



Ark John Archer Primary Academy
POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

2021 / 2022



Ark John Archer Primary Academy Positive Handling Policy

Introduction

This document is based on the guidelines and model policy for Positive Handling developed by the Hackney Learning Trust with their kind permission.

Ark John Archer Primary Academy recognises that there is a need, reflected in common law, to physically intervene when there is an obvious risk to the safety of its children, staff, members of the public and property. This applies both on and off school site. If used at all, the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils will be used in the context of respectful, supportive relationship with the young person in order to ensure minimal risk of injury to any person.

Ark John Archer Primary Academy has adopted the term 'Positive Handling' to describe such interventions. This follows the approach taken by an organisation named Team Teach.

The objectives of Team Teach have been adopted, namely:

- To promote the least intrusive positive handling strategy and a continuum of gradual and graded techniques, with an emphasis and preference for the use of verbal, nonverbal de-escalation strategies being used and exhausted before positive handling strategies are utilised
- To enable the school to develop acceptable and authorised responses to disruptive, disturbing, angry and aggressive behaviours in a manner that maintains positive relationships and provides safety for all, by training in Team Teach.
- To minimise the number of incidents involving physical controls and emphasise the importance of exhausting non- intrusive behaviour management strategies in the first instance
- To ensure that staff are aware of the importance of recording and reporting, monitoring and evaluating, all incidents involving positive handling
- To provide a process of repair and reflection for both staff and children

Ark John Archer Primary Academy is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving challenging behaviour.

Physical intervention and or restraint is a last resort and may only be used in a reasonable and proportionate way that is fully compliant with, and in the spirit of this policy. Our highest priority is on the safety and well- being of every child and young person in the school and on the health and safety of every member of staff.

Purpose of Policy

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in our Academy. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff in Ark John Archer Primary Academy. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required.

Ark John Archer Primary Academy acknowledges that physical techniques are only part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management.

Every Effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school:

- Clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care for taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary
- Are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations

Implications of the Policy

The Education and Inspection act 2006 stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere within the school (this includes authorised out-of-school activities);
- Self-injuring
- Causing injury to others
- Committing an offence

Individual members of staff cannot be required to use physical restraint. However, teaching and non-teaching staff work in loco parentis and should always operate with an appropriate 'Duty of Care'; they could be liable for a claim of negligence if they fail to follow the guidance within this policy.

The application of any form of physical control places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and seek alternative strategies wherever possible to prevent the need for physical intervention. Reasonable force will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk.

Definitions

Reasonable Force

No legal definition of reasonable force exists. However, for the purpose of this policy and the implementation of it in Ark John Archer Primary Academy:

- Positive handling uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming him/herself, others or property.

- The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour and individual to be controlled, and the nature of the harm they might cause.

Physical Contact

Situations in which appropriate physical contact occurs between staff and pupils, e.g. in the care of our students needing manual handling; in PE; to comfort pupils.

Physical Intervention

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, e.g. Guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

Physical Control/Restraint

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff, others or property. It is important to note that the use of 'reasonable force' should be seen as a "last resort". The level of compliance from the pupil determines whether or not the interaction is an intervention or a control/restraint. In all cases, the use of physical intervention or restraint must be proportionate.

Underpinning Values

Everyone attending, working in or visiting Ark John Archer Primary Academy has a right to:

- Recognition of their unique identity
- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Learn and work in a safe environment
- Be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse

Pupils attending Ark John Archer Primary Academy and their parents have a right to:

- Individual consideration of pupil needs by staff who have responsibility for their care and protection
- Expect staff to undertake their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies;
- Be informed about the school's code of conduct and relevant policies
- Be informed about the school's complaints procedure

The school will ensure that pupils will be given support to understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits, which govern behaviour in the school.

Authorised Staff

In this school all staff are authorised to use reasonable force within the context of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 – 'The use of reasonable force to control and restrain pupils'. The school will provide training for all staff and the Principal will retain a list of all those staff trained. The list is reviewed on an annual basis.

The Principal is responsible for making it clear to whom such authorisation has been given, in what circumstances and settings they may use reasonable force and for the duration of time this authorisation will last. The Principal will ensure that those authorised are aware of, and

understand, what the authorisation entails. Those to whom the Principal has not authorised will be told what steps to take in the case of an incident where control or restraint is needed.

Support Services working within the school

Support services will have their own policies for care and control of pupils. When working within the school, it is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that colleagues from the support services are aware of school policy and practice.

Training

It will be the responsibility of the Principal to arrange suitable training. Training for all staff will be made available. No member of staff will be expected to undertake the use of reasonable force without appropriate training. Prior to the provision of training guidance will be given on action to be taken. Arrangements will be made clear as part of induction of staff and training will be provided as part of on-going staff development.

The governors of the school are committed to reviewing the behaviour policy annually and will ensure that.

1. Training will be delivered on a needs-based approach and procedures are in place to monitor incidents, following a behaviour audit and implementation of appropriate risk management procedures.
2. All training will include theory on at least the following
 - causes of challenging behaviour
 - prevention strategies
 - positive behaviour management
 - de-escalation
 - risk assessment
 - behaviour support planning
 - de-brief following incidents
3. Physical intervention techniques are not treated in isolation and the school is committed to ensuring that, as a result of incidents, learning opportunities are created for children that allow them to 'own' and take responsibility for their behaviour. In addition, procedures are also in place to ensure that appropriate support is provided for staff and that following an incident pupil/staff relationship are rebuilt and repaired to ensure that a positive learning environment is maintained.

All techniques used take account of the young person's:

- age
- gender
- level of physical, emotional and intellectual development
- special needs
- social context

Where appropriate, Positive Handling Plans are written for individual pupils, and where applicable, these will be designed through multi-professional collaboration agreed with parents. These should be included in any behaviour/support plans.

Risk assessments need to be completed against each pupil when physical intervention or restraint may need to be used, in the context of identified target behaviour(s) and environments in which they occur. The assessment should identify the benefits and risks associated with the strategies being proposed.

Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Staff will consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to pupils, staff, others, property, buildings or the environment. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches should be taken according to the circumstances of the incident.

- Verbal, visual or signing acknowledgement of unacceptable behaviour with a request for the pupil to refrain (this includes negotiation, care and concern)
- Further verbal, visual or signed reprimand, followed by an explanation why it is unacceptable and of what will happen if the behaviour continues
- Warning of intention to intervene physically and that it will cease when the pupil complies, if needed and possible summon appropriate assistance.
- Physical intervention. Reasonable force being used to prevent the pupil harming him/herself, others or property.

Types of Incident

The incidents fall into three broad categories:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an 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 and discipline
Examples of situations, which fall in one of 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, rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
 - A pupil is running in a corridor or stairway etc, such that they might cause an accident likely to injure themselves or others
 - A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave the school (NB: this will only apply if a pupil or others could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A pupil persistently refuses a request to leave the classroom
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

Acceptable measures of physical intervention

The school will put in place systems for managing and reviewing the following:

- Strategies for preventing the occurrence of behaviours which precipitate the use of physical intervention
- Strategies for 'de-escalation' or 'de-fusion' which can avert the need for physical intervention
- Procedures for post-incident support and de-briefing for staff, children, service users and their families
- The concept of reasonable force where 'reasonableness' is determined with reference to all the circumstances, including

The Seriousness of the Incident

The relative risks arising from using physical intervention compared with using other strategies

The age, cultural background, gender, stature and medical history of the pupil concerned

The application of gradually increasing or decreasing levels of force in response to the pupil's behaviour

The approach to risk assessment and risk management employed

- The distinction between
- Seclusion where a pupil is forced to spend time alone against their will in a locked room or room that they cannot leave (NB this is not a permissible form of control)
- Time out which involves restricting the pupil's access to all positive reinforcements as part of a behavioural programme
- Withdrawal which involves removing the pupil from the situation which causes anxiety or distress to a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities
- The distinction between planned physical interventions (where incidents are foreseeable in that they have occurred previously, and a response planned to following a risk assessment) and the use of force in emergency situations (which cannot be reasonably anticipated)
- First aid procedures to be employed and those responsible for implementation in the event of injury or physical distress arising as a result of physical intervention
- Unacceptable practices that might expose pupils or staff to foreseeable risk of injury or psychological distress.

Wherever possible, assistance will be sought from another member of staff.

Positive handling at Ark John Archer Primary Academy is seen as a proactive response to meet individual pupil needs. If a pupil or student requires physical intervention strategies to manage behaviour, a detailed risk assessment and behaviour management plan must be put in place that has been agreed with parents/carers and other agencies where appropriate.

Recording

Where physical control or restraint has been used, a record of the incident will be kept. This record should be logged in the school Serious Incident Book, statutory for all special school provisions. This hard-backed book with numbered pages, retained in the main office and

containing a brief reference to the detailed Serious Incident Record form and Local Authority Health and Safety Incident form as appropriate.

The Serious Incident Record form will be completed as soon as possible after the incident, normally prior to staff going off duty and be signed by all staff involved and the Principal. After the review of the incident, copies of the form should be placed on the pupil's central file. A Health and Safety Incident form will be completed and sent to the Local Authority in situations where injury has occurred to either members of staff or pupils. Where staff have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force, they should have access to support as appropriate.

Parents/carers should be informed on the same day as an incident. They should receive a copy of the incident report, preceded by a telephone call or a note in the home/school book or daily diary if no one was hurt.

Monitoring Incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use reasonable force, this will always be recorded and documented following agreed procedures. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Principal to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour may require the use of reasonable force. Monitoring of incidents will take place on a regular basis and the results used to inform planning to meet individual pupil and school needs.

Action after an Incident

The Principal will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Review of behaviour programme
- Child protection procedure (this may involve investigations by police and/social services)
- Staff or pupil disciplinary procedure
- School behaviour policy
- Exclusions procedure in the case of violence or assault against a member of staff

The member of staff will be kept informed of any action taken. In the case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

Complaints

The availability of a clear policy about reasonable force and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them. Any complaints about staff will be investigated through the school's Complaints Policy. If necessary, the complaint will be dealt with by the Staff Disciplinary Procedures and/Child Protection Procedures.

Other Relevant Policies & Procedures;

Behaviour and Discipline
Complaints Procedures

Child Protection
Equal Opportunities

Policy to be Reviewed: September 2022

Together As One