



POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

Policy Version			
Date	Document Version	Document Revision History	Document Author/Reviser
5 July 2017	Version 1.0	N/A	Daniel Waterhouse
4 th December 2017	Version 1.1	New guidance: DFE: Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention (2017)	Daniel Waterhouse

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months in light of local and Government legislation.

At Mountwood
Academy we
nurture our young
people through
quality experiences
to never stop
learning and be the
best they can be.

Key Points

- School staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.
- Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

Positive Handling describes a broad spectrum of risk-reduction strategies to promote positive behaviour and ensure a safe and effective learning environment. All members of staff have a collective responsibility to partake in Team Teach training and uphold the principles of Positive Handling outlined in this document.

The term 'Positive Handling' is used to describe the full range of strategies used to de-escalate, defuse and divert in order to prevent violence and reduce the risk of injury to staff, children, young people and others. The use of force only forms a small part of the Positive Handling Framework and will always be used as a last resort across the service. All physical interventions, including restraint, are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management.

All actions must be taken with the best interest of the child as the paramount consideration.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide staff with a framework for supporting children and young people who present challenging behaviours;
- enable staff to effectively carry out their duty of care towards young people;
- define in broad terms what may constitute a physical intervention and
- ensure the health, safety and welfare of children, young people and those who work with them.

Preventative approaches to risk reduction involve:

- identifying and communicating early warning signs, situations, settings and other factors which may influence behaviour;
- taking steps to divert behaviours leading towards foreseeable risk and
- the development of Positive Handling Plans to collate and share information with all staff. Parents and students are encouraged to contribute to these.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Mountwood Academy behaviour policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Exclusions policy

This policy is written using guidance from:

DFE: Use of Reasonable Force (Updated July 2013). This is non-statutory advice from the Department for Education.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/355362/use_of_reasonable_force.pdf

DFE: Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention (2017)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/663453/Reducing_the_Need_for_Restraint_and_Restrictive_Intervention.pdf

De-escalation and Non-Restrictive Physical Intervention Techniques

The emphasis of positive handling is always on preventative measures; environmental management and defusing and de-escalation should make more than 95% of positive handling interventions. Non-Restrictive Physical Intervention includes the use of Physical Presence, and Positive Touch.

All staff should undertake training in de-escalation and conflict resolution techniques as part of their Team Teach refresher training.

Restrictive Physical Intervention Techniques

A restrictive physical intervention or restraint is the positive use of force to control movement with the intention of safeguarding people and property. The concept of restrictive physical intervention involves ensuring that students with a high level of personal stress, a dangerous lack of self-control, and a desire to challenge and threaten are diverted from harming themselves or others, seriously damaging property, displaying disruptive behaviour prejudicial to the safe and secure learning environment of the school. Restrictive physical intervention includes only techniques taught and delivered by qualified Team Teach trainers. These techniques are agreed by the Academy's governing body and are deemed as the most appropriate positive handling techniques for our students. Only staff who hold a valid Team Teach license may use restrictive physical interventions. However, in exceptional circumstances, staff who are out of license may be required to intervene to prevent a young person being harmed. Any action taken should be the result of a dynamic risk assessment whereby the staff members assess themselves to be acting in the best interest of the young person to safeguard them and others.

Wherever possible, restrictive physical intervention is used as part of a planned strategy.

Risk assessments and Behaviour Plans should inform all staff as to the most appropriate use of non-restrictive and restrictive physical intervention with a particular student.

Staff are required to assess the potential risks posed to others as a result of negative behaviour. Appropriate strategies should be outlined in Risk Assessments and Behaviour Plans. Planned restrictive physical intervention strategies should consider the size, build and health of the young person and the physical ability of the staff who work with them to be able to successfully support the young person for the minimum amount of time.

De-escalation techniques, in line with Team Teach training, must always be deployed before any use of physical intervention. De-escalation techniques and approaches are delivered to all staff as mandatory training.

Physical Presence

Staff members' physical presence is a means of communicating authority and re-establishing safety and security. Presence by implication of authority may restrict students' movement for a brief period but is limited to:

- Standing close by to, or in front of a student,
- Standing momentarily or temporarily in the way of a student.

Presence should become neither oppressive nor of excessive duration. Presence is likely to be most effective if complemented by a range of non-verbal communication signals and persuasion or dissuasion.

Physical Presence must be:

- Considered appropriate in the context of a particular situation or incident,
- Used only in the context of engaging the student in discussion about the significance, relevance and consequences of his behaviour,
- Ended if it is met with resistance, when a decision will need to be made whether or not another form of intervention is appropriate.

Restriction of access or exit

There may be occasions when a student has lost self control and is intent on serious self damage, inflicting injury to others, damaging property, interrupting the safe and secure learning environment of the school, or is considered potentially likely to do so. In these circumstances, it would be appropriate to prevent or restrict access by locking, blocking or fobbing doors. It is appropriate to restrict access only when the student is safely supervised in the environment that they are contained in and that the pupil is able to attend to their basic needs.

This type of control is appropriate and permissible provided that:

- The staff member attempts to engage the student in conversation aimed at de-escalating the crisis;
- If the student physically resists, a considered decision is made in respect of justification for an alternative form of intervention;
- Any form of restrictive access that is known to be successful in preventing harm to themselves or others should be included in the students Risk Assessment and Behaviour Plan.

Reflection

Reflection describes a student leaving an environment with the purpose of enabling the student to regain self-control. This must be with the knowledge and agreement of the staff member. If the strategy is successful it should be included in and shared with all staff via the student's Behaviour Plan. The student should be monitored and risk assessed to ensure that during this time they are not at further risk or harming themselves or others.

Interventions by Senior and Middle leaders within the school will also support pupils who need some reflection time. The purpose of this intervention is to reduce time lost for learning and to try to ensure that the negative impact on the safe learning environment is limited.

Positive Touch

Positive touch differs from restrictive physical intervention and the degree of force used.

Positive touch is a means of deflecting a student from destructive and/or disruptive behaviour. It is important that:

- The intervening member of staff should already have an established relationship with the student;
- It should be ended if it is met with resistance, when a decision will need to be made whether or not another form of intervention is appropriate;
- Contact to the hand, upper arm, centre of the back and around the shoulder are usually acceptable forms of positive touch to most students, but this should always be confirmed with the individual student concerned.

Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)

Restrictive physical intervention is the positive use of minimum force. It must only be used:

- Where a student is seriously harming himself, others or seriously damaging property,
- Where a student is in potential danger of seriously harming himself, others or seriously damaging property,
- To prevent or interrupt a criminal offence,
- To interrupt disruptive behaviour prejudicial to the safe and secure learning environment of the school.

It is always the last resort and de-escalation strategies must be proven to have been attempted first.

Restrictive physical intervention techniques must always be:

- Reasonable
- Proportionate
- Necessary

Staff using restrictive physical intervention must always adhere to the following principles:

- De-escalation and conflict resolution techniques must have been exhausted;
- All staff must use help scripts and protocols in line with Team Teach training to support one another in physical interventions;
- Always warn the student calmly, clearly and firmly that you are likely to take physical action BEFORE taking action;
- Maintain emotional and physical control. It is the member of staff's responsibility to call for and/or accept help from another member of staff where necessary;
- The physical restrictive intervention techniques used should provide a gradual, graded system of response commensurate with the situation, task and individual involved. Techniques used should allow for phasing up and down as dictated by the circumstances at the time;
- Whenever possible, two members of staff should be involved in a restrictive physical intervention. This engenders teamwork, requires less effort and is therefore likely to minimise the possibility of injury. It also prevents particular staff becoming associated with the physical control of students;
- The most appropriate method of restrictive physical intervention should be employed and where possible only interventions detailed in the student's positive handling plan should be employed.
- In every case, the minimum use of force and maximum amount of care, control and therapeutic support must be used to effectively resolve the situation;
- All incidents should follow post incident protocol (see flowchart);
- The student should repeatedly be offered the opportunity of exercising his own self-control and holding should cease as SOON AS POSSIBLE;

Only physical interventions that have been taught as part of Team Teach training may be undertaken by staff unless it is an exceptional circumstance.

Recording, Reporting and Reflection

As soon as possible after the incident the student should be given the opportunity to talk through the incident through either debrief book. All such incidents must be recorded with the Bound and Numbered Book. The report should consider the circumstances and justification for using restrictive physical intervention.

The recording form gives comprehensive coverage of an incident, and should be filled in thoroughly and accurately. If staff are unsure of details they should refer to colleagues who were present. Inexperienced staff are encouraged to write up incidents in conjunction with more experienced colleagues.

Recording of the incident must be completed at the earliest opportunity, and certainly within 24 hours of the incident. The Head Teacher must be informed immediately of all incidents where restrictive physical intervention has been used. Parents or Carers

must be informed immediately or as soon as practicable of any use of restrictive physical intervention.

Involved staff should be afforded supportive discussion and reflection as soon as possible. The event should be discussed with all involved staff so that feedback is achieved and the potential for improved approach, teamwork and skills gained. Recording of the incident must take place in liaison with involved colleagues and the student given the opportunity to discuss their feelings and opinions.

Staff should regularly monitor the well being of any young people who have been held in a restrictive physical intervention.

The Pastoral Leader should monitor the use of restrictive physical interventions through the Bound and Numbered Books by examining:

- The frequency of their use;
- The justification for their use;
- Their nature;
- Their users,
- The hotspots.

They must also:

- Report on the use of restrictive physical intervention to the School's Governing Body
- Take appropriate action over issues of concern of either a general or specific nature,

Time must be allocated for staff and students involved in restrictive physical interventions to make reparations and discuss what happened.

It is important that these reflections are fed back to class teams and Behaviour Plans and Risk Assessments are altered accordingly to reflect the most successful course of action for the student.

Police Involvement

While police have no part to play in the application of discipline within the school, they do have a role where issues of potential or actual criminality and breaches of the law may apply. The decision to involve the police lies with the Head Teacher. Any decision made to contact the police will rest on an evaluation of whether a criminal act may have occurred which would routinely warrant police investigation and involvement.

Approval by Mountwood Academy

Signed: _____
Date: _____
Review date: _____

This policy, signed by the Proprietor on behalf of Mountwood Academy, is held by the Head Teacher.

End of policy statement