

Policy for Positive Handling

This Policy has Safeguarding Children and Child Protection, and the school's caring ethos and values at its heart. Designated members of staff have taken part in Team-Teach training, where positive approaches to managing behaviour are advocated.

STATEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

At William Austin Junior School, our school community has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are our pupils. We have a Safeguarding Policy and procedures in place which reflect both national and local safeguarding responsibilities. All staff including our volunteers and supply staff are aware of our procedures, and parents and carers are welcome to read our Safeguarding Policy on our school website. Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will always ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with their parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that this is not in the child's best interests.

Our Designated Child Protection Officer is: Mrs Sylvia Douglas

Rationale

This policy sets out the framework for the use of positive handling and physical intervention using reasonable, proportionate and necessary force, but it must be clearly understood that this should always be set within the school's overall behaviour management framework and is only used as a last resort under-pinned by sound risk assessment.

Providing successful inclusion may necessitate positive handling or physical intervention, but only as one of the strategies available for the management of challenging behaviour. Only in the event of failure of clearly defined protocols to bring control to the situation, or when there is imminent danger to persons, should physical intervention be considered. It must be in the best interests of the child.

Legislation that came into force on 1.9.98 (Section 550 of the Education Act 1996) together with national guidance (DfES Circular 10/98), establishes the power of teachers and other staff to use reasonable force if required. This applies to all occasions when that member of staff is in charge of children both on and off school premises. There is no legal definition of reasonable force; this would depend on the individual circumstances of each case. Only a court may judge what is reasonable in terms of the amount of force used in physical handling and obviously does so retrospectively.

Both employers and employees have a duty of care. The welfare of children and vulnerable adults takes legal precedence in all countries where Team-Teach provides training. A breach of duty of care may involve [i] taking unreasonable action or [ii] failing to take reasonable action. Where risk is foreseeable there is no excuse for waiting until damage or injury occurs.

An adult in charge of children has a responsibility to intervene and, only when absolutely necessary use physical intervention, in the event of the following types of incident:

- imminent risk of injury
- imminent risk of significant damage to property
- where a pupil is compromising good order and discipline

Aims

- To safeguard every person in the school community from harm.
- To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is not reasonable, proportionate and necessary.
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so they are able to manage challenging behaviour effectively.
- To only use physical interventions taught under the Team-Teach Framework.
- To ensure Positive Handling Plans are put in place where the risk concerns a particular pupil.
- To maintain accurate records of incidents where Positive Handling has been employed.

Policy

The definition of restraint is **the positive application of force with the intention of overpowering the person**. The use of restraint requires skill, judgement and knowledge of non-harmful methods of control. Reasonable force would include those methods taught and practised in Team-Teach training. The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. In all cases, the person exercising the restraint must be authorised by the Head Teacher and have received approved Team-Teach training. **[Appendix A]**

There is a spectrum of positive handling strategies and restraint is only a small part of this framework. It also involves personal behaviour, diversion, defusion and de-escalation:

- Use of space
- Safe environments
- Comfortable environments
- Diversions
- Calm stances and postures
- Non-threatening facial expressions
- Low tone, volume and pace in communication
- Careful use of words
- Physical reassurance and prompts
- Effective guides and escorts
- Releases and holds with minimum drama and effort

Before using physical intervention staff must take into account whether the child has an **individual risk assessment** or is listed on the **medical needs register** kept in the Staff Room and follow any guidelines mentioned. Individual staff risk assessments must also be considered.

A second adult should be called to reduce the risk of the member of staff or child suffering bodily harm, and as a witness if allegations of assault are made later by the child.

While intervening, the member of staff must:-

- employ minimum physical force necessary for the minimum period needed, using the safe techniques taught
- continue to use all of the Level one and two de-escalation responses **[Appendix B]**
- keep his or her temper, working as part of a team and adhering to the 'help scripts' **[Appendix C]**

Pupils should not be placed on the floor. Specialist accredited training is necessary for this procedure.

If restraint is required for an extended period (for example, more than five minutes), a senior member of staff must monitor the situation closely with a view to safeguarding the child and the staff concerned. After an incident, it is vital that a full serious incident report is completed by all concerned [within 24 hours] and a de-briefing is held in order to support the child, the members of staff involved, any other children involved and the parents. Copies of the incident reports and de-briefing notes will be kept in the Head Teacher's Behaviour Record file and copies added to pupils' files. If an injury has been incurred to anyone involved, the usual procedures regarding injuries will be followed.

If physical restraint is necessary to manage the behaviour of an individual, it would be appropriate to instigate, or amend if one is already in place, a **Pastoral Support Plan (PSP)** during de-briefing meetings. In the event of physical restraint being necessary on more than one occasion, it would be appropriate to compile an **individual risk assessment** in discussion with all staff, parents and any relevant outside agencies and put a Positive Handling Plan in place, referring to the Team-Teach Positive Handling Plan checklist. **[Appendix D]**

In the case of a child with a **statement** of educational needs/ Education Health Care Plan [**EHC Plan**], there will be opportunities to address issues of challenging behaviour at annual review meetings and interim reviews organised by the Inclusion Manager.

Looked After Children will have a **Personal Education Plan** which features planning and strategies to address any challenging behaviour, where appropriate.

The Head Teacher, Leadership Team and Governors need to ensure that all authorised teachers and other authorised staff are appropriately trained and updated by Luton Borough Council approved trainers and accept the responsibility of their role by being aware of the guidelines in this policy.

Records are to be kept of any physical intervention. These are to be clear, comprehensive and prompt (completed within 24 hours of incident). Parents of the child involved must be informed each time an incident occurs and a report is completed. These records will be part of the review procedures of this policy and will inform future policy and practice. In addition the Safeguarding Governor and the Inclusion Manager will support the Head Teacher in monitoring and reviewing.

The Head Teacher, Management Team and Governors need to ensure that, as far as possible, preparation and planning has taken place to identify areas where physical intervention might be used. However, authorised members of staff may also have to intervene in circumstances where preparation and planning have not been possible.

When physical restraint takes place, the school will always endeavour to safeguard children and adults from physical harm, however, there may be cases in which some discomfort and/or bruising may occur, to both staff and children, as a result of the restraint taking place.

If, after receiving the report of an incident where physical intervention has occurred, the Head Teacher considers the school's guidelines have been seriously breached and that further investigation is warranted, the incident should not be pursued, but action in accordance with Child Protection procedures must be taken. In these circumstances, any school internal investigations must cease and no further statements should be taken. If the school's guidelines have been breached, the Head Teacher will contact the Local Authority Personnel Division and advise the staff member to consult his/her professional association.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- **Safeguarding Policy**
- **Behaviour Policy**
- **Complaints Procedure**

If a parent is unhappy with the school's provision to meet their child's needs they may follow the arrangements set out below:

- In the first instance any concerns should be discussed with the Head Teacher.
- If the problem remains unresolved the parent should contact the Chair of Governors.
- In the unlikely event that the matter is not dealt with satisfactorily, the parent may contact an officer from the Local Education Authority.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

Policy updated: April 2019

Staff responsible: Sylvia Douglas

This policy was ratified by the Governing body on: 1st May 2019

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body: _____(signature)

_____(printed)

Appendix A

Members of staff who have received approved Team-Teach training:

Jo Adams, Head Teacher

Tabs Parkar, Deputy Head Teacher

Azmat Ramzan, Assistant Head Teacher

Andy McMulkin, Assistant Head Teacher

Sylvia Douglas, Inclusion Manager

Nila Awan, Behaviour Teaching Assistant

Teresa MacArthur, Assistant Senco

Sarah Durkin, Behaviour Teaching Assistant

Jackie Slater, Lead Family Worker

Christopher Britten, Physical Education Teaching Assistant

Andre Elliott, Behaviour Teaching Assistant

Shasta Akram, Teaching Assistant