

St Andrew's C E Primary School



Care and Control of Pupils including the Use of Positive Handling Techniques Policy

St Andrew's CE Primary School

Every Child A Champion in Their Own Right. Matthew 5.16 - "Let Your Light Shine."

Policy on the Care and Control of Pupils including the Use of Positive Handling Techniques

Introduction

There is a threefold purpose in producing this guidance:

- To protect the interests and well being of children for whom staff have a shared responsibility
- To protect staff in the fulfilment of their responsibilities to children
- To protect the local authority, which ultimately has responsibility for the actions of its staff.

It is important to remember that the majority of young people in at St Andrew's CE Primary School behave very well and conform to the expectations of the school and community. We have a responsibility to ensure that good behaviour is valued and that circumstances within our school are geared to enhancing each individual's own sense of value and worth. It is only in these circumstances that children and young people will learn to value and respect others.

It is vitally important to acknowledge that the vast majority of behaviour that does not meet the school's expectations is responded to through management strategies that do not rely on any form of physical intervention. At St Andrew's CE Primary physical intervention is rare. If deemed necessary, staff who have completed the 'Team Teach' methods will implement these strategies.

The Education Act 1997 (Section 4) clarified the use of physical force by teachers and others authorised by the headteacher of a school / educational establishment to control or restrain pupils. The clarification was achieved through the addition of Section 550A to the Education Act 1996. This section became operational on 1 September 1998 and applies to all schools. Subsequent DfES Circulars and consultation documents have provided additional guidelines for managers and staff.

Section 550A restates principles derived from statute and clarifies the common misperception that physical contact with a child is in some way unlawful. It states clearly that, where necessary and appropriate, force can and should be used to control and restrain children and young people.

Ethos

The ethos of this school is vital to the way in which children and young people perceive themselves as part of the community. It will determine the extent to which pupils feel they belong to the community and as a result impact on all aspects of behaviour. It is a key objective to achieve a positive, calm and facilitative environment in which children and young people can develop and learn through a wide range of measures.

A key factor in successful schools is the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum appropriately differentiated to stimulate and engage all pupils. Where this is achieved in conjunction with the provision of an

effective personal and social education curriculum it is more likely that a calm and orderly learning environment will exist.

It is widely recognised that a reward based rather than a punishment orientated ethos, which rewards good behaviour and attitudes and avoids whole group sanctions, is more likely to bring about desired behaviour. Similarly, the use of any form of force as a punishment, as well as being unlawful, is unlikely to induce positive attitudes and behaviour in children and young people.

A supportive ethos within the school will also be determined by the extent to which staff feel safe and supported in carrying out their duties. There is recognition that some staff may experience verbal and physical assault whilst working with children and young people. It must be made clear to all staff that they should not expect or accept such abuse. Similarly, it must be made clear to them what course of action is open to them when abuse occurs. All staff work within the context of the guidance provided by the Health and Safety department.

Core Principles

Consistent and positive discipline helps children to stay within reasonable behavioural limitations. It enhances self-esteem by helping the child to meet the expectations of the school and community. Every child and young person needs security, stable and caring relationships and a dependable and predictable environment in order to develop self-discipline and control.

Behaviour management is the educational process, which involves the use of authority to bring about change. Children and young people are guided through their participation in this process towards socially acceptable, self controlled and responsible behaviour.

Each incident needs to be considered and understood in context i.e. the total picture of the young person including their life experiences to date. Any interventions or responses to behaviour should involve the young person in the behaviour management process to allow them to recognise their responsibility in their own development.

Kingston upon Hull City Council advocates that, to promote learning and reduce the incidence of poor behaviour educational, schools should develop a positive culture in which sanctions will always be brief, clear and to the point. Disapproval will always be of the behaviour and not the person.

Definitions

In considering the use of reasonable force to control and/or restrain children and young people, it is essential that there is clarity about the terms that are used to describe physical interventions when they occur. For the purposes of this policy the LA endorses the definitions contained in the DfES/DoH guidance of June 2002.

The LA supports the principle that everyone has the right to defend themselves against attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so. The judgement about the degree of force will always be made in the context of the perceived physical threat i.e. how badly injured the person would be if they had not taken steps to defend themselves. A useful guideline for staff is the phrase:

"Minimum force and time; maximum care and control"

Where the aim of physical intervention is to maintain good order it is essential that the member of staff takes into consideration the extent to which any such action might exacerbate the situation. The age and understanding of the pupil must be taken into account. Physical intervention should not be used to replace good behavioural management. This is where the 'Team Teach' strategies could be implemented, where the behaviour will be diffused and positive handling implemented. Team teach - Techniques Effective with Anger Management utilising Therapeutic Educational Awareness Communication Handling strategies

All members of staff need to

- be clear that physical intervention is one element of a wider behaviour management policy and that it is a **last resort**;
- have a clear understanding of special educational needs and of pupils as individuals with individual characteristics and life experiences;
- appreciate that pupils with special educational needs require different handling from adults; that gender issues are complex and that, as a result of sexual abuse, children may be aroused and or very frightened by physical intervention. All staff should be made aware of individual personal handling plans (PHP).

Risk assessment at time of incident

It is crucial here to emphasise that physical intervention should not be undertaken unless the member of staff feels confident in the intervention and has assessed the risk. In this situation 'risk assessment' may mean the evaluation of the situation to determine whether immediate physical intervention is necessary. The physical characteristics of those present may be one factor in making this judgement. It may also be necessary to check the physical environment for hazards.

The relevant consideration here is an assessment of a person and a situation. In the case of an unexpected circumstance this has to be done very quickly. Every case is different and in some cases a risk assessment may have been carried out on the particularly challenging behaviour of an individual and the findings should be made known to all staff who may have to deal with that individual. Nevertheless, in all cases each set of circumstances is unique and the risk assessment will be a continuous process taking place in relation to the changing circumstances.

The initial response should be to identify potential harm to persons and to consider control measures to deal with the danger. This includes danger to:

- the individual presenting the challenging behaviour;
- other pupils;
- any staff involved/other staff;
- self.

Staff should be made aware that on those occasions when physical intervention has been decided against, there is still an obligation for staff to take some form of action. This may be verbal, may involve sending for assistance or removing other children from the scene. Recording and reporting is essential. To take no action where the outcome is that a child injures him/herself, or another, including staff, could be seen as negligence.

Recording, Reporting and Repair

It is vital that a contemporaneous written record of any occasion when the use of force has been made is established. The record should include:

- The name(s) of the pupils involved;
- The name(s) of all staff involved including witnesses;
- When and where the incident occurred;
- The reason that force was used and the nature of the force used, degree and type of hold;
- The antecedents, detail of incident including what was said, duration;
- Pupils response and outcome of incident; · Details of any injuries including marks to the skin;
- Details of damage to property.

The incident form/ CPOMS will be completed and the head teacher informed.

Following the incident, the LA upholds the view that staff should be provided with support. This may be time to calm down or the opportunity to discuss the incident, for example.