



Positive Handling Policy

Date Implemented: March 2017
Review Date: March 2020

Rationale

The Policy has been developed in response to Circular 10/98 superseded and updated with 11/07 'The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils', issued following the enactment of Section 550A of the 1996 Education Act. It also takes into account recent DFES and DOH letters of guidance, Education Act 2006, and the DOH/DFES GUIDANCE 2002.

The term 'Positive Handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. Included in this policy are a small number of responses which may involve the use of force, to control, or restrain a pupil.

The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. This is referred to as 'Restrictive Physical Interventions' in National Guidance (DFES/DOH 2002). A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and behaviour difficulties; within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

The policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils as noted at the end of the policy.

The policy has been developed for the support of all teaching and support staff, who come into contact with pupils; for volunteers and other agencies working within the school, to explain the school's arrangement for the care and control of pupils presenting very challenging behaviours.

Aims

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are essential in ensuring safety and good order in school:

- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children at school
- The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

Most of the children attending Digitech Studio School respond positively to behavioural strategies and techniques used by staff. However, in exceptional circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required.

Digitech Studio School acknowledges that physical techniques are only part of a holistic approach to behaviour management and positive handling.

The management team takes its duty of care towards pupils, employees and visitors to the school very seriously. Staff protection is an important part of child protection. Both depend on confident and competent staff, who feel supported by their management team.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in the school:

- Clearly understand the policy and their responsibilities
- Can identify situations where reasonable force is necessary
- Are provided with appropriate training to deal with challenging behaviour

A behaviour management plan will be written if a pupil is displaying behaviour that requires management

A behaviour plan should target specific behaviours that a class team want to decrease and stop. Targets need to be SMART (small, measurable, achievable, realistic, time limited) targets.

If a child is requiring regular physical support such as escorting, guiding, intervention or restraint then the child will require a behaviour plan and a positive handling plan. A positive handling plan outlines for staff key Team Teach principles that need to be followed before intervention is used.

All the staff in the classroom are required to both read and sign the positive handling plan; and to acknowledge that they have both read and understood what is expected of them.

All plans should be shared with parents as well as other agencies involved with the child.

In the event of a dispute over, or concerns about, techniques and methods being considered an interim school strategy should be agreed and the matter referred to the Local Authority (LA).

Equal Opportunities

Everyone attending or working at Digitech Studio School has the right

- To be recognised for their unique identity
- To be treated with respect and dignity
- To learn and work in a safe environment
- To be protected from harm

Pupils and Parents have the right

- To expect that staff will undertake their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies.
- To be informed about all policies and guidelines if requested.
- To feel safe and secure at school
- To access a broad and balanced curriculum that also meets individual need.

Risk Assessment

Informal risk assessment should be a routine part of life for staff working with children that display very challenging behaviour. Staff should always think ahead to anticipate possible incidents; should a proposed activity or situation involve unacceptable risk, then the correct decision is to do something else.

Any child that displays very challenging behaviour; and who has a positive handling plan will also have a generic risk assessment for behaviour, which will be kept with the positive handling plan.

Each child will be risk assessed to ensure that the use of restrictive physical interventions/restraints is suitable and appropriate for use with each individual child.

Reporting and Recording use of Restrictive Physical Interventions (Restraint)

Whenever physical intervention/restraint is used the incident **must** be recorded using the approved incident recording forms. The record of the Use of Reasonable Force will also be logged in a Serious Incident Log Book kept in the main office.

All staff involved in the incident (including witnesses) must contribute to the record and the form must be completed within 24hrs of the incident.

(please refer to appendix (a) for the school incident form)

Staff should

- **Read through the school incident form**
- **Take time to think about what actually happened and try to explain the facts carefully.**
- **Complete all names in full**
- **Sign and date all relevant sections**
- **Hand the form into the school office**

Post Incident Support for Pupils and Staff

Incidents that require the use of physical interventions/restraints can be very upsetting to all involved and may result in injuries to students or staff. Until an incident has subsided it is essential to reduce risk of re-escalation and to ensure the situation remains calm. Staff should avoid saying or doing anything that might inflame the situation during the recovery phase.

Pupils should be given time and space to calm down after an incident and when ready reintegrated back into their timetable as soon as possible.

Staff should also be offered a short break out of the classroom where possible

After an incident it is important to ensure that staff and pupils are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid.

All injuries should be reported and recorded on an accident form and in the accident log book. The school should take action to report any injuries to staff or pupils in accordance with RIDDOR.

If a pupil has had an incident during the school day staff should make time at the end of the school day to debrief and prepare for the next day. Debriefing is an essential part of the post incident framework and enables staff to reflect and develop their professional practice.

Once an incident form has been completed and handed in, it is the management team's responsibility to ensure that staff are well and offered support.

It is the teacher's responsibility to contact parents when an incident occurs to ensure that communication is open and that everyone is involved in the recovery phase.

Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

Digitech Studio School acknowledges that on occasion staff may find themselves in unforeseen or emergency situations, when they have no option but to use reasonable force to manage a crisis. However before proceeding with a physical intervention staff should think through the likely consequences and reflect on the following questions.

- Is the intervention in the best interest of the child?
- Is the physical intervention reasonable and proportionate?
- Is the intervention intended to reduce risk?
- Is the response the least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective?

Whenever a physical intervention is used there should be a verbal warning. Staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical intervention. Staff should only use the techniques and methods approved for use by Digitech which is **TEAM TEACH**. In general, if staff act in good faith and their actions are reasonable and proportionate, they will be supported.

If an unforeseen or emergency incident takes place staff must record the incident by means of the school incident form found on the 'general shared drive' under behaviour management. The form must be completed within twenty-four hours of the incident and handed into the Principal or Deputy Principal responsible for behaviour management.

(please refer to appendix b for types of incidents that may require physical intervention)

Monitoring & Evaluation

When a member of staff has found it necessary to use physical intervention this will always be recorded and documented following the agreed procedures (incident form)
Monitoring of incidents will help ensure that staff are following appropriate procedures and will alert the Principal to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour may require the use of reasonable force.

Each incident form will be handed into the office and logged in the Serious Incident Log Book (OneDrive document) and then forwarded to the Principal and /or senior member of staff responsible for behaviour. Incident forms will be monitored on a half termly basis and any child that has more than two incident forms will have an 'actions' sheet to record and monitor frequency of incidents and to record actions taken that half term.

Behaviour Plans and Positive Handling Plans will be reviewed and updated once a term and will be reviewed after incidents in case there are new behaviours and triggers.

Once a year a parent's evening will be held so that staff can share individual pupil's plans and strategies with parent's.

Please refer to appendix (c) for information on Team Teach, our complaints procedure and for further information regarding Team Teach training.

Definitions

There is no legal definition of what **'reasonable force'** is. For the purpose of this policy and for the implementation of it in Digitech Studio School

'Positive Handling' uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming him/herself, others or property.

'Physical Restraint' will involve the use of reasonable force where there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. **(restraint should be seen as a last resort.)**

'Physical Intervention' This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action e.g. guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

Related Documentation

Child Protection Policy

Behaviour Policy

Complaints Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Digitech Studio SCHOOL INCIDENT REPORT

Please complete all sections

Section 1

Name of Pupil:	Year/Group:	Time:
Date of Incident:	Place/Activity:	
Reporting Staff:	Others Present:	

Section 2: Antecedents (a brief description of events leading up to the incident)

Section 3: Behaviour (please indicate sequence of behaviour)

Biting		Spitting		Theft	
Damage to property		Absconding (class/school)		Throwing objects	
Verbal abuse		Work refusal			
Kicking/hitting		Disruption (please specify)			
Scratching/pinching		Bullying		Other (please specify)	

Other relevant comment:

Section 4: Intervention (De-escalation techniques used)

Verbal advice & Support		Physical intervention e.g (prompted) excluding restraint		Non-threatening body language	
Calm talking		Warning		Instruction	
Distraction		Reassurance			
Step Away		Humour			
Negotiation		Options offered		Other (please specify)	

Other relevant comment:

Section 5. Was restraint used? Yes/No (if Yes, please complete restraint form overleaf)

Section 6: Action taken after incident

Talk through		Sanction/consequence		Exclusion by Principal	
Directed Withdrawal		Sent home			
Internal exclusion		Parents informed		Other (please specify)	

Duration of incident, how long before pupil re-integrated into the class and their routine?

Staff support provided - Time out (please tick as appropriate)

Debriefing with SMT member:

Other relevant comment:

Signature of reporting adult:	Date:
Signature of witness:	Date:

Section 5. Report of Incident of Physical Restraint

Child's name:

5.1 Justification for Physical Restraint (please underline)

- 1) Child injuring themselves or in danger of injuring themselves.
- 2) Child injuring others or in danger of injuring others.
- 3) Seriously damaging property or in danger of seriously damaging property.
- 4) Serious disruption, prejudicial to good order.

5.2 Team Teach restraint technique(s) used. Please indicate sequence of use

Single elbow (SE)		Standing		Single staff	
Figure of four hold (F)		Seated		Two staff	
Double elbow hold (DE)		Kneeling		Three staff	
Wrap (W)					
Half Shield (½ Sh)					
Full Shield (FSH)					

5.3 Resulting injury: YES/NO (please delete as appropriate) If Yes, please give details:

Staff Pupil Both Accident form completed? Yes Date

Body map completed? Yes No Medical treatment Yes

No

Any resulting damage to property? No Yes Please give brief details

5.4 Name(s) of staff involved in restraint:

5.5 Signature(s) of Staff witness(es):

5.6 Any other relevant information eg child's response, further action needed.

Signature of reporting adult:	Date:
Signature of witness:	Date:

Please ensure Section 6 of Incident Report (action taken after incident) has been completed

To be completed by Principal or Deputy Principal	
Recorded in serious incident book ref no>	
Parents informed Yes/No	Any others informed (specify)
Staff debriefed	Child debriefed
Outcomes of debriefs/any further action necessary	
Signed	Date

Please pass to Deputy principal on day of incident

Appendix B

Types of Incident

Section 93 of the Education and Inspectors Act 2006 enables school staff to use force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following.

1. Committing any offence (or for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil).
2. Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself) or
3. 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.

Examples of situations that may require reasonable force.

- A pupil is physically aggressive towards a member of staff or another pupil
- Pupils are fighting causing risk of injury to themselves or others
- A pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate damage to property.
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage (by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of materials or objects).
- A pupil absconds from a class, or tries to leave school other than at an authorised time. Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place is not enough on its own to justify the use of force. It would be justifiable where allowing a pupil to leave would
 - a) entail serious risk to the pupil's safety (taking into account age and understanding), to the safety of other pupils or staff, or of damage to property: or
 - b) leads to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline, such as disrupting other classes.
- A pupil is persistently non compliant when asked to leave a classroom
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.
- A pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school sporting event, or school visit.

Appendix C

Training

It will be the responsibility of the Principal and the member of senior management responsible for professional development; to ensure that all members of staff who are expected to use planned physical techniques are trained appropriately. Digitech Studio School has adopted Team Teach as its programme of physical intervention. All training courses have been fully accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) in accordance with DFES and Department of Health guidance.

The staff, who require training in Team Teach, will complete the two-day basic training programme, which will be delivered by Team Teach trainers. The course offers both physical and theoretical components and staff will be certificated at the end of the course. The course will cover staff for up to twenty-four months and then a day's refresher course must be undertaken. A record of staff who have completed the training will be kept on file, as well as list of staff that have been authorised to use Team Teach by the Principal.

Complaints

It is possible for a pupil to make an allegation of inappropriate or excessive use of force after an incident.

At Digitech Studio School there is a complaints procedure for pupils and parents, which is responded to by the Principal, governors and Local Education Authority (LEA) if necessary.

The complaints policy also applies to staff. Digitech Studio School is an open school and promotes transparent policy and practice in order to protect the interests of staff and pupils alike.

Any staff concerns regarding the welfare of pupils should be taken directly to the designated person for child protection and any safety concerns should be reported to the person responsible for health and safety.

Team Teach

Team Teach is an international organisation dedicated to safeguarding vulnerable children and adults.

It provides training to carers in education, social services, health and residential units.

Team Teach encourages carers to appreciate the influence they can have on the thinking, feeling and behaviour of those they care for.

Team Teach is affiliated to the National General Services Association and was one of the first training organisations in the UK to be fully accredited by the British Institute of Learning Difficulties (BILD) under a government sponsored scheme.

Team Teach is committed to the term 'Positive Handling' to describe a broad spectrum of risk reduction strategies.