

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

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RISE LEARNING ZONE

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

First Principle

RISE Learning Zone does not apply any physical restraint or positive handling at any time with one limited exception: the application of the minimum necessary physical intervention during an incident when physical injury is imminent and all other methods of de-escalation have failed.

Introduction

This policy sets out the framework for the use of reasonable force, restraint or positive handling, but it must be clearly understood that this should always be set within RISE Learning Zone's overall behaviour management framework and First Principle above, and is only used as an absolute last resort underpinned by sound risk assessment. Only in the event of failure of non-physical strategies to bring control to the situation, or of imminent danger to persons, should positive handling be considered. 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.

Definition

The definition of restraint is the positive application of force with the intention of calming and overpowering the child. The use of restraint requires judgement and knowledge of non-harmful methods of control. 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.

Positive Handling should only be used when all other strategies which do not employ force have been tried and found unsuccessful or in an emergency situation.

Reasonable force would not include any of the following:-

- Holding a child around the neck, collar or other way that may restrict breathing
- Slapping, punching, kicking or tripping a child. Holding or pulling a child by their hair or ears.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against joints.
- Indecently touching or holding.
- Holding a child face down on the ground
- Lifting a child off the floor in order to intimidate

Types of incident where the use of force may be necessary are given as:-

- Action due to imminent risk of injury ONLY

Types of incident where the use of force is NOT necessary include:-

- Action due to imminent risk of significant damage to property
 - Action where a pupil is compromising good order and discipline
- (This is a non-exhaustive list).

Examples of situations that fall into the first category are:

- A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil,
- Pupils fighting,
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects,
- A pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others,

Authorisation

In all cases, the person exercising the restraint must be authorised by the Programme Manager. At RISE Learning Zone, all staff have a duty to keep children and adults safe and therefore all staff are deemed authorised. The approach will be to de-escalate situations.

Implementing Positive Handling

In the event of restraint becoming necessary, before touching the child, the member of staff should advise the child calmly and repeatedly about what they are going to do and why, and how the child might change his/her behaviour, in order that the restraint would become unnecessary. Any other children and adults present should also be warned. Note: this warning must not comprise of any threat of unlawful attack. A second adult, where possible, 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
- wherever possible keep talking to the child and give choices as to how they could behave in a manner that would avoid the need for restraint
- avoid committing any act of punitive violence
- keep his or her temper

Types of restraint which may be appropriate:

- Tactics in which a young child is non-physically restrained without injury until the young child calms down (e.g. talking calmly and purposefully to the child, removing other children from the vicinity,)
- Physical contact with a young person designed to control the young person's movements, which pose a danger (e.g. holding hands, holding by the arms against the side of the body). Standing by the side of the young person is likely to minimise the risk to adult and young person.
- The holding of a young person's arms or legs to prevent/restrict striking/kicking.
- The use of sufficient physical force – without causing injury – to remove a weapon/dangerous object from a young person's grasp
- Physically preventing a young person from exposing themselves to possible danger by leaving the premises.

Pupils should not be placed face down 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.

When not to use physical restraint

Staff must always use their judgement in deciding whether a situation warrants the use of physical restraint. Occasions when physical restraint, by an individual, should not be used include:

- A physically large pupil,
- More than one pupil, or
- When the teacher believes that they or the child may be at risk of injury.

In those circumstances where the member of staff has decided that it is not appropriate to restrain the pupil without help they should:

- Remove other pupils who might be at risk,
- Summon assistance from colleagues,
- Where necessary, telephone the police,
- Inform the pupil(s) that help will be arriving,
- Until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

Recording

After the incident, it is vital that a full report is completed by all concerned (see Appendix 1, Incident Form) in order to support the child, the members of staff involved, any other children involved and the parents. In the event of an incident when physical restraint is required, an incident form will be completed within 24 hours. If possible, all staff and children involved will undertake a de-briefing meeting with the Programme Manager within 24 hours. The parents/guardians or carers should meet with the Programme Manager as soon after the incident as possible. Copies of the form will be kept in the office and, if appropriate, copies added to special educational needs files and sent to all concerned in the incident including parents. If an injury has been incurred to anyone involved, the usual procedures regarding this will be followed.

The Programme Manager & Management Team need to ensure that, as far as possible, preparation and planning has taken place to identify areas where physical restraint might be used. However, the school 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 protect 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 physical restraint is necessary to manage the behaviour of an individual, it would be appropriate to instigate 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 include positive handling advice in the child's file. It is also necessary to compile an individual risk assessment in discussion with all staff, parents and any relevant outside agencies. In the case of a child with a statement of educational needs, there will be opportunities to address issues of challenging behaviour at annual review meetings and an interim review organised in exceptional circumstances. Looked-After Children will have a Personal Education Plan which features planning and strategies to address challenging behaviour, where appropriate. The Programme Manager & Management Team need to ensure that all authorised teachers understand and accept the responsibility of their role by being aware of the guidelines in this policy. Records are to be kept of any physical restraint or incident involving physical contact. These are to be clear, comprehensive and prompt (completed within 24 hours of incident). Parents must be informed and consulted each time a form is completed. These records will be part of an ongoing annual review procedure that examines practice and informs future planning.

Child Protection Issues

If, after receiving the report of an incident where physical intervention has occurred, the Programme Manager considers the school's guidelines have been seriously breached and that further investigation is warranted. The incident should then be reviewed in accordance with Child Protection issues. 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 Programme Manager will

contact the LADO and advise the staff member to consult his/her professional association.

Appendix 1: Reporting and Recording Proforma

RECORD OF RESTRAINT

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Pupil Name: D.o.B:

Member(s) of staff involved:

Adult witnesses to restraint:

Pupil witnesses to restraint:

Outline of event leading to restraint – including other strategies tried and reasons for using Positive Handling rather than another strategy:

Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used):

Outcome of restraint:

Description of any injury(ies) sustained by injured pupil and any subsequent treatment:

Date parent/carer informed of incident:

Time:

By whom informed:

Outline of parent/carer response:

Signature of staff completing report: _____

Date:

Signature of Teacher-in-charge: _____

Date:

Signature of Head: _____

Date:

Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action: