



Meopham Community Academy



Enjoy, Learn, Aspire

Positive Handling Policy

This policy was reviewed by: Hazel Parke, SENCO
Date: December 2017
Approved by Governors: December 2017
Next Review Date: December 2018

Introduction

This policy is designed to ensure all staff are aware of their role in restraining and/or comforting pupils.

Training

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Behaviour Mentors and SENCo have attended training by a qualified Team-Teach trainer. This training detailed the context for physical intervention and gave practical guidance on the application of a range of strategies to keep everyone safe during the physical management of behaviour.

The training put a clear emphasis on the rights of all children to be kept safe at all times and the importance of the use of de-escalation strategies.

Comforting

A fundamental issue to be considered in the use of any form of physical contact with a child is their right to be both 'touched' and 'not touched'. It is clear that for some children who may have had experiences of abuse in the past the issue of being touched in any way must be managed sensitively. Similarly for some children their need for emotional support and comfort may at times extend to being physically comforted and this too must be managed appropriately. Judgements that all adults must make before touching any child are as follows:

- Is the physical contact truly in the best interests of the child?
- How do I feel about this level of contact?
- Is this age appropriate given my knowledge of the child?
- What would be the consequence of not making physical contact?

When a child is in need of physical comfort staff act as any responsible parent and respond to the child's need as appropriate to their age for example holding their hands; putting an arm around their shoulders and in the case of the very youngest children providing a lap to sit on. Such interactions would not be the subject of a handling plan.

Physical restraint

Physical restraint should only be used when all other strategies have been tried and found to be unsuccessful. In the first instance staff should always attempt to diffuse the situation by following the strategies described in the Academy's behaviour management policy.

Government guidance published at the beginning of 2010 stated:

*'All school staff members have a legal power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline.'**

If a child's behaviour is causing concern a referral will be made to the pupil support team. It will be discussed with the class teacher and behaviour mentors and may need to be discussed with senior leaders. When necessary an individual behaviour plan is put in place and shared with the parents. If the behaviour poses a risk to others a risk assessment may be carried out. If the risk assessment indicates that physical restraint may be necessary a positive handling plan (PHP) is completed. (Appendix 1) Wherever possible, strategies for physical intervention should be detailed within the plan. The plan is formulated with the child and the parents/guardians and is regularly reviewed.

If a child needs to be restrained the member of staff should clearly explain to the child the reason for the restraint, for example, 'I'm holding you to keep you safe.' It is important for staff to remember: 'Minimum force for the shortest time.'

- If physical intervention has been used staff members involved will complete a Positive Handling & Intervention Report which is kept in the Bound and Numbered Book held in the school office.
- This will, wherever possible, be shared with parents on the same day as the incident.

Restraint is always a last resort so it is the responsibility of everyone at Meopham Community Academy to ensure that the environment is calm and safe for all. Children have the responsibility to recognise when their behaviour is likely to compromise this situation and to have due regard for the comfort, safety and well-being of all within Meopham Academy Community. Parents are encouraged to support the school in the provision of a safe, calm and happy community by encouraging children to follow the Academy Charter and reinforcing the reflection process of the 4W procedure.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented and maintained through:

- Ensuring, when new staff are appointed, that references are sought and obtained from the most recent employer; that appropriate police checks are conducted prior to the employee starting work.
- The provision to every member of staff and to the governors a copy of this policy.

Support for staff

In circumstances where staff judge that they need support they should quickly send for another member of staff and do what they can to contain the situation. It should be remembered that the children at Meopham Community Academy are active members of the community and as such should be encouraged to go for help when the circumstance dictates it to be necessary.

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, SENCo and the Behaviour Mentors are trained in the methods of holding and restraint as recommended in TeamTeach. Wherever possible one of these staff members will hold and restrain the child.

Teachers and support staff will be briefed on procedures when necessary. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of Meopham Community Academy at all times.

This responsibility must extend to themselves in the first instance. Any member of staff that has determined that all behaviour management strategies have been tried, that every effort has been made to involve one of the above SLT members, that there is likely to be serious harm to persons or property or that the good order of the environment will be severely disrupted, may use reasonable force.

Staff that have had to use physical intervention will be offered the opportunity to discuss their feelings about the incident as soon after the recording of the incident as is helpful. It is an expectation that all staff acknowledge the importance of using a senior member of staff to discuss the issues raised for them personally by using physical restraint.

The Governors and leadership team will support the actions of staff in the use of physical intervention provided that they have been conducted in the context of this policy.

Appendix 1 Positive Handling Plan (PHP)

Name of child:	
Date:	
Class:	
Year Group:	
Name of teacher:	
Completed by:	

Trigger behaviours (describe common situations/behaviours which are known to lead to Positive Handling being required. When is such behaviour likely to occur.

Topography of behaviour (Describe what the behaviour looks like/sounds like.)

<u>Preferred strategies: (highlight those used)</u>	
Verbal advice/support Reassurance Calm talking/stance Negotiation Choices/limits Humour Consequences Planned ignoring Others?	Distraction Take up time Time out (requires a written plan) Withdrawal (requires a written plan) Cool off (timed) Contingent touch Transfer adult Success reminder

Medical conditions that should be taken into account before physically intervening:

Preferred handling strategies: (Describe the preferred holds: standing, sitting, ground, stating numbers of members of staff etc.

Staff authorised by the Headteacher to use positive handling strategies:

- In the first instance: Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, SENCo and the Behaviour Mentors.
- Thereafter any member of staff that has determined that all behaviour management strategies have been tried; that every effort has been made to involve one of the above SLT members and that there is likely to be serious harm to persons or property or that the good order of the environment will be severely disrupted.

Parent/carer's views:

Pupil's views:

De-briefing process following incident: (What is the care to be provided)

Staff members involved:

Print names:

Signatures:

Parent/Carer's name:

Signature

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<u>Headteacher:</u> Miss R Nicholson	<u>Sign:</u> Date:
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<u>Checklist of Recording and notification required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of Positive Handling & Intervention Report• Amendments made to Positive Handling Plan Checklist if necessary.• Inform the Headteacher and parent/carer• Amend risk assessment if applicable
