difficulties sometimes present a risk to themselves and others. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and DfE's document on the 'Use of Reasonable Force' (2013) describes the circumstances in which teachers and others authorised by the Headteacher may use reasonable force to control or restrain a pupil.

Examples of when such action may be reasonable are to prevent injury to people, damage to property or the breakdown of discipline. This policy details how we implement the guidance in this school. It is designed to help staff to ensure that any actions they take are reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary.

School Expectations

Ardley Hill Academy takes seriously its duty of care towards its children, employees and visitors to the school. Staff protection is an important part of safeguarding and child protection; both depend on confident and competent staff who feel supported by the Senior Leadership Team. This policy has a clear focus:

- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the pupils at the academy
- The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

Positive Behaviour Management

All physical interventions at Ardley Hill Academy are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. The school's behaviour policy is intended to reward effort and application, and encourage children to take responsibility for improving their own behaviour.

Part of our preventative approach to risk reduction involves looking for early warning signs, learning and communicating any factors which may influence negative behaviour and taking steps to divert behaviours leading towards foreseeable risk. Whenever possible, children are encouraged to participate in the development of their own individual Behaviour Plans by focusing on positive alternatives and choices. However, if problems arise, staff have an additional responsibility to support all children when they are under pressure and safely manage crises if, and when, they occur.

TEAM TEACH

Team-Teach provides training to staff groups in children and adult services and Health Care Trusts in behaviour supports and interventions. The training combines both theory and practice, emphasising the need for staff to show restraint rather than apply it. Providing a risk assessment structure to the selection of physical interventions that best allow the employer to provide a safer workplace for service users and staff (Team-Teach 2020).

Team-Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the pupils but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of ensuring that pupils remain safe (George Matthews, Team-Teach Director).

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Crisis intervention

It is the policy of Ardley Hill Academy that all staff are trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategies and techniques of Team-Teach, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

De-escalation strategies

Before physical intervention becomes necessary, staff will take effective action to reduce risk. They can use strategies identified on an individual pupil's Behaviour Plan as well as:

- showing care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation, reason and distraction;
- giving clear directions for children to stop;
- reminding them about rules, choices and likely outcomes;
- using well-chosen language to de-escalate situations;
- removing an audience or take vulnerable children to a safer place;

- making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons;
- using positive touch to guide or escort the pupil to somewhere less pressured;
- humour – although self-explanatory, staff should make sure the humour is used in the right context for the particular pupil
- calm talking stance – staff should endeavour to maintain a calm, confident and objective approach in conflict situations
- change of face – it should be assessed as to whether an adult present needs to be moved out of sight as this might defuse the situation
- ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and get help

Help Protocols

The expectation at Ardley Hill Academy is that all staff should support one another. This means that staff always offer help and accept it as appropriate. Help does not always mean taking over. It may mean being available and stating to staff that “help is available”. Staff may also be required to seek support in locating a member of staff or supervising a group of children. Colleagues support each other by acting as critical friends during and after incidents.

Proactive physical interventions

If a situation develops that requires physical intervention and where the adult(s) need to assume control, staff should be aware of their surroundings and ensure that they do not apply an escort or method of physical intervention where there is limited space, e.g. on the stairs or where they expose themselves or the pupil to unnecessary risk of injury due to the environment. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the child and that it reduces, rather than increases risk.

Reasonable and proportionate

Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. Staff should not react in anger. If they feel they are becoming angry they should withdraw to allow someone else to deal with the situation. Where staff act in line with the school policy they will be supported. It is not reasonable to use force simply to enforce compliance in circumstances where there is no risk. Nor is it reasonable to use any more force than is necessary to achieve a reduction in risk.

Health and safety

Informal risk assessment is a routine part of life for staff working with pupils that display very challenging behaviour. Staff should always think ahead to anticipate possible incidents; should a proposed activity or situation involve unacceptable risk, then the correct decision is to do something else.

Any pupil that displays very challenging behaviour; and who has a positive handling plan will also have a risk assessment for behaviour, which will be kept on our online recording system. Appropriate Team Teach holds will be recorded on the behaviour management plan.

Support systems

At Ardley Hill Academy the following support structures are in place:

- pre warnings communicated within teams and during three morning briefings;
- teams respond quickly to verbal requests;

- Behaviour Plans and risk assessments kept on file to ensure all relevant information about each pupil is available to all members of staff working with them;
- concerns about individual pupils are shared at meetings;
- liaison with external agencies.

Post-incident support structure for children and staff

Following a serious incident, it is the school's policy to offer support for all involved. Time needs to be given to following up incidents and carry out a debrief so that children and staff have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective (Appendix A). These meetings can either be facilitated by the staff involved or by a member of the Senior Leadership team.

The school has a formal Complaints Procedure if there are allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force following an incident. Basic first aid treatment is offered for any injuries. Immediate action should, of course, be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded in accordance with school procedures.

The Head/SLT must be alerted as soon as possible that a situation involving physical intervention is taking or has taken place. Parents/carers must be notified about the incident using the Restricted Physical Intervention letter (Appendix B) and also may do so by other means (e.g. face to face, phone, e-mail, written in home-school communication book). The school has a formal Complaints Procedure if there are allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force following an incident.

Reporting and recording use of restrictive physical interventions

All incidents involving restrictive physical intervention must be recorded, **on the same day**, using our online recording system of SIMS and the Bound and Numbered Book.

Data from the bound book will be used to analyse incidents and identify actions required to reduce the number and nature of incidents. These records will be retained for the required periods of time in order that the school meets its legal requirements. The Headteacher and Governors will monitor behaviour incidents including restrictive physical interventions. The school's incident log is open to external monitoring and evaluation. It may be necessary to amend Behaviour Plans following a review of an incident. Staff at Ardley Hill Academy will at all times be operating in line with DfE guideline 'Use of reasonable force: advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies' (2013).

Monitoring use of restrictive physical interventions

Use of physical intervention is monitored in order to help staff learn from experience, promote the well-being of pupils in their care, and provide a basis for appropriate support. The data generated is used to help determine training needs, what specialist help is needed for pupils and to assess the appropriateness of the pupil's placement at the school.

Governors can request to view at any time the bound and numbered book and SIMS to ensure that incidents are being recorded accurately.

Policy review

This policy was first adopted by the Governing Body on 19th March 2012 and up-dated in May 2014. Further amendments were made in May 2015, June 2016 and May 2018.

The Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Definitions

There is no legal definition of what **'reasonable force'** is. For the purpose of this policy and for the implementation of it at Ardley Hill Academy:

'Positive Handling' uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming him/herself, others or property.

'Physical Restraint' will involve the use of reasonable force where there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property (restraint should be seen as a last resort).

'Physical Intervention' This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action e.g. guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

The DoH/DfES RPI (Risk Assessment) clearly defines the risks involved in applying 'restrictive physical intervention' and the staff through Team-Teach training, are skilled in taking the appropriate steps to minimise the risks of injury, pain or distress to both staff and pupils in line with the Guidance.

Related Documentation

Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Complaints Procedure Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Drafted by Monique Berry

February 2021

APPENDIX A

Reflection Time

Name _____ Date _____

What I chose to do _____

This means I was not:

Being my best

Being positive

Being kind

Being safe

Being responsible

My actions made others feel (please circle):



scared



sad



worried



angry

Next time I will:

Pupil signature _____

Staff signature _____

Name:

Date:

Time:

Teacher:

What happened before the incident?

What happened during the incident?

What happened after the incident?

APPENDIX B

Incident Date: _____

Dear Parent/Carer

Restricted Physical Intervention

It is with regret that I have to inform you that **Name here** has been involved in a serious incident which has resulted in the staff having to make a restricted physical intervention (RPI). The methods used are in line with our Positive Handling Policy using Team Teach techniques for which staff have received training. Restrictive physical interventions are used as a last resort. Below is an extract from the report we have made of the incident.

Behaviours displayed

- Risk to Self
- Risk to Others
- Risk to Safe Physical Environment
- Risk to Safe Psychological Environment
- Prevention of Psychological Distress
- Prevention of Physical Harm
- Prevention of Criminal offence
- Temporary Loss of Competence or Capacity

Physical intervention strategies used

- Help Hug
- Cradle Hug
- Wrap (Standing)
- Wrap (Seated)
- Double Elbow (Single person)
- Double Elbow (Two person)
- Half Shield
- Single Elbow (Single person)
- Single Elbow (Two person)
- Sitting Single Elbow (Two person)
- Figure of Four (Two person)
- Figure of Four (Single person)

This intervention was required due to **Name here** continuous unsafe behaviour and potential risk to themselves and others.

Have you phoned home? Yes/no

If you wish to discuss this incident in more detail, please don't hesitate to contact your child's class teacher.

Regards

Mr Steven Fox
Headteacher