



Hazelwood Schools

Positive Handling Policy

Reviewed and Adopted: March 2022

Reviewed by: SLT/LTS committee

Next Review: Spring Term 2025

Review every three years

These Guidelines are intended to conform with Section 550A of the Education Act 1996, Article 5 of the Human Rights Act 1998, the Children Act, DfE Circular 10/98 and the 2002 Guidance on Physical Intervention.

Intent

At Hazelwood Schools, we believe that we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of all children and to maintain the safety of all staff and volunteers. We recognise that the welfare of the child is paramount and that each child has the right to be protected from harm. We seek to protect all children from any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or unlawful.

It is also recognised that on occasions, and as a last resort, situations may arise where in order to ensure the welfare and protection of children or other adults, it may be necessary for staff to use a physical intervention.

Aims of the Policy

We aim to provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children as per the vision and values of the school described below. This policy is in line with our vision and values and supports us to achieve a culture where our 12 values are at the heart of all we do.



Our Vision and Values

At Hazelwood, we believe in nurturing responsible citizens to achieve educational excellence by inspiring awe and wonder through a real, relevant, immersive and purposeful curriculum.

Our shared values are at the heart of all we do.

Our values are: **Respect, Resilience, Responsibility, Creativity, Honesty, Ambition, Trust, Kindness, Fairness, Courage, Tolerance & Understanding and Teamwork.**

We believe that good professional relationships between all staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. We recognise that the majority of children respond positively to our Good to be Green behaviour management system. We also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances that staff may need to take action in situations where the use of positive handling may be required and it is important to be clear about what this may look like and when this may be necessary.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff at Hazelwood Schools:

- clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary and
- are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

The application of any form of positive handling places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have responsibility to follow the policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for positive handling.

Positive handling should only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed (please refer to separate Positive Behaviour Policy) or when pupils, staff or property are at risk.

What the Law says

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

- Committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil him/herself); or
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupil receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force. That will always depend on the precise circumstances of individual cases. To be judged lawful, the force used must be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent. The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Use of force could not be justified to prevent trivial misbehaviour. Those exercising the power to use force must also take proper account of any particular special educational need and/or disability that a pupil might have.

Types of Incidents

There are a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a pupil. These will fall into 3 broad categories:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is imminent risk of injury.
- Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.
- Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order or discipline.

Examples of situations that fall within the first two categories are:

- A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil.
- Pupils are fighting.
- A pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property.
- A pupil is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
- A pupil is running anywhere on the school premises in a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him/herself or others.
- A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school; this applies if it is felt that the child will be at risk if not kept in the classroom or school – in most circumstances it is best to allow the child to leave, the school site is fully secured and gated.

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom.
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson or any other supervised activity during the school day e.g. at playtime or in the dining hall.

It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment. This is because it would fall within the definition of corporal punishment, abolished by section 548 of the Education Act 1996.

Implementation - Preventative Strategies

This school actively promotes positive behaviour management strategies thus reducing the need for the use of any form of physical intervention, except in an emergency situation and in exceptional circumstances. See our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a strategy to prevent the risk of an incident escalating unnecessarily. It is normal practice where a pupil or a small number of pupils are known to exhibit disturbing or distressing behaviour. In order for staff to plan accordingly, risk assessments will be considered only for those pupils who constitute a risk.

Risk assessment will be considered from two perspectives:

- Environmental risk assessment - what can be done in the class or playground environment to stop a particular child from feeling they have no option but to resort to violent outbursts?
- Individual risk assessment - are there particular activities, times of the day or areas that trigger aggression in a particular individual, and what controls can be put in place to combat this?

Positive Handling

Positive handling is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming themselves, others or seriously damaging property. The proper use of positive handling requires skill and judgement, as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of restraining. Some members of staff are trained to apply the approach and support technique when absolutely necessary, however all members of staff have a duty of care to use reasonable force to protect a child from hurting themselves or others.

The Positive Handling Approach should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/herself or others. Positive Handling Approach, skilfully applied, may be eased by degrees as the child calms down in response to the physical contact. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

The staff at Hazelwood Schools recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the strategies available to secure pupil safety and also maintain good order and discipline.

- No occasion should arise when it is acceptable for a person to act violently towards others. Staff who act professionally, and within these agreed guidelines, will be supported if a situation arises where physical intervention is necessary as long as guidance is followed.
- Time and/or distance from the child might, at times, reduce the need for physical control.
- Situations can arise that cannot be diffused and where unacceptable behaviour becomes violent or dangerous. It is then likely that a member of staff will become directly involved.
- Where possible, staff trained in the approach and support techniques will intervene if a child is at risk of hurting themselves or others, however all staff have a duty of care to all our pupils to use reasonable force to prevent serious harm and remove danger.
- On occasions, it may be appropriate to use physical intervention to reduce the level of violence or danger. However, it must be remembered that there may well be times when the use of physical intervention may, in the short term, increase the level of violence.
- Members of staff should only use physical intervention when other alternatives have been or cannot be tried, and where the following circumstances appear to exist:
 1. Where pupils are in imminent danger of causing danger to themselves
 2. Where other children or staff are in imminent danger of injury
 3. If a child is causing significant danger to property and causing serious damage
 4. When a pupil has refused to carry out a reasonable instruction, and in so doing, their presence is causing serious disruption. This could be an occasion when the child has refused to leave the room or go to an appointed place after direct instruction from a member of staff

Whenever possible in 1, 2, 3, - and always in 4- the child should be warned clearly that you are likely to take physical action before that action occurs.

It is important to remember the security of the child, and therefore the emotional stability of the child.

- A temper tantrum is naturally best dealt with by the demonstration of calm, unthreatening concern and the assumption of total control by the caring adult.
- Adult action ensuing from a loss of temper is never acceptable.
- Whenever possible, more than one adult should be present during the use of physical intervention. It may be appropriate to observe from a distance or monitor regularly in order to ensure the safety of both the adult and the child.
- In every case, the minimum strength and the shortest period of time should be used to achieve the necessary objective.
- The pupil should repeatedly be offered the opportunity to exercise self-control and the physical intervention should stop at the earliest opportunity.
- As soon as possible, the child should be removed from the general circulation. Withdrawal/isolation can be calming and may prevent stubbornness adopted by children if others are able to observe the incident.
- An appropriate record of the incident will be communicated to SLT (Senior Leadership Team) as well as to other adults who work with the child.
- Where physical intervention has been used, a record form should be completed (Appendix 1) by the person who used the physical intervention.

- These records are uploaded to ScholarPack after a member of SLT has read through it. Parents/carers will be informed that physical intervention has taken place to keep their child safe. These records will be archived when the child leaves the school.

Action Steps

When dealing with a serious incident that may involve physical intervention, the following action steps should be applied where possible:

- Tell the pupil who is making poor behaviour choices to stop and state possible consequences of failure to do so; tell them what to do instead
- Summon another adult
- Continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident
- Make it clear that the physical intervention will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem.

Training

Some members of staff have had training in different positive handling approaches and de-escalation techniques. These staff should become directly involved, where possible, in the planned safe handling of children. Refresher training for the named members of staff also takes place, usually every two years to ensure that they are up to date with current procedures and legislation. These staff will discuss the procedures and legislation regularly to ensure that they are able to recall key strategies for positive handling. However, all staff have the duty of care to intervene using reasonable force when danger or harm is imminent.

Complaints

We all have a duty of care to the children in our school and cannot escape our legal responsibilities by avoiding taking appropriate and necessary action. Involving parents/carers when an incident occurs with their child, together with a clear policy adhered to by all the staff, should help to avoid complaints from parents/carers. It will not prevent all complaints however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation.

Staff subjected to physical violence or assault, have the right to be supported in making a formal complaint to the police and, if necessary, taking private action against the assailant. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents/carers and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply. Remember that adhering to the principles and procedures referred to in this policy is part of effective practice and should minimise risk to children in our care and enhance our own self-protection.

This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies and LA guidance, including:

- Safeguarding Children and Children Protection Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy and SEND Information Report
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Appendix 1



Hazelwood Schools
Use of Physical Intervention to Support a Pupil: Recording Sheet



Name of Pupil:					
Date:		Time:		Location:	
Staff involved:					
Any other witnesses:					
Description of events leading up to intervention:					
Setting/Activity etc:					
Any known Triggers:					
Any positive intervention/de-escalation techniques used?					
Form of restraint (describe how you physically intervened):					
Any injuries to staff or pupil?					
Further actions					
Reported complied by:				SLT action completed by:	
Name of role:				Name and role:	
Date:				Date:	