

MICKLEOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Name of Policy: Positive Handling

Date of Policy:

Member of Staff responsible: Sean Welsh

Review date: January 2027

Signature: _____ **Chair of Governors**

Date Approved: _____

At Mickleover Primary School

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POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This guidance is based on best practice provided by Nottingham City RPI Solutions on de-escalation and positive handling. It also aligns with the Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools guidance (DfE) It should be referred to by all members of staff.

BEST PRACTICE DE-ESCALATION SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES

Underpinning the success of managing the diverse needs present in each classroom is the skill of teachers and support staff in intervening early to calmly de-escalate situations when they arise. Remaining calm and professionally detached is not always natural and is therefore a skill that needs to be practised.

Below are some examples of techniques that can be used:

- Stay calm
- Keep a neutral facial expression
- Be aware of personal space
- Distract or divert
- Reassure the pupil
- Use a low voice
- Use non-judgemental language
- Give the pupil a 'way out'
- Give the pupil time to follow instructions
- Simplify/reduce language

THINGS TO AVOID

- Do not make threats you cannot carry through, such as threatening to exclude the child.
- Do not be defensive or take it personally. What is being said may seem insulting and directed at you, but this level of aggression is not really about you.
- Do not use humour unless you are sure it will help and you have a very good relationship with the child.
- Do not use sarcasm or humiliate the child.

THE USE OF POSITIVE HANDLING (RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION)

Positive handling (also known as restrictive physical intervention) will be a planned response where possible; however, there may be occasions when it is used following a dynamic risk assessment. Positive handling will only ever be used as a last resort, when all other reasonable behaviour management strategies have been attempted or are deemed inappropriate due to the level of risk.

At our school, we believe that the use of positive handling is only necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing serious damage to property, including their own
- Emergency situations that may result in a child being harmed

THE USE OF SECLUSION

Seclusion is the confinement of a pupil alone in a space where they are not free to leave. This practice is discouraged in school but is defined within the DfE guidance on Restrictive Interventions, including the Use of Reasonable Force in Schools, as a restrictive intervention that may only be considered in exceptional circumstances to prevent serious harm. If seclusion is used, it must be for the shortest time possible, with continuous monitoring, clear recording, parental notification, and a review to reduce the risk of recurrence. De-escalation will always be the initial strategy and restraint thereafter if required; seclusion will only be used as a last resort if the previous strategies are ineffective at preventing risk of serious harm to pupil/ staff.

TRAINING, SAFEGUARDING AND AFTERCARE

It is good practice for all staff to receive legal and ethical training. However, only named individuals are trained in de-escalation and positive handling techniques. This training will be refreshed annually, and a record of all training will be kept by the school.

In the event that positive handling is used, only approved and trained techniques will be used as part of a planned or risk-assessed response. Positive handling will only ever be used to control or restrain and must never be used as a punishment, or with the intent to cause pain or harm. Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that could be considered inappropriate.

When using positive handling, the level and duration of physical intervention will always be the minimum necessary to restore safety. Due regard will be given to the age, understanding, and any SEND needs of the pupil. Knowledge of the pupil is a key factor in the professional judgement made by staff.

Where a pupil has become dysregulated to the point that restraint has been necessary, appropriate aftercare techniques will be implemented once the pupil is safe and calm. This may include reassurance, support to regulate emotions, time and space to recover, and a restorative conversation when appropriate. The wellbeing of both the pupil and the staff involved will be prioritised.

INDIVIDUAL HANDLING PLANS (IHPs)

Most pupils who may require positive handling will have an Individual Handling Plan (IHP Appendix I) in place, detailing agreed strategies, techniques, and aftercare approaches. A risk assessment (RA Appendix II) will be completed prior to the implementation of an IHP. The IHP and outcomes of the risk assessment will be shared with parents/carers and other relevant professionals.

RECORDING INCIDENTS

Following any positive handling incident, staff must first ensure that both the pupil and adult are safe and that no further assistance is required. Any injuries must be reported appropriately.

The following process must then take place:

1. The incident must be reported immediately to the Headteacher. In the event of their absence, a member of the senior leadership team must be informed.
2. The RPI handling log (appendix III) must be completed by the staff involved as soon as possible after the incident and uploaded onto CPOMS.
3. Following the incident, the pupil's provision, IHP (where applicable), and risk assessment must be reviewed, including the effectiveness of any aftercare provided.

4. If an injury occurs, the appropriate accident or personal contact incident reporting procedures must be followed.
5. Parents and carers will be informed of any physical restraint as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than the same day.
6. Where appropriate, the pupil's views and reflections on the incident will be recorded and considered as part of the review process.

EMERGENCIES

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and DfE *Restrictive Intervention Guidance*:

- Any member of school staff may use reasonable force
- Training is not a legal requirement to intervene
- Force may be used to prevent injury, criminal offences, or serious disruption
- The expectation is reasonableness, not certification

However:

- Schools should prioritise trained staff
- Untrained staff should intervene only in emergencies
- Force used must always be reasonable, proportionate, minimal and as a final resort.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This guidance may be amended at any time to reflect changes in legislation or statutory guidance. The policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis and should be read in conjunction with the school's behaviour, safeguarding, and health and safety policies.

Appendix I

Appendix I Individual Handling Plan

Known Triggers/ Warning Signs	De-escalation Strategies	Positive Handling Techniques	Re-regulation and Post-Handling Support	Post-Incident Actions

IHP completed by:

IHP approved by:

Risk Assessment in place from:

Appendix II

Name:

Individual Risk Assessment

Date:

Context				
Nature of hazard	Worst Outcome	Control Measures	Risk Rating	Action and further precautions

Assessment carried out by:

Date:

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How was the incident resolved?	
First Aid Include: who was injured, injuries sustained, first aid offered, first aid given	
After Care Include: drink/ food, 1:1, calm space, weighted blanket, box of calms, fiddle toys, cushions favoured objects etc	

Follow Up

	Y/N	Notes
Head Teacher informed		
Parent/carer informed		
Risk assessment written/ reviewed		
Alterations shared with staff		
Consequence for CYP agreed		
Safeguarding issues considered		
Any other issues		

Signed..... Print Name:

Manager's signature.....Date.....