

# Green Meadow Positive Handling Policy

Teaching and non-teaching staff work 'in loco parentis' and should always operate with an appropriate 'Duty of Care'.

(Birmingham Behaviour Support Service Care and Control Policy 2007)

At Green Meadow it is our policy that an adult should not make any physical contact with a child in an enclosed environment or in isolation from another adult or child. Our 'open-door' policy supports this measure. Private meetings with individual pupils may give rise to concern. There may be occasions when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary, but where possible, such interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access, or with the door open (NASUWT union advice). Another adult or pupil should be present nearby and another member of staff should know that the interview is taking place.

## Safe Guarding Members of Staff

It is not realistic to suggest that teachers should never touch pupils and they have the right to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances (DFES Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007). Further to this there is also a place for physical contact between adults and children within the school setting. However, a pupil / parent / observer may misconstrue physical contact and in recognising the need to safe guard staff and pupils the following guidelines have been produced.

### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This policy is based upon DfES Circular 10/98 and the corresponding

1.2 Green Meadow recognises that there is a need, reflected in common law, to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to its pupils, staff and property.

1.3 Green Meadow is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, **and only use positive handling as a last resort** in line with DfES.

If used at all it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.

1.4 This policy must be read and implemented in conjunction with the whole school behaviour policy and approach to behaviour management.

1.5 The Education Act 1996 (Section 550A) states that it is lawful for teachers and other authorised staff to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from committing an offence, causing injury or damage or disrupting the good order and discipline of the school. Teachers are not contractually obliged to carry out restraint procedures and they are not contractually obliged to undertake training in any restraint procedures. This policy applies to all staff who are authorised to use positive handling (see Section 7)

1.6 All staff authorised to positively handle children must be aware that they must not:

- Use corporal punishment
- Use pain to gain compliance
- Deprive the person of food or drink
- Require the person to wear inappropriate clothes
- Humiliate, degrade the child or young person

## **2.0 Our approach to best practice**

2.1 The best practice regarding positive handling outlined below should be considered alongside other relevant policies in the school, specifically those policies involving behaviour, bullying, child protection and health and safety.

2.2 In line with Education Act 1996 (Section 550A) in the following situations staff must judge whether or not positive handling would be reasonable, appropriate and necessary:

- Risk to the safety of staff, pupils or visitors or
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property or
- Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline or
- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence

This judgement will take into account the circumstances of the incident. All staff should be aware that the use of positive handling in response to a clear or developing danger of injury will always be more justifiable than the use of force to prevent damage or misbehaviour.

2.3 Staff will view positive handling of pupils as a **last resort for the purposes of maintaining a safe environment**. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every strategy will be used to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation.

2.4 Staff will understand the importance of listening to and respecting children to create an environment that is calm and supportive especially when dealing with pupils who may have emotional and behavioural needs, which may increase their aggression.

2.5 All staff will understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the child, which lie beneath the behaviour as well as to the behaviour itself.

## **3.0 Practice regarding specific incidents:**

3.1 All policies and practice regarding the supervision of pupils during the school will be appropriate to the identified needs and behaviours of the pupils, this combined with the whole school approach to behaviour should minimise the likelihood of requiring positive handling to an absolute minimum.

3.2 The physical action taken will take into consideration the age and competence of the child and will be the least detrimental alternative

3.2 Staff intervening with children will seek assistance from other members of staff as early as possible, since single-handed intervention increases the risks of injury to both parties and does not provide a witness.

3.3 A member of staff recognising that a situation is escalating to a point demanding positive handling yet feeling unable to carry this out must, as part of their duty of care, clearly tell the pupil(s) to stop the behaviour and seek help by any means available. (red hand)

3.4 Staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil will have a responsibility to provide a presence and to offer support and assistance should this be required.

3.6 Where possible, staff who have not been involved in the initial confrontation leading up to an incident may be in a better position to intervene or restrain the pupil if this proves necessary.

3.7 A pupil's behaviour may be adversely affected by the presence of an audience. Wherever possible, the audience will be removed, or if this is not possible, the pupil and member(s) of staff will withdraw to a quiet, but not completely private, place (e.g. two members of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation).

3.8 Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe. Staff will explain that as soon as the pupil manages his/her behaviour, she/he will be released.

3.9 The force used will be proportionate with the risk prevented.

3.10 All staff are aware that we operate a back-up system to enable staff to call for help in emergencies (e.g. a member of staff will give a red hand to a bystander, pupil to take to the nearest member of staff. The card indicates to staff that help is required urgently)

#### **4.0 Positive handling**

4.1 Examples of situations where positive handling maybe appropriate include

- pupil attacks member of staff or another pupil
- pupils are fighting
- pupils are engaging in, or on the verge of, committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- pupil is causing, or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- pupil absconds from school or room (this only applies if pupil could be at risk if not kept in school or a room).
- a pupil persistently refusing to leave a classroom
- a pupil behaving such that the lesson is being seriously disrupted.

4.2 The following approaches are regarded as reasonable in appropriate circumstances.

- a. Holding for security (by the arm or shoulder) and to reduce anxiety where there is potential risk, even if the pupil is not yet out of control. This is best used when the pupil is anxious or confused. Its purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation. Staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted by the pupil as aggression.
- b. Physically interposing between pupils.
- c. Blocking a pupil's path.
- d. Pushing if restricted to situations where reasonable force is used to resist a pupil's movement, rather than a forceful push that might cause the pupil to fall over.
- e. Escorting a pupil by the hand or arm

#### **5.0 Holds to be avoided**

5.1 The following holds should not generally be used.

- Holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict a pupil's ability to breathe
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping a pupil
- Holding a pupil by the hair or ear
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground

#### **6.0 Recording an incident (model pro forma in Appendix 4)**

6.1 All incidents that result in non-routine interventions will be recorded in detail in the school incident book with numbered pages.

6.2 Contemporaneous record (i.e. written within 24 hours of the incident's occurrence) will be made by the staff member involved in the incident.

6.3 Similarly, contemporaneous notes will also be made by any other members of staff involved (i.e. as witnesses or additional providers of support). The notes will be signed and dated.

6.4 The record will contain the following information:

- The name(s) and the job title(s) of the member of staff who used reasonable force
  - The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved
  - When and where the incident took place
  - Names of staff and pupils who witnessed the incident
  - The reason that force was necessary
  - Behaviour of the pupil which led up to the incident
  - Any attempts to resolve the situation
  - The degree of force used
  - How it was applied
  - How long it was used for
  - The pupils response and the eventual outcome
  - Details of any injuries suffered by either staff or pupils
  - Details of any damage to property
  - Details of any medical treatment required (an accident form will be completed, where medical treatment is needed).
  - Details of follow-up, including contact with the parents/carers of the pupil(s) involved.
  - Details of follow up involvement of other agencies – police, Social Services
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6.5 Pupil witnesses may also be asked to provide a written account if appropriate.

6.6 Copy of this entry will be kept on the pupil's file and retained in line with LA guidance on keeping educational records.

6.7 The school will report any injuries to pupils or staff in accordance with RIDDOR (HSE Regulations 1995)

6.8 Pupils who are identified as likely to require positive handling as part of their behaviour management will require an Individual Behaviour Plan alongside their Individual Education Plan. This is drawn up in response to the risk posed by the pupil's behaviour and is shared with all staff, parents / carers and the pupil if appropriate.

## **7.0 Debriefing Arrangements**

7.1 The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. First aid will be administered to anyone who requires it, or medical treatment obtained.

7.2 The pupil will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise her/him. When the pupil regains complete composure, a senior member of staff or her/his nominee, will discuss the incident with the pupil and try to ascertain the reason for its occurrence. The pupil will be given an opportunity to explain things from her/his point of view. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish the relationship between the pupil and the member(s) of staff involved in the incident.

7.3 In cases where it is not possible to speak to the pupil on the same day as the incident occurred, the debrief will take place as soon as possible after the pupil returns to school.

7.4 All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff or her/his nominee, will provide support to the member(s) of staff involved.

7.5 The Headteacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity of any incidents where positive handling was used.

The Headteacher or his/her nominee will initiate the recording process if not already underway (see 6.0) and review each incident to ensure that any necessary lessons are learned.

### **8.0 Training Needs of Staff**

8.1 In cases where it is known that a pupil will require positive handling on occasions, the school will ensure that appropriate training is provided. Staff involved will identify their training needs in this area.

8.2 Staff trained in positive handling techniques need to update their training on a regular basis and ensure that their training record is kept up to date

### **9.0 Authorisation of staff to use positive handling**

9.1 We recognise that positive handling will be seldom used and it is a last resort to maintaining a safe environment.

9.2 All teaching staff are, by the nature of their roles, authorised to use positive handling as appropriate. Support staff will require specific authorisation, either temporarily or permanently. The HeadTeacher or someone deputising for him/her when she/he is absent can only give this authorisation. Authorised staff will be notified formally.

9.3 In the event of a complaint being received by the school in relation to the use of physical force by staff, the matter will be investigated in line with DFCS protocol.

Policy revised: June 2009

Whole School Staff Training – June 2009

Agreed by staff –

Agreed by Governors

To be reviewed in conjunction with Child Protection and Behaviour Policy

Additional policy information relating to specific circumstances:

#### Staff caring for children in class or in the playground

- There are times when a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. Physical contact may be made in a caring way if it is deemed appropriate by the professional working with the child and the child him/herself (DCSF 'The use of force to control or restrain pupils' Guidance 2007).
- Staff may use a comforting arm if appropriate for the individual child.
- Staff may use a guiding hand where appropriate.
- Additional physical contact may be required for some Early Years children and other aged pupils who need greater comfort or positive handling. The class teacher will negotiate with the child's parents the appropriate types of comforting and physical contact that a child needs e.g. comforting arm around the shoulder whilst sitting next to the child. These children will be identified by the class teacher and recorded in the class low incident book.
- *When an Early Years / other aged child is distressed it is agreed that an adult will sit alongside the child and offer a comforting arm on the shoulder. If a child has needed comfort from an adult then the parents are informed by the class teacher at the end of the day. This is agreed in consultation with the parents (see above).*
- Before any physical contact is given the adults should first consider whether it is age / gender appropriate.
- There may be some children for whom physical contact is particularly unwelcome. (DCSF 'The use of force to control or restrain pupils' Guidance 2007). These children will be identified by the class teacher and recorded in the class low incident book.
- Early Years children or children with special educational needs may need staff to provide physical prompts or help (DCSF 'The use of force to control or restrain pupils' Guidance 2007).

#### First Aid

- If a child is on the ground, speak to them to find out what the problem is. Ask them to get up if they can so that you can look at them. Use appropriate support if necessary. If a child cannot get up by themselves send for another adult, preferably a first-aider.
- For all injuries ask the child to check themselves and say what is wrong. If required, a member of staff can check the visual injury if another adult / child is present. Pupils can receive treatment from 1 adult with another child present.
- Pupils are only treated in the first aid area, playground or open environment of the classroom.
- When appropriate allow the child to clean their own injury e.g. KS2 pupils.
- Should an injury occur in a difficult location on the body, ask the child to check themselves to ascertain the extent of the injury. If this is not appropriate or possible then 2 adults (one to be a first-aider) must be present when the injury is checked e.g. Early Years children / pupils with a physical need.
- All injuries must be reported to the parent either face to face, by letter or on the telephone.
- All injuries must be recorded in the First Aid Accident Book.

- The 'yellow form' (provided by the office) must be completed and sent in the event of a child receiving hospital treatment.
- If an accident occurs on a school trip then the 'Trip Accident Book' must be filled in (located in the office).

### P.E and Games

- Some physical contact may be necessary to demonstrate exercise or techniques during PE lessons and sport coaching (DCSF 'The use of force to control or restrain pupils' Guidance 2007).
- Health and Safety issues must be considered.
- If necessary, Early Years children or pupils with physical need can be assisted in getting changed.

### Toileting

- If a child has an accident when going to the toilet, they are directed by a caring adult as to how to clean themselves and put on clean clothing.
- A change of clothing is provided by the school with an accompanying letter asking for the return of clean items. A note is made of the issue / return of clothing.
- Adults do not enter the toilet cubicle and if appropriate, assist the child with another adult present. A courtesy call is made to the parents after an incident.
- Should the child be unable to clean themselves appropriately then the parents are contacted and asked to come to school and assist their child. It may be appropriate for the child to leave school to be made comfortable.

### References:

- DCSF 'The use of force to control or restrain pupils' Guidance 2007
- DFES Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007
- Birmingham Behaviour Support Service Care and Control Policy 2007
- NASUWT Union Advice
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council –policy