

NORTON PRIMARY ACADEMY



Positive Handling Policy

Autumn 2016

This policy sets out the framework for the use of reasonable force or positive handling, but it must be clearly understood that this should always be set within the academy's overall behaviour management framework and is only used as a last resort underpinned by sound risk assessment. Providing successful inclusion may necessitate physical restraint but only as one of the strategies available for the management of challenging behaviour. Only in the event of failure of clearly defined protocols to bring control to the situation, or 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 academy 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.

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 ear
- 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

An adult in charge of children has a responsibility to intervene in the event of the following types of incident where the use of reasonable force may be necessary:

- Action due to imminent risk of injury
- Action due to imminent risk of significant damage to property
- Action where a pupil is seriously compromising good order and discipline

The third type of incident is unlikely to be cause for restraint if it is possible to remove the rest of the children from the scene and allow the child concerned to calm down safely. However in circumstances where it would be impossible to remove the rest of the children safely, force may be necessary to remove the child causing the disruption.

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

Reasonable force would include those methods taught and practised in TeamTeach training. 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. In all cases, the person exercising the restraint must be authorised by the

Principal (see Appendix 1, List of Authorised Staff) and have received appropriate approved training. Staff must take into account if the child has an individual risk assessment (positive handling plan) and follow any guidelines mentioned. (see Appendix 2).

The Process

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 should be called immediately 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 end the need for restraint
- avoid committing any act of punitive violence
- keep his or her temper

Types of restraint which may be appropriate include:

- ♦ Any holding tactic in which a young child is restrained without injury until the young child calms down
- ♦ Physical contact with a young person designed to control the young person's movements, which pose a danger (e.g. 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 (if foreseeable this requires specialised training).
- ♦ Physically preventing a young person from exposing themselves to possible danger by leaving the premises.
- ♦ Moving the child to a safe, identified place to calm down and sitting them in a comfortable place until they are calm.

Pupils should not be placed lying down on the floor. Specialist accredited training is necessary for this procedure.

As soon as restraint is to be used a senior member of staff must be informed. 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.

After the incident, it is vital that a full report is completed by all concerned (see Appendix 3, Incident Form and De-briefing) and the agreed de-briefing procedures adhered to 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.

Copies of the form will be kept in the office in the Welfare File and copies added to special educational needs files.

If an injury has been incurred to anyone involved, the usual procedures regarding this will be followed.

The Principal, Management Team and Governors 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. In the event of physical restraint being necessary on more than one occasion, it would be necessary to instigate a Positive Handling Plan (which includes a risk assessment) in discussion with all staff, parents and any relevant outside agencies.

The Principal, Leadership Team and Governors need to ensure that all authorised staff are appropriately trained and updated by Team Teach approved trainers 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 positive handling. 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.

When physical restraint takes place, the academy 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, after receiving the report of an incident where physical intervention has occurred, the Principal considers the academy's guidelines have been seriously breached and that further investigation is warranted, the incident should not be pursued, but action in accordance with Child Protection procedures must be taken. In these circumstances, any internal investigations must cease and no further statements should be taken. If the academy's guidelines have been breached, the Principal will contact the LADO and advise the staff member to consult his/her professional association.

Appendix 1

List of Team Teach Authorised Staff:

Louise Plant (accreditation November 2014)

Liam Corby (accreditation November 2014)

Appendix 2

Individual Positive Handling Plan

POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN

Name:

Class:

SEN Y / N

Date of plan:

Review date:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

E.g. Medical information.

TRIGGER BEHAVIOURS:

E.g. change to routine, direct requests, unfamiliar adults.

RISKS:

(to the child and others)

PREFERRED SUPPORTIVE STRATEGIES: (Underline strategies which, when and where possible, should be attempted before positive handling techniques are used).

Verbal advice/support
Reassurance
Tactical ignoring
Negotiation/Partial agreement
Transfer adult

Planned positive distractions
Positive touch
Descriptions of reality
Time out offered/directed
Choices/limits/consequences

Others:

Preferred Handling Strategies:

Technique	Number of staff	When it would be used

REPAIR AND REBUILD PROCESSES FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT

EVALUATION (This section is to be completed during the review)

SIGNATURES:

Principal: Date

Parent / Carer Date

Whenever positive handling has been necessary parents will be informed within 24 hours

Appendix 3

Record of positive handling / debriefing

Pupil name			
Member(s) of staff			
Date		Time	
Location			
Brief summary of events (including strategies tried before handling)			
Reported to Principal / Vice Principal		Signed Principal / Vice Principal	
Parents informed			
Signature(s) members of staff			