

Link Learning Trust Brookburn Primary School



Positive Handling Policy Update June 2020

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Policy Statement

Staff at Brookburn Primary School are trained to look after the pupils in their care. Where pupils may display challenging or physical behaviour, our staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others. There may also be situations in which a child seriously disrupts good order in the school or causes damage to property. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow the school's Positive Handling Policy. In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, the school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Introduction

Good professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the behaviour policy practised by the staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of positive handling may be required. Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in Brookburn Primary School:

- i. Clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary and
- ii. Are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

The application of any form of positive handling places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for positive handling. Positive Handling will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk

Definitions

(a) Physical Contact

Situations in which proper physical contact takes place between staff and pupils, e.g. in games/PE or to comfort pupils.

(b) Physical Intervention

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

(c) Positive Handling

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or property or if good order is being seriously prejudiced. All such incidents will be recorded and reported to the head teacher.

(d) Physical restraint

This is defined as when force is used to overcome active resistance and are referred to as 'Restrictive Physical Interventions' in national Guidance (DfES/DoH 2002). A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

Pupils with severe behavioural difficulties sometimes present a risk to themselves and others. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 describes the circumstances in which suitably trained teachers and others authorised by the Headteacher may use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. Examples of when such action may be reasonable are to prevent injury to people, damage to property or the breakdown of discipline.

This policy details how we implement the guidance in this school. It should be considered alongside the most recent LA policy statements and recent local and national guidance. It is designed to help staff to ensure that any actions they take are reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary.

School Expectations

The management takes seriously its duty of care towards pupils, employees and visitors to the school. Staff protection is an important part of child protection; both depend on confident and competent staff who feel supported by the management. This policy has a clear focus.

- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care.
- The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

Positive Behaviour Management

All physical interventions at this school are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. The school behaviour policy is intended to reward effort and application, and encourage pupils to take responsibility for improving their own behaviour. Part of our preventative approach to risk reduction involves looking for early warning signs, learning and communicating any factors which may influence unacceptable behaviour and taking steps to divert behaviours leading towards foreseeable risk. However, if problems arise, staff have an additional responsibility to support all pupils when they are under pressure and safely manage crises if, and when, they occur.

Alternatives to Physical Controls

A member of staff who chooses not to make a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk using a range of de-escalation techniques. They can:

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason.
- Give clear directions for pupils to stop.
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.
- Remove an audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place.
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons.
- Use positive touch to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressured.
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help.

Help Protocols

The expectation is that all staff should support one another. This means that staff always offer help and always accept it. Help does not always mean taking over. It may mean just staying around in case you are needed, getting somebody else or looking after somebody else's group. Supporting a colleague does not only mean agreeing with their suggestions and offering sympathy when things go wrong. Real support sometimes means acting as a critical friend to help colleagues become aware of possible alternative

strategies. Good communication is necessary so that colleagues avoid confusion when help is offered and accepted, which may include the use of practised scripts.

The Last Resort Principle

At Brookburn Primary School, physical restraint is used only when there is no realistic alternative. This does not mean that we always expect staff to methodically work their way through a series of failing strategies, before attempting an intervention in which they have some confidence. Nor does it mean always waiting until the danger is imminent, by which time the prospect of safely managing it may be significantly reduced. National guidance is clear on this point.

*“If necessary, staff have the authority to take immediate action to prevent harm occurring even if the harm is expected to happen some time in the predictable future.”
Para 10 Page 4 Department of Health – 1997 – “The Control of Children in the Public Care: Interpretation of the Children Act 1989” – London: H M S O*

It does mean that we expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative. It also means that we expect staff to experiment and think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective.

Proactive Physical Interventions

It is sometimes reasonable to use physical controls to prevent extreme behaviour from becoming dangerous. Examples of this are where a pupil has shown ritualistic patterns of behaviour, which in the past have led to the child becoming more distressed and violent. In such circumstances, it may be reasonable to withdraw the child to a safer place when the pattern of behaviour begins, rather than wait until the child is distressed and out of control. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the child and that it reduces, rather than increases, risk.

Reasonable and Proportionate

Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. People should not react in anger. If they feel they are becoming angry they should consider withdrawing to allow someone else to deal with the situation. Where staff act in good faith, and their actions are reasonable and proportionate, they will be supported.

When physical controls are considered staff should think about the answers to the following questions:

- How is this in the best interest of the pupil?
- Why is a less intrusive intervention not preferable?
- Why do we have to act now?
- Why am I the best person to be doing this?
- Why is this absolutely necessary?

If staff can answer these questions it is more likely that a physical intervention will be judged to be reasonable and proportionate.

Unreasonable use of Force

It is not reasonable to use force simply to enforce compliance in circumstances where there is no risk. Nor is it reasonable to use any more force than is necessary to achieve a reduction in risk. Under no circumstances should pain be deliberately inflicted or should pupils be deliberately subjected to undignified or humiliating treatment (this should not be confused with the unavoidable discomfort associated with some approved techniques for disengaging from assaults such as bites and grabs). Other than as a one-off emergency measure to protect health and safety, force should never be used to keep a pupil secluded. Seclusion is only lawful by specific court order and cannot become part of a planned strategy at this school.

Team Teach

At Brookburn Primary School, we believe that to support staff and ensure that the well-being of pupils is paramount, there should be designated members of staff trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategies and techniques of Team Teach, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the School Behaviour Policy. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers act as designated staff members, with some further staff members trained to support staff in positive handling where necessary.

This school has adopted the Team Teach Model of training. All training courses have been fully accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) in accordance with DfES and Department of Health guidance. Positive handling training is always provided by qualified instructors with rigorous guidelines. Further details of the Team Teach approach can be found on the Team Teach website (www.team-teach.co.uk).

The level of training recommended is related to the level of risk faced by the member of staff. Our preferred approach is for a nominated group of staff to be trained in positive handling. The level of training required is kept under review and may change in response to the needs of our pupils. In the instance where staff require additional support, they should seek the guidance and support of the trained staff members.

Health and Safety

If dangerous behaviour presents a significant risk of injury to people, there is a legal Health and Safety issue to be addressed.

As a minimum requirement, in order to comply with health and safety legislation, each employee has a responsibility to ensure that they are conversant with school policy and guidance, and to cooperate to make the school safer. It is also a requirement that they participate in training if they are directed to do so. This does not necessarily mean that all staff can be involved in all the physical activities. The non physical aspects of positive handling training are crucially important too.

When considering a pupil's behaviour staff should think about the following questions:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this pupil's behaviour?
- Have we got all the information we need to conduct a risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan as a result?
- What further steps can we take to prevent dangerous behaviour from developing?

Risk Assessment

Informal risk assessments should be a routine part of life for staff working with pupils who may exhibit extreme behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. If a proposed activity or course of action involves unacceptable risk the correct decision is to do something else.

Factors which might influence a more immediate risk assessment, and therefore a decision about how to intervene, might include the state of health and fitness of the staff member, their physical stature, competence, confidence and relationships with the pupils concerned. Confidence and competence are often related to the level of staff training. Other than in an emergency, staff should only attempt physical controls when they are confident that such action will result in a reduction of risk. When faced by extreme behaviour, or even in a fight situation, the judgement may be that by becoming involved, the member of staff will increase the chance of somebody getting hurt. In this situation the correct decision is to hold back from the physical controls.

Getting Help

At this school the following support structures are in place:

- Use of help protocols and language to remind all staff of availability of colleagues to offer help including change-overs of staff during a crisis situation with a pupil.
- Debrief sessions after a crisis with the pupil(s) involved, reflecting on how crisis was managed by all involved and identifying any points for review or learning.
- Refresher meetings for de-escalation and Team Teach strategies.
- Communication between staff about pupils at risk or presenting with challenging behaviour.

Positive Handling Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Positive Handling Plan. The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended (see appendix 4). If particular physical techniques have been found to be effective they should be named, along with alerts to any which have proved ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Positive Handling Plans should be considered alongside any statement/EHCP and any other planning documents which relate to the pupil. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special need and social context. These will be reviewed annually.

Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. The key principles in any decision making where physical intervention is used should be that this intervention:

- Is in the best interest of the child
- Reasonable and proportionate
- Intended to reduce risk
- The least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective.

Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning. Where possible, staff should always attempt to use de-escalation methods (e.g. diversion or defusion) in preference to physical interventions. They should only use the techniques and methods approved for use in this school. If staff act in good faith and their actions are reasonable and proportionate, they will be supported.

The Post Incident Support Structure for Pupils and Staff

Following a serious incident, it is the policy of this school to offer support for all involved. People take time to recover from a serious incident. Until the incident has subsided the only priority is to reduce risk and calm the situation down. Staff should avoid saying or doing anything which could inflame the situation during the recovery phase. Immediate action should be taken to ensure medical help is sought if there are any injuries which require more than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded using the school's systems. It is important to note that injury in itself is not evidence of malpractice. Even when staff attempt to do everything right, things can go wrong. Part of the post incident support for staff may involve a reminder of this, as people tend to blame themselves when things go wrong. Time needs to be found to repair relationships. When careful steps are taken to repair relationships, a serious incident does not necessarily result in long term damage. This is an opportunity for learning for all concerned. Time needs to be given to following up incidents so that pupils where appropriate have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective. When time and effort are put into a post incident support structure the outcome of a serious incident can be learning, growth and strengthened relationships.

Complaints

It is not uncommon for pupils to make allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force following an incident. The school has a formal Complaints Procedure for pupils or parents of pupils to follow. The complaints policy applies equally to staff. We are an open school and promote transparent policy and practice in order to protect the interests of staff and pupils alike. Any staff concerns regarding the welfare of children should be taken to the designated person for safeguarding children. Any safety concerns should be reported to the Safeguarding Leads who are the Headteacher, Ms Ferris and the Deputy Headteacher, Miss Henderson.

Recording

Whenever positive handling has been used, incidents must be recorded on the school's safeguarding system, CPOMS. CPOMS will alert the Headteacher to the incident and any actions taken.

All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the record which should be completed that day however CPOMS should not be completed until the individuals concerned have recovered from the immediate effects of the incident. They should not be rushed. Bear in mind these records will be retained and cannot be altered. They will be kept for many years and could form part of an investigation at some time in the future.

Staff should:

- Report accurately what happened, in clear, precise language.
- Include any detail of Team Teach methods employed.
- Complete all names in full, indicating precise time of incident.

Other minor incidents of 'behaviour' will be dealt with by class teachers and logged according to the Behaviour Policy of the school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action, as required. The school incident log is open to external monitoring and evaluation.

Follow Up

Following an incident, consideration may be given to conducting a further risk assessment, reviewing the Positive Handling Plan, behaviour management policy or this positive handling policy. Any further action in relation to a member of staff, or an individual pupil, will follow the appropriate procedures.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Health and Safety Policy

Covid 19 Update and Adjustments

Brookburn remains committed to the ethos, principles and desire to limit the number and severity of physical interventions in school. If a child / young person has a plan which includes potential use of physical intervention, this should be reviewed and updated by staff who know the pupil well to further reduce risk.

Measures to reduce risks linked to physical intervention include:

- Considering the impact that lockdown will have had on the individual child's social interaction and mental well-being
- Reducing social challenge
- Reducing academic challenge
- Staff being aware of their own medical risk when considering use of physical intervention

In line with existing policy, physical intervention is an absolute last resort. Some children may show an increase in anxiety or behaviours that challenge as a result of changes and lockdown. Staff can deploy a range of strategies to limit risk e.g. reducing challenge, adults move away, a change of adult within the bubble and ensuring access to an identified break out area in the classroom, for the pupil to access independently.

Physical intervention should be used for as short a time as possible. Where possible, physical intervention should involve limited number of people e.g. single person escort. Staff can limit risk from saliva e.g. looking away and wearing a face mask. If physical intervention is required then the child will be escorted to a withdrawal isolation space where the child can remain safely until a parent can collect him/her. Where staff assess there is a risk to themselves by staying in the isolation room with the child then they will stand outside of the room but observe through the window in the door. The withdrawal isolation space will be cleaned on a daily basis.

Government advice is that normal procedures should be followed for children not displaying symptoms but PPE should be worn when closer than 2m with any child displaying symptoms. Brookburn will provide access to PPE for all staff, accessible throughout the day, for use if a child is displaying symptoms. If a child displays symptoms, arrangements will be made for the child to be sent home. If during this period

the child requires physical intervention, staff will be advised to wear PPE to protect themselves and the child.

Frequently asked questions:

- a. Mental health of staff
 - i. Any concerns regarding physical intervention should be discussed with SLT.
 - ii. Opportunities to discuss well-being have been implemented e.g. Friday's working from home and flexible hours.
- b. Individual risk assessment – prior to readmission after lockdown
 - i. All risk assessments have been updated by SLT/SENDCo
 - ii. Meetings with parents and class teachers have been completed by SLT/SENDCo
 - iii. SLT to share school procedures and policy updates with parents/carers
- c. Policy and curriculum to meet needs of pupils who may exhibit problematic behaviour as a response to trauma they may have experienced during lockdown
 - i. Individual plans have been updated
 - ii. Identified focus on nurture, wellbeing, recovery and hygiene for all pupils
- d. Regular and rigorous reinforcement of new rules and behaviour
 - i. Individual plans highlight needs and modifications of specific children
 - ii. All bubbles to review hygiene content daily (as set out in school risk assessment document)
- e. Training for staff around new routines to support pupils in understanding them
 - i. SENCo led training with teams for the return of each pupil
- f. Measures in place to protect staff and pupils who may at times need to use physical intervention to protect pupils from harming themselves or others.
 - i. Individual plans created by SENDCo and agreed with parents, prior to return
 - ii. Staff encouraged to use facemasks if using physical intervention with a child
 - iii. Pupils requiring physical intervention will be sent home for the remainder of the day
 - iv. In Instances where sustained restraint is needed more regularly, the HT will make a decision as to the date a pupil can return to school, dependent on a revised plan for that pupil.
- g. Measures in place to ensure enough staff on site to support pupils with behaviour issues.
 - i. Staff in school who are Team Teach trained
 - ii. Pupils with an EHCP or pending an EHCP will be given 1:1 TA support
 - iii. Additional staff identified to support where required
- h. Risk of airborne contamination where social distancing cannot be adhered to e.g. first aid / physical intervention, PPE should be provided and training given.
 - i. Staff encouraged to be aware of their own personal health risks
 - ii. PPE available to all staff who wish to use it

Appendix 1: Positive Handling Plan

**Brookburn Primary School
Positive Handling Plan**



Name:	D.O.B.	Year Group:	Class Teacher: TA:
Strengths/Interests		Challenging behaviours that are displayed	
De-escalation strategies to be used	De-escalation methods that are ineffective	Where will positive handling will be used	Follow up/reflection plan
RISK ASSESSMENT			
What is the risk?	Who is at risk?	What actions should be taken	
I have read through the plan and understand where positive handling will be used in school to support the named child. I agree to this positive handling plan and understand that it will be reviewed on a termly basis.	Parental Signature		
	Class Teacher Signature		
	Designated Lead Professional Signature		

Appendix 3: Exemplary Plan

Brookburn Primary School Positive Handling Plan

Name: Child X	D.O.B.	Year Group:	Class Teacher:
Strengths/Interests		Challenging behaviours that are displayed	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child X is very articulate and can make contributions to class discussions that are informative and useful.• Child X is good at mathematics – he enjoys number work and has good mental calculation strategies for finding solutions to simple number problems.• Loves science and learning new things – naturally very inquisitive and asks lots of questions.• Enjoys stories and books – will listen intently and is clearly engaged and relaxed when listening to stories.• Child X can be very kind and thoughtful – it is clear that he is able to empathise with others and will attempt to say kind things to them.		<p>Lower level behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hyperactivity/Fidgeting: Child X finds it very difficult to sit on the carpet and follow expectations about how to do this. It can be unsettling for children near to him, as Child X likes to move and touch them.• Lack of understanding of personal space: Child X does not understand that space close to others is an area that he must not come into. This is especially true in Child X's contact with other children.• Delay tactics with work: requires constant support to produce work as unable or refuses to attend for any period of time. <p>Escalating behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of response to instructions: Child X will not respond to his name, nor will he respond to a count down from 3 to enable him to make a good choice.• Running around the classroom• Refusal to work• Consistent attention seeking behaviour: If asked to do something, e.g. sit and think about behaviour, he will purposefully shuffle and watch teacher to check if behaviour is being noticed.• If asked about incidents, Child X will lie and become sullen in his demeanour. <p>Challenging behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Running away – either within the classroom, attempting to get out of the classroom and running from staff outside• Hiding – Under tables, in small spaces around classroom, locking himself in the toilet. When under tables and behaviour is ignored, Child X will start to impact on others e.g. removing their shoes as they try to work.• Hurting others – pushing, scratching, hitting.	

De-escalation strategies to be used	De-escalation methods that are ineffective	Where will positive handling will be used	Follow up/reflection plan
<p>Use clear language of choice – <i>The good choices is, the sad choice is ...</i> Explain to Child X that if he can't do the right thing, he will need to miss part of his playtime.</p> <p>Child X can sometimes respond to challenges with work if 1:1 and encouragement is used in the form of challenge/competition <i>I bet you won't be able to write this word. This word is going to disappear in 5,4,3,2,1...</i></p> <p>Provide Child X with 5 minutes of sitting out time with a book before work is attempted again. Ensure there is a clear space in which Child X must sit.</p> <p>If hiding, attempt to encourage Child X out by providing tasks/jobs to do e.g. Can you help me come and collect x from y? Would you help me do some photocopying (<i>requires additional support in the classroom</i>)</p> <p>Offer incentives that are associated with food.</p> <p>If Child X's behaviour presents a level of challenge that endangers the safety of the class, remove the class from the room and return to manage/support Child X at a safe</p>	<p>Child X finds it hard to acknowledge rules and boundaries. If he arrives in school and displays high levels of erratic and disruptive behaviour, he will be unlikely to respond to any language of choice and will, without trigger, escalate to hiding behaviour very quickly.</p> <p>Ignoring this behaviour will encourage Child X to escalate his behaviour further e.g. running from the classroom, locking himself in the toilet.</p> <p>Chasing – If Child X believes he is being chased because of his behaviour, he reads this as a game and finds it fun.</p> <p>DO NOT CHASE. Observe and watch at a safe distance. Address behaviours when Child X returns.</p>	<p>Positive handling will be used where Child X's behaviour presents a danger to other children, staff or himself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Child X is running around the classroom, and refuses to stop on request, staff members will restrain him until settled. • If Child X is physically harming others, positive handling should be used to remove Child X from the environment. • If Child X refuses to follow an instruction when asked to do so e.g. return to his seat to work, and refuses to acknowledge requests made by the teacher, positive handling will be used to either remove him from the classroom or bring him back to a work space where he shall have further support to complete work provided. • If Child X is attempting to hide in a space where staff are concerned for his safety and well-being, and he can be restrained without being pulled or dragged out of a space, then restraint will be used to prevent him reaching this space. 	<p>Learning mentor to complete follow up tasks to address scenarios and behaviours through PM sessions or if available, immediately following incidents once Child X is calm and settled.</p> <p>A range of strategies to complete reflection will be used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppets • Art/drawings • Train track – I did, I should have done • Prompt cards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who did I upset? ○ Why did my behaviour make them feel sad? ○ What could I have done differently? ○ How can I make things better?

distance until settled/calm.			
I have read through the plan and understand where positive handling will be used in school to support the named child. I agree to this positive handling plan and understand that it will be reviewed on a termly basis.	Parental Signature		
	Class Teacher Signature		
	Designated Lead Professional Signature		