

Heritage Park Primary School

Positive Handling Policy



Approved by: Karen Bell - Headteacher

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Heritage Park Primary School **Positive Handling Policy**

Introduction

This policy outlines our approach towards physical contact between staff and children at Heritage Park Primary School and should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection, Behaviour and Discipline, SEN, and Health and Safety policies.

At Heritage Park Primary School, we are a caring community where the emotional and physical wellbeing of the children is paramount. Staff are in *loco parentis* during the school day and therefore in some circumstances, appropriate physical contact is a perfectly normal part of the relationship between a member of staff and a pupil, e.g. to offer comfort or reassurance if a child is unwell or upset, or to physically support a child in their learning (perhaps in PE or writing).

At Heritage Park Primary School, we are committed to a Behaviour and Discipline policy which encourages children to make positive behaviour choices. On extremely rare occasions, circumstances may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff. Our policy for physical intervention is based upon the following principles:

- Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when all other appropriate strategies have failed
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Incidents must be recorded and reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible
- Parents will be verbally informed of each incident

All staff Heritage Park Primary School are trained to look after pupils in their care. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow this policy.

Aims

If Positive Handling is used as a strategy, it is done so with the aim of supporting safe learning for everyone, not as punishment or control.

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the following documents:

- Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act (2006)
- Common Law and Section 3(1)(a) Criminal Law Act (1967)
- DfE Behaviour and discipline in schools: guidance for Headteachers and school staff, (January 2016)
- Use of reasonable force Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies, (July 2013)

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states:

Power of members of staff to use force

(1) A person to whom this section applies may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing a pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following, namely—

- a) Committing any offence,
- b) Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself), or
- c) 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.

Additionally all persons have powers to use force under **Common Law and Section 3(1)(a) Criminal Law Act 1967**. This would include if a child was in danger of hurting someone else or themselves or intent on damaging property.

Key points of the **DfE Behaviour and discipline in schools: guidance for Headteachers and school staff, January 2016** states:

- Teachers have power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour which occurs in school and, in some circumstances, outside of school.
- The power to discipline also applies to all paid staff (unless the Headteacher says otherwise) with responsibility for pupils, such as teaching assistants.
- Headteachers, proprietors and governing bodies must ensure they have a strong behaviour policy to support staff in managing behaviour, including the use of rewards and sanctions.

Key points of the DfE **Use of reasonable force Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies**, July 2013 states:

- School staff members have a power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- 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.

Our Approach

The term positive handling includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. 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

At Heritage Park Primary School, we aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort when all other strategies have been unsuccessful.

All members of staff should ensure that they:

- Aim to deal with behaviour using a verbal approach
- Always act within the school's policies on behaviour and physical intervention, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour
- Take reasonable action to ensure all pupils' safety and wellbeing
- Do not place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention

Use of physical intervention

Physical intervention should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as punishment. Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this. What constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. All staff should apply verbal strategies in order to de-escalate wherever possible. Only members of staff who have received Positive Handling training should use physical intervention, as outlined in the Positive Handling training. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below. In all circumstances, alternative methods should be used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint, a last resort.

Reasonable Force

What is reasonable force?

Reasonable force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm, through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed. As mentioned, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them.

- Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention

Staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases, for example, where there is an extreme risk to the pupil's personal safety or a threat to life, it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

When can reasonable force be used?

- To prevent a pupil behaving in an extremely disruptive way during a school event, a school trip or visit
- To prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety
- To prevent a pupil from attacking another pupil or a member of staff, or to stop a fight in the playground
- To restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves or others through physical outbursts

Under no circumstances can reasonable force cannot be used as a punishment. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Physical intervention

When physical intervention becomes necessary, the following guidance should be strictly adhered to by all members of staff.

Staff should:

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use reasonable force
- Involve a trained member of staff and work in a pair
- Tell the pupil what they must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

Staff should not:

- Act in temper (involve a third staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment

Actions after an incident

Physical intervention often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. The Headteacher or another member of the Senior Leadership Team should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

A member of staff will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

The staff members involved must complete a 'Positive Handling Report Form' (Appendix A) following the incident in order to provide an accurate account of the action that was taken. This must be completed as soon as possible and handed to the Headteacher. The Positive Handling Report Forms can be obtained from the Headteacher's office.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern, it is helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided. All incidents should be recorded immediately using an AABCC (Appendix B) form so that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed. This should be conducted in discussion with the SENCo who will explain the process of completing the AABCC forms. In the event of any future complaint or allegation, these records will provide essential and accurate information and will be stored as part of our online CPOMs system.

It may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a Personal Support Plan in discussion with the Senior Leadership Team and SENCo. If the pupil's displayed behaviour is thought to be as a result of a special educational need, it may be necessary for the pupil to be added to the school's SEND register. This process would follow our SEND policy and the pupil's parents and class teacher would be kept informed at all times.

Risk Assessments

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises.

Such planning will address:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action school might need to take
- Briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate
- The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff

Complaints and Allegations

The positive ethos, good behaviour and excellent relationships in this school mean that restrictive physical intervention will be rarely needed. This policy will ensure that in those rare circumstances the care and wellbeing of all pupils will be paramount. It is our intention to inform all stakeholders about this policy and these procedures through a clear policy, which is adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, However, in the event that a complaint or allegation is made, this should follow the school's complaints procedure which can be found on the school's website.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and distributed to relevant stakeholders.

Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following other policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour and Discipline
- SEND
- Health and Safety

This policy links to the following documents:

- [Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act \(2006\)](#)
- [Common Law and Section 3\(1\)\(a\) Criminal Law Act \(1967\)](#)
- [DfE Behaviour and discipline in schools: guidance for Headteachers and school staff, \(January 2016\)](#)
- [Use of reasonable force Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies, \(July 2013\)](#)

Appendix A

Positive Handling Incident Report Form

1. Your Name:			
2. Name of Pupil:			
3. Date and Time when positive handling techniques were used:			
Date:		Time:	
4. Location of incident:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/> Main Hall	<input type="checkbox"/> Small Hall
<input type="checkbox"/> Playground/Field	<input type="checkbox"/> Library	<input type="checkbox"/> ICT Suite	<input type="checkbox"/> DT Room
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Location – Please specify			
5. Your statement			
Your statement must set out what happened; give details of your part in the use of positive handling, any holds you applied and how the incident was finally resolved. It must give details of any attempts made to de-escalate throughout the incident. Your statement should be completed independently of other staff involved in the incident.			
The use of force must only be used when it is: i. Reasonable in the circumstance, meaning: ii. You believed that it was absolutely necessary, and iii. Proportionate to the seriousness of the situation			
When restraint was used, please tick your primary role with the pupil: <input type="checkbox"/> Right arm <input type="checkbox"/> Left arm <input type="checkbox"/> Supervising			
6. Why was it necessary to use positive handling techniques?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Harm to Self	<input type="checkbox"/> Harm to Others	<input type="checkbox"/> Damage to property	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other – Please specify			
6. Were any verbal de-escalation techniques used prior to positive handling?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Please expand below:			

7. How did you rate the risk posed by the pupil?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> High	
8. How would you rate the amount of force applied by you?			
<input type="checkbox"/> No force	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> High
9. How did you feel prior to, during and after the incident?			
10. Who else was involved in the positive handling?			
Name:			
Name:			
11. Please list any injuries to you:			
12. Please list any injuries to the pupil:			
13. Please list any other information that is relevant to the incident:			
*attach more pages if necessary			

14. What technique/s position of restraint did you use?

Please tick the techniques used:

1. Single-Person Escort / Prompt



2. Two Person- Holding Technique 1



3. Two Person Holding Technique 2



4. Straight Arm Immobilisation



5. Cupped Fist



6. Seated Position



7. Kneeling Position



8. Other - Please specify

I believe the facts stated in this report provide an accurate and honest account of the incident that required the use of positive handling techniques to be used.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix B

Date and time (when the behaviour occurred)	Activity (what was going on when the behaviour occurred)	Antecedent (What happened right before the behaviour that may have triggered the behaviour?)	Behaviour (An observable description of what the behaviour looked like)	Consequence (What happened after the behaviour or as a result of the behaviour)	Communication (what might the child be trying to communicate?)