



Physical Intervention & Positive Handling Policy

Autumn 2023

Purpose

At Elloughton Primary School, we are committed to a positive behaviour policy which encourages children to make positive behaviour choices. We do however recognise that children sometimes do make the wrong choices. On occasions, this may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff. Our policy for physical intervention is based upon the following principles:-

- Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required.
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Incidents must be recorded on CPOMS and reported to the Headteacher as soon as possible (or the Chair of Governors if it involves the Headteacher)
- Parents will be informed of each incident

1. The Legal Framework (Use of Reasonable Force 2013)

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

School staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.

This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to other people in school whom the Headteacher gives the authority to do so.

2. Our approach

At Elloughton Primary School, we aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in a minority of situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Behaviour Policy.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which positive handling would be necessary or appropriate, and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the school's policy



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for positive behaviour, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and have a 'Duty of Care' to all children they are in charge of. They must, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure all pupils' safety and well-being.

Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

3. Use of physical intervention

Positive handling should be used 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 punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical intervention, although there is no absolute definition of this. What constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

In all circumstances, alternative methods should be used as appropriate, with physical intervention or restraint as 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 physical intervention (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance
- Remain calm at all times 'keep calm by acting calm'

C - communication (stance/posture/gesture/facial expression/scripts)

A - awareness and assessment (reading behaviour- anticipating what might happen next / knowledge of handling plans)

L - listening and learning (give time and space - allow pauses for take up time / give them a way out)

M - making safe (objects / space / hotspots / safety responses)

DON'T

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the positive handling
- Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct
- 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
- Use physical intervention as a punishment
- Follow an angry child around as they try to calm themselves once the hold has been released



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4. Actions after an incident

Physical intervention often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. **The head teacher should be informed of any incident as soon as possible**, and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and where it is a child, their parents informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern, it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of an Individual Support Plan, and/or a Positive Handling plan which may include additional intervention, or other strategies agreed by the Headteacher/Inclusion Manager. This may require additional support from other services e.g. the LA Inclusion Service.

In some circumstances, an Early Help Assessment may be appropriate to help identify an additional need for a particular child. It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

All incidents should be recorded immediately on CPOMS. In the event of any future complaint or allegation, this record will provide essential and accurate information.

A member of the staff will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

5. Risk Assessments

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way, that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate
- The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff

Remain calm at all times: 'keep calm by acting calm'.

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A - awareness and assessment (reading behaviour- anticipating what might happen next / knowledge of handling plans)

L - listening and learning (give time and space - allow pauses for take up time / give them a way out)

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Where possible, those members of staff involved in positive handling will have undertaken Team Teach training.

"Team-Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the child, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of



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professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent “side-effect” of ensuring that the child remains safe”.

6. Complaints and Allegations

A clear physical intervention and positive handling policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under the complaints disciplinary or allegation management procedures.

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

Adoption, Approval, Sign Off

Signed	Rebecca Brammall
On behalf of	Headteacher
Date	Autumn 2023

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