

GOOSEWELL SCHOOL

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

Positive Handling Strategies for Pupils with Emotional
or Behavioural Difficulties

This policy aims for us to achieve the following school aims:

- Care for everyone's well-being.
- Support everyone to have high expectations of ourselves and take responsibility for our learning and behaviour - always trying to do our best.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the LA guidance document entitled "Positive Handling Strategies for Pupils with Emotional or Behavioural Difficulties" dated May 2000. The Education Acts of 1996, 1997, the DfES circular 10/98, the draft DfES guidance on Positive Handling April 2000 and the Chief Education Officers update 2001 have all been taken into account.

REASONABLE FORCE

Circular 10/98 does not give a legal definition of reasonable force. However, there are four relevant considerations:

- The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of *any* degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore, physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that clearly could be resolved without force.
- The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences if is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.
- When using physical restraint, the level and duration of the restraint will always be the minimum necessary to restore safety.
- Knowledge of the pupil is a key factor in this judgement.

RESTRAINT

- Restraint is a last resort
- Where necessary reasonable force can be used to control or restrain.

RESTRAINT AND AUTHORITY TO USE RESTRAIN

Staff who are authorised by the Headteacher may use reasonable force in the following situations. "Staff" includes escorts, care workers, and midday supervisors.

- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence.
- Injuring themselves or others.
- Engaging in behavioural prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline in the classroom or around the school.
- Causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property)

The Headteacher should explicitly inform staff if they are to be authorised to use reasonable force. All teaching staff and targeted Teaching Assistants completed the first level of CPI (Crisis Intervention Programme) training on 05.05.2011 and 1 x 2 hr physical training on May 2011. Therefore, these staff are qualified to intervene using reasonable force. A list of trained staff is listed in the staffroom and Safeguarding file.

At Goosewell School, all staff are authorised to use reasonable force: if in their professional opinion they consider it necessary.

The use of physical restraint is placed within the context of:

- identification of potential pupils by staff through risk assessment.
- appropriate planning for the possibility of restraint via a restraint management plan (appendix 6).
- appropriate training for all staff - updated every three years.
- all restraint or handling of a pupil is in line with this policy.
- this policy is used in conjunction with:
 - school behaviour policy
 - child protection procedures
 - school Health & Safety Policy

APPLYING FORCE

The application of force can take several forms:

- Physical interposing between pupils.
- Blocking a pupil's path.
- Holding.
- Pushing } But only in extreme circumstances to avoid danger
- Pulling }
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm.
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back, or:
- (In extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

Staff should **never**:

- hold a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe.
- slap, punch or kick a pupil.
- twist or force limbs against a joint.
- trip up a pupil.
- hold or pull a pupil by the hair or ear.
- hold a pupil face down on the ground.
- staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

Physical intervention should never be a substitute for good behavioural management.

RECORDING INCIDENTS

It is important to keep a record of any occasion where force is used. As soon as possible after the event.

Such incidents should be recorded in the Incident Report file, which is kept in the Headteacher's office.

Similarly the Headteacher, or their representative, should be informed immediately following an incident.

The written report of any incident should include:

- The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved, and when and where the incident took place.
- The names of any other staff or pupils who witnesses the incident.
- The reason that force was necessary (eg to prevent injury to the pupil, another pupil or member of staff).
- How the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long.
- The pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident.
- Details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil, and or a member of staff and of any damage to property.

Staff should keep their own copy of the report.

It is advisable to inform parents or carers of any incident involving their child as soon as possible after the event either orally or in writing. It may be advisable also to give them opportunity to discuss the incident.

Please fill in details of any incidents that require the use of reasonable force on the form RF1.

COMPLAINTS

The possibility that a complaint arising from the use of force to control or restrain pupils might result in a disciplinary hearing or criminal prosecution cannot be ruled out.

In such an incident going before a Court of Law or requiring investigation by the Local Authority, the line of enquiry would take account of the school's policy on restraint and whether it had been followed.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

For some pupils it is important to have agreed procedures, known to all adults. A positive handling plan will be agreed with specific parents who will sign to show their agreements of the plan.

These procedures will be drawn up specifically in relation to the individual needs of a particular pupil and will:

1. Contain re-active strategies to take the heat out of a situation and any physical holds which may be necessary.
2. Be known to parents and agreed with.
3. Be known to all staff.
4. Where relevant, pay due attention to medical advice.

The school SENCO will provide information to all staff on any individual needs.

PRACTICAL STEPS

- Before intervention, tell the pupil who is misbehaving, to stop. This could be carried out using a visual symbol.
- Explain what will happen if they continue to misbehave.
- The teacher should continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident. Making it clear that restraint or physical contact will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
- Adults should never give the impression that they are acting out of anger or have lost their temper.
- There will be incidents where it is inadvisable to intervene without help of another adult eg with physically large pupils or older students. In some instances it is advisable to remove other pupils who may be at risk.
- Where help is sought, this should be explained from another adult to the pupil whilst still attempting to diffuse the situation orally.

OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES OF APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

Some physical contact may be necessary in:

- Demonstrating techniques in PE or Design Technology.
- The administration of First Aid.
- Young pupils with SEN frequently require physical prompts to help them.

- Touching may be appropriate where pupils are in distress.
- When urgent action is required to avoid an incident or injury.

Teachers will apply their professional judgement about where or when not to provide such support to pupils.

Where staff are aware that physical touch is likely to provoke an adverse reaction from a pupil such information should be provided to all staff.

Staff should be reminded that, particularly as pupils reach and go through adolescence, even innocent and not intentional physical contact can sometimes be misconstrued causing distress to all concerned.

Staff should not be alone with individual pupils except in unavoidable circumstances. Classroom doors should be left open when a member of staff is left supervising (talking with/teaching individual pupils).

This policy was agreed by Governors in July 2010

Last Review to November 2014

Next Review November 2017

REASONABLE FORCE
INCIDENT FORM (RF 1)

Date:

Location:

Time:

Pupil's Name:

Witness Name(s):

Details of Incident

The reason why force was necessary

Details of any injury (to child or adult) or damage to property

Please give a copy of this to the Headteacher immediately and keep a copy yourself

POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN

NAME:

DOB:

YEAR GROUP:

Pupil needs: (To include known triggers that lead to the need for restraint)

Protocol for occasions of restraint

Early indicators:

Actions to be taken:

Actions to be taken when restraint is unavoidable

Known deescalators

Action to be taken after the incident

For pupil(s):

For staff