

All Hampstead Hill School Policies are always to be read and considered in conjunction with Equal Opportunities, Race Equality and Inclusion Policies. This Policy of Hampstead Hill School applies to all sections of the school including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Hampstead Hill School: Positive Handling Policy



*To be read in conjunction with Intimate Care and Assistance Policy and Staff Code of Conduct Policy*

### Policy statement

This policy sets out Hampstead Hill School's framework for the use of positive handling and the use of reasonable force. Whenever possible positive handling should be avoided. There are occasions when positive handling is appropriate and is in line with the duty of care members of staff have to pupils and colleagues.

No-one likes the idea that they might need to use positive handling. The concept conflicts with many of our values as teachers and educationalists. Such views, however, can lead to an avoidance of the subject. If positive handling needs to be used, it is in everyone's interests that it is done well. This can only be achieved by proper forward planning. Staff need to know exactly what actions they are permitted to take and should not be embarrassed about the need to do so. Above all, they need to know that their colleagues, the Principal and the SMT will support their actions.

When positive handling is necessary, it must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.

### PRINCIPLES

It is essential that the physical management of pupils:

- is seen as a rare occurrence and as a last resort
- seeks to ensure the safety of other children and staff
- is part of a whole school behaviour policy
- is not used to discipline or punish children

The foundation of good practice in this area is based on:

- good relationships between staff and pupils
- the positive promotion of good behaviour
- clear procedures and processes, which are reinforced inside and outside the classroom
- clear recording of all incidents
- effective links with parents
- effective links with other appropriate agencies

### POSITIVE HANDLING

The purpose of positive handling is:

- To restrain the pupil until the emotional response passes, self-control is regained and the situation is diffused;
- To limit the harm that the pupil can do to self and others;
- To demonstrate to the pupil that he/she is within safe physical boundaries and that adults can contain his/her anger.

It is helpful to distinguish between:

- *Planned intervention*, in which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods which are based upon a risk assessment and recorded in care plans;
- *Emergency or unplanned positive handling* which occurs in response to unforeseen event.

Where possible, the pupil should be advised in advance that positive handling will be used unless he/she desists. Throughout any restraint, the member of staff should ensure the pupil understands what is happening either by talking firmly, yet calmly and quietly, to the pupil, or via a colleague, encouraging calm, letting them know the physical intervention will be relaxed as they become calm and offering the chance to talk.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
- Causing personal injury or damage to property
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

The staff to which this power applies are:

- Any member of staff at the school.
- Any other person whom the head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils. This can also include people to whom the head has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers (for example parents accompanying pupils on school-organised visits).
- This does not include any pupils.

The power may be used where the pupil (including a pupil from another school) is on the school premises or elsewhere in the lawful control or charge of the staff member (for example on a school visit).

**Any physical intervention must be:**

- **REASONABLE:** Did the incident warrant a physical intervention?
- **NECESSARY:** Will someone be hurt if no intervention occurs?
- **PROPORTIONATE:** Was minimum force used?
- And in the **BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD**

Reasonable force may need to be used in the following incidents.

1. Action due to imminent risk of injury.
2. Action due to imminent risk of damage to property
3. Action where an individual is compromising good order and discipline.

**Unacceptable interventions include:**

- Intentionally or maliciously inflicting pain on a child
- Using physical intervention as a punishment
- Hitting a child
- Forcing a pupil's arm behind their back
- Twisting limbs
- Pinning pupils against walls or furniture
- Sitting on a pupil
- Techniques which restrict circulation or breathing
- Any holding which may be interpreted as being of a sexual nature

In the event of restraint becoming necessary, before touching the child the staff member should inform the child calmly about what they are going to do and why.

**PLANNED AND EMERGENCY PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS**

- In most circumstances, physical interventions will occur in response to an unforeseen event.
- Following an emergency physical intervention a Risk Assessment should be carried out and a Positive Handling Plan created in consultation with the child and those with parental responsibility. The plan would include agreed de-escalation strategies and positive handling methods that may be used by named staff as a last resort.
- Identified staff should know exactly what action they can take.
- It is beneficial for all school staff to receive training in positive handling to ensure staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities and to reduce the risk of injury to both staff and students.
- Ideally two members of staff should be present during any physical intervention.

**Before any physical intervention occurs:**

- Monitor changes in body language & possible triggers for the student to ensure early intervention & de-escalation occurs.
- Use distractions.
- Move to a quieter, less public space.
- Remove the audience.
- Lower the voice and soften voice tone.
- Soften body language.
- Have help at hand - a change of face can diffuse a situation.

- Communicate reassurance: *'I can see something has happened John. Let's go and talk about it.'*
- Listen to the child's point of view.
- Repeat a key word or phrase. E.g. *'Keep your hands down.'*
- De-personalise the confrontation. E.g. *'Try and get control of your anger'* rather than, *'Get control of yourself!'*
- Offer help rather than criticism. E.g. *'What do you need me to do?'*, *'Do you need to be left alone?'* *'Would you like to sit down?'* *'Is there someone you need to speak to?'*
- Ask questions or suggest alternatives rather than giving advice or instructions.
- Where possible, the pupil should be advised in advance that physical intervention will be used unless he/she desists.

Types of restraint which may be appropriate.

- 1. Any holding tactic in which a young child is restrained without injury until the child calms down.
- 2. The holding of a young person's legs or arms to prevent striking or kicking.
- 3. The use of sufficient force without causing injury to remove a dangerous object from the persons grasp.
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- Physically contact with a young person designed to control the young person movements, which pose a danger. (E.g. holding by the arms at the side of the body).
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### During physical intervention:

- Maintain communication: talk to the pupil, encouraging calm and offering positive reassurances.
- The purpose of the physical intervention is to restrain the student until anger passes, self-control is regained and the situation is diffused.
- Demonstrate to the pupil that he/she is within safe physical boundaries and that adults can support containment of his/her anger.
- Consider a change of face to calm the situation.
- Be aware that there will be some level of discomfort for the student but this is kept to a minimum and not used as a means of control.

### RISK ASSESSMENT

When the use of positive handling is appropriate, it is important that suitable steps are taken to minimise the risk to both staff and children.

Among the main risks to children are that positive handling could:

- be used unnecessarily
- cause injury
- cause pain, distress or psychological trauma
- become routine rather than exceptional and increase the risk of abuse
- undermine the dignity of staff, or humiliate or degrade those involved create distrust and undermine relationship.

The main risks to staff include injury or distress to themselves and the need to justify their actions if challenged at a later date. However, failure to take such action may also present risks, which include breach of duty of care, injury to children, damage to property and the possibility of litigation.

For those pupils who are thought to require a behaviour management plan involving positive handling, a risk assessment should be carried out. An example of a risk assessment pro forma is included in Appendix One.

### After a physical intervention:

Governing bodies must ensure a procedure is in place for recording each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil.

- Parents/carers should be informed by telephone as soon as is practicable after the incident and then in writing.
- The incident must not be reported to a parent if it appears doing so is likely to result in significant harm to the pupil. If that is the case the incident must be reported to the local authority where the pupil normally lives.
- Incident reports should include:
  - Time and date of restraint
  - Action taken to try and defuse the current situation
  - Why restraint was necessary & description of restraint used

- How long the incident lasted
  - Action taken by whom
  - Others present
  - Any marks or injuries occurring
  - Any medical treatment required
  - Report signed and dated by author
  - Countersigned and dated by person monitoring incident
- A follow up session should be arranged with the student and possibly, but not necessarily, the member of staff who carried out the physical intervention. It may be useful to involve parents/carers too. This meeting should occur once all involved have had the opportunity to reflect on the incident.
  - The meeting is to:
    - Review events leading up to the use of physical intervention.
    - Identify appropriate support arrangements and strategies to prevent and deal with any recurrence of behaviour that could lead to the use of force.
    - To maintain positive relationships between students, staff and parents.

Date adopted: September 2016

Updated September 2016

Name: Andrea Taylor



Signed:

## Appendix One

### RISK ASSESSMENT

For use where positive handling may occur

School:		Risk assessment completed by:	
Name of child:	DofB:	Year:	
<b>Identification of Risk</b>			
Describe the foreseeable risks: •			
Is the risk:	potential	occurring	
<b>Assessment of risk</b>			
In which situations does the risk usually occur?			
How likely is it that the risk will occur? (unlikely, possible, probable, likely)			
If the risk arises, who is likely to be injured or hurt?			
What kinds of injuries or harm are likely to occur?			
How serious are the adverse outcomes? (severe, substantial, minor, minimal)			
<b>Risk Reduction Options</b>			
What actions are being taken to minimise the level of risk? (Consider changes to environment, awareness of triggers, de-escalation strategies, varying staff deployment, varying teaching group/size, access to quiet area etc.)			
Any immediate actions to be taken, by whom and by when?			
<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Role:</b>	

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Copy to:</b>

## Appendix Two

### SERIOUS INCIDENT RECORD

Name of young person:		Name of person writing report:	
Date & time of incident:		Location of incident:	
Name(s) of staff involved:		Name (s) of witnesses:	
Incident book completed:		Yes	No
Reason for intervention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury to a person</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Criminal offence</li> <li>• Serious disruption</li> <li>• Absconding</li> </ul>		External agencies informed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical staff</li> <li>• Parent/carer</li> <li>• Social worker</li> <li>• Police</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>	
<b>Describe events leading up to the incident:</b>			
<b>✓ Behaviours that occurred:</b>			
Verbal abuse	Slapping	Punching	
Biting	Pinching	Spitting	
Kicking	Hair grab	Neck grab	
Clothing grab	Body holds	Arm grab	
Weapons/missiles	Head butting	Self mutilation	
Pushing	Disruption	Damage to property	
Who was at risk?			
<b>Describe any changes made to routines, staff or environment in an attempt to reduce the risk:</b>			
<b>✓ Diversions, Distractions &amp; De-escalation strategies attempted:</b>			
Verbal advice		Limited choice	
Clear directions		Distraction	
Negations		Planned ignoring	
Take up time		Consequences	
Time out		Humour	
Change of staff		Success reminders	