

Learning is fun at

## Park Hill Infants' School



All different, All equal, All achieving

# Positive Handling Policy

January 2017

# Positive Handling Policy

## Policy Statement

This policy has been prepared in consultation with the staff and governors and sets out the arrangements for Park Hill Infants School. The governors and headship team regard the need for physical intervention of pupils as something they hope can be avoided but in extreme cases, especially to prevent a pupil harming themselves or others, including physically assaulting staff, then this policy is agreed as necessary. This policy seeks to fulfil responsibilities to the fullest extent, to ensure the provision of a safe environment for staff, pupils, parents and visitors.

## Aims

- to offer a secure, carefully structured environment, promoting positive behaviour, where pupils develop as confident and independent learners;
- to provide all staff with the necessary support and information to enable them to understand their professional and legal responsibility in carrying out their duty of care which may, at times, involve the use of positive physical intervention;
- to inform staff, pupils, parents, carers and outside agencies about the rationale and use of physical interventions in managing challenging behaviours warranting their use;
- to establish consistent procedures for the use of all physical interventions ranging from positive handling to restrictive physical intervention of pupils throughout the school;
- to embed procedures in Park Hill Infants School practice that work towards minimal use of Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) and maximum use of non-intrusive intervention such as positive reinforcement, distraction and other de-escalation techniques (**Appendix 1**).

## Definitions and legal position

The Law (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 pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence;
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property;
- engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintain the good order and discipline at the school.

“Restrictive Physical Intervention” is the term used by the Department for Education to include interventions where bodily contact using force is used. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the Headteacher has to, in specific circumstances, use “reasonable force” to control or restrain pupils. This policy takes into account advice set out by the Department for Education’s “Use of reasonable force” document.

There is no legal definition of “reasonable force”, however for the purposes of this policy and the implementation of it at Park Hill Infants School: *‘Positive Handling uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming himself /herself, others or property.*

There are two relevant considerations in terms of reasonable force:

- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it;
- the degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent.

**Positive Handling** by staff can take several forms. At different ages, it could be appropriate to involve:

## 1. Physical Contact

Situations in which proper physical contact occurs between staff and pupils, e.g. in the care of pupils with learning disabilities; in games/PE; to comfort pupils.

## 2. Physical Intervention

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, shoulder or using an 'elbow touch' with little or no force.

## 3. Escorting and Holding

The most commonly used forms of physical intervention are escorting and holding. These depend upon the degree of compliance from the child as to whether they constitute 'restrictive'. The development of trusting, confident relationships is of high priority so that children are accepting of the use of the friendly escort and calming holding to support their own efforts to manage their behaviour. These positive handling holds rarely need force and are not 'restraint'.

## 4. Restrictive Physical Intervention (*Restrictive Physical Intervention- RPI*)

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. It is important to note that the use of 'reasonable force' should be seen as a last resort. All such incidents must be recorded on the school's form (Appendix 3). The level of compliance from the pupil determines whether or not the interaction is an intervention or a method of physical control.

School staff use RPI as opposed to holding or escorting as the last resort after:

- appropriate de-escalation techniques have failed to help the child to control him/herself (**Appendix 1**);
- instant risk assessment by staff lead them to believe that injury, or serious damage to property, is an immediate danger;
- knowledge of the child's history and behaviour pattern leads staff to believe that speedy removal from the room is necessary to prevent escalation or breakdown of the session or other pupils behaving in a similar manner;
- the pupil has been cautioned that his/her continued choice of behaviour may lead to restraint.

## Staff Training

Staff participate in Behaviour Management Training during the year -INSETs, etc. All members of staff are authorised to use Restrictive Physical Intervention, although most staff have received specific training on Positive Handling techniques.

## Recording and Reporting

It is essential that a risk assessment is completed to assess and manage foreseeable risks for children who present challenging behaviours (**Appendix 2**).

It is important that on occasions necessitating its use, RPI is recorded (using Appendix 3).

This is to:

- prevent later misunderstanding of the incident;
- prevent misrepresentation of the facts;
- identify patterns of behaviour;
- encourage pupils to acknowledge/take responsibility for their actions;
- allow parents/carers to check the use of RPI at any time;
- allow the Senior Leadership team to monitor the operation of the policy;
- allow Positive Handling Plans or individual risk assessments to be developed for individual pupils who are assessed as being at greatest risk of needing RPI.

These records will be kept confidentially by the Headship team in a record of significant incidents.

## The Support of Parents/Carers

The use of RPI (*Restrictive Physical Intervention*) can be a source of anxiety for parents/carers. We therefore attempt to establish, as a priority, close working relationships with parents and carers so that they fully understand why it has been used. This school/home relationship in itself is a strategy for reducing the likelihood of need for RPI on any regular scale. Parents/carers must be informed by telephone, in person or by letter on the same day of serious incidents of challenging behaviour necessitating RPI.

### **Dealing with Complaints**

Despite the care taken by staff to follow procedures and ensure that incidents are positively resolved, a small number of complaints following restrictive intervention may be expected for many reasons, e.g.:

- pupils with severe emotional and behavioural needs may take time to accept responsibility for their actions and seek to transfer ownership of negative behaviour to others – often the staff who have ‘controlled’ them;
- some parents/carers have yet to accept that their child can behave in school in a manner dangerously violent or disruptive enough to have needed RPI;
- any act of RPI carries with it a risk of accidental harm which is difficult for the injured party (who could be either the child, member of staff or passing member of the public) to accept as such.

When parents/carers are informed that RPI has been used, it is the first opportunity for them to discuss any concerns they might have. If the parent/carer or child remains anxious, an appointment can be made to discuss the incident with the staff concerned and/or a member of the Senior Leadership team. At this point, written records and other evidence may be consulted and shared with the parent/carer to help him/her to understand the facts. Presented with the evidence, parents/carers are enabled to see that procedures are followed and actions justified. The pupil concerned will also now, having been given the chance to re-evaluate and accept what has happened, in all likelihood confirm the facts postulated by staff and reassure the parent/carer. If the situation cannot be resolved through informal discussion, the parent/carer may make an official complaint, which will be investigated according to Croydon Borough procedures.

### **Monitoring of the Policy and Practice of Procedures**

Following any incident of RPI, the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will receive and read the detailed account of the incident, and discuss it with those involved if necessary. Appropriate follow-up action may then be taken. Any complaints will be recorded, including the nature of the complaint, the time taken to deal with them and the outcome.

### **Health and Safety**

The school will ensure that pupils are given support to understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits, which govern behaviour in the school. Restrictive physical interventions are performed with due regard to ensuring the minimum risk to the safety of all concerned. Where either a pupil has a medical condition (which may make some methods of intervention inappropriate), or a history of aggressive/victim behaviour, all staff should be informed of the circumstances so that an accurate risk assessment can be made (**Appendix 2**).

On occasions, the decision to apply RPI procedures will be based on the need to prevent a child from harming him/herself. A member of staff may request to be exempted from obligation to apply if it may endanger their own health and safety, e.g. someone who is pregnant, temporarily suffering from an injury etc. In such a case, arrangements will be made to minimise the possibility of the member of staff becoming involved in a situation requiring the use of RPI.

**Policy Review**

This policy is to be read in conjunction with all other school policies, in particular the Safeguarding, Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies. In addition, it should be read in conjunction with the Guidelines on Permissible Forms of Positive Handling Strategies with Children, issued by Croydon Council.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Review date: January 2019.

## APPENDIX 1

# Bank of Ideas for Behaviour Management

It is important to remember there is a strong relationship between behavioural difficulties and language delay/disorder and learning difficulties. If someone has difficulty understanding what is being said or has problems finding words or sentences to express feelings then they are more at risk of expressing frustration and challenging behaviour.

### General strategies

- There should be behaviour management plans for consistent approaches to predictable behaviours.
- Agreed approaches/targets for a particular child should be used consistently by all staff.
- Good behaviour must be modelled by adults in their interactions with pupils.
- Keep your voice calm and controlled with no shouting, and your body language (facial expressions, posture, gestures) matching your spoken language.
- Notice the mood and behaviour of the child when they arrive in the morning.
- Look for signs of anxiety/tension.
- Try to defuse a situation before it starts by distraction, offering alternatives, isolating the area so there is no audience or move the child away.
- Negotiate, if possible.
- Be patient.
- Ask for assistance.
- If a child becomes agitated when another child is behaving inappropriately, explain or distract the child and reassure them.
- Plan activities where children can succeed.
- Physical activity/quiet activity can ensure the day starts positively.

### Effective communication

- Sentences with positive statements are easier to understand than ones with negative ones. E.g. *'hands on laps please'* is easier to understand and reinforces the desired behaviour better than *'stop waving your arms about you will hit someone'*.
- Avoid unnecessary social phrases before giving request e.g. in the sentence *'it's almost dinner time so I think it would be a good idea if we all went .....*' these words carry no useful information for what you want the child to do and just create confusion – just say "its dinner time - time to line up".
- Use Augmentative and Alternative Communication systems (AAC) - visual or physical cues and symbols to explain what is about to happen. Examples are:
  - natural gestures and pointing;
  - real objects, pictures and photographs;
  - use pictures on key rings on the wall to show sequences of events;
  - actively listen to the child and notice if their body language matches their verbal language;
  - acknowledge and reflect the child's feelings;
  - give children time to respond. This is particularly important for children with language delay/disorders where they will take longer to process what is being said to them, then find the right words they want and make them into a sentence;
  - reassure with a quiet hand on the child's shoulder if it is appropriate;
  - if the child is focussed on a physical activity, if appropriate gently cover their hands to encourage eye contact with you - this will assist listening.

### Routines and approaches

- Set up familiar routines throughout the day.

- Sit the child in the same place in the circle/classroom sitting next to e.g. an adult or a child.
- Wherever possible finish routines i.e. counting 1 – 10, then show the finish sign or symbol.
- Give clear boundaries for a required activity or behaviour e.g. use an egg timer for X minutes.
- Adult to say and sign 'calm down' and distract. Take to another area of the classroom to an area away from other children, if necessary.
- Gently massage e.g. hands, back to support calming, if appropriate.
- Move objects that could be thrown out of the way.
- Adult to sign and count to ....for child to watch and give time to calm down.
- Move child to another area of the room.
- 2 adults to move a child to another area.
- Move all the other children/staff out of the room.
- Move child to an area outside the classroom e.g. corridor, playground.
- Offer reward e.g. motivating object if child does as requested e.g. sit down and you can hold the .....
- Take away an object the child is holding until they do as requested.
- Give a choice. You can stay here or go to.....
- Set up area in the classroom when child can calm down.
- Define a chair in specific area of classroom for child to sit on to calm down.
- Use cushions to prevent child from hurting themselves.
- If child is refusing to move wait for length of time for child to calm down, supervising without giving eye contact. This might be for 5 minutes, depending on the child. Tell them go to .....if they do not respond wait again and repeat procedure. Call for a member of the SLT if necessary.
- Reward good behaviour at an appropriate time and by a means that is relevant to the child by e.g. focused praise e.g. good sitting, stickers, eye contact and smile etc.
- Use negotiation to achieve an outcome e.g. you do this and then do that. Pictures can help a child understand sequences.
- Bring child to the circle when it is set up and ready so they do not have to wait.
- Take an activity to the child if they will not go to a table.
- Support the child to take part in turn taking activities.
- Realistic expectations – allow a child to do activity and then move to something else if they have done what they can.
- Let a child go first if they cannot wait and then, in time, ask then them to wait for the second go.

### **Encourage independence**

- Encourage independence with the child choosing an activity and child doing things for themselves – with asking for help, if needed.
- Give choices through real objects so that child has ownership of decision.
- Allow a child to access resources to help them to sit.
- Use motivating rewards e.g. stickers, talking to parents
- Find out likes and use these to encourage appropriate behaviour and a sense of achievement e.g. use of music, songs.
- Find out dislikes and try to avoid these BUT also teach children how to manage them to create self-awareness and chances to succeed in changing their behaviour.

### **Resources and the environment**

- Ensure child is ready for learning e.g. is wearing their glasses or hearing aid and is sitting comfortably.
- Use 'likes' to base work around e.g. interest in cars for counting.
- Set up a box/choosing bag of favourite objects that can be held in lesson time, negotiate and exchange time, if needed. Use only soft toys if they are likely to be thrown.
- Leave a small distance when sitting next to a child so that they cannot grab.
- Use carpet squares or cushions so that each child clearly has their own space/place.

- Split groups or classes to promote good behaviour.
- Move equipment out of the room/area if it causes problems that cannot be managed safely.
- Prevent children from doing an activity that is likely to hurt others e.g. always supervise the door if a child is likely to slam it.
- The adult may need to model a play activity for the child to understand and try it - praise their appropriate responses.
- Position staff at appropriate places to prevent a particular behaviour from happening.
- Explain the consequences of behaviour if child understands them e.g. When you put your shoes on you can play.
- Show a symbol of the room/activity with a red cross symbol over it to make it clear to the child that they are not going to the room/activity – show the child the room/activity they are going to do.
- Use a social story to support a child to understand a situation.
- Substitute skills e.g. tapping quietly, fiddle toy.

### **When inappropriate behaviour occurs**

- Shape behaviour by modelling the behaviour you would like to see.
- Divert through use of e.g. song, actions, favourite toy.
- Distract.
- Show symbol for the behaviour you want to see.
- Tell child the behaviour you want to see e.g. feet down.
- Say, 'No' and take child away from situation for an amount of time e.g. count of 10, 30 seconds using an egg timer to show amount of time.
- If child attempts a behaviour e.g. biting to say 'stop' / show symbol for 'stop' and take appropriate action e.g. take child away, divert with a toy, etc.
- Adult to say and sign 'calm down' and distract. Take to another area of the classroom to an area away from other children, if necessary.
- Gently massage e.g. hands, back to support calming, if appropriate.
- Move objects that could be thrown out of the way.
- Adult to sign and count to ...for child to watch and give time to calm down.
- Move child to another area of the room.
- 2 adults to move a child to another area.
- Move all the other children/staff out of the room.
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- Give a choice. You can stay here or go to.....
- Set up area in the classroom when child can calm down.
- Define a chair in specific area of classroom for child to sit on to calm down.
- Use cushions to prevent child from hurting themselves.
- If a child is refusing to move wait for a length of time for the child to calm down, supervising without giving eye contact. This might be for around 5 minutes, depending on the child. Tell them to....if they do not respond wait again and repeat the procedure. Call for a member of SLT if necessary.



## Appendix 2: Individual Risk Assessment

Assessing and managing foreseeable risks for children who present challenging behaviour.

### Individual Risk Assessment – (Date)

Name of pupil:

D.O.B:

Year Group:

### Behaviour causing concern:

(example)

- Climbing on, over and through and opening gates.
- Leaving the classroom and running from class
- Picking up objects and throwing them at other children/staff
- Lack of fear e.g. trying to climb out of a lower floor window. Climbing on chairs to attempt to unlock bolted doors.

### Identification of Risk

**Describe the foreseeable risk:**

(example)

- Falling from gate/fence/window
- Being injured / knocked down by traffic if he manages to get onto road.
- Hurting another child by throwing objects.

**Is the risk potential or actual?**

**List who is affected by the risk**

Child, his family, other pupils and school staff.

### Assessment of Risk

**In which situations does the risk usually occur?**

(example)

- Can occur any time during the day.
- Transition times and when activities finish

**How likely it is that the risk will arise and to what extent?**

RISK RATING	Slightly harmful	Harmful	Extremely harmful
Highly Unlikely	Trivial	Tolerable	Moderate
Unlikely	Tolerable	Moderate	Substantial
Likely	Moderate	Substantial	Intolerable

*Likely/Slightly harmful – At present, Child runs out of class/hall/communal areas at least 6 times a day.*

**If the risk arises, who is likely to be injured or hurt?**

Child, school staff who will need to restrain him, other pupils.

**What kinds of injuries or harm are likely to occur?**

Bruising, broken bones, internal injuries and fatality

**How serious are the adverse outcomes?**

*Extremely harmful*

## **Proactive interventions to prevent risks:**

- Gaining pupil input in planning and review.
- Providing regular feedback and pastoral support to pupil.
- Involving parent/carer in decision-making and planning.
- Involving outside agencies (e.g. EP, EWO, Social Services).
- Establishing an individual support plan and/or behaviour plan with clear agreed targets
  - “I can and I will keep myself safe in school.”
- Providing regular supervision to staff working with the pupil.
- Adapting curriculum arrangements to reflect challenge, choice and structure levels which are appropriate to the pupil’s assessed needs.
- Adapting group arrangements to promote positive peer models and minimise inappropriate contact.
- Arranging furniture and other equipment to minimise movement and frustration.
- Providing frequent rest or change of activity opportunities.
- Establishing a positive teaching programme to increase the pupil’s range of appropriate skills.
- Providing a range of rewards which the pupil can earn by demonstrating the skills defined in the teaching programme, and through other appropriate behaviour.
- Identifying the message communicated by the pupil’s behaviour.
- Agreeing key reactive strategies for handling incidents of challenging behaviour with all staff likely to be in contact with the pupil, and ensuring that these plans are shared with parents.
- Use of positive handling techniques.
- High level of staffing / supervision in school
- Caretakers office, all gates and door by kitchen to be locked.
- The playground gate has been modified to include a mesh covering, which will prevent Child from squeezing through.
- The main playground gate is operated by a coded keypad and is monitored on screen by office staff.
- All internal doors in the Library have been fitted with additional high handles / catches with the exception of the fire exit which is used by all personnel in the building.
- All pupils are constantly reminded about keeping safe in school.

## **Early Interventions to Manage Risks**

If he needs physical activity, ..... can:

- *Play and run in the outdoor area, providing there is adult support there.*
- *Teacher and TA to be sent on Positive Handling training.*
- *TA to be close to Child at ‘trigger’ time e.g. transition.*
- *If Child does leave the classroom, he will be monitored closely by an adult.*
- *As a last resort, Positive Handling Techniques may be used to restrain Child and prevent him running from the building.*

## **Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes**

If ..... leaves the Infant and Junior site and is out of sight, the senior teacher will call:

- a) the police
- b) Child’s parents.

Level of Risk – *potentially very harmful.*

## **Actions for the future:**

(examples)

- *... will ensure that her phone is switched on and will come to Park Hill Infants if requested.*
- *A comprehensive behaviour plan will be put in place and shared with all relevant staff and parents*
- *A consistent reward system will be put in place, when ..... is ready.*
- *Plenty of opportunities will be given for physical activity in the outdoor area.*
- *Discussed with ... the possibility of ... attending mornings only for the time being until he has settled.*

Risk Assessment will be evaluated at the Child's next Educational Review.

Plans and Strategies shared with:

**Child's name** .....

**Parent name(s)**.....

**Teacher:**.....

**Date:**.....

**APPENDIX 3:**

**POSITIVE HANDLING RECORD FORM (RPI)**

For reporting significant incidents where staff have used force on a pupil

Details of pupil on whom force was used – name, class, and any SEN, disability or other vulnerability	
Date, time and location of incident	
Names of staff involved (directly or as a witness)	
Description of the incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to de-escalate and warnings that force might be used	
Reason for using force and description of force used	
Any injury suffered by staff or pupils and any first aid or medical attention required	
Follow-up, including post-incident support and any disciplinary action against pupils	
Details of other children involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the pupils involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons (names to be removed on any reports to parents)	
Any information shared with staff who were not involved and who are not safe guarding leads and / or external agencies	
When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed	
Has any complaint been lodged (details should not be recorded)? Y / N	
Report compiled by:	
Role:	
Date:	

- The member of staff involved in the incident should compile the record. The member of staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding, checks the record and ensures it is confidentially filed in the "Significant Incidents" book kept by the Headship Team.
- If there is an injury to the pupil or member of staff the Croydon Council accident report form must be used (hard copy available in the school office).