

# **The Grange School**

## **Positive Handling Policy**

**March 2017**

**To review March 2018**

# **THE GRANGE SCHOOL**

## **POLICY FOR THE RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION AND POSITIVE HANDLING OF PUPILS**

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## Rationale

The Grange School is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for students' safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and use physical intervention only as a last resort. If used at all it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the student, and be reasonable and proportional to the circumstances of the incident. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.

It is recognised in both statute<sup>1</sup> (See appendix I) and Common Law that there is a need to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to students, staff and property.

This policy is based on DFE guidance 'The use of reasonable force-advice to Headteachers, Staff and Governing bodies' and NCC guidance for schools on the use of restrictive physical interventions.'

## Objectives

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Maintain the safety of pupils, staff and visitors
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent serious breaches of School discipline

## Deciding if the use of restrictive physical intervention is appropriate

Staff will view physical intervention of pupils as **a last resort**. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent the need for restrictive physical intervention.

In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate:

- Risk to the safety of staff, pupils, or visitors
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property
- Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline.

Any member of staff who undertakes a restrictive physical intervention should be clear as to why it is necessary and be able to show that it was in the pupil's best interest and that it was reasonable and proportionate. For those pupils assessed as being at risk of restrictive physical intervention Positive Handling Plans will be developed. These plans outline what techniques should be used and not used along with de-escalation strategies.

The judgement on whether to use physical intervention and what physical intervention should be used should always depend on the circumstances of each case and in the case of pupils with Special Educational Needs information about the individual concerned.

Staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about:

- a. The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. the greater the potential for

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<sup>1</sup> Section 93 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

- injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
- b. The chances of achieving the desired result by other means. the lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
  - c. The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, The more likely it is that using force may be justified.

## **Using physical interventions**

Before using restrictive physical intervention staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil to stop misbehaving and communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout the incident. Staff should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

The types of physical intervention could include:

- a. Passive physical contact resulting from standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path.
- b. Active physical contact such as:
  - i) Leading a pupil by the hand or arm;
  - ii) Ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
  - iii) In more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive interventions, which require specific expertise and training.

The restrictive physical interventions authorised by the School are those techniques in which staff have received appropriate training and development through 'Team Teach'.

The core principles of 'Team Teach' include:

- Minimum of two staff involved.
- Last resort minimum force and time.
- Techniques that do not rely on pain or locks and allow for verbal communication.
- Staff safety and protection addressed.
- Planned responses and techniques are written out and included in positive handling plans for individual pupils.

Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff is justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum intervention required to achieve the desired result.)

## **Alternatives to physical intervention**

A member of staff who chooses not to make a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk. They can:

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason.
- Give clear directions to the pupils to stop.
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.

- Remove an audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place. (Where a pupil is highly disruptive, it is likely to be impossible to usher this pupil to a safer place. In this situation, the remaining children should be removed.)
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons.
- Use 'positive touch'<sup>2</sup> to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressurised.
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help.

## **Reducing the likelihood of situations arising where physical intervention may be required**

All physical interventions at The Grange School are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. The School Positive Behaviour Policy rewards effort and application, and encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The Grange School undertakes to ensure a calm, orderly and supportive school climate which minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind, thereby reducing the need for physical intervention.

A structured approach to staff development is adopted through The 'Team Teach' programme, which allows staff to develop the skills of positive behaviour management and de-escalating incidents.

Staff should recognise the need to effectively manage individual incidents. It is important to communicate calmly with the pupil, using non-threatening verbal and body language and ensuring that the pupil can see a way out of the situation. Strategies might include, for example, going with the staff member to a quiet room, away from bystanders or other pupils, so that the staff member can listen to concerns; or being joined by a particular member of staff well known to the pupil.

Wherever practicable a pupil should be warned that physical intervention may have to be used before applying it.

## **Who can use Reasonable Force**

All school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.

This power applies to any member of staff in the school. It can also apply to people who the Head Teacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils ie Volunteers or Parents accompanying pupils on a school organised visit

Specific staff have been trained in specific physical interventions and de-escalation strategies through the 'Team Teach' approach. Once staff have received their full training, refresher training will take place no later than 3 years following initial training.

A list of trained staff is kept in the school (Wellbeing Office) and these staff are those that are currently authorised by the Head Teacher to restrain pupils, according to the principles of their training.

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<sup>2</sup> 'Positive touch' is a 'Team Teach' technique. The student is guided by touching The arm above the elbow. Please refer to The Team Teach training manual for specific guidance on the technique.

## **Positive Handling Plans**

Individual pupils assessed at being at greatest risk of requiring restrictive physical intervention will be identified through the SENDCo. These pupils will be placed on Positive Handling Plans developed in consultation with the School, Parents/ Carers, and the pupil.

Positive Handling Plans set out the situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and the de-escalation strategies that are most effective. Specific strategies and techniques that have been agreed by staff when physical intervention is required are also included.

If it is necessary the pupil may receive further support in school and this may be detailed in a Behaviour Management Plan. This will be compiled by the SENCo and class staff when necessary.

## **Recording and reporting incidents**

The Grange School keeps a record of all physical interventions. The incident book is stored securely in the Wellbeing Office and is bound with numbered pages. All records are kept for ten years after the date of the incident.

The purpose of recording is to ensure that policy guidelines are followed, to inform parents/ carers, to inform future planning as part of the school improvement process, to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the incident and to provide a record for any future enquiry.

Accounts of the incident should be taken from the member of staff who undertook the physical intervention, the pupil/s involved and any third party witnesses.

Parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible after any recordable incident. Parents/carers will be telephoned before details are confirmed in writing. Parents/carers will be informed of when and where the incident took place, which members of staff were directly involved (anonymous where necessary), why they decided physical intervention had to be used, what physical intervention was used, whether there were any injuries and what follow up action was being taken in relation to their child. Parents/carers will also be given a copy of The 'Policy for The Restrictive intervention and Positive Handling of Pupils.'

A Designated Safeguarding Lead teacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity that a physical intervention has taken place. A Designated Safeguarding Lead will initiate the recording process and review each incident.

Governors will be informed of the number of physical interventions on an annual basis.

## **Post-incident support**

The School recognises the need to ensure that staff and pupils have appropriate emotional support.

The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. Immediate action will be taken to provide first aid for any injuries requiring attention.

The pupil will be given time to become calm whilst staff continue to supervise. When it is deemed that the pupil is composed, a senior member of staff will discuss the incident with the pupil and ascertain the reason for its occurrence. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish a positive relationship between the pupil and the member of staff involved in the incident.

All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. The Head Teacher (or his/her nominee) will provide support to the member of staff involved.

Parents/carers will be engaged in discussing the incident and for setting out subsequent actions and support.

### **Complaint procedure**

If a parent/carer or pupil is concerned about any aspect of the management of an incident requiring physical intervention, The Head Teacher should be informed of their concern. The Head Teacher will respond to the complaint in accordance with School policy and procedure.