

Clifton Green Primary School

Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Guidelines and Procedures

Signature of Co-Chairs of Governors Kathleen Wood and Jeremy Pilling

Signature of Head Teacher



Member of Staff Responsible:

Head Teacher

Reviewing Committee:

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

Statutory/Non Statutory:

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Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Guidelines and Procedures

1. Introduction

Clifton Green Primary School, recognises the right of every person to be protected from harm and, for that reason, seeks to protect all children and young people against any form of positive handling and physical intervention which is either unnecessary, inappropriate (either to the individual or in the prevailing circumstances) excessive or unlawful.

This policy is written to explain our procedures in line with:

- Our school behaviour policy
- Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006, *“This section enables a member of staff to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from committing an offence, causing personal injury, damaging property or doing something that prejudices discipline at the school.”*
- Department for Education, Use of Reasonable Force in Schools guidance, 2013

For the purpose of this policy, the terms ‘positive handling’, ‘physical intervention’ and ‘reasonable force’ are all used to describe the same intervention - a physical act carried out with the purpose of influencing, modifying or preventing the actions of a child or young person.

2. 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.

3. 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. We use restorative approaches and trauma-informed practice to support children who may need additional care and guidance.

All staff work in partnership with those who know the child to:

- 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.

4. What is physical intervention?

The use of force is illegal if the physical circumstances do not warrant it. The force used should always be the minimum needed to regain and ensure safety and control for everyone involved or present. Restrictive physical interventions may include:

- Bodily contact - where the physical presence of one or more people is used to control a pupil, e.g. physically interposing between pupils; blocking a pupil's path; holding or 'shepherding' a pupil; using agreed, approved restricted holds
- Environmental – where a change is applied within the environment for example shutting a door or the use of locks or key pads to prevent access to a particular area.

A core team of staff in school have completed nationally accredited 'Team Teach' training which has informed our approach in school.

5. In what circumstances can physical intervention be used?

- To prevent a pupil causing, or being at risk of causing, injury or damage to themselves or others, whether by accident, rough behaviour or by misuse of materials or objects.
- To prevent a pupil committing a criminal offence.
- To prevent a pupil committing deliberate serious damage or vandalism.
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil.
- To prevent behaviour which is prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline.

The decision to use physical intervention will be taken in the context of the level of risk presented by the behaviour, the seriousness of the incident and the relative risks of the use of physical intervention compared with any available alternative. The use of physical intervention will take into account the characteristics of the pupil, including their age, gender, SEN, physical needs or disability, developmental level or cultural issues.

6. The Last Resort Principle

At Clifton Green Primary School we proactively foster positive relationships and only use reasonable force when there is no realistic alternative. This means that we expect staff to conduct a dynamic risk assessment and choose the safest alternative before using physical intervention. There might be some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives e.g. a child is about to run in the road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives such as the use of assertiveness skills:

- Use a distracter to interrupt the behaviour long enough for other methods of verbal control
- Withdrawal of attention/audience
- Avoidance of confrontation and use of humour; in which case the incident could be dealt with later when emotions are running less high
- The employment of other sanctions consistent with Clifton Green's Behaviour Policy.

7. Using Physical Intervention

Where physical interventions are needed to prevent injury to the student, other students or staff, or to prevent serious damage, these should be for the minimum length of time possible and using the least possible force.

When positive handling becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance.

DON'T

- Act in temper - involve another staff member and 'change face' where needed to deescalate a situation
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in private areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint, bend fingers or hold hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck, lying face down or pulling arms across the child's chest.

8. Records

When physical intervention has been used, a factual account of the incident (including escalation) and the actions taken must be recorded on CPOMS as close to the event as possible. All staff and pupils involved must be named and times/dates should be accurately recorded. A member of the school's Leadership Team should also be notified verbally and the family of the child involved should be informed also.

9. Post Incident Review

An informal, post incident review will be conducted by a member of the school's Leadership Team to check-in with all children and adults involved in the incident (either together or 1:1 whichever is most appropriate). This will include:

- reflective discussion about the incident and the events leading up to it
- learning about the child's behaviour including triggers and responses
- review of the physical intervention used

10. Positive Handling Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk and require regular physical intervention should have a Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan.

The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. If particular physical techniques have been found to be effective they should be named, along with alerts to any which have proved ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Positive Handling Plans should be considered alongside any other planning documents which relate to the pupil. Positive Handling Plans should result from multi-professional collaboration.

11. Monitoring Use of Physical Interventions

The use of physical intervention in school is monitored in order to help staff learn from experience, promote the well being of children in their care, and provide a basis for appropriate support. Monitoring can help the school to determine what specialist help is needed for children and to assess the appropriateness of the child's placement at the school. The use of physical intervention is monitored and evaluated regularly at inclusion and leadership meetings.

12. Complaints and Allegations

The use of restrictive physical intervention can lead to complaints or allegations of inappropriate or excessive use. In the event of a complaint being received by a school in relation to use of force by staff, the matter should be dealt with in accordance with LA guidelines and school policy.

