

The New School at West Heath

Policy on Positive Handling (Restraint)

This policy should be read in conjunction with our schools stated aims and objectives, particularly our behaviour management policies and guidance and complaints and representation procedure.

Introduction

Young people join our school having experienced a breakdown in their traditional educational career. This may have been due to a number and combination of different reasons. These could include a failing in the way local authorities and previous schools have recognised and been organised and responded to individual need. They could also include young people suffering a medical and/or emotional and/or psychological condition that has made it difficult for them to learn under traditional conditions. Whatever the reason, although our students may experience intense feelings of frustration because of their individual difficulties, it is highly unlikely that they will ever need to be physically restrained. However, it would be irresponsible to think that there will never be a situation when one of our students may need to be safely and professionally restrained by our staff.

Our Trustees, Student Services Committee and Senior management Team recognise the serious implications for all concerned when the use of physical intervention becomes necessary. In particular they acknowledge the stress and very real anxiety that such actions can and do generate in children and young people, parents and staff. The production of this policy and guidance will ensure everyone has a positive and safe way to respond to the use of physical intervention.

All staff will have the opportunity to be trained to use appropriate methods of holding and restraint and will be expected to apply them to the best of their ability. Our school will ensure that training and development opportunities continue to be available for our staff team and that the programmes of training delivered in this regard are current and appropriate. Some staff will choose not to engage in the programme of training and, as such will not be expected to physically intervene with any our students having difficulty managing their behaviour.

This policy has been formulated to ensure that our students, their parents, carers, staff, and other agencies are fully aware of the context for our school's response to behaviour that requires physical intervention. Further it is designed to provide detailed guidance for all concerned regarding the use of holding, escorting and restraint, including when it is appropriate to physically intervene and what strategies must be used in so doing.

Training

The use of physical interventions including escorting holding and restraint has been the subject of staff development days. Qualified trainers delivered a programme, which detailed the context for physical intervention and practical guidance on the application of a range of strategies to keep everyone safe during the physical management of behaviour. The programme used in our school is based on **Team Teach**.

Key aspects of the training were:

- Clear and unequivocal emphasis on the rights of children to be kept safe at all times
- Physical intervention should only be used when all else has been tried and the situation is likely to become dangerous for children and staff
- Staff need to keep themselves safe at all times
- Past experiences of children will affect the way they respond to physical interventions. Those with a history of physical or sexual abuse will often have painful and disturbing memories triggered by such interventions
- Children with the above experiences could also experience adverse reactions to witnessing physical interventions
- All actions must be conducted in the context of this policy
- Staff have a right to choose to be trained in the use of physical interventions
- Clear and accurate records of the antecedents, behaviour and consequences will be maintained.

Context

Our school is a lively and thriving community dedicated to the provision of high quality teaching and learning. It is in this light that our students are appropriately involved in formulating plans that are made to meet their individual needs. Such plans, where and if appropriate will also detail how specific behaviours will be managed. The use of holding and restraint will be a last resort for supporting our student manage their behaviour.

This policy has been constructed in the light of the DFEE amendment to section 550A of the Education Act 1996. The policy is also written in the context of the "Permissible Forms of Control in Children's Residential Care" DOH 1993.

Principles

Good behaviour must be acknowledged and celebrated as a matter of course and that this in itself is a primary tool in managing behaviour. Additionally the management of behaviour in our school is based on the belief that children and young people have the right to learn from their experiences of life. This will at times involve testing the clearly defined boundaries established by the behaviour management system used in our school.

A fundamental issue to be considered in the use of any form of physical contact with a child or young person is their absolute right to be both “touched” and “not touched”. It is clear that for some young people who may have had experiences of abuse in the past the issue of being touched in any way must be managed sensitively. Similarly for some young people their need for emotional support and comfort may at times extend to being physically comforted and this too must be managed appropriately. In the light of these examples the judgements that all adults must make before touching any young person are as follows:

- ◇ Is the physical contact in the best interests of the child?
- ◇ How do I feel about this level of contact?
- ◇ Is this age appropriate given my knowledge of the young person?
- ◇ What would be the consequence of not making physical contact?

Wherever possible, strategies for physical contact should be detailed within a plan formulated with the young person. The actions might then be properly reviewed.

It is the responsibility of everyone here to ensure that the environment is calm and safe for all. Children and young people have the responsibility to recognise when their behaviour is likely to compromise this situation and to have due regard for the comfort, safety and well - being of all within our school community. Parents and carers must be encouraged to support our school in the provision of a safe calm and happy community by discussing with their son/daughter the need to be sensitive to the needs of others in our school. Home school contact using our staff contact/key working practice will be one way that this is achieved especially as it would set clear expectations for both parents and the school from the point of admission.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented and maintained through;

- ◇ the recruitment and selection of staff which will be governed by the principles enshrined in the Warner report “Choosing With Care.”
- ◇ As a minimum the selection process will ensure that references are sought and obtained from all previous employers; appropriate

checks with the Criminal Records Bureau are conducted prior to the employee having substantial unsupervised access to children; and selection interview techniques go beyond the standard formal interview and include opportunities for candidates to engage in focused debates designed to provide insights to their individual values and beliefs.

- ◇ Induction of all new staff will ensure that there is an opportunity for detailed study and discussion of the policy with senior staff and ongoing discussion within the staff group;
- ◇ Regular training activities both in - house and reinforcement by external trainers as appropriate.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document the terms holding, escorting and restraint will be defined by the outcome, which is intended when the physical intervention is applied.

- *Escorting – the intention to move a child away from a particular area, The degree of force will determine when this becomes a restraint i.e. when the child has no choice but to move under the directions of staff.*
- Holding – the intention is to keep the child in a particular place see above for when this becomes restraint.
- Restraint – the intention is to overpower the child because they have lost all control and are a danger to themselves and or others or property.

Holding & Escorting

To be used to discourage and redirect from unwanted behaviours which are likely to lead to a loss of control by the young person resulting in severe disruption to the orderly environment, damage to property, damage to self and or others.

Staff should use their judgement in using this method as to whether it is likely to lead to a full scale restraint. Factors for consideration will be the likely reaction of the young person based on the most recent and accurate information available and the content of any plan; the environment i.e. the impact of onlookers, events immediately preceding the incident and whether the young person has been misusing alcohol or drugs.

It is important that at all times the young person is made aware of what is expected of them and that as soon as there is a genuine attempt to comply with such expectations the hold be ceased. Always the amount of force that is

used should be the minimum necessary to successfully achieve the desired outcome as defined above.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint should only be used when all other strategies have been tried and found to be unsuccessful. In the first instance staff should always attempt to diffuse the situation by;

- ◇ appropriate use of voice in terms of pace volume and tone
- ◇ adjustment of body position to ensure minimum threat to the young person and maximum safety for staff generally a sideways stance
- ◇ facial expression eye contact is positive and calming
- ◇ appropriate use of humour
- ◇ making clear the expectations of all concerned in the incident and the likely consequences if behaviour deteriorates further
- ◇ seeking help from other staff to diffuse the situation

When restraint is used it should always be **USED WITH CARE**

U RGENTLY	required to prevent immediate possibility of harm or damage to self, others or property.
S AFE	using only the minimum of force necessary.
E FFECTIVE	not if it will make the situation worse.
D ECENT	great care must always be taken to avoid sensitive areas of the body, the risk of cultural offence or the risk of sexual arousal.
W ITNESSED	every effort must be made to ensure the presence of another member of staff as a witness and assistant.
I NDEPENDENT	of size the method of restraint used must depend for its efficacy on the technique and not the relative sizes of staff member and young person.
T IMED	the restraint should only continue for the minimum time for it to be effective.
H ARMLESS	it must always be an act of care and control never punishment.
C ALMING	the intention is to help the young person regain their self control, there should always be a calming dialogue to that end.
A PPROPRIATE	to the circumstances, only when all else has failed, only for as long as necessary.

R E C O R D E D

all incidents of restraint must be recorded using the pro-forma at appendix 1.

E X P L A I N E D

reasons for the restraint and resolution of the incident should be conducted with the young person as soon after the incident as will be effective. Outcomes should be incorporated in IECP. All restraints should be discussed at the earliest opportunity by the staff concerned and a senior member of staff.

RECORDING, REPORTING AND REPAIR

Staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:-

- Holding a student around the neck, by the collar or in any other way that might restrict airways and circulation
- Slapping, punching or kicking
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping a student
- Holding a student by the hair or ear
- Holding a student face down on the ground

It is vital that a contemporaneous written record of any occasion when the use of force has been established. The record should include:-

- The name(s) of the student involved
- The name(s) of all staff including witnesses
- When and where the incident occurred
- The reason that force was used and the nature of the force used, degree and type of hold
- The antecedents, detail of incident including what was said and duration
- Students response and outcome of the incident
- Details of any injuries or marks to the skin
- Details of any damage to property

The report will be kept securely in our school and individual staff should retain a copy for their own use. A pro-forma is attached at appendix 1 which should be used to record incidents where reasonable force has been used.

The record will be used to assist all concerned with planning to avoid repetition of the incident that caused the use of force. Similarly, the record will be used to analyse what worked well and how it might be replicated as part of a planned response to out of control behaviour in the future i.e. an alternative not requiring the use of physical contact. The outcome of all such planning will be included in the respective Individual Education and care Plan that will be shared with the student and their parents or carers.

Support for staff

All staff will be given the opportunity to be trained in the methods of holding and restraint as per the principles of the TEAM TEACH programme. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure the safety and well being of all members of our community at all times. This responsibility must extend to themselves in the first instance. It is therefore essential that staff make a judgement quickly about the safety of using a hold or restraint. They should only proceed if they have determined that all else has been tried and failed. That there is likely to be serious harm to persons or property if nothing is done or that the good order of the environment will be severely disrupted. Finally that they can apply the hold or restraint safely for the young person and themselves, and feel comfortable in doing so.

In circumstances where staff judge that they are unable to apply restraint satisfying the above condition of safety they should quickly send for another member of staff and do what they can to contain the situation. Children and young people at our school are active members of the community and as such should be encouraged to go for help when the circumstance dictates it to be necessary.

Staff that have had to use physical intervention will be offered the opportunity to discuss their feelings about the incident as soon after completion of the recording pro-forma as is helpful. It is an expectation that all staff acknowledge the importance of using a senior member of staff to discuss the issues raised for them personally by using physical restraint.

The Trustees, Student Services Committee and Senior Managers of our school will support the actions of staff in the use of physical intervention provided that they have been conducted in the context of this policy and the methods drawn from the team teach program have been used.

Positive Handling	
This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Positive behaviour, Complaints, Concerns, Suggestions & Compliments and Safeguarding Children	
Appendices:	
Monitoring of Policy Implementation is the responsibility of: The Senior Leadership Team	
Lead responsibility:	Vice Principal – Development
Relevant Legislation:	To be detailed in the next release
Approved by: S.S. Committee	Date approved:
Ratified by: Trustees	Date ratified: 05:2003
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