

GOOSEWELL ACADEMY

POSITIVE TOUCH POLICY

Positive 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 Department for Education document 'Use of Reasonable Force' document published in July 2013.

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 it 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 always last resort
- Where necessary reasonable force can be used to maintain the safety of the child and those around them.

Restraint and the authority to use restraint

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

- The main factor that is considered prior to a physical intervention being used is that there is imminent or immediate risk of harm to the child or others.
- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence.
- 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)

Physical Intervention- a last resort.

Although such incidents are rare, there may be times when a pupil, as a result of their complex and challenging special educational needs, requires support to prevent him from: Imminent or immediate risk of harm to self or others.

Staff have a responsibility to assess the risk behaviour being shown and act accordingly ensuring physical intervention is a last resort, or an emergency intervention to keep people safe.

In partnership with Plymouth City Council, Goosewell Academy has developed a policy and process for dealing with such situation. As part of this, key staff are trained in the BILD approved 'MAPA' principles and utilise these when appropriate. **Physical interventions are always used as a last resort.**

Goosewell is committed to providing the best *care, welfare, safety and security* for its pupils as well as a curriculum or activities that meet their varying educational needs. Staff will use a wide range of verbal and visual strategies before an individual is completely out of physical and emotional control or about to reach that point when he becomes a danger to himself or others. Any form of physical intervention is used as a last resort and is reasonable and proportionate to their behaviour.

The Prevention of Risk Behaviour

All staff are encouraged to look for early precipitating factors. The management of challenging behaviour is based on the Crisis Prevention Institute's 'Crisis Development Model'. When anxiety behaviours are displayed, a non-judgmental, empathic, supportive approach is used but if the pupil displays defensive behaviours like refusal, challenging questions/ authority, attempting to draw into a power struggle, staff issue a directive approach. Limits are set which present the pupil with choices. The emphasis is on verbal and visual de-escalation throughout. Principles of 'Positive Behaviour Support', which involve the assessment and re-engineering of the environment, the teaching of new skills and the development of supportive staff responses are applied and a risk behaviour plan is created for those that present with regularly challenging or risk behaviour.

Promoting the Pupils Well-being

- The school acknowledges the inherent risks associated with use of any physical intervention
- Such interventions should only be used as a last resort, when all attempts at verbal and/or visual de-escalation have failed and the situation poses imminent risk or danger or the risk of doing nothing is greater.
- Priority is given to factors that make the process as safe as possible for everyone involved, particularly the student showing risk behaviour
- Staff will act reasonably and proportionately to the level of risk behaviour, ensuring that the least restrictive physical interventions are always to be used
- The dignity of the individual must be preserved throughout the intervention
- Physical interventions are never used to punish but to help a student regain emotional and physical control. (Pupils do not/will not always lose control)
- Physical interventions are never intended to cause pain
- Physical interventions are never used as a convenience for staff
- The least amount of force necessary should be used for the least amount of time necessary
- Verbal de-escalation should continue to be applied during a restrictive physical intervention
- Staff are aware that risk behaviours do not happen in vacuum and must make efforts to support other pupils involved or that may have been a witness

- Pupil voice is extremely important and staff will ensure that a restorative conversation (appropriate to child's needs) at an appropriate time after the incident.

The Use of Physical Interventions

- All staff have a duty of care towards all pupils in school, acting in their best interests, and following DfE guidelines.
- Staff members must use reasonable and proportionate physical interventions for the risk behaviour being shown.
- Physical interventions that compromise safety or impair the individual's ability to breathe should not be used.
- During the intervention staff, must closely monitor the well-being of the individual.
- Parents/carers will be kept informed regarding risk behaviour and support needed.
- Following the use of a physical intervention the individual should be assessed for injury or psychological distress and monitored.
- If this is an isolated incident a risk behaviour plan is not usually necessary. If a regular pattern of risk behaviour is identified a Behaviour Support Plan will be written.
- Pupils on specific plans have them shared and ideally done in consultation with parents/carers. It is helpful if parents / carers sign these to show their agreement.
- Staff are to assess the situation using the Decision Making Matrix, as per MAPA handbook. They are to assess the likelihood of something happening against the severity of the outcome. Staff are to assess if there is a low, medium or high risk behaviour being shown and act reasonably and proportionate to the level of behaviour. Each risk is dealt with on an individual basis.

A Team Approach

- A physical intervention should not normally take place when a staff member does not have the support of another colleague.
- If a staff member needs immediate support from other colleagues at Goosewell they will seek support from a colleague.
- If a staff member needs to discuss/clarify/check/re-think strategies or another pair of hands/eyes then they will ask for 'support'.
- At Goosewell if a member of staff sees a situation and they are unsure as to whether the staff need assistance they will ask them.
- The first person on the scene will naturally assume the role of Team Leader but when other members of the team arrive he/she can pass on that responsibility to a more competent and confident colleague or to a team member who has a particularly good relationship with the pupil showing risk behaviour.
- Sometimes within a situation it is necessary to switch adults or approach. During a risk behaviour adults will communicate when things need to change.

Training for staff

- The school places high value on staff training particularly in the prevention of and intervention in crisis situations.
- After initial whole staff training, 'refresher sessions' should take place annually.
- Rehearsals and drills will take place throughout the year
- Debriefs are encouraged with all staff to plan safe future interventions. Staff to seek debrief opportunities as soon as possible following a situation.

Key staff throughout the school are trained using the MAPA strategies in physical interventions. All staff should be trained in a range of de-escalation strategies.

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

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.
- 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 disengagements or holds.

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. This should be done as soon as possible after the event.

Such incidents should be recorded on CPOMS. These should include antecedents, triggers, de-escalation strategies employed, adults present, type of physical intervention used and length of time of the incident and restorative conversations / strategies employed following the incident.

It is essential 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.

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 / Behaviour Support Plan will be agreed with specific parents who will sign to show their agreements of the plan. See appendix 1.

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. Use the verbal intervention script and set limits.
- The lead adult should continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident, in a manner that is appropriate for the child. 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.
- All physical intervention should involve a team approach. This is to safeguard the pupil as well as the adults.
- 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.
- Supportive approaches can include: hand holding, high fives, a hug, hand over hand support to help with fine motor skills etc.

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 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).

Reviewed annually

Appendix 1

Behavior Support Plan Example Use specific behaviours/words and approaches that will work for the individual and things to avoid.		
Colour Code	Behaviour	Staff strategies and support These need to be very specific to include phrases and strategies that are pertinent to that child
Calm and on task	<u>Calm</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calm can talk on the subject concerned Able to engage in learning and can interact with peers. Adult direction is possible 	<u>Positive behaviour support strategies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive communication in an even tone. Positive facial expressions. Rewards for good learning, behaviour. Instructions reinforced with visual prompts
Anxiety	<u>Anxiety</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone of voice may become 'high pitched' Unable to make eye contact. 	<u>Supportive</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive reassurance. Diversion – where possible. Limit communication use an even tone. Reduce expectations Refer to visuals
Defensive	<u>Defensive</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication and language becomes very difficult to understand. may cry / scream. Refuse to complete any task. Will push equipment on to floor 	<u>Directive</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firmly state instructions and that reward time needs to be earned for appropriate behavior and good choices. First, then / if,when / set limits Enable to have a limited period of time out (5mins with timer) on his chair.
Acting out	<u>Acting out</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will scream Push chairs back Throw objects. Run Hit out at anyone close 	<u>MAPA Interventions and self- protection / strategies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intervene using 'small child' / young person holds If needed transition to a safe place (quiet room) to enable them to calm . Document all intervention on CPOMS Report intervention to parents
Tension reduction	<u>Tension Reduction</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to focus on other things Calmer in approach. Can re-engage in learning. Can become revert to previous behaviours very quickly 	<u>Therapeutic Rapport</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reassure and talk calmly in an even tone. Comic strips / social stories written together to work through moment and work out strategies for next time.