



Positive Handling Policy

Approved by the governing body on: April 2020

To be reviewed on: (yearly) April 2021

Signed on behalf of the governing body: Mary Morgan

NB. This guidance will be retained for a period of 7 years from replacement.

Policy & Guidance on the Use of Physical Intervention with Children

Crossflatts Primary School believes in providing an environment for children, where they feel safe, secure and free from abuse, bullying and violence; an environment in which boundaries and expectations are clear and provide opportunity for personal development, enabling children to maximise their personal potential.

Crossflatts Primary School believes that all children should have:

- The right to feel safe, secure and cared for
- Access to appropriate support, care and education; this includes the support to manage their own emotions and their behaviour including taking account of their own responsibilities.
- The opportunity to learn how to support others with additional educational needs e.g, the chance to mentor, guide and support other pupils with encouragement and the ability to prevent confrontation by avoiding provocation.

This Guidance is intended for the teaching and non-teaching staff of Crossflatts Primary School.

1. Physical intervention is defined as: The use of force to prevent another person committing an act that is likely to be physically damaging to another person, themselves, to property or, in school settings, prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline.
2. The use of physical interventions should only be considered within the context of risk, be proportionate to that risk and appropriate given the age, understanding, gender and size of the child. Any use of force to influence another's behaviour entails a risk. Clearly, interventions that are unplanned and unprepared carry a greater risk. The risks may be categorised as:

Risk of injury to the person being restrained
Risk of injury to the restrainer
Risk of injury to other people in the vicinity
Risk of subsequent legal action

3. Restrictive physical interventions may include:
 - **Bodily Contact:** where the physical presence of one or more people is used to control a child, for example, two people holding a child so as to restrict their mobility
 - **Environmental Change:** applying a change within the environment, for example, the use of locked doors or key pads to prevent access to or from an area.
 - **Emergency physical intervention** is the use of physical intervention in a situation of significant risk that was unforeseeable.
 - **Planned physical intervention** is the proactive use of physical intervention as part of an overall behaviour support plan, aimed at reducing the level of risk presented by behaviour and accompanied by appropriate preventative strategies.
4. Primary prevention will be achieved by:
 - Developing positive relationships with children, based on mutual respect and shared boundaries
 - Creating an environment in which children and staff feel safe and secure
 - Ensuring staff have the appropriate skills to effectively support children
 - Supporting children, as far as is possible, to understand their behaviour and learn alternative ways of expressing themselves or achieving their desired aim
 - Holding positive views of children and building on the relationships they value by listening to and taking account of the views held by the child in their personal plan

- Creating exciting and fulfilling lives for children
 - Encouraging effective and consistent support from family and other agencies
5. Secondary prevention should be used where primary prevention has been ineffective and is achieved by:
- Ensuring staff have clear guidance and appropriate skills, i.e Team Teach
 - Recognising the personal indicators exhibited by individual children when they are having difficulty in managing their emotional state, or are reaching crisis
 - Identifying previously successful diversion and de-escalation strategies and emerging risk indicators which must be incorporated into the positive handling plan

Normally, only those staff who have completed the Team Teach training should attempt to intervene physically with pupils; however, there are occasions – when it is the only way to prevent an offence being committed, or it is necessary to the conduct of the Duty of Care – then unqualified staff may use reasonable **and proportionate** force. All staff at Crossflatts Primary School will be offered positive behaviour management training, to enable them to avoid situations where physical contact might be deemed necessary.

A significant number of staff have undertaken training provided by Team Teach and a refresher course on positive behaviour management including aspects of Positive Handling has been provided for all staff who currently work at the school. A record will be kept of all those staff who have had positive handling training.

6. There are a number of different levels of physical intervention and associated risks. Generally, the least intervention carries the least risk; although there are exceptions to this generalisation. The occasions when physical intervention should be employed or a child should be restrained are:
- When failure to intervene physically is **likely** to result in injury to the child or another child or a member of staff or of the general public.
 - When failure to intervene physically is **likely** to result in damage to the building or its contents e.g, broken windows or computer.
 - When failure to intervene physically is **likely** to result in the commission of a crime e.g, damage to vehicle or theft.

In each of these instances, the actions of all staff must be governed by the duty of care which overrides any other consideration.

Risk Assessment

It is important that appropriate risk assessments are conducted to ensure that the likelihood of a child requiring physical intervention is reduced. The SENCo with the SLT should consider risks associated with all areas of the school to ensure that there is adequate supervision of corridors and facilities at break times, particularly for children at risk of positive handling. Responsible teaching staff should produce risk assessments prior to all external activities and these should include an assessment of the likelihood of a child requiring physical intervention during the course of an excursion.

If a child has a pattern of instances of physical restraint, it is essential that there is a clear positive handling plan that identifies the steps that may be taken to de-escalate a situation. The positive handling plan will look to avoid physical intervention and detail the kind and level of intervention that may be required, e.g, if an older heavier child can only safely be restrained by more than one member of staff, any group outing will require two members of staff to be present. Where children are known to be likely to need handling, then a positive handling plan should be drawn up in advance of their induction to the school with the parents, to identify possible ways of avoiding confrontational behaviour and to explore ways of de-escalating situations when they arise. The positive handling ensures that

parents are involved in the way that their child is dealt with and ensures that all staff working with the child are aware of the best way to handle them.

Indemnity

Staff who undertake physical intervention in accordance with the procedures detailed within this policy, adopt associated service guidance and appropriate training are explicitly reassured that they will be acting within the scope of their employment and that they will be indemnified. Any member of staff will be fully supported throughout the process, should an allegation be made.

If an incident has required Team Teach to be used, a Positive Handling form will be completed. This is kept in the Restraint Records file in the DSP Office.

Karen McCausland - Leader of Learning DSP

Claire Thirkill - Deputy Headteacher

Mary Morgan - Chair of Governors