



Positive Handling Policy

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An academy within:



"Learning together; to be the best we can be"

Positive Handling Policy Coppice School

Objectives

The key objective of this policy is to maintain the safety of the pupils and staff. In doing so we abide by the objectives laid down in the education Act as outlined below.

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

- Committing any offence {or for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for a older pupil};
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person {including the pupil himself/herself}: or
- 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.

Minimising the need to use force

At Coppice School we aim to provide a calm environment, which enables staff to teach and pupils to learn. This enables us to minimise the risk of incidents that might require the use of force, which is reasonable, proportionate and necessary. As a Special school, some of our pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The majority of our staff are trained to manage and control their behaviour. There is a strong emphasis on the recognition of difficulties as soon as they begin to arise and on the de-escalation of incidents as they progress. We would estimate that 95% of staff energy is directed towards de-escalation and only 5% is involved in the use of force, although we prefer the term physical intervention and will use this term throughout the rest of the policy.

At Coppice School we will only use physical intervention when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not doing so. These risks would result in injury to the pupil, another pupil or to staff or result in serious criminal damage.

To ensure that we are not in breach of this policy all pupils have an Individual Risk Assessment/ Behaviour plan. These are discussed with the pupil (where appropriate) and parent/carers.

Staff authorised to carry out physical intervention

Most of the permanent members of staff and non-teaching staff are fully trained in Team Teach and have received accreditation. Team Teach is a BILD accredited framework for de-escalating behaviour and trains staff in the use of safe physical restraint techniques. A list of accredited staff is kept on the data base with the dates of training and the dates when re-accreditation and training is due.

The Head Teacher has authorised all trained staff to have the statutory power to use force, which is reasonable, proportionate and necessary where the incident is covered under the objectives listed above. Staff who are not trained in Team Teach or temporary staff on short-term contracts are not authorised to use physical interventions.

Deciding whether physical interventions are necessary

As already stated we would estimate that 95% of staff energy is directed towards de-escalation of incidents and only 5% is involved in physical intervention. In line with Team Teach guidance all staff are clear that physical intervention is only used when:

- The potential consequences of not intervening were sufficiently serious to justify considering the use of force e.g. another pupil could be seriously injured;
- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means were by this stage very low;
- The risks associated with not intervening outweighed those of intervening.

All staff will be kept informed about and advised on how to deal with pupils who present with particular risks to themselves and others through the sharing of positive handling plans and staff briefings where any amendments {particularly following an incident} have been made.

Physical Intervention

As stated all staff who carry out a physical intervention on a pupil are authorised to do this by the Head Teacher and that this will only occur when at least one of the criteria below occurs: -

- Committing any offence {or for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence by an older pupil};
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person {including the pupil Himself/herself}: or
- 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.

In addition, staff will always ensure that the following are in place wherever it is possible to do so: -

- Pupils are given a clear oral warning prior to a physical intervention taking place. This will allow the pupil to consider whether they could work with staff to calm the situation without an intervention having to take place. It also ensures that the pupil is fully aware that staff are preparing for physical intervention and are therefore not able to say staff assaulted them {as long as the intervention used the recognised techniques}
- The holds used by staff will be the recognised holds for which the staff have received training. Any form of hold that is likely to cause injury to the pupil {particularly anything that could restrict breathing} should not be used.
- Staff are advised that, as far as possible, they should not use a physical intervention unless, or until another trained member of staff is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

Staff Training

All staff receive Team Teach training [www.team-teach.co.uk] as some of the pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. They will attend a 12-hour {2-day course}. Refresher training is also carried out during staff meeting time as and when deemed

necessary by the team-teach coordinator. Staff must attend a 1-day refresher course every 2 years.

The skills and techniques taught on a Team Teach course are as a result of an on going risk assessment in an effort to safeguard everyone involved in a violent incident where physical interventions are necessary.

Team teach techniques seek to avoid injury to a pupil, but whilst some physical injury potential can be reduced there remains some risk, with potential for bruising or scratching that may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessary as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of ensuring that the pupil remains safe.

It is also recognised that staff may choose to respond with techniques from outside the Team Teach framework. This does not automatically render the use of such skill or technique necessary improper, unacceptable or unlawful. Its use must be judged on whether or not it was reasonable, proportionate and necessary in those particular contexts and circumstances.

Recording incidents

All serious incidents, which result in a physical intervention taking place, will be recorded on CPoms and a Team Teach intervention form will be attached to the recorded incident, by the staff involved. This is then scrutinised by SLT and followed up accordingly.

Reporting incidents

Following a physical intervention taking place, the parents/carers of the pupil involved will be informed by either telephone or by letter. Once this action has taken place this is recorded on the incident form.

Post-incident support

It is essential that following a physical intervention that both the pupil and member{s} of staff involved are provided with support. Immediately after the incident, both parties will be given time to calm down, as it is not possible to debrief effectively until the adrenalin levels subside.

The incident will be discussed and the opportunity to review how this could be {if possible} have been handled differently will be considered. This will enable staff to develop their skills and knowledge and enable work to be carried out with the pupil about developing strategies that will support them in finding more appropriate ways of managing their behaviour.

A further meeting will be facilitated if necessary between the member{s} of staff and the pupil to rebuild relationships.

Complaints and Allegations

Coppice School has a complaints procedure in place. Should a complaint arise following an intervention this will be activated and the procedures followed.

However, if concerns arise when the investigation of the incident is taking place regarding misconduct by a member of staff, then the child protection policy and procedures may

require to be followed. The Head Teacher in consultation with the acting Deputy Head will make this decision. Alternatively, depending on the nature of the alleged misconduct, the decision may be to follow the disciplinary policy and procedures.

Monitoring and Review

The policy and procedures will be reviewed formally on a yearly basis. However should amendments be published then the policy will be updated accordingly.

This policy follows the non-statutory guidance published by the DCSF entitled "The use of force to control or restrain pupils" [Circular 11/07]. This guidance replaced and superseded by Circular 10/98.

(See also Health and Safety, Confidentiality, Child protection, Complaints and Behaviour Policies)