

PARSLOES PRIMARY SCHOOL



Positive Handling Policy

Submitted for approval by Governing Body: January 2022

Lauren Pearce
(Head Teacher)

Richard Hunter
(Chair of Governors)

RATIONALE

Staff at Parsloes Primary School are trained to look after pupils in their care. Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically, they will follow the school's Positive Handling Policy.

This policy sets out the expectations in relations to the use of positive handling and reasonable force in school for all pupils including those with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder and mental health difficulties.

PURPOSE

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any physical intervention that they undertake is carried out and meets legislation.

To abide by legislation.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006:

Section 93 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 themselves)
- 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.

The Children Act 1989:

The welfare of the child shall be the paramount consideration.

DEFINITION

Positive Handling – the term ‘positive handling’ includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. The term ‘restraint’ is used whenever force is used to overcome active resistance.

Restraint - Non-physical interventions (no touch) – this would include adaptations to the physical environment; use of space; body language; facial expressions; volume, pitch, pace, tone of voice and choice of words.

Physical contact (contingent touch) –this would include reassuring touch for example holding hands in the corridor or physical prompts and guidance for example attracting attention or communication with someone with sensory impairment, helping someone to learn physical skills, escorting a young child or someone with learning difficulties.

Restraint / restrictive physical interventions – this includes holding someone who is actively resisting to prevent them from putting themselves and others at risk of significant harm; holding someone who is actively resisting to reduce the risk of pain or injury; holding someone who is actively resisting to reduce the risk of damage to property; holding someone who is actively resisting to prevent the commission of a criminal offence; moving someone who is actively resisting into a reduced risk environment; holding/moving someone whose actions are or leading to a breakdown of discipline; preventing a person who is actively resisting from moving into an increased risk environment.

When a pupil seeks to remove themselves from a conflict situation, blocking this action is not considered reasonable justification for restraints unless they are running onto the road or towards a person with violent intent. Staff can be injured when seeking to block a child (for example by standing in a doorway). This is not a necessary outcome and frequent inadvertent on the part of the child in a high stress state.

Staff- is intended in this document to refer to both teaching and non-teaching staff and contracted personnel under the authority of the Head Teacher.

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'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.

How staff might intervene:

When a restrictive physical intervention is justified, staff will use 'reasonable force'. This is the degree of force 'warranted by the situation'. It will 'be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident and the consequences it is intended to prevent'. Any force used will always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired results and for the shortest amount of time.

During an incident, the member of staff involved will tell the pupil that his or her behaviour may be leading to restraint. This is not to be used as a threat or said in a way that could inflame the situation. Staff will not act out of anger or frustration. They will try to adopt a calm, measured approach and maintain communication with the pupil at all times.

The place of restrictive physical intervention within broader behavioural planning

If, through the school's special needs assessment procedures, it is determined that a restrictive physical intervention is likely to be appropriate to help a pupil make progress, a risk assessment will be carried out. If appropriate, an individual positive handling plan will then be drawn up for that pupil (see Appendix A). 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 or SENDCo will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training.

Recording and Reporting Significant Incidents

This part of the guidance is statutory

The Governing Body must ensure appropriate procedures are in place for recording and reporting significant incidents where a member of staff has used a restrictive physical intervention on a pupil.

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 safeguard.
- Recording will be completed within the same day whenever possible. 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.
- The Headteacher will check that there is no cause for concern regarding actions of adults involved. If it is felt that an action has 'caused or put a child at risk of significant harm' the Headteacher will follow the school's child protection procedures and also inform parents/carers.
- Parents/carers will be informed by the Headteacher/SLT/SENDCo on the day of the incident or as soon as is practicable.
- Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding the 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 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 Headteacher / SENDCo will report this information to the SEND Governor at their termly visit.

Complaints Procedure

If a complaint is made the school's complaints procedure and guidance on dealing with allegations of abuse by staff will be followed.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by SLT. This policy will be evaluated and viewed in line with the Behaviour policy and any new legislation and guidance provided by the DfE.