



## **POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY**

APPROVED BY: Governing Body

NEXT REVIEW: October 2024

At Holmleigh Primary School, we are committed to a positive behaviour policy which encourages children to make positive behaviour choices. On rare occasions circumstances may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff. Our policy for physical intervention is based upon the following principles:

- Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed;
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required;
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned;
- Incidents must be recorded and reported to the Headteacher as soon as possible;
- Parents/Carers will be informed on the day of each incident.

### **The Legal Framework**

The Education and Inspection Act 2006 stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere within the school (this includes authorised out-of-school activities);
- self-injuring;
- causing injury to others;
- committing an offence.

### **Our approach**

At Holmleigh, we aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in managing situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the school's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and have a 'Duty of Care' to all children they are in charge of. They must, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure all pupils' safety and wellbeing. Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

### **Use of physical restraint**

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allows the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this. What constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. Teachers should apply the training they receive to de-escalate where possible then use the appropriate holds as practised in the training. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

When physical restraint 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 if you fear loss of control);
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil;
- Involve other pupils in the restraint;
- Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct;
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint;
- Bend fingers or pull hair;
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck;
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil;
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment.

## **Actions after an incident**

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. The Headteacher should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support. The parents/carers will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural school support plan, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the SENCo. This may require additional support from, other services, for example the Reengagement unit.

All incidents should be recorded immediately on the Pupil Restraint Report Form (attached). All sections of this report should be completed so that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed.

In the event of any future complaint or allegation this record will provide essential and accurate information.

A copy should be filed in the child's appropriate file and in a central school file in order to inform individual and school risk assessments.

A member of the leadership team will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

## **Risk Assessments**

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive and/or challenging way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention;
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known;
- Involvement of parents/carers to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take;
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking;
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate.

## **Complaints and Allegations**

A clear restraint policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under the complaints disciplinary or allegation management procedures. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

### **Searching pupils**

On occasions, a member of staff may have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of an item or items which contravene school regulations and could potentially cause harm to the pupil or others. Under these circumstances The Education Act 2011 extends the power of staff to search pupils of their possessions without their consent. Searches must be conducted by two members of staff, at least one of whom will be the same sex as the student. Only the Headteacher or a member of school staff authorised by them can search without consent. Students will be offered the opportunity to have their parents/carers present. For further information the DfE have provided guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation.

Holmleigh Primary School does not endorse and will not undertake a physical search of any pupils' person. Where necessary, a student will be asked to remove his/her coat and/or jumper, empty all pockets, open their bags and in some circumstances remove their shoes and socks. Possessions and items of apparel that have been removed may then be searched by the staff present.

If undesirable items are discovered the school will use its power of confiscation to retain the offending item(s). Parents/carers, if not present, will be contacted to explain what has been found and any subsequent sanctions that have been applied. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be invited to retrieve the offending property and asked to ensure that they are not brought to school again. In the event that illegal items are discovered then the Police will be informed immediately.

**Positive Management Plan**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Environment and trigger (situations which cause/lead to difficulties)**

**Prevention (describe any changes to routines, personnel or environment which might reduce the risk) Praise points/ Strengths)**

**What might happen (describe the behaviour/ what looks like/ sounds like)**

**Low level:**

**Next step:**

**Extreme:**

**Things that help (strategies that help to calm)**

**Things to avoid**

**Managing the crisis (what to do, step by step, who will do it)**

**Cooling off/ Follow up**

## HE Positive Handling Guidance for Schools and Settings

Physical Intervention Recording Form Physical Intervention Recording Form	
Staff present: Name of child:	Date:
Name of child: Staff present	Time:
Children present:	Location:
Hold(s) used:	Duration:
Is there a behaviour plan?	
Description of situation leading to restraint:	
Description of restraint (including child's view):	
Outcome of restraint (including child's view):	
Signature staff member:	Date:
Signature Headteacher:	Date: