

Mountfields Lodge Primary School



Positive Handling/ Restraint Policy

Aim High, Reach for the Sky

Introduction

Staff at school are trained to look after pupils in their care. Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves, other children adults, damaging property or disrupting the good order of the school and classroom.

It is the policy of Mountfields Lodge that identified staff are trained in positive handling strategies and techniques to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the school behaviour policy.

Restraint training undertaken by staff covers the following:

Communication: Verbalisation skills for communicating under pressure and de-escalation in high-risk restraint/non-restraint situations

Behaviour: Fundamental understandings about the nature of aggression, its triggers, cues and how to de-escalate it.

Restraint Rules: Understanding Reasonable Force for Control and Restraint Interventions

Duty of Care: Understanding where the duty begins and ends and who carries responsibility for restraint during an intervention.

Government Guidance: What is expected by the national authorities who advise on best practice for restraint interventions and restrictive practices.

Risk Awareness: What are the risks of physical restraint intervention and how to reduce or avoid them

Teamwork: Working in cooperation with team-mates in high-risk restraint and non-restraint situations

Restraint Tactics: Reliable and Robust methods for last-resort physical intervention resolution of high-risk conflict situations

The term 'positive handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties with an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

Consideration is given to not only the welfare of the child but also the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

The Education and Inspectors Act 2006 enables school's staff to use such force that is *reasonable*, appropriate and necessary. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable or what is reasonable. This depends on the circumstances and what is in the best interests of the child.

An up to date list of trained staff is held centrally in school and is regularly updated by the SENCo or office staff.

Before using physical controls

We take effective action to reduce the risk by:

- Showing care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiating and reasoning.
- Giving clear directions for the pupil to stop
- Reminding them about rules or taking vulnerable pupils to a safe place
- Making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons
- Using positive guidance to escort pupils to somewhere less pressured
- Ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and get help.

Restraint

At this school we only use physical restraint where there is no realistic alternative. We expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative, this may be a pre-planned assessment or an 'on the spot one' at a time of crisis where the member of staff would be expected to work under the premise of 'honest belief' of what might happen if they did or didn't intervene.

It also means that where pupils have detailed Behaviour Plans, we expect staff to follow those guidelines. These guidelines show alternative means to physical intervention which may be effective for that child before needing to carry out a physical restraint. Should physical restraint be necessary after staff have thought creatively about alternatives, the paramount consideration is that it reduces rather than increases risk. Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable, proportionate and necessary. Physical restraint must only be used in accordance with the following.

- The child should be in the immediate danger of harming themselves, or others, damaging property or disrupting the good order of the school.
- The member of staff should have good grounds for believing this.
- Only the minimum force is used.
- The presence of another staff member before applying a hold is always desirable. These staff act as a witness and an assistant.
- Once safe, the hold should be relaxed to allow the child to regain self control.
- Restraints or holds should be used as an act of care and control, not punishment.

In addition, whilst or before intervention, staff should speak calmly as a way of reassurance e.g. 'I am doing this to keep you safe'.

Parents are informed of a restraint and record is made in the school's 'Bound Book'.

Responding to unforeseen emergencies

Even the best planned system cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. An unforeseen event may require an emergency response. After that event staff have a duty to plan ahead and prepare a risk assessment.

Positive Handling Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who are identified as a risk should have a Behaviour Plan. The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses that are not recommended. Behaviour Plans should be considered along with an EHCP and any other

planning relating to that individual. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional, intellectual development, special needs and social context.

When there is a concern about a child, parents will also be invited to contribute to a Behaviour Plan.

Post Incident De-brief

Following a serious incident it is the policy of the school to offer support to all involved at an appropriate time. This is an opportunity for learning for all concerned. A staff member must be given time to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and to receive support from other colleagues. The SENCo, Deputy Head, Assistant Head or Head Teacher are available to provide this support and time for staff members.

Recording

As already stated, all incidents of restraint must be noted down by members of staff involved in the incident. Staff should use the 'Bound Book'.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The SENCo / Head Teacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and initiate further action as required.

Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints will follow the school's complaints procedure.