



*Rebecca Cheetham Nursery
and Children's Centre*

Positive Handling POLICY

Compiled by: RC SLT using LA guidance

Amended: RC Senior Leadership Team

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Ratified by governors: Yes

Review Date:

Governor's signature: _____

Positive Handling Policy

Rationale

Children need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. For a very small minority of children the use of physical intervention may be needed, and, on such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention are used.

The majority of children behave well and conform to the expectations of our setting. We have responsibility to operate an effective behaviour policy that encompasses preventative strategies for tackling inappropriate behaviour in relation to the whole group of children, and to individuals.

This policy must be read and implemented in conjunction with the whole school behaviour policy and approach to behaviour management.

At Rebecca Cheetham are committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, **and only those trained will use positive handling as a last resort** in line with guidance from the Department of Education and London Borough of Newham. If used at all, it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.

All staff need to feel able to manage inappropriate behaviour, and to have an understanding of what challenging behaviours might be communicating. They need to know what the options open to them are, and they need to be free of undue worries about the risks of legal action against them if they use appropriate physical intervention.

Aims

1. To address the meaning of 'duty of care'
2. To provide guidance to staff about appropriate physical contact
3. Assist staff to maintain a safe and secure environment in school so that learning can take place
4. Protect all pupils in school against any form of physical restraint which is either unnecessary, or inappropriate, or excessive, or unlawful
5. To protect staff and minimise the risk to staff of any accusation of improper conduct towards a pupil

Duty of Care

If a child has an incident in the school, in the schoolyard, on the way to school, or while on a school trip, the question of whether or not the school or the staff were negligent may arise. There is no simple answer to the question of when the school may be liable. Everything depends on the facts of the individual case.

There is no doubt that teachers owe a duty of care to students. When this duty starts, where it ends and precisely what constitutes a breach of duty are not nearly so clear cut.

The following general principles apply:

- Paid staff must take reasonable care to ensure that their students do not meet with foreseeable injury. They have a duty to protect the children against foreseeable risks of personal injury or harm.
- The standard of care is that of a reasonably prudent parent. The degree of care depends on such factors as the age of the students.
- There must be an effective system of supervision in operation in the school.
- The school should consider volunteers and trainees on an individual case basis when instructing about duty of care guidelines

All incidents should be reported to the Leadership Team and recorded appropriately.

Physical Contact

Physical contact between staff and pupils is a natural occurrence of school life and the school will be transparent about this to parents and carers. Appropriate physical contact in situations like comforting, leading, averting danger or congratulating a child are recognised as being normal practise.

In all situations where physical contact between staff and children takes place, staff must consider the following:

- The child's age and level of understanding;
- The child's individual characteristics and history;
- The location where the contact takes place.

There are many situations where physical contact with children is unacceptable, except in extreme circumstances. Some examples are:

1. Staff should never pick up a child
2. A child should never be dragged or pulled by the arm or other body part
3. Staff should avoid physical contact in situations where they are one to one with a child
4. Staff should never carry a child
5. Staff should avoid excessive contact with individual children

Using positive handling

Positive handling of pupils should only be used as a **last resort for the purposes of maintaining a safe environment**. Where a pupil is deliberately refusing to cooperate or refusing to follow instructions then the teacher or member of staff should:

1. Staff should use their knowledge of the child so that each incident is considered individually. For example, overuse of language may stress an autistic child, use of words like 'no, don't, stop, keep still, etc...' may inflame the situation.
2. Give clear instructions to the pupil as to what is required of them. For example, communications will be clear about why the adult will not allow the child to be out of control
3. Give the pupil a warning of the consequences of not complying with the request from the teacher and re-explain why you are doing this.
4. Give the pupil time to reconsider and conform to the request
5. Keep calm and remain in control of the situation
6. Send another adult or responsible pupil to bring a trained member of staff. This member of staff will go through these steps again when they arrive and attempt to persuade the child to accompany them and leave the room.

If the pupil still refuses to comply then the staff members should make a dynamic risk assessment as to whether physical intervention will occur. Members of staff who have been 'Team Teach' trained, or a member of the Leadership Team should make an assessment of the situation and decide whether to physically intervene or follow another course of action. This could be:

1. Remaining by the pupil and giving him/her further time to calm down and reflect on the situation.
2. Remaining by the pupil and arranging for the pupil's parents to be contacted and asked to come to school to deal with the incident.
3. Removing the other pupils to another room while the pupil calms down, if they are felt to be in danger. Where possible there should always be two members of staff with the disruptive pupil.

Principles of Physical Intervention

The general principle is that the use of physical intervention should, wherever possible, be avoided. Before using physical intervention staff should always attempt to use diversion, positive handling techniques or diffusion to manage the situation. However the Education Act 2006 allows all teachers to use reasonable force to:

1. Remove a disruptive child from the class when they refused to follow instructions
2. Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event, trip or visit
3. Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom or school premises, where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others

4. Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
5. Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

If physical intervention is deemed to be necessary then it must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary:

- If possible 2 adults should always be in attendance
- If in a public place adults should try to move pupil to more private place where other members of staff can still see them.
- It is seen as an act of care and control not punishment
- It should be an exceptional circumstance
- It must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned
- It should be the minimum necessary to avert injury or damage to property. In all cases there should be the minimum use of physical restraint. There should be no unnecessarily rough handling or shaking of the pupil.
- It should be sensitive to the age and cultural expectations of pupils and their attitude towards physical contact
- It should avoid any contact that might be misinterpreted as sexual
- It should be applied for the shortest period of time
- An incident report proforma should be completed as soon as possible.
- Moving a child should be kept to a minimum
- A pupil must not be left alone in a room as this is considered forced seclusion.

Examples of situations where positive handling may be appropriate include:

- Pupil attacks member of staff or another pupil
- Pupils are fighting
- Pupils are engaging in, or on the verge of, committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- A *safe holding* tactic by which a pupil is restrained until he/she calms down.
- Removing a weapon or dangerous object from a pupil.

All staff are aware that we operate a back-up system to enable staff to call for help in emergencies (e.g. a member of staff will contact Assistant Headteacher/Deputy Head Teacher/Headteacher by bleeper, by telephone or by sending a pupil).

Recording an incident

Often, Team Teacher staff will have been involved at an early stage in dealing with an incident of extreme behaviour and will inform the head teacher and Head of School for behaviour. Once an incident of physical intervention has occurred the following steps should take place:

- A. The member of staff will need to log this incident either in electronic or hard copy.

The notes will contain the following information:

1. the name(s) and the job title(s) of the member(s) of staff who used reasonable force
 2. the name(s) of the pupil(s) involved
 3. when and where the incident took place
 4. names of staff and pupils who witnessed the incident
 5. was a dynamic risk assessment used to reason that force was necessary ?
 6. The behaviour of the pupil which led up to the incident
any attempts to resolve the situation
 7. what was said by staff and pupils
 8. the degree of force used
 9. how it was applied
 10. how long it was used for
 11. the pupil's response and the eventual outcome (pupils may need up to 2 hours to fully calm down)
 12. details of any injuries suffered by either staff or pupils
 13. details of any damage to property
 14. details of any medical treatment required (an accident form will be completed)
 15. details of any follow-up, including contact with the parents/carers of the pupil(s) involved
 16. name of member of LMT that debriefed staff involved straight after incident
 17. any other relevant details e.g., the involvement of any other agency, e.g., the Police
- B. Copy of this entry will be kept on the pupil's file and retained in line with LEA Guidance on keeping educational records (approximately 7 years as good practice)
- C. The school will report any injuries to pupils or staff in accordance with RIDDOR (HSE Regulations 1995)
- D. Pupils who are identified as likely to require positive handling as part of their Behaviour management will require an Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) alongside their Individual Education Plan. This is drawn up by the Inclusion Manager in response to the risk posed by the pupil's behaviour and is shared with all staff, parents/carers and the pupil if appropriate.

Debriefing Arrangements

Parents/Carers as well as appropriate outside agencies such as Behaviour Support and Educational Psychologist services will be notified of incident. (see para 10.1 about informing parents)

The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. First aid will be administered to anyone who requires it, or medical treatment obtained.

Governors will be informed of the number of incidents where positive handling has been used, on an annual basis

Training Needs of Staff

In cases where it is known that a pupil will require positive handling on occasions, the school will ensure that appropriate training is provided. Staff involved will identify their training needs in this area.

Staff trained in positive handling techniques need to update their training on a regular basis and ensure that their training record is kept up to date. (Appropriate staff last trained on 17/10/2011 to be updated 2014)

Pupils with Known Behavioural Difficulties

Children with special educational needs are identified through the procedures outlined in the Special Educational Needs Policy. If a pupil is identified as having special needs which include social, emotional and mental difficulties then a behaviour plan will be put in place and displayed in a central area (such as the staff room). The purpose of this plan is to identify the potential hazards which the pupil presents and detail the action which needs to be taken to deal with the behaviour. The aim is to keep the use of restrictive physical intervention with the pupil to a minimum.

This policy will next be reviewed and updated as outlined in the policy review timetable.