



Positive Handling Policy

Date reviewed and adopted:	September 25 th 2024
Reviewed and adopted by:	Full FGB
Approved by:	Chris Lewis (Chair of Governors)
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Introduction

This policy outlines how staff at Wyton Primary School create and maintain good order and relationships through positive approaches. These approaches are successful for the vast majority of the time. Effective relationships are developed between staff and pupils and PSHE activities support pupils in managing conflict and coping with feelings. This policy on the use of restrictive physical interventions supplements the main behaviour policy. Both should be read in conjunction with the school SEND policy, the Health and Safety policy, and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Purpose of this policy

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any physical intervention that they undertake is carried out in a way that supports the values and principles described above. In particular, it aims to describe the circumstances in which restrictive physical intervention is an appropriate response and how staff at the school will fulfil their responsibilities in those circumstances.

The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that staff, Governors and parents are aware of the policy and will ensure that any necessary training/awareness-raising takes place so that staff know their responsibilities.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the DfE Guidance Use of Reasonable Force July 2013 have been used to inform this policy.

Policy Objectives

- To maintain the safety of pupils and staff
- To prevent serious breaches of school discipline
- To prevent serious damage to property

Physical touch

The staff at Wyton Primary School 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. Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary are:

- Holding a hand
- Comforting a distressed pupil
- Giving praise or congratulation (e.g. as a 'high five')
- Demonstrating how to use equipment
- Demonstrating or supporting exercises or techniques during Physical Education
- To give First Aid
- Staff need to be aware of sensitivities associated with any form of physical contact with students.

Terms and Definitions

Control means either passive physical contact (standing between pupils) or active physical contact (leading a pupil by the hand or arm).

Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is when staff physically prevent a pupil from continuing what he/she was doing when told to stop or when involved in a fight.

Non-restrictive physical intervention means either where the child's movement is not restricted or where the child is held supportively but such that they will be released immediately should they so wish. (As already stated touch/physical contact is a small but important and natural part of teacher-pupil relationships in our school.)

Restrictive physical interventions are those which prevent, impede or restrict movement or mobility.

Reasonable Force is used either to control or restrain. Reasonable means using no more force than is needed. All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.

When is restrictive physical intervention permissible?

What the law says:

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.

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 either. 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 result 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 will not 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 in accordance with Local Authority Specialist Teaching Team guidance. 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 Headteacher or SENDCo will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training.

Recording and Reporting Significant Incidents

As a statutory requirement, 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 the positive handling incident report form (see Appendix B).

Recording will be completed within 12 hours 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 the 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/SENCO 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 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 (SLT) 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 meetings.

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 on going and carried out by the SLT. This policy will be evaluated and reviewed in line with the Behaviour Policy and any new legislation and guidance provided by the DfE.

Monitoring & Review

This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every three years, or before if necessary.

The current Guidance for Safer Working Practice document for those working with children and young people in education settings will be followed at all times.