



New Ash Green Primary School - Positive Handling Policy

Rationale

The well-being, welfare and safety of all pupils and staff at New Ash Green Primary School is of paramount importance and it is recognised that the vast majority of pupils in our school respond positively to our behaviour expectations and have a thorough understanding of our core values.

The Legal Framework and Key Definitions

It is acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to act in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required. Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables a school's staff to use such force as is reasonable. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force.

New Ash Green Primary School acknowledges that physical techniques are only part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management. Positive Handling will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils and/or staff are at risk. New Ash Green Primary School does not support the routine use of physical interventions.

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 within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour and Escalating Situations

Staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and positive choices, in line with our Behaviour Policy. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively. Staff should recognise that restraint is only a small part of a wider spectrum of positive framework that may include use of space, safe environments, diversions, calm stances and postures, non-threatening facial expressions, low tone, volume and pace in communication, careful use of words, and physical reassurance and prompts.

Why Use Positive handling?

Positive handling should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action(s) or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him / herself or others. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

Use of Positive Handling

Positive handling should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.

Named staff, who have completed Team Teach training (see Appendix 1), are authorised to use reasonable force in applying positive handling. However, as a rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below. There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary. In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective positive handling should be a last resort.

When Positive Handling Becomes Necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

DO NOT

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil

Positive Handling Plan

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 (see Appendix 2). The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any responses which are not recommended. Any particular physical techniques which have been found to be effective should be named, along with any alerts to any which have proved to be ineffective, or which caused problems in the past. Positive Handling Plans should be considered along with the child's Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) and any other planning document relevant to the pupil. They should take account of age, gender, level of physical, emotional, and intellectual development, special needs, and social context.

Where there is a concern about a child, parents/carers will be invited to contribute to a Positive Handling Plan. Written parental agreement will form part of this. Positive Handling Plans are shared with staff who work alongside the named pupil.

Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

New Ash Green Primary School keeps a record of all incidents where physical intervention involving the use of force against resistance from a child has been necessary. The record should be completed by the end of the working day on which the incident took place. A member of the Leadership Team will be told at the earliest possible time after an incident. Parent/carers will be informed.

The Headteacher will ensure that incidents are reviewed and instigate any further action(s) as required.

Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints will follow the school's complaints procedure.

Appendix 1 Blank Positive Handling Plan

Appendix 2 Advice for Staff

The school's behaviour, safeguarding, and anti-bullying policies will all be incorporated into the care package which is used to address each child's needs.

Name of child:	DOB:	Year & Class:
Date plan started:	Date plan discontinued:	
<u>Effective strategies previously used:</u>		
<u>Strategies not recommended:</u>		
<u>Physical techniques used effectively:</u>		
<u>Physical techniques used which proved ineffective or problematic:</u>		

1. At New Ash Green Primary School, we believe that physical intervention and/or restraint should be the last resort. In the majority of cases de-escalation and diffusion are the appropriate methods of dealing with situations that might result in a threat to the health and safety of any individuals. On extremely rare occasions it may be appropriate for staff to intervene physically with or between pupils. These include:
 - Injury, or risk of injury, to another pupil
 - Injury, or risk of injury, to a member of staff
 - Serious damage to property that would result in harm to a person.
2. Any intervention should be a last resort and be **proportionate, reasonable and appropriate**, and be done with the aim to **reduce** not **provoke**.
3. All staff owe a **duty of care to pupils**. To take no action, where the outcome is that a pupil injures him/herself, or another, including staff, could be seen as negligence.
4. Members of staff facing confrontational situations with pupils are reminded that the following behaviours can either reduce or inflame incidents, and that a brief moment of risk assessment may allow the time to decide on the appropriate action necessary.
5. **Remaining calm** – the ability to try and remain calm and appear relaxed is less likely to provoke. A relaxed posture and a non-threatening (CALM) stance, i.e. not toe-to-toe, are recommended.
6. **Awareness of Space** – try to be aware of the space around you and avoid stepping into another individual's personal space. Try to take a step back outside the circle of danger.
7. **Pacing and Chasing** – angry people often pace around in tense situations and staff should try to avoid the temptation to follow as they attempt to help them calm down. This can be counterproductive as it may trigger an animal chase response and drive the other person away. Where possible it is preferable for the staff member to stand still, speaking calmly, clearly and confidently – or even sit down.
8. **Intonation** - when people are anxious or angry, they tend to talk faster, higher and more loudly. In a potential crisis situation, staff need to deliberately speak slower, lower and more quietly

9. **Help Script**

- I. Connect by using pupil's name
- II. Recognise the feelings
- III. Tell the pupil you're there to help
- IV. You talk and I will listen
- V. Give direction

10. **Diffusing body language responses**

- Social distance
- Sideways stance, step back
- Intermittent eye contact
- Relaxed body posture
- Palms open