



Positive Handling Policy

Policy for Alternative Provision Providers used by
County Durham Schools

Reviewed:	Reviewed By:	
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Introduction

Education Plus aims to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and this policy should be read in connection with our Behaviour Policy.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations.

Staff should be aware that when they oversee children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in *loco parentis* and have a 'Duty of Care' to all children they oversee. They must, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure **all** pupils' safety and wellbeing. Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

Principles

On rare occasions physical intervention by staff is required. The physical intervention policy is based upon the following principles:

- Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required.
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Incidents must be recorded and reported to the referring school as soon as possible.
- Parents/Carers and referring schools will be informed of each incident.
- Any incident will be reviewed, with the aim of continuously improving practice.

The Legal Framework

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows 'teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Head Teacher of the appropriate school who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- causing injury to him/herself or others
- committing an offence
- damaging property
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline

Use of physical restraint

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allow the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this. What constitutes reasonable force depends upon the situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. Staff should apply the training they received in Team Teach to de-escalate where possible then use the appropriate holds as practiced in the training. However, as a rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

In all circumstances, alternative methods should be used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint, a last resort.

When physical restraint becomes necessary:

Staff have a duty of care to the child and will:

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why.
- Use the minimum force necessary.
- Involve another member of staff if possible.
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition).
- Use simple and clear language.
- Hold limbs above a major joint, if possible, e.g. above the elbow.
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

Staff will not:

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control).
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil.
- Involve other pupils in the restraint.
- Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct.
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint.
- Bend fingers or pull hair.
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g., around the neck.
- Slap, punch, kick, or trip up the pupil.
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment.

Actions after an incident

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. SLT should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern, it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioral IEP, which may include an anger management program, or other strategies agreed by the referring school. This may require additional support from other services.

In some circumstances a TAF may be appropriate to help identify an additional need for a particular child, these are usually instigated from outside services and an invite will be offered to Education Plus.

It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided. All incidents should be recorded immediately on the Pupil Restraint Report Form. All sections of this report should be completed so that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed. In the event of any future complaint or allegation this record will provide essential and accurate information.

A copy should be filed in the child's appropriate file and in a central file in order to inform individual and school/Education Plus risk assessments.

SLT will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

Risk Assessments

To manage risk and allow proactive strategies to be incorporated all students will have:

- A completed referral form
- A school completed risk assessment

- A pupil management plan

These documents include:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention.
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known.
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take.
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance).
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate.
- The provisions and school's duty of care to all pupils and staff.

If team teach is to take place, please be mindful of:

"Team-Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching 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 service user remains safe". (George Matthews - Director)