



The Willows School
Academy Trust
Learning - Achieving - Succeeding

Positive Handling Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for staff in the use of non-violent physical restraint. At The Willows we recognise the right of every person to be protected from harm. For that reason we seek to protect all pupils from any form of physical intervention which is:

- unnecessary or inappropriate to either the pupil or the circumstances;
- excessive or unlawful.

1. AIMS AND KEY PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The aims of our school policy regarding behaviour are set out in our Discipline Policy and our document "Procedures for Behaviour Management and the Care and Control of Pupils". It is essential that this policy is read in the context of these documents which emphasise the importance of good relationships and positive reinforcement.
- 1.2 The staff at The Willows deal on a daily basis with pupils who exhibit disturbed, distressed and distressing behaviour. Members of staff are expected to:
 - promote the best interests of the pupils;
 - respond in a way which promotes good order and discipline;
 - maintain surroundings conducive to meeting the pupils' educational needs;
 - provide a safe environment.
- 1.3 Physical restraint is not and never should be thought of as punishment. It is an interim measure to gain control over a pupil who is exhibiting a lack of self-control. The use of non-violent restraint may well result in a pupil becoming even more distraught. Although the pupil may initially struggle, the aim of the intervention is that he/she will become calmed and reassured by the restraint.
- 1.4 Reasonable force or non-violent restraint will be used when necessary in the following circumstances:

- To prevent a pupil from harming him/herself or placing him/herself in danger;
- To prevent a pupil causing harm to another pupil or member of staff;
- When a pupil is causing serious disruption to a class / school activity;
- When a pupil persistently refuses the request of a member of staff to leave a situation where his/her behaviour is causing disruption;
- To prevent a pupil inflicting unnecessary or unreasonable damage to the fabric of the building or other property.

2. PROCEDURES FOR PREVENTING AND MANAGING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOURS

2.1 When faced with a potentially violent or emotionally charged situation staff will endeavour to **AVOID CONFRONTATION** by:

- Adopting a calm manner when speaking. Speaking to the pupil slowly, non-aggressively and quietly but confidently;
- Breathing normally, remaining aware of own body signals e.g. avoid unhelpful body signals such as tensing of the arms, gritting of the teeth, exaggerated body movements;
- Attempting to keep channels of communication open by using eye to eye contact, by offering choices and time for the situation to de-escalate;
- Attempting to defuse the situation e.g. by diverting attention, using humour, taking care to avoid sarcasm;
- Avoiding physical contact unless one's judgement dictates otherwise as touching can serve to irritate or annoy rather than having a calming effect;
- Remaining at arm's distance and avoiding being directly face-to-face with a pupil behaving aggressively;
- Allowing the pupil space to calm down while monitoring the situation from a discrete distance, ensuring no harm to pupils, others or property;
- Whenever possible taking time to consider one's own mood and how it may be affecting one's objectivity and tolerance. The physiological signs of anger and fear are similar and can be easily confused in the heat of the moment.

2.2 In situations where avoidance strategies have failed and the situation escalates from threatening to violent:

- If your risk assessment indicates the situation cannot be managed by the adult(s) present, unless it is a situation where a child or adult may get seriously hurt, leave the situation to get help. Do not put yourself at risk.
- **WHENEVER POSSIBLE CALL FOR ASSISTANCE BEFORE ENGAGING IN NON-VIOLENT RESTRAINT.** Having at least one other person present is a safeguard for all concerned, both as witness and assistance.

2.3 RESPONDING TO CONFRONTATION

- Respond to a violent situation in a non-violent manner, using calm and role modelling self-control. Rapid and forceful movements only increase the severity of the confrontation.

2.3.1 OBSTRUCTING

- A member of staff may use his/her physical presence to obstruct an exit, prevent passage or limit movement of a pupil, thereby creating an opportunity to express concern/talk with the pupil.
- Obstruction is a passive form of control and does not involve physical contact, chasing or dodging.
- Movement by a member of staff in this situation will be unhurried and non-threatening to the pupil.
- Obstruction will only be used in situations where it is likely to be effective by virtue of the presence of the member of staff i.e. the pupil does not try to push past the member of staff.

2.3.2 HOLDING AND NON-VIOLENT RESTRAINT

- To prevent injury or damage from hitting, punching, kicking, throwing etc. staff may hold pupils using an authorised hold.
- When limbs are held vulnerable areas around the joints must be avoided and the pupil must be held on the fleshy parts of the arms and legs.
- Pupils must not be held around the neck, throat or fingers.
- In situations where a pupil needs to be carried his/her body must be properly supported and no pressure put on any joints e.g. wrists, ankles, shoulders.
- If it is necessary to lower a pupil to the floor in order to restrain him/her care must be taken to avoid injury.
- **No pupil will be placed in a face-down position.**
- Pupils being restrained are frequently and repeatedly offered the option of being released on condition they desist from the behaviour that necessitated the restraint.

On all occasions pupils will be restrained for the shortest time possible.

3. RECORDING AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

- 3.1 All incidents of physical restraint are:
- Recorded in the Physical Intervention File. The report must include:
 - a) details of when and where incident took place.
 - b) circumstances and significant factors which led to incident.
 - c) the duration and nature of any physical restraint used.
 - d) the names of pupils and staff involved.
 - e) a description of any injury sustained by pupils or staff.
 - f) a description of any action taken after the incident.
 - Reported to the Head Teacher via the entry in the Physical Intervention Book and also, if a serious incident, orally at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.2 Parents will be informed, on the day, by telephone, of serious incidents requiring restraint. The level of reporting less serious incidents will be agreed with the parents.
- 3.3 If a pupil or member of staff has been injured during an incident an entry must also be made in the Staff Injury file
- 3.4 If physical restraint is being used as a frequent intervention to help a pupil to control his/her behaviour a **Behaviour Management Plan (BMP)** is completed by the class teacher.
- The BMP:
 - Analyses the triggers for the unacceptable behaviour.
 - Identifies strategies for supporting the pupil in defusing difficult situations.
 - Specifies the most appropriate and safest way to hold the individual pupil when physical restraint is necessary.
 - Outlines strategies to support an improvement in the pupil's behaviour.

- Parents/carers are consulted about the BMP. They are asked to contribute and give their written consent to the final plan.
- There is regular review of the BMP with the pupil and parents/carers.

4 STAFF TRAINING

- 4.1 The school has adopted the "The Team-teach Approach" to positive and protective handling strategies within a whole setting and holistic response to behaviour management.
- 4.2 All teachers, teaching assistants and any other staff the head teacher authorises to physically restrain pupils, receive training in the prevention and management of aggressive behaviour using The Team-teach approach.
- 4.3 All staff are trained in team teach within a year of starting at the Willows. All staff have a refresher day every 2 years


5 MONITORING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES


- 5.1 Class teachers monitor the frequency and severity of aggressive incidents for individual pupils in their class group.
- 5.2 The Head Teacher monitors the frequency and severity of aggressive incidents, throughout the school, by reference to the Physical Intervention Book.
- 5.3 Staff receive regular training with regard to the prevention and management of aggressive behaviour and the use of non-violent restraint techniques.
- 5.4 The Head Teacher reports termly to the Governing Body, on the statistics for the previous term, regarding the incidents occurring and pupils involved.
- 5.5 This policy will be reviewed every two years.


6 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- Behaviour policy

To be reviewed at Full Governing Body Meeting on 24th June


Signed: _____
Headteacher


Signed: _____
Headteacher


Signed: _____
Headteacher


Signed: _____
Chair of Governors


Mr Robert Barr
Chair of Governors

Signed: _____
Chair of Governors

Date: 24th June 2015

Date: 21st June 2016

Date: June 2017