

Positive handling policy



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1. Introduction

Staff at Overdale Junior School are trained to look after pupils in their care. Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow the school's Positive Handling Policy.

It's the policy of Overdale that all staff working with pupils who may require this support 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 behaviour policy. Further details of the TEAM TEACH approach can be found on the TEAM TEACH website. The website address is WWW.team-teach.co.uk

The term "positive handling" includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

The school takes seriously its duty of care to pupils, employees and visitors to the school.

- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care.
- The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables the school's staff to use such force as is reasonable. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force.

Team Teach

Staff at Overdale Junior are trained in using positive handling techniques through the TEAM TEACH system which is recognised by the local authority and accredited through the ICM – the Institute of Conflict Management.

Staff undergo a one day course led by qualified trainers within the school. This training is then renewed every three years although they always have the option to discuss any children or de-escalation approaches with the trainers within school. Although any member of staff may be required to physically intervene with a pupil who is endangering themselves or others, we would expect accredited staff to take over as soon as possible.

An up-to-date list of trained staff is kept by the Headteacher.

Before using physical controls

We take effective action to reduce risk by:

- Showing care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiating and reasoning
- Giving clear directions for pupils to stop
- Reminding them about school's expectations and likely outcomes
- Removing an audience or taking vulnerable pupils to a safe place
- Making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons/missiles
- Using positive guidance to escort pupils to somewhere less pressured
- Ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and get help.

Restraint

At this school we only use physical restraint when there is no realistic alternative. We expect staff to conduct a risk assessment, both in advance and dynamic, and choose the safest alternative. It also means that we expect staff to experiment and think creatively about alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the child and that it reduces rather than increases risk. Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable, proportionate and necessary. Physical restraint must only be in accordance with the following: Dec

- The child should be in immediate danger of harming their self or others or in danger of seriously damaging property.
- The member of staff should have good grounds for believing this.
- Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied.
- Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before applying restraint. These staff can act as assistants or witnesses.
- Once safe, restraint should be relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control.
- Restraint should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- Physical restraint should not be used purely for force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate danger present to people or property.
- The restraint should be discussed with the child, if appropriate, and the parents at the earliest opportunity.

In addition, during or before intervention, staff should speak calmly as a way of reassurance e.g. 'I am doing this to keep you safe' and keep repeating this message.

Responding to unforeseen emergencies

Even the best planning system cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet.

An unforeseen event may require an emergency response. After that event staff have a duty to plan ahead and prepare a risk assessment.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are required for pupils who exhibit extreme behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. This should be indicated in the Risk Assessment as much as possible.

When considering a pupil's behaviour staff will think about the following questions:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this pupil's behaviour?
- Have we got all the information we need to conduct a risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan as a result?
- What further steps can we take to prevent dangerous behaviour from developing?

Positive Handling Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Positive Handling Plan. The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. Any particular physical techniques which have been found to be effective should be named, along with alerts to any which have proved to be ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Positive Handling Plans should be considered alongside any EHCP or other planning document relevant to the pupil. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special needs and social context.

At this school the following support structures are in place:

- IEPs, PHPs and generic RAs are kept on file on Provision Map to ensure all relevant information about each pupil is available to all members of staff working with them.
- Regular reviews of strategies will form part of staff meetings.
- Debrief sessions for all staff to share experiences, concerns and to access support from each other, led by a member of SLT.

Post Incident Debrief

Following a serious incident, it is the policy of the school to offer support to all involved. This is an opportunity for learning for all concerned. Time needs to be given for following up incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective. When time and effort are put into a post-incident support structure, the outcome of a serious incident can be learning, growth and strengthened relationships.

It is difficult to devise a framework of support that meets the need of all staff. As individuals we all vary in how much support we need after an unpleasant incident. Generally a member of senior staff would expect to talk to staff and children involved (if appropriate) in any incidents involving violence. If members of staff need time to rest or compose themselves, then the HT or Deputy will make arrangements for the class group to be supported.

Recording

Incidents of restraints need to be recorded by staff teams, using the agreed form (Leicester City Physical Intervention File) and copies kept in a folder in the office. This form must be completed within 24 hours of an incident however it would be preferable that this is fully completed by the end of the day of the incident taking place. The incident should also be recorded on CPOMS.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head Teacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required.

Parents

Parents/Carers need to be contacted on the day of the incident to inform them that a restraint has taken place. NO message should be left on answer phones about the nature of the incident and instead they should just be asked to ring the school on receiving the message. If they have not got back to school by the end of the day a message via the school's communication system should be used to indicate that there has been issues surrounding their child's behaviour and that we would welcome a telephone call to school to discuss it further.

If class teams have left the premises before parents/carers have rang back it is their responsibility to inform the member of SLT on duty that day so they can take the telephone call if it comes through.

Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints will follow the school's complaints procedure.

Data will always be processed to be in line with the requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulations