

A, B, C & D



Achieve, Believe,
Care & Dream

Positive Handling

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Introduction

This policy outlines how staff at Benhall Infant and Pre-School create and maintain good order and relationships through positive approaches. These approaches are successful for the vast majority of the time. This policy on the use of holding safely or positive handling interventions supplements the main behaviour policy. Both should be read in conjunction with other Safeguarding Policies, most notably: SEN policy, Health & Safety policy and Child Protection policy. At Benhall we use the terms Safe Holding or Positive Handling in place of Restrictive Physical Intervention. We believe in the Team Teach philosophy and, as a Team Teach trained school, we implement the practices in which we have been trained.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any physical intervention that they undertake is carried out in a way that supports the values and principles described above. In particular, it aims to describe the circumstances in which holding safely or positive handling is an appropriate response and how staff at the school will fulfil their responsibilities in those circumstances. The Head Teacher will be responsible for ensuring that staff, Governors and parents are aware of the policy. (S)he will ensure that any necessary training/awareness-raising takes place so that staff know their responsibilities.

Physical Touch

The staff at Benhall Infants and Pre-School believe that physical touch is an essential part of human relationships. In our school adults may well use touch to prompt, to guide such as in music tuition, to demonstrate appropriate care for example if a child has fallen over, to give comfort if a child is upset, to provide reassurance when they may be worried or to support in PE.

To use touch/physical support successfully, staff will adhere to the following principles. It must always:

- be non-abusive: no intention to cause pain or injury
- be in the best interests of the child and others
- have a clear educational purpose (e.g. to access the curriculum or to improve social relationships)
- take account of gender issues
- be open and transparent

Staff need to be aware of sensitivities associated with any form of physical contact with students and should refer to other policies such as intimate care, child protection and working alone. Guidance should be sought from the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors if there is any concern regarding appropriate action or behaviour.

More guidance and advice on physical contact other than the exercise of the power to use force is provided by the Education and Inspections act 2006 (updated June 2019). What the law says on when is restrictive physical intervention permissible (Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing any offence (or for a student under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);

- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student themselves); Injury to self/ self-harm, injury to others, rough play, hitting another pupil or adult or fighting, damage to property including their own property.
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

What Do We Mean By Physical Interventions

Non-restrictive interventions:

- Either where the child's movement is not restricted or where the child is held supportively but such that they will be released immediately should they so wish. Eg. a child or student wishing to hold an adults hand or asking a child to hold an adults hand for safety reasons.
- Supporting a child who has fallen in the playground.
- Holding safely/positive handling interventions
- Hold or Guide - application of force to overcome minimal resistance, prompting and encouraging a pupil (team teach workbook)
- Controls - application of force to overcome moderate resistance, prompting and encouraging a pupil (team teach workbook)

Emergency/unplanned interventions:

Occur in response to unforeseen events (staff have a duty of care to safeguard pupils, an emergency can only happen once, once it has happened plans must be in place to reduce the foreseeable risk)

Planned interventions:

In which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods which are based on a risk assessment and recorded in an individual plan for the management of a pupil

For example: an agreed response to a specific behaviour which is designed to support the child's overall education in which is part of a Positive Handling Plan

Risk Assessments

The use of a restrictive physical intervention will be the outcome of a professional judgement made by staff on the basis of this school policy. It is avoided whenever possible and will not be used for staff convenience.

Positive Handling will only be considered if other behaviour management options have proved ineffective or are judged to be inappropriate (or in an emergency situation).

Before deciding to intervene in this way, staff will ensure they are following the personal support plan if available and seek support from a member of SLT. Benhall's Positive Handling Policy considers whether the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk of intervening.

Any actions will be carried out with the child's best interests at heart. Physical intervention will never be used to punish a pupil or cause pain, injury or humiliation. Staff are not expected to intervene physically against their better judgement nor are they expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk.

In such circumstances, they must take steps to minimise risks. For example, by removing other pupils and calling for assistance. Supply staff will not be authorised to use safe holds or positive

handling. Parents and volunteers in the school are not given authorisation. Staff from the Local Education Authority may have their own policies about the care and control of pupils but, whilst on the premises, they will be expected to be aware of, and operate within, the policy of this school.

How Staff Might Intervene

When a positive handling intervention is justified, staff will use 'reasonable force'. This is the degree of force 'warranted by the situation'. It will 'be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident and the consequences it is intended to prevent'.

Any force used will always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result and for the shortest amount of time. During an incident the member of staff involved will ask the pupil to "STOP", ask other pupils to move away and send for help and then tell the pupil that his or her behaviour may lead to being held safely or guided to a safer place. This will not be used as a threat or said in a way that could inflame the situation.

Staff will not act out of anger or frustration. They will adopt a calm, measured approach and maintain communication with the pupil at all times. They will refrain from telling the pupil what they have done and explain 'We are just going to walk to the quiet space.'

The Place of Restrictive Interventions Within Behaviour Planning

If, through the school's special needs assessment procedures, it is determined that a positive handling approach is likely to be appropriate to help a pupil make progress, a risk assessment must will be carried out following the school's guidelines.

If appropriate, an individual positive handling plan will then be drawn up for that pupil. This plan will aim to reduce the likelihood of the need for restrictive physical intervention as well as describing how such intervention will be carried out. This plan will be discussed with parents/carers.

Before the risk assessment is implemented, any necessary training or guidance will be provided for the staff involved. The Head Teacher will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training.

What to do after the use of a restrictive physical intervention

After the use of an emergency restrictive physical intervention, the following steps will be taken:

1. Details of the incident will be recorded by all adults involved immediately in the CPOMS records for that child.
2. Recording will be completed within 24 hours whenever possible. Staff will be offered the opportunity to seek advice from a senior colleague or professional representative when compiling their report and any other personal / professional support they may need.
3. Any injuries suffered by those involved will be recorded following normal school procedures.
4. The Headteacher will check that there is no cause for concern regarding the actions of adults involved. If it is felt that an action has 'caused or put a child at risk of significant harm' the Headteacher will follow the school's child protection procedures and also inform parents/carers.
5. Parents/carers will be informed verbally by the Head Teacher/SENCO/Teacher on the day of the incident.

6. Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding an incident and are entitled to see a copy of the incident form, which the school would aim to do in person.
7. Support/debriefing will be available for adults and pupils who have been involved in any incident involving positive handling.
8. Arrangements for recording and informing parents in the case of a planned restrictive intervention will be followed as agreed beforehand but broadly will follow the same pattern as above.
9. The Senior Leadership Team will use the records kept to analyse patterns of behaviour and so decide whether responses are being effective.
10. The Headteacher/SENCO will report this information to the SEN Governor at their termly meetings.

Complaints

We believe our school to be a successful and happy place, where everyone is an active learner. However we understand that very occasionally some issues may arise over which not everyone is in agreement.

The school and Governing Body have therefore created a procedure to enable legitimate concerns or complaints to be made and properly investigated. We aim to seek resolution to any disagreements at the lowest possible level and encourage any party who may wish to make a complaint to discuss any concerns with the appropriate person in the first instance.

The school and Governing Body will work with any complainant to resolve the concern of complaint as quickly as possible. We have therefore adopted a staged approach, which is outlined in the school's Complaints Procedure; this is readily available on the school website, or can be requested directly in paper copy from the school.

Monitoring

Any incidents involving positive handling are recorded and reported to the Headteacher Committee as part of the school's monitoring. Analysis of such incidents is used in support of school improvement and evaluation