



Thistly Meadow Primary School

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

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Introduction

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils who may need to be positively handled. This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies including:

- Overarching Behaviour
- Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Safeguarding
- Staff Code of Conduct

Purpose of the policy

Good professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the discipline practised by the staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in **exceptional** circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of positive handling may be required.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in Thistly Meadow primary school:

- i. clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary and
- ii. are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working at Thistly Meadow primary school has the right to:

- a recognition of their unique identity
- be treated with respect and dignity
- learn and work in a safe environment
- be protected from harm

Pupils attending this school and their parents have a right to:

- individual consideration of pupils needs by staff that has responsibility for their care and protection
- expect staff to undertake duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies

- be informed about school rules, relevant policies and the expected conduct of all pupils and staff working in the school
- be informed about the school's complaint procedure

The school will ensure that all pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits which govern behaviour in the school. Parents should have committed themselves through the Home-School Agreement to ensure the good behaviour of their child and that the child understands and follows the school's Behaviour Policy.

Physical touch

At Thistly Meadow primary school we believe that physical touch is an essential part of human relationships. In our school adults may well use touch to prompt, to give reassurance or to provide support in PE.

To use touch/physical support successfully, staff will adhere to the following principles. It must:

- be non-abusive, with no intention to cause pain or injury
- be in the best interests of the child and others
- have a clear educational purpose (e.g. to access the curriculum or to improve social relationships)
- take account of gender and cultural issues

Staff need to be aware of sensitivities associated with any form of physical contact with students.

Definitions

(a) Physical Contact

Situations in which proper physical contact takes place between staff and pupils, e.g. in games/PE or to comfort pupils.

(b) Physical Intervention

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

(c) Positive Handling

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or property or if good order is being seriously prejudiced. All such incidents will be recorded.

What the law says on when is restrictive physical intervention permissible

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- a) Committing any offence (or for a student under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- b) Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student 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.

Types of Incidents

Incidents described above fall into 3 broad categories:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property
- Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order or discipline

Examples of situations which fall within one of the first two categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil
- pupils are fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing injury, damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of materials or objects
- a pupil is behaving in such a way that places a health and safety risk to him / herself or others
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave the school Thistly Meadow primary school

Examples of behaviour which fall into the third category are:

- a pupil persistently refusing to do as requested
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

The application of any form of positive handling places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and to **seek alternative strategies** wherever possible in order to prevent the need for positive handling.

Positive Handling will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk.

Training

Positive Handling training will be made available to designated staff and will be the responsibility of the Head teacher. No member of staff will be expected to undertake

positive handling without appropriate training notwithstanding **all staff** under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 can use reasonable force as is necessary, in circumstances to prevent a pupil from causing an offence, injury, damage and to maintain good order and discipline. Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken.

Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches will be taken according to the circumstances of the incident:

a) Verbal acknowledgment of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain; this includes negotiation, care and concern.

b) Further verbal reprimand stating:

- this is the second request for compliance
- an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable
- an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues.

c) Warning of potential need to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies. If possible summon assistance.

d) Physical intervention. Reasonable physical intervention using the minimum degree of contact to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Acceptable measures of Physical Intervention

Positive handling can only be deemed reasonable if:

- it is warranted by the particular circumstances of the incident
- it is delivered in accordance with the seriousness of the incident and the consequences which it is desired to prevent
- it is carried out as the minimum to achieve the desired result
- the age, understanding and the gender of the pupil are taken into account
- it is likely to achieve the desired result

Wherever possible, assistance will be sought from another member of staff before intervention.

The form of physical intervention may involve staff doing the following:

- physically interposing themselves between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- escorting a pupil
- shepherding a pupil away

Any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way in which staff exercise their responsibilities and the behaviour management strategies used.

Whenever positive handling is used, staff will keep talking to the pupil.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The school has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for children with special educational needs and disabilities. These pupils will have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) or Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) agreed in advance by a multidisciplinary or school team working in consultation with the child and his/her parents/carers. Pupils with severe behavioural difficulties, for example, those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, autism and learning difficulties can display extreme/challenging behaviour.

Where planned physical intervention strategies are in place, they should be one component of a broader approach to behaviour management, treatment or therapy and documented in their EHCP/IHP.

Physical intervention within broader behavioural planning

If, through the school's SEND assessment procedures, it is determined that a restrictive physical intervention is likely to be appropriate to help a pupil make progress, a **Risk assessment for challenging behaviours** will be carried out following the school's guidelines (see Appendix A).

If appropriate, an **Individual positive handling plan** will then be drawn up for that pupil (see Appendix B). This plan will aim to reduce the likelihood of the need for restrictive physical intervention as well as describing how such intervention will be carried out. This plan will be discussed with parents/carers.

Before the risk assessment is implemented, any necessary training or guidance will be provided for the staff involved. The Head teacher will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training. This is usually the Team Teach method of training that provides staff with a certification and duration of three years competency.

Risk assessment

The use of a restrictive physical intervention will be the outcome of a professional judgement made by staff on the basis of this school policy. It is avoided whenever possible and will not be used for staff convenience.

Restrictive physical intervention will **only** be considered if other behaviour management options have proved ineffective or are judged to be inappropriate (or in an emergency situation). Before deciding to intervene in this way, staff will weigh up whether the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk of intervening. Any actions will be carried out with the child and other pupil's best interests at heart.

Physical intervention will never be used to punish a pupil or cause pain, injury or humiliation.

Staff are not expected to intervene physically against their better judgement nor are they expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk. In such circumstances, they must take steps to minimise risks. For example, by removing other pupils and calling for assistance.

Supply staff will not be authorised to use restrictive physical interventions. Parents and volunteers in the school are not given authorisation. Staff from the local education authority may have their own policies about the care and control of pupils but, whilst on the premises, they will be expected to be aware of, and operate within, the policy of this school.

What to do after the use of a restrictive physical intervention

After the use of an unplanned restrictive physical intervention, the following steps will be taken:

- Details of the incident will be recorded by all adults involved immediately on the **Positive handling incident report form** (see Appendix C).
- Recording will be completed before the end of the school day. Incident forms should be scanned and uploaded to the CPOMs online safeguarding system. In this way, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Head teacher can ensure records are retained securely and available for monitoring.
- Staff will be offered the opportunity to seek advice from a senior colleague or professional representative when compiling their report.
- Any injuries suffered by those involved will be recorded following normal school procedures and logged on the Assessnet online accident reporting system.
- The Head teacher will check that there is no cause for concern regarding the actions of adults involved. If it is felt that an action has 'caused or put a child at risk of significant harm' the Head teacher will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and also inform parents/carers.
- Parents/carers will be informed by the Head teacher/Class teacher on the day of the incident. Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding an incident.
- Support/debriefing will be available for adults and pupils who have been involved in any incident involving restrictive physical interventions.

Arrangements for recording and informing parents in the case of a planned restrictive intervention will be followed as agreed beforehand but broadly will follow the same pattern as above.

The Senior Leadership Team will use the records kept to analyse patterns of behaviour and so decide whether responses are being effective. The Head teacher will report this information to the SEND Governor at their termly meetings.

Staff completing recording forms will keep a copy for themselves for future reference. After the review of any incident, a copy of the recording form will be placed on the pupil's file.

Action after an Incident

The Head teacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Safeguarding Procedure
- Staff Facing Allegations of Abuse Procedure
- Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure
- School Behaviour Policy (including exclusions)

Members of staff will be kept informed of any action taken. In case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

Complaints

The availability of a clear policy regarding Positive Handling and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them. Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's Complaints Policy.

Monitoring of Incidents

Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Head teacher to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour can only be contained using positive handling and the implications for this pupil being educated at a mainstream school or alternative provision. This process will address patterns of incidents and evaluate trends which may be emerging.

This should be read in conjunction with:

DfE Guidance Use of Force 03/12 Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Guidance on the use of restrictive physical interventions for staff working with children who display extreme behaviour in association with a learning disability and/or autistic spectrum disorder, DfE July 2002

Version	Date	Comment
V2	Date created: 8/11/2021 Review date: Nov 2024	A Gordon

**APPENDIX A – RISK ASSESSMENT PROFORMA
FOR CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS**

Proforma for assessing and managing foreseeable risks for children who present challenging behaviours

Name of child.....

Class.....

Name of teacher.....

IDENTIFICATION OF RISK

Describe the foreseeable risk	
Is the risk potential or actual	
List who is affected by the risk	

ASSESSMENT OF RISK

In which situations does the risk usually occur?	
How likely it is that the risk will arise?	
If the risk arises, who is likely to be injured or hurt?	
What kinds of injuries or harm are likely to occur?	
How serious are the adverse outcomes?	

Assessment completed by

Name.....

Date.....

RISK REDUCTION OPTIONS

Measures	Possible options	Benefits	Drawbacks
Proactive interventions to prevent risk			
Follow up interventions to manage risk			
Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes			

AGREED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Focus of measures	Measures to be employed	Level of risk
Proactive interventions to prevent risk		
Follow up interventions to manage risk		
Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes		

Agreed by:

Parent/Carer.....

Head teacher..... **Date**

COMMUNICATION OF RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Plans and strategies shared with staff:	Communication Method	Date

STAFF TRAINING ISSUES

Training required	Date completed

ACTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

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**APPENDIX B – INDIVIDUAL POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN
(PHP)**

Name of child.....

Class.....

Name of teacher.....

TRIGGER BEHAVIOURS

Describe common behaviours/situations which are known to have led to Positive Handling being required. When is such behaviour likely to occur?

TOPOGRAPHY OF BEHAVIOUR

Describe what the behaviour looks and sounds like:

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Note any known medical conditions that should be taken into account before physically intervening (e.g asthma, brittle bones).

PREFERRED SUPPORTIVE AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Ways of CALMING such behaviours. Strategies that, where and when possible, should be attempted before positive handling techniques are used:

- Verbal advice and support
- Distraction (Know key words, objects, likes etc)
- Reassurance
- Take up time
- CALM talking/stance
- Time Out (requires written plan)
- Negotiation
- Withdrawal (requires staff/carer observation)
- Choices/Limits
- Cool-off: Directed/Offered (*delete as appropriate*)
- Humour
- Time allowed out to calm down or cool off
- Contingent Touch
- Consequences reminder
- Transfer Adult (Help protocol)
- Planned Ignoring
- Success Reminder
- Others

PRAISE POINTS

Areas that can be developed and build upon. Please state at least three bridge builders.

PREFERRED HANDLING STRATEGIES

Describe the preferred holds: standing, sitting, ground, stating numbers of staff, what “get outs” that can be used when holding, etc

Note: Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the client, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent side effect to attempts to keep individuals safe.

Agreed by:

Parent/Carer.....

Head teacher..... **Date**

APPENDIX C– POSITIVE HANDLING INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Name		Class	
Date		Time	
		Time span	
Location		Activity	
Reported by		Position	
Name of staff involved		Name of witness	

Reasons for Intervention		
Immediate danger of personal injury to pupil	Immediate danger of injury to other pupil(s)	Immediate danger to a member of staff
Severe disruption to other pupils	To avoid property damage	Prevent a criminal act

Triggers		

Behaviour (give examples)

De-escalation techniques used			
Verbal advice and support	Reassurance	Calm/script talking	Persuasion
Distraction	Appropriate humour	Choices given	Take up time
Time out offered	Time out directed	Tactical ignoring	Negotiation
Changed staff	Success reminder	Praise	Consequence reminder
Other			

Team Teach Strategy Used				
Strategy	Duration	No. of staff	Stand/Sit	Effectiveness
Verbal				1 2 3 4 5
Friendly hold				1 2 3 4 5
Single elbow				1 2 3 4 5
Double elbow				1 2 3 4 5
Figure 4				1 2 3 4 5
Wrap				1 2 3 4 5
Escort				1 2 3 4 5
Outcome			How effective	

Medical Intervention	
Breathing/circulation checked	Checked for bruising
Injury to child	Referred to Doctor
Injury to staff	Referred to Doctor
Injury to others	Referred to Doctor

Pupil Views
This report has been read to the pupil and discussed. Pupil's view:

Monitoring			
Parents Informed	Name	Time	Date
Parents Comments			
Other agencies			
Further action			

Monitoring Checks						
Was sufficient de-escalation undertaken?	Were there grounds for physical control?	Were agreed physical controls used?	Has sufficient post incident action been taken?	Is record keeping comprehensive and complete?	Were all relevant people informed?	Were there any staff/pupil complaints about the incident?
Outcome				Further Action Risk Assessment		

Signatures	
Staff	
Staff	