



## **HARTSBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY**

This policy is part of our overall pastoral care procedures, and should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy, Child Protection Policy, (and Local and National Child Protection Guidelines) Inclusion Policy and Special Educational Needs Policy.

### **RATIONALE**

Positive Handling is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others, or seriously damaging property. Positive handling should only be used when all other strategies have been tried and found unsuccessful or in an emergency situation.

SECTION 550a OF THE Education Act 1996 and the DFEE Circular 10/98 allow teachers and other members of staff at a school who are authorised by the Head teacher to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, where the pupil may need to be prevented from engaging in behaviours which are likely to:

- Result in committing a criminal offence
- Cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person including the pupil
- Be prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

'Reasonable amount of force' will be the amount of force that is the minimum needed to avert injury or damage to property or to prevent a breakdown in discipline – applied for the shortest period of time.

### **When Restraint will be used:**

The decision to use positive handling must take account of the circumstances and be based on an assessment of the risks associated with the intervention compared with the risks of not employing a restrictive intervention.

Positive handling will be used to:

- Avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action
- Removing a physical object which could be used to harm him/herself or others

### **AIMS**

The staff at Hartsbourne Primary School recognises that the use of reasonable force is only one of the strategies available to secure pupil safety and well being and to maintain good order and discipline.

## **We aim to:**

- Protect every person in the school community from harm and
- All pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.
- Provide adequate information and training for all staff so they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations.
- Use minimum degree of force necessary to accomplish positive handling
- Give full support to staff that have been assaulted or have suffered verbal abuse from pupils or others.
- Maintain accurate records of incidents where positive handling has been employed.
- Undertake risk assessment if a pupil is displaying disturbed, distressed or distressing behaviour and plan how to respond if a situation arises (using de-escalation strategies).

Children can be distressed by a range of events or circumstances that are beyond their control, eg an accident, bereavement, loss of a pet, personal possession etc. Strategies for comforting a distressed child will include the following:

- Verbal reassurance and expressions of sympathy
- Making eye contact and crouching down at the child's level
- Holding the child's hand(s) gently between the adult's hands
- A gentle pat on shoulder, arm or hand
- Sitting or standing alongside, with appropriate body language

The above will also apply to children who are anxious about separating from a parent first thing in the day and teaching staff will exercise their professional judgement on the appropriate level of intervention, when encouraging children to say goodbye to their parent(s).

**Inappropriate contact will include holding a child on an adult's lap, cuddling, hugging and/or kissing.**

## **Risk Assessment and Planning**

Although most young people at Hartsbourne Primary School will never require any form of positive handling, staff may occasionally have to deal with pupils who exhibit disturbed, distressed or distressing behaviour. Staff will attempt to reduce risk by managing:

- The environment, body language, the way we talk, the way we act

If positive handling is likely to be necessary this will be included in the pupil's Individual Education Plan (IEP) together with information on: de-escalation strategies; the manner in which the pupil will be held; how support can be summoned if needed; any medical factors to be considered. Parents/carers will be involved in IEP planning to ensure they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take.

The school's respect for the rights of the individual takes into consideration the context of The Human Rights Act (1998) and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

(1991). The school's ethos and the guidance in this policy are based on the presumption that every adult and child is entitled to:

- Respect for his/her private life
- The right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment
- The right to liberty and security: and
- The right not to be discriminated against in his/her enjoyment of those rights.

## **PROCEDURES**

A calm and measured approach to any situation will be adopted and staff will not give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem. In the event of positive handling being used the following strategies and recording procedures are deemed acceptable:

### **Action Steps (Used in conjunction with our Behaviour Management Policy)**

1. Tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and state possible consequences of failure to do so
2. If possible summon another adult
3. Continue to communicate calmly with the pupil throughout the incident
4. Make it clear that restraint will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary
5. Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include:
  - i. Providing medical support
  - ii. Providing respite for those involved
  - iii. Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as possible

## **Recording**

Staff should record all incidents of restraint in accordance with School Policy and report these to the Head teacher (See Appendix 1). Parents/carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This action should also be recorded.

## **COMPLAINTS**

We will involve parents when an incident occurs, adhere to the policy and make clear and accurate records. A dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and social services department under child protection procedures.

Staff subjected to physical violence or assault has the right to be supported in making a formal complaint to the police and, if necessary, taking private action against an assailant.

It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Date of Policy: January 2006

Date of Review:

January 2008

## **GUIDELINES**

### **When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?**

1. Committing an offence
2. Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil); or
3. Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or amongst its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Examples of situations that fall into one of the first two categories are:

- A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- Pupils fighting;
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects;
- A pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others;
- A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom.
- A pupil is behaving in such a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

### **Strategies**

All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and steps, which they can take to defuse and calm a situation.

- Move calmly and confidently.
- Make simple, clear statements.
- Intervene early.
- Try to maintain eye contact.
- If necessary summon help before the problem escalates.
- Remove audience from the immediate location.

Assistance should be sought when dealing with:

- A physically large or more than one pupil, or
- When the teacher believes that s/he may be at risk of injury.

In those circumstances where the member of staff has decided that it is not appropriate to restrain the pupil without help they should:

- Remove other pupils who might be at risk,

- Summon assistance from colleagues,
- Where necessary, telephone the police,
- Inform the pupil(s) that help will be arriving,
- Until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

The method of restraint employed must use the minimum force for the minimum time and must observe the following requirements. Restraint must NOT:

- Involve hitting the pupil or deliberately inflicting pain on the pupil;
- Restrict the pupil's breathing;
- Involve contact with sexually sensitive areas.

In no circumstances should a member of staff act in such a way that injury might be inflicted such as:

- holding around neck or collar so that breathing could be restricted;
- Slapping;
- Punching;
- Kicking;
- Twisting or forcing limbs against the joint;
- Tripping;
- Holding or pulling by hair or ear;
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground.

**Staff should avoid touching or holding in any way that might be construed as indecent.**

During any incident the restrainer should:

- Offer verbal reassurance to the pupil;
- Cause the minimum level of restriction of movement;
- Reduce the danger of any accidental injury.

**Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff in:**

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding
- Pushing
- Pulling
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back; or
- (In extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

**DO:**

- Be aware of any feelings of anger
- Summon help
- Continue to talk to the pupil in a calm way
- Provide a soft surface if possible
- Be aware of any accessories worn by you or pupil
- Hold the pupil's arms by his/her sides
- Keep classroom/office doors open during 1:1 interviews/conversations

**DON'T:**

- Try to manage on your own
- Stop talking even if the pupil does not reply
- Straddle the pupil
- Push arms up the back
- Touch the pupil near the throat or head
- Put pressure on joints

**Authorised Staff**

From section 550A of The Education Act 1996:

The Act allows all teachers at a school to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. It also allows other people to do so, in the same way as teachers, provided they have been authorised by the Head teacher to have control or charge of pupils.

The Head teacher will identify the people, other than teachers, whom they wish to authorise to have control or charge of pupils and therefore be able to use force if necessary. Authorisation may be on a permanent or long term basis because of the nature of the person's job, or short term for a specific event such as a school trip. The Head will inform the people concerned, and ensure that they are aware of and properly understand what the authorisation entails.

**Training**

There are no government approved training techniques for Positive Handling. We will consult with the Local Education Authority for additional advice and support on managing behaviour, including the Educational Psychology Service and the Behaviour Support Service.

Date: January 06

Date of Review: January 08

# HARTSBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## RECORD OF RESTRAINT

Date of Incident:		Time of Incident:	
Pupil Name:		Date of Birth:	
Year Group:		Class teacher:	
Staff Member involved		Staff Member involved:	
Adult witness to restraint:		Pupil witness to restraint:	
Outline of event leading to restraint – including other strategies tried and reasons for using Positive Handling rather than another strategy:			
Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used):			
Outcome of restraint:			
Description of any injury(ies) sustained by pupil and any subsequent treatment:			
Date parent/carer informed of incident:		Informed by:	
Time parent informed:		Signature of adult completing report:	
Outline of Parental Response:			
Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action:			
Signature of Head:		Date:	