



Positive Handling Policy

Head teacher.....

Chair of Governors.....

Positive Handling Policy 'Inspire, Achieve, Dream, Succeed'

At Greenmeadow Primary School we strive to provide a safe learning environment for our pupils. Sometimes, some of our children may get anxious or agitated; during these times we do our best to help pupils to calm down using communication skills, distraction techniques and removing triggers where possible.

However, there may be times when an individual pupil needs more help to calm down – this may require staff to physically support a pupil to ensure, the pupil's own safety, the safety of other pupils and staff, or that property is not seriously damaged. Staff have a duty of care and will need to intervene if needed.

This applies where a member of staff of the school is:

On the premises of the school; or elsewhere at a time when as a member of its staff he/she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned, for example school trip/visit.

The Education Act 1997 introduced the legal right to use 'reasonable force' in relation to circumstances in which physical intervention is used, although there is no legal definition of reasonable force (DofE, 1998, p.3). Whilst there may appear to be a relatively wide range of possible circumstances in which physical intervention is possible, teachers must also consider the best interests of the child (the paramount principle from the Children Act, 1989) and must take a balanced view of the individual child's needs and that of others. Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. At Greenmeadow Primary School we have adopted the Team Teach approach to manage challenging behaviour. This approach promotes the use of de-escalation strategies and the reduction of risk and restraint, to support teaching, learning and caring, it increases staff confidence and competence in responding to behaviours that challenge, whilst promoting and protecting positive relationships.

All incidents where children need to be held to help them to calm down are recorded in the Bound and Numbered Book, securely stored in the ALNCoS room. Parents are informed as a matter of course. All pupils who are likely to need help in this way are classed as category D or E according to the Torfaen Behaviour audit, or as Highly Complex or Complex according to the Torfaen Matrix of Needs. They will have an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), Risk Assessment and a Positive Handling Plan (PHP) drawn up by the class teacher which will be discussed with parents, the local authority and other relevant professionals where appropriate and consistently followed by all school staff. This information may also be shared with other agencies.

School Expectations

All staff have a 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.

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 with positive praise and using strategies specific to our school. We 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 bad behaviour and taking steps to divert behaviours leading towards foreseeable risk through the 'Window of Tolerance model' (explained further in the Behaviour Policy). Whenever possible, pupils are encouraged to participate in the development of their own Behaviour Plans by focusing on positive alternatives and choices, parents are also encouraged to contribute.

Alternatives to Physical Controls

Before physical intervention becomes necessary staff will take effective action to reduce risk.

They will:

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation, reason and distraction.
- Give clear directions for pupils to stop.
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.
- Well-chosen language is used to de-escalate situations.
- 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.

Modifications to Environment

Staff will not wait until a crisis is underway before conducting a risk assessment of the environment. We understand that some pupils at this school may exhibit extreme and possibly dangerous behaviour. This may mean giving consideration to secure storage for some objects when they are not being used.

Help Protocols

The expectation at this school is that all staff should support one another. Help is always offered and must be accepted at the second offer. Colleagues support each other by acting as critical friends during and after incidents.

Proactive Physical Interventions

It is sometimes reasonable to use physical controls to prevent extreme behaviour from becoming dangerous, provided that it is an agreed part of the Behaviour Plan or Risk Assessment when possible.

Examples of this are where a pupil has shown ritual patterns of behaviour, which in the past have led to the child becoming more distressed and violent. 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 withdraw to allow someone else to deal with the situation. Where staff act in line with school policy they will be supported. 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.

Team Teach

It is the policy of Greenmeadow Primary School that as many staff as is possible are 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's Behaviour Policy. Only members of staff in receipt of this training and authorised by the Head teacher are permitted to use physical restraint.

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. Key to addressing any health and safety concerns is the risk assessment process, both at informal and written level. Risk assessments will be agreed and signed by parents and the head teacher. Risk assessments are held in a central online shared area. They are also made available to supply teachers and any other professional working with a child with a risk assessment. They will be updated as necessary and reviewed regularly.

Individual Behaviour Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a high risk will have an Individual Behaviour 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. The school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet.

The Post Incident Support Structure for Pupils and Staff

Following a serious incident, it is the school's policy to offer support for all involved. Time needs to be given to following up incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective.

Recording and Review

Whenever physical restraint is used the incident must be recorded using the bound and numbered book. This is securely stored in the ALNCo's room. These records will be retained and cannot be altered. They will be kept for 3 years unless the incident is serious, resulting in an injury, in which case they will need to stay on file for DOB + 25 yrs.

The Head Teacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required. It may be necessary to amend a Risk Assessment, Positive Handling Plan, Relationship Plans or call an early IDP review following a review of the incident.

Complaints procedure

Our aim is for parents to have little reason to complain however in the event of a complaint there is a clear escalation procedure to follow:

Stage 1 – discuss issue with staff member involved.

if not resolved

Stage 2 - Make complaint to Head Teacher

if not resolved

Stage 2 – Complaint put in writing to Head Teacher

if not resolved

Stage 3 – Complaint considered by Governing Body

During each of the above stages records will be kept outlining details of the meetings.

*A full copy of the school's complaints procedure is available upon request.

Associated Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Relationship Policy

Additional Learning Needs Policy

Health & Safety Policy

Safeguarding Policy