

WHITEHILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

"...putting children first..."



POSITIVE HANDLING AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

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Reviewed by: N James

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1) Rationale

Whitehills Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for pupils' safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour - and use physical intervention only as a last resort. If used at all it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil, and be reasonable and proportional to the circumstances of the incident. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.

It is recognised in both statutory¹ and Common Law that there is a need to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to pupils, staff and property.

This policy relates to legislation in The Education Act 1996 and The Education and Inspections Act 2006. This policy also considers the non-statutory advice outlined in the DfE guidance 'Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies' as well as NCC guidance for schools on the use of restrictive physical interventions.

Key points that are outlined in the advice include:

- All school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force
- Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force
- Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power

2) Objectives

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Maintain the safety of pupils, staff and visitors
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent serious breaches of school discipline

3) Deciding if the use of restrictive physical intervention is appropriate

Staff will view the use of physical intervention of pupils as a **last resort**. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent the need for restrictive physical intervention.

Reasonable force can be used to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate:

- Risk of harm towards themselves or others, including; staff, pupils, or visitors
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property
- Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline
- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence

¹ Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Any member of staff who undertakes a restrictive physical intervention should be clear as to why it is necessary and be able to show that it was in the pupil's best interest and that it was reasonable and proportionate. For those pupils assessed as being at risk of restrictive physical intervention, Positive Handling Plans will be developed. These plans outline what techniques should/should not be used, along with appropriate de-escalation strategies.

The judgement on whether to use physical intervention and what type of physical intervention should be used, should always depend on the circumstances of each case and in the case of pupils with Special Educational Needs, information about the individual concerned.

Staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about:

- a. The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
- b. The chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
- c. The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

4) Using physical interventions

Before using restrictive physical intervention, staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil to stop their specific undesired behaviour and communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout the incident. Staff should be specific in telling the pupil that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

The types of physical intervention could include:

- a. Passive physical contact resulting from standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path.
- b. Active physical contact such as:
 - i) Leading a pupil by the hand or arm;
 - ii) Ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
 - iii) In more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive interventions, which require specific expertise and training.

The restrictive physical interventions authorised by the school are those techniques in which staff have received appropriate training and development through Intelligensa.

The core principles of 'Intelligensa' include:

- Minimum of two staff involved
- Last resort minimum force and time
- Techniques that do not rely on pain or locks and allow for verbal communication
- Staff safety and protection addressed
- Planned responses and techniques are written out and included in positive handling plans for individual pupils

Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff is justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum intervention required to achieve the desired result).

5) Alternatives to physical intervention

A member of staff who chooses not to make a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk. They can:

- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help
- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason
- Give clear directions to the pupils to stop
- Give clear directions to guide the pupil to a safe place
- Allow supervised time for the child to self-regulate
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes
- Remove any audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons

6) Reducing the likelihood of situations arising where physical intervention may be required

All physical interventions at the school are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. The school's Behaviour Policy rewards effort and application, and encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The school's Behaviour Policy also outlines the steps the school undertakes to ensure a calm, orderly and supportive school climate which minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind, thereby reducing the need for physical intervention.

A structured approach to staff development is adopted through the 'Intelligensa' programme, which allows staff to develop the skills of positive behaviour management and de-escalating incidents.

Staff should recognise the need to effectively manage individual incidents. It is important to communicate calmly with the pupil, using non-threatening verbal and body language and ensuring that the pupil can see a way out of the situation. Strategies might include, for example, going with the staff member to a quiet room, away from bystanders or other pupils, so that the staff member can listen to concerns; or being joined by a particular member of staff well known to the pupil.

Wherever practicable, a pupil should be warned that physical intervention may have to be used before applying it.

7) Authorisation of staff to use physical intervention and staff development

All members of school staff have legal power to use reasonable force. We adopt a preventative and pro-active approach and individual staff are identified to assist any pupil with a Positive Handling Plan in place. Authorisation is given by the Headteacher (or someone deputising when they are absent). Information regarding the positive handling strategies, including de-escalation techniques, will be shared with all identified staff.

Staff are trained in specific physical interventions and de-escalation strategies through the 'Intelligensa' approach. This is a two-part course, online and face to face training which needs refreshing annually.

The names of staff who have been trained to use physical intervention techniques are included in Appendix 1, along with the dates they received their training.

8) Positive Handling Plans

Individual pupils assessed at being at greatest risk of requiring restrictive physical intervention will be identified by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher. These pupils will be placed on Positive Handling Plans (appendix 2), developed in consultation with the school, parents/carers, and the pupil.

Positive Handling Plans set out the situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and the de-escalation strategies that are most effective. Specific strategies and techniques that have been agreed by staff when physical intervention is required are also included. The positive handling plan will be discussed with parents/carers as well as the pupil in a meeting.

9) Recording and reporting incidents

The school keeps a record of all physical interventions. Each incident is recorded on MyConcern and also recorded in a Bound & Numbered book, which is located in the Headteacher's office. All records are kept for ten years after the date of the incident. Parents/carers will be also be verbally notified of any incident that has resulted in the need to use physical intervention.

The purpose of recording is to ensure that policy guidelines are followed, to inform parents/carers, to inform future planning as part of the school improvement process, to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the incident and to provide a record for any future enquiry.

Accounts of the incident should be taken from the member of staff who undertook the physical intervention, the pupil(s) involved and any third-party witnesses.

Parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible after any recordable incident. Parents/carers will be telephoned before details are confirmed in writing. Parents/carers will be informed of when and where the incident took place, which members of staff were directly involved (anonymised where necessary), why they decided physical intervention had to be used, whether there were any injuries and what follow up action was being taken in relation to their child. Parents/carers will also be guided to review the Positive Handling Policy available on the school website.

The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity that a physical intervention has taken place, ensure that the incident is recorded, review the details of incident and provide post-incident support to the pupil or staff.

Governors will be informed of the number of physical interventions on an annual basis.

10) Post-incident support

The school recognises the need to ensure that staff and pupils have appropriate emotional support.

The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. Immediate action will be taken to provide first aid for any injuries requiring attention.

The pupil will be given time to become calm whilst staff continue to supervise. When it is deemed that the pupil is composed, a senior member of staff will discuss the incident with the pupil and ascertain the reason for its occurrence. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish a positive relationship between the pupil and the member of staff involved in the incident.

All members of staff involved will be allowed appropriate period of time to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support and or supervision. A senior member of staff (or his/her nominee) will provide support to the member of staff involved.

A member of the senior team will engage parents/carers in discussing the incident and for setting out subsequent actions and support.

Complaint procedure

If a parent/carer or pupil is concerned about any aspect of the management of an incident requiring physical intervention, they should contact the Headteacher and discuss their concerns. The Headteacher will respond to any concern or complaint in accordance with school policy and procedure.

Positive Handling Training Record *(app.1)*

The following members of staff have been trained to use Intelligensa physical intervention techniques and have permission to use them and assist other members of staff to ensure the safety of staff, pupils, visitors and members of the public, in accordance with the school's Positive Handling Policy:

Staff Name:	Date certificate issued:	Date training completed:	Date refresher training due:
Natalie James	24.5.21	24.5.21	24.5.22
Alison Amos	24.5.21	24.5.21	24.5.22
Sarah Mitchell	24.5.21	24.5.21	24.5.22
Ruth Concannon	24.5.21	24.5.21	24.5.22
Avril Tyler	24.5.21	24.5.21	24.5.22
Elaine Ayton	24.5.21	24.5.21	24.5.22
Dena Wright	24.5.21	24.5.21	24.5.22
Jo Currell	24.5.21	24.5.21	24.5.22
Liz Abel	24.5.21	24.5.21	24.5.22

Physical Intervention Incident Report (app.2)

All records must be retained for 10 years.

INCIDENT NO:

Name of Pupil:	NCY:	
Name of school:	Date:	Time:
Staff Involved: 1: (Leader) 3:	2: 4:	
Names of Witnesses:		
Antecedents (<i>events leading up to the incident</i>)		
Behaviours (<i>description of behaviour exhibited by the pupil</i>)		
Consequences: (<i>what happened and how was the situation resolved</i>)		
Injuries: (<i>to staff or pupils, type of injury and treatment, if any</i>)		
Damage to property:		
Debrief: (<i>was the incident talks through with the pupil and by whom?</i>)		
Any further actions taken: (<i>e.g., police or SC& H involved, behaviour plan changed etc.</i>)		

Justification for Physical Intervention: *(please tick)*

Physical safety of the pupil is at risk

Physical safety of another pupil is at risk

Physical safety of a member of staff is at risk

The pupil is attempting to harm him/herself

To prevent absconding

To prevent disruption to other pupils

To prevent the committing of a criminal offence

Member of staff believes that any of the above was likely to occur

To prevent or interrupt serious damage to property *(describe)*

De-escalation strategies used: *(state all strategies tried, e.g. verbal advice/ support, reassurance, calm voice, non-confrontational body language, voice matching, distraction, humour, options provided, time-out offered, time-out directed).*

Physical strategies used: *(state types of escort/hold used and why)*

Notification:

Was the parent/carer informed? Yes: **No**

By whom?:

When? (date/time):

Signatures of those involved:

1. Leader:	Date	Witnesses:	1.	Date
2.	Date		2.	Date
3.			3.	Date

Report completed by:

Signature:

Date:

Headteacher/SLT name:

Signature:

Date:

POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN

Name of Pupil:

NCY:

Date of Plan:

Health & Safety arrangements (include medical & dietary requirements):

Staff Involved in Plan:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Triggers (common situations/behaviour known to result in the need for positive handling):

Behaviour (description of observable behaviours):

Step One

Positive handling strategies (preferred strategies/de-escalation to keep the situation calm):

Verbal advice/support

Reassurance

Time Out offered

Time Out directed

Controlled choices

Distraction

Take up time

Repeat instructions

Remind of rules, rights, responsibilities

Remind of consequences

Remind of successes

Other:

Step Two

Physical intervention strategies (preferred strategies to be used):

Step Three

De-escalation strategies (preferred strategies to be used to de-escalate situation):

Praise (appropriate praise & reward can be offered to improve situation):

Consequences (appropriate and agreed consequences to be issued after de-escalation):

Date and time of review of Positive Handling Plan:

Plan to be shared with appropriate school staff and parent/carer.