



Positive Handling Policy

Weddington Primary School

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1. Intent

This policy aims to provide a framework for the use of physical interventions, including restraints, required to create a school environment where everyone feels, and is, safe.

This policy has close links with the Behaviour Policy. It is written to explain our procedures in line with:

- Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 • British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) Code of Practice
- DfCS Guidance "Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils" November 2007
- Joint DfES/DH guidance issued July 2002, "The use of restrictive physical interventions for staff working with children and adults who display extreme behaviour in association with learning disability and/or autistic spectrum disorder"
- Local authority policies
- LA behaviour support plan (for individual pupils)
- School Behaviour Policy and Practice.

2. Legislation & Guidance

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and further guidance issued by the DfE in July 2013 ([Use of reasonable force - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies](#)) enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including himself); or
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.



School Expectations

In our school we create a calm environment to minimise incidents that may require any physical intervention. We de-escalate incidents when they do arise. We only use physical interventions when the risks involved of doing so are outweighed by the risks of not doing so.

Positive Behaviour Management

All staff and volunteers adopt a positive approach to improving behaviour in order to reward effort and application, and to build self-esteem, and promote a safe environment for students and staff. All staff work in partnership with those who know the child to help those concerned:

- Find out why this child behaves as he or she does
- Understand the factors that influence this child's behaviour
- Identify early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours are developing

This approach helps to ensure that early and preventative intervention is the norm. It reduces the incidence of extreme behaviours and makes sure that the use of physical intervention is rare.

The statutory power conferred by Section 93 is in addition to the common law power of any citizen in an emergency to use reasonable force in self-defence, to prevent another person from being injured or committing a criminal offence. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force and each case must be judged on its circumstances and those exercising the power to use force must also take proper account of any particular special educational need and/or disability.

DfE Guidance and The Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 state that **schools cannot use force as a punishment**. Also, whilst force can be used to search for and confiscate prohibited items it **cannot** be used to search for items banned under the school rules. (See Screening, Searching and Confiscation policy)

Who can use reasonable force?

The staff to which this power applies are defined in Section 95 of the Act as:

- All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
- It can also apply to people whom the Head has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

The types of force which are deemed to be reasonable

- Passive physical contact resulting from standing between two pupils or blocking a pupil's path;
- Active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the hand or arm; ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of his back; or, in more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds.

Other physical contact with pupils

The DfE says that it is not illegal to touch a pupil and that there are occasions when physical contact with a pupil is 'proper and necessary'.

Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary include:

- Holding the hand of the child
- When comforting a distressed pupil.
- When congratulating or praising a pupil.
- When demonstrating physical skills e.g., musical instrument, during PE lessons, handwriting.



- When giving first aid.

Minimising the Need to Use Force

Use of force is only used as a last resort and procedures are in place in Weddington provisions to create a calm and orderly environment within a supportive school climate that lessens the risk and threat of violence of any kind. Effective relationships are developed between staff and pupils and PSHE and Zones of Regulation activities support pupils in managing conflict and coping with feelings. Staff are also given guidance and training in how to manage pupil behaviour.

3. Physical Interventions

At Weddington we define a physical intervention as any reasonable use of force used to support a pupil who is building towards crisis. This can be a simple low-level prompt touch or a restraint and everything in between. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances and based on an assessment of risk. This assessment should include the risk to the pupil, themselves and others.

4. Restraints

Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control using appropriate physical intervention. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances and is always in response to a safety concern. Weddington staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

What to do in circumstances when the use of physical restraint is needed

- Staff should not hesitate to act in an emergency provided they follow the guidelines in this policy.
- Staff should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of professional colleagues.
- Approach the pupil calmly but firmly.
- Where possible, the consequences of refusing to stop the behaviour should be explained and it should be communicated to the pupil that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
- A calm and measured approach is required by staff throughout.
- In any application of physical restraint, the minimum reasonable force should be used to calm down the situation.
- Following a restraint, pupils should be closely monitored by a member of staff and checked by a first aider once the situation is safe to do so.

5. Recording & Reporting

Following an incident that required physical intervention staff should consider what and how this information needs recording and reporting depending on the type of intervention and in accordance with this policy.



Recording Incidents

- Minor or everyday use of reasonable force does not need to be recorded. For example, guiding a pupil into the building after break to ensure their safety.
- More serious incidents involving the use of physical restraint must be reported to the **Head and/or the SLT as soon as possible after the incident**. These must be recorded on CPOMs ensuring you 'add a physical intervention' to the behaviour incident log and complete a 'statement' and sent to the HT on the same day.
- Any injuries that anyone has sustained, must be recorded and sent to the LA and HT/SBM.

Informing others

After a restraint, the following people **must** be informed as soon as possible of the incident, this would normally on the same day:

- Parent/Carers by phone call or email
- If the pupil has a social worker, they should be informed by phone call or email
- If the pupil is LAC, the Head of the Virtual School by phone call or email

Post Incident Support

Care is taken after an incident to ensure both staff and pupils are supported including meeting immediate medical needs, rebuilding relationships and reflecting on the incident so lessons can be learned. These restorative conversations should be documented in an appropriate way and included as part of the incident report for pupils. Staff should have a separate conversation with a senior member of staff using the form in appendix 1, these should be forwarded to HR and filed in their personnel files. Heads report incidents to the Directors and they monitor incidents where force has been used and consider the implications, agreeing any necessary actions required.

Complaints and Allegations

If a complaint is made it is considered in relation to the school's complaints procedure and guidance on dealing with allegations of abuse by staff. Further guidance is available in 'Use of Reasonable Force – Advice for Headteachers, Governing Bodies and Staff' - DfE document.

6. Staff Training

The school will receive training to support in a 'positive handling strategy' to complement the behaviour and relationship policy. Where possible, the staff will attempt to de-escalate the situation.

General Advice for Staff

- Be sure that you are aware of and complying with the school policy for behaviour and discipline and positive handling procedures.
- It is better to defuse situations wherever possible, as this prevents them from escalating to a level where force is necessary
- Send for the assistance of another member of staff as soon as possible
- All those involved should be de-briefed after incidents to explore more positive/effective responses to future difficult situations

7. Linked Policies

This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies:

- Suspensions policy



- Safeguarding policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse policy within the Safeguarding Policy
- Screening, Searching and Confiscation policy within the Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour & Relationship Policy
- Training & Development Statement



8. Appendix 1

Staff Follow up meeting Positive Handling and Restraint Form

Staff Name:	Date:
Incident Date:	SLT Initials:
How are you feeling following the incident?	
Have you been Injured? Yes / No (please circle)	
If yes, how did the injury occur?	
If yes, have you recorded it? (please tick) On the RPI Form CPOMs	
What do you think could be implemented to avoid this happening again in the future?	
How would you rate the effectiveness of the support offered during the incident? Please highlight.	
Excellent Very Good Good Satisfactory Poor	
Do you need any further support after this incident?	
SLT Notes from meeting:	
Staff Signature:	Full Name:
SLT Signature:	Full Name:



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Once completed please return to HR.

