



Positive Handling Policy

Hopewell School & motorvations@hopewell

Policy Date:	September 2023
Date Ratified by Governors:	September 2023
Next Review:	September 2024

Introduction

- All staff at Hopewell are trained to work with pupils with sometimes exceptionally challenging behaviours, and adhere to a clear, positive pupil-centred behaviour and mood management policy, which focuses on prevention and verbal intervention.
- Staff work positively and confidently with pupils and find the least intrusive way possible to support, empower and keep pupils safe.
- Where the wealth of strategies available to staff fail, physical handling of pupils is the absolute last resort and is used to keep pupils, and staff safe. It is used safely and positively, drawing upon the formal Team Teach training staff have received, when all other strategies have failed to avert behaviour that is likely to cause harm to the pupil or others around them and staff deem an intervention as reasonable, proportionate and/or necessary. This is set out in our behaviour and mood management policy.

DEFINITION

- Physical intervention is the positive use of force in order to avert danger by preventing or deflecting a pupil's action, or by removing the physical object which could be used to harm the pupil or others.
- In all circumstances, we recognise that physical intervention can only deal with the immediate problem and careful assessment is needed to prevent repetition. This assessment takes the form of a reflective debrief with the staff involved and a leader at the end of the school day (it is important to ensure staff are given time to debrief and reflect on the incident, including in terms of their own well-being) which is recorded on our Team Teach intervention record forms. Incidents where restraint is used may also be discussed as a team to look at provide an understanding of what happened and how strategies can be implemented.
- For monitoring purposes, a decision is made as to whether the intervention was a 'standard Team Teach intervention' or a 'serious incident'. Although reviewed "case by case", an incident may be deemed serious, if for example, a pupil has been in crisis throughout the day and requires more support than usual or if a pupil requires a more restrictive physical intervention

USE OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Where there is a risk of a pupil:

- endangering or harming others
- self-harming
- causing damage to property
- significantly disrupting the school, its pupils or members of the public staff will use reasonable force (any use of physical intervention will, as far as possible, only ever be a Team Teach hold and will always be undertaken by staff with up-to-date Team Teach training) to manage the situation only when all alternatives have been exhausted (e.g. calm talking, distraction, warnings, relaxation room, reassurance, humour, options, change of face) and have failed.

Our starting point is always the rights, needs and safety of the pupil (and other pupils and staff present). If possible, the pupil will be taken to a safe space.

Any use of force will be recorded on a handwritten intervention record form and will be signed-off by a member of the SLT at the end of the same day. Staff can meet with a member of the therapy team following any use of physical intervention to reflect on the incident and outcome.

Where necessary, the pupil's parents/carers will be informed straight away, at the end of the school day at the latest. The leader signing the record will inform the designated safeguarding lead where there are specific safeguarding concerns or where social care services have asked to be informed.

In both such cases, the pupil's allocated social worker will be informed by the designated safeguarding lead.

All records of Team Teach intervention are logged, collated, reviewed at leadership team meetings on a weekly basis and trends are analysed over time, including with governors. Where patterns appear, strategies (such as timetable changes) are trialled. The data we use is based on average numbers of physical interventions per pupil over time, as well as actual numbers of interventions for specific pupils.

We use physical intervention as follows

- If a pupil's behaviour presents a risk to themselves or others, including staff, significant damage to school property or if they are significantly disrupting the school (and are likely to be a trigger for other pupils)
- As a safety measure where aggressive behaviour could put the pupil or other people at risk. It is never used as a punishment or as part of a behaviour management strategy

The number of staff involved will always be the minimum necessary to safeguard the pupil and others but where appropriate, and especially where large, strong or particularly violent pupils are involved (as identified on their risk assessment) there will always be two staff members involved in any physical intervention

- The force used will be the minimum necessary to deal with the harm that needs to be prevented, i.e. it must be reasonable in the circumstances. Staff must always remember: 'minimum force used for the shortest amount of time.'
- During a physical intervention, staff will not attempt to discuss the incident as the pupil will be too distressed to think about it and it may further escalate the challenging behaviour. The time for reflection is later when the pupil has calmed down. Staff will focus any talking on trying to soothe the pupil and help them calm down. They will verbalise their belief in the pupil's ability to calm down and turn the situation around. They will verbalise their commitment to continue to support them ("I'm here to keep you safe")
- The pupil will have time to rest, reflect and recover; they will then re-join the activity or lesson when appropriate.
- This must be neither rushed (the pupil must be properly calmed and ready to re-engage) nor unnecessarily elongated
- Any pupil who has been held should be given the opportunity to be debriefed and talk through their experience with a member of staff who was not involved in the physical intervention, normally by the end of the school day
- Pupils will also (usually) have the opportunity to speak to a therapist or TA of their choice following an incident

RISK ASSESSMENTS

- All pupils have an individual risk assessment linking with their SSP, PHP Progress review, which outlines specific considerations for that pupil in relation to physical intervention. These are updated on a termly basis, or more frequently if specific issues arise. Updates are actioned through the completion of the incident reporting system.
- In an emergency situation, staff will inevitably need to make a dynamic risk assessment, which will include a judgement of the capacity of a young person at that moment to make a safe choice. However, sometimes they

need to make decisions and take action that endeavours to keep the child safe from harm. In loco parentis, we need to ensure that our first priority is a child's safety

- When considering a pupil's dynamic risk assessment, if there is a temporary period of incapacity that may place a pupil at risk of significant physical or emotional harm, staff may need to use physical intervention as one of the measures to protect the pupil
- When it comes to protecting pupils, staff are encouraged to consider what they would want somebody else to do if that was their child - this helps to direct staff towards best practice

STAFF TRAINING

- All staff have in-date Team Teach training (2-day course every 2 years). Certificates are kept on file and refresher training (1-day course) occurs every 2 years.
- Team Teach are approved as an accredited CPD provider and all of their training courses are CPD accredited. Team Teach is also accredited by ICM and have received a National Training Award as a way of recognition.
- For new staff, opportunities are provided as quickly as possible in the meantime they must not get themselves involved in any physical intervention with pupils.

TEAM TEACH

- The skills and techniques taught on a Team Teach course are as a result of an ongoing risk assessment in an effort to safeguard everyone involved in a violent incident where physical interventions are necessary.
- According to Team Teach, Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the child, but whilst some physical injury potential can be reduced there remains some risk, with potential for possible bruising or scratching that may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of ensuring that the child remains safe.
- It is also recognised that staff may, in very exceptional circumstances, choose to respond with a technique from outside the Team Teach framework. This does not automatically render the use of such skill or technique necessarily improper, unacceptable or unlawful. Its use must be judged on whether or not it was reasonable, proportionate and necessary in those particular contexts and circumstances

MONITORING OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION:

The leadership team reviews all physical intervention data formally as part of its standard agenda. In particular; periods of physical intervention that are lengthy, an incident that involves a high number of staff, situations that are escalating with physical intervention being used more frequently, children sustaining injuries and repeated incidents or patterns that are easily identifiable.

- The governing body reviews data regularly as part of its role in holding leaders to account.

POLICY REVIEW CYCLE:

This policy and all policies at Hopewell School will be reviewed and updated by the leadership team and governing body as per our policy review cycle