



BLACKPOOL GATEWAY ACADEMY

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

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Positive Handling Policy

Information for all Stakeholders:

Positive Handling is only used in the wellbeing and safeguarding interests of all pupils and staff
Positive Handling is used as a last resort and only when all de-escalation strategies have been used.
Positive Handling is used when the child(ren) in question poses an immediate danger or threat to themselves or others including staff.
Positive Handling will only be used by staff who have been trained in the agreed Team Teach Strategies and the circumstances warrant restrictive Positive Handling.

1. Introduction

“The Governors and staff of Blackpool Gateway Academy aim to provide high quality educational provision in a caring, safe and secure environment for all pupils.”

This policy provides a framework for the use of positive Handling within Blackpool Gateway Academy and takes into account information provided in Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The school has trained tutors in the Team Teach method; aims and guidelines central to this approach are incorporated within this policy.

Central to this policy is the understanding that any Positive Handling used by staff must be in accord with the idea of “Reasonable Force” and used only as a last resort once all other deescalation strategies have been exhausted.

There is no legal definition of reasonable force. The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it and the degree of force employed is proportional to the level of challenging behaviour presented or the consequences it is intended to prevent.

It is essential that any discussion of Positive Handling is set in the wider context of education and behaviour management; it should not be seen as an isolated technique. For the majority of the time there will be no need for Positive Handling and other methods can be used to de-escalate situations or prevent inappropriate behaviour.

Parents are fully informed of the school policy on ‘Physical Control and Positive Handling’ at initial non-prejudicial visits and are given written information setting out the context for use at their pre-admission meeting with the school liaison worker.

2. The Legal Context

The documents that concern us most are the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 93) which sets out guidelines for the use of reasonable force. Alongside the Department for Education’s (2013) ‘Use of reasonable force’, Advice for Head-teachers, staff and governing bodies guidance.

With regards to these documents. When circumstances justify, staff can :

- Hold a pupil using agreed Team Teach techniques.
- Physically interpose between pupils using agreed Team Teach techniques.
- Move a pupil using agreed Team Teach techniques.

Decisions on whether the precise circumstances of an incident justify the use of significant force must be reasonable. Sometimes such decisions have to be made quickly, with little time for reflection. Nevertheless, staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about:

- a) the seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or serious disorder. The more severe, the more likely it is that using force may be justified;
- b) the chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely it is that using force may be justified; and
- c) the relative risk associated with the Positive Handling compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with Positive Handling compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

Examples of situations.

- a) a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- b) pupils are fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others;
- c) a pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate damage to property;
- d) a pupil is causing, or is at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or object;
- e) a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school other than at an authorised time. Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place is not enough on its own to justify use of force. It would be justifiable where allowing a pupil to leave would;
 - i) entail serious risks to the pupil's safety (taking into account age and understanding), to the safety of other pupils or staff, or of damage to property; or
 - ii) lead to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline, such as disrupting other classes;
- f) a pupil persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave a classroom;
- g) a pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson; or
- h) a pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school sporting event or a school visit.

3. Accepted Positive Handlings to be used

Listed below are the accepted Team Teach strategies that have been taught to staff.

A range of personal safety responses to deal with:

Wrist & Hair grabs
Neck holds
Bites
Punches & Kicks

Guides, escorts and restraints:

These provide a graded and gradual response aimed at intervening with the appropriate amount of reasonable force. Restraints where 2 people are used will be deemed as a more restrictive hold. As the level of Positive Handling increases so does the risk of injury to all concerned; staff need to make a risk assessment based on the situation as to the level at which they are going to intervene.

Initial strategies for positive handling

- Single Person Standing / Walking
- Guiding away (C Hands)
- Shield/block

The above techniques are deemed to be acceptable actions that do not require positive handling documentation.

Techniques for one person.

- Single Person -Double Elbow
- Small Person Hold to seat (guided towards bean bag- then accompanied by another adult)

Techniques for two people.

- Single Elbow (stationary hold, not to be used to move pupils)
- Figure of Four (stationary hold, not to be used to move pupils)
- Double Elbow – This can be used to move pupils but every effort should be made to allow the pupil to sit in an appropriate chair.
- Small Person Hold – (Use of a bean bag required, child to sit on bean bag whilst supported by adults)

NB. Ground Recovery holds are the most restrictive and carry the highest risk. Therefore, apart from two Team Teach tutors, staff are not taught floor holds. Exceptions may occur if the child is already on the floor when a Positive Handling has begun.

Training on Positive Handling given to staff will include sections on the background, theory and rationale behind the Team Teach approach as well as an understanding of personal space and body language before any Positive Handling techniques are taught.

Any Positive Handlings used will need to take account of age, cultural background, gender, stature and medical history of the student involved.

4. Positive Handling in Context / Risk Assessment

Positive Handling is never seen in isolation at Blackpool Gateway Academy. It is but one strategy available to staff and should always be seen as a last resort when all other strategies have failed. Positive Handlings can be placed in 2 broad categories:

Emergency Interventions

Emergency Interventions will involve staff employing, where necessary, one or a combination of the strategies mentioned in the previous section in response to an incident. This will occur when all other strategies have been exhausted or the incident requires a rapid physical response.

As outlined in the paragraph 32 of the guidance, Blackpool Gateway Academy makes Risk Assessments where it is known that force is more likely to be necessary to restrain a particular pupil. These Risks Assessments are undertaken as part of the completion of the Positive Handling Plans in accordance with paragraph 23b.

Planned Interventions and Behaviour Plans

Planned interventions involve staff employing, where necessary, one or a combination of the strategies mentioned in the previous section as an agreed response to an identified behaviour. This will be documented in pupil risk assessments and pupil specific behaviour plans. These plans will be written jointly by the class teacher/key stage leader and a Team Teach trainer.

Behaviour Plans will not be needed for all pupils. However, if a pupil has had to be restrained on one or more occasions an individual handling plan or behaviour plan must be put into place for them. Pupils may demonstrate certain behaviours which are causing concern and it is these behaviours which are targeted. Pupils may behave in a manner other than that identified on the Behaviour Plan and in such circumstances Emergency Interventions would need to be undertaken.

Pupil risk assessments and behaviour plans for all pupils are accessible on the shared drive and are circulated to all Team Teach trained staff by e-mail. Any changes to pupil behaviour plans and/or risk assessments are also shared with staff promptly via email.

Reducing the likelihood of situations arising where use of force may be required.

The 'Use of Force' guidance states that 'Although preventative measures will not always work, there are a number of steps which schools can take to help reduce the likelihood of situations arising where the power to use force may need to be exercised'.

At Blackpool Gateway Academy the use of strategies designed to deal with situations in a non-physical manner are at the forefront of all pupil management.

This can be evidenced by:

- a) The work undertaken as part of the Team Teach training and ongoing re-training, which focuses on the 95% use of non-physical pupil management methods.
- b) The Behaviour and Discipline Policy, which outlines the schools use of positive pupil management, interaction and de-escalation techniques. It also takes into account the extensive work the school has undertaken with regard to the work of 'Bill Rodgers', and his positive behavioural management techniques.

5. Reporting and Monitoring of Incidents.

Incidents involving Positive Handling are to be recorded using the schools CPOMS recording system

The Assistant Headteacher responsible for behaviour, reviews the incident forms termly. This assessment is undertaken to assess patterns of behaviour or if areas of the school or specific locations are causing areas of difficulty. The review also identifies if additional procedures such as an 'Individual Behaviour Plan' need to be implemented or adapted.

When Team Teach has taken place (other than 'acceptable touching' and 'friendly hold') a form will be completed, detailing:

- Date and time of intervention,
- Name of child,
- Pupils class and year group,
- Place of intervention,
- Name of staff involved,
- Reasons for intervention,
- Description of lead up to intervention,
- De-escalation techniques used,
- Details of the incident,
- Forms of Positive Handling,
- Details if pupil was injured during intervention and medical treatment given,
- Follow up action taken,

Parents/carers are contacted on the day of the incident.

6. Training and Authorisation of Staff

The staff to which the power to use reasonable force are defined in Section 95 of the Education and Inspections act 2006. They are-

- a. any teacher who works at the school,
- b. any person whom the head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils, This :
 - i) Includes support staff whose job normally includes supervising pupils, learning mentors and lunchtime supervisors.

- ii) Can also include people to whom the head has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils, such as paid members of staff whose job does not normally involve supervising staff.

Only staff who have satisfactorily completed Team Teach training are authorised to use the taught Positive Handling techniques. A list of staff who have completed this training is held with the schools Team Teach tutors. Once staff have received their full training, refresher training will take place annually.