

Care and Control Policy



Responsibility: Miss C Forrest

Approved on: March 2022

Next Review Date: April 2024

CARE AND CONTROL POLICY

(Incorporating Physical Intervention, Positive Touch, Physical Contact and Restraint)

Introduction

The policy takes cognisance of relevant legislation, regulations and guidance including the most recent examples from the Department for Education (Use of reasonable force July 2013.)

The policy has been prepared to support all staff who will come into contact with children and for volunteers/work place students working within the school to explain the school's arrangements for care and control. The purpose is to give staff the confidence to act in the best interests of the child. This policy should be made available to parents and pupils upon request.

Duty of Care:

All staff have a duty of care towards the children and young people they look after, their colleagues and others, under Health and Safety Legislation. They have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with policies and risk assessments, and participate in necessary training. They should look out for obvious hazards and reduce foreseeable risks wherever possible.

In any decision involving a child the paramount consideration must be the child's welfare. Paramount means it should be the first thing people think about and it should take precedence over all other considerations. For that reason staff need to carefully consider what is in the best interest of the child, both in the short term and the longer term.

In exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in the best interest of the child and the use of reasonable force may be required to achieve this. Nelson Primary School acknowledges that physical interventions which use varying degrees of reasonable force are only a small part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school/setting:

- (i) Understand their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care
- (ii) Understand that the paramount consideration is the welfare of the individual child
- (iii) Understand that 'reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- (iv) Are provided with appropriate training to manage risk and this training is maintained at an appropriate level.

DfE Guidance 2013 :

States that schools can use reasonable force to:

Prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

This means that staff can use 'reasonable force' to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

In addition, the headteacher and authorised staff can use such force as is as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following 'prohibited items': knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images, articles that has been or likely to be used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property.

At Nelson Primary School, whenever possible, a member of the SLT will be called for to use 'reasonable force'. Staff need to assess the situation and make a professional judgement on whether immediate use force is needed.

The paramount consideration is for staff to work in the best interests of the child. Reasonable force will only be used when no other effective alternatives are available.

Identifying hazards and making risk assessments:

It is essential to make risk assessments when considering the use of reasonable force. Staff should balance the risk of taking action against the risk of not taking action. At Nelson, there is a 5 step approach to risk assessment. This can easily be applied to situations where staff need to make a decision whether to use de-escalation or physical contact.

1. Look for hazards.
2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risk and decide on the necessary and proportionate action.
4. Record your findings. (when necessary).
5. Review and revise (if necessary).

It is not always possible to predict all risks relating to a specific behaviour of a child. When an unforeseeable risk presents itself a "dynamic risk assessment" can be undertaken. This means that staff do a mental risk assessment and then act in the best interests of the child. Once a risk has been identified, or if the risk is already known, then a planned risk assessment needs to be put in writing. If physical touch or restraint is required, a Positive Handling Plan can be developed by staff who work closely with the child, using their knowledge of the child's behaviour and the environment they are working in. Parents need to be informed and involved with this process as they need to be notified of why and how reasonable force is being used in the best interests of their child. Where possible the child's views should be sought and included in the Positive Handling Plan.

Physical intervention is seen as a proactive response to meet individual pupil needs and any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way that staff work together as a team, share their responsibilities and the holistic behaviour management strategies that are used.

1. Physical Contact

There are a range of circumstances in which positive physical contact occurs between staff and pupils in order to support equal opportunities to access to a broad and balanced curriculum such as using PE equipment. Examples of physical contact covers a wide range of positive physical interactions ranging from light touch to firm pressure. Physical contact is necessary to provide provision of care, give comfort, and convey communication, reassurance and safety. Physical contact should be considered positive and part of the adult role-modelling what good touch or contact is. The purpose of any physical contact should be to meet the needs of the child. Where children have special needs their individual requirements should be detailed in an individual plan.

2. Physical Intervention

There needs to be a gradual and graded approach from staff when considering the use of reasonable force. Examples of low risk physical interventions could be guiding or escorting a child to a safer place. Medium to high risk physical intervention could be separating a fight or using a standing or seated restraint.

3. Restraint

Restraint involves the restriction of freedom and movement in circumstances in which the child is resisting. It is reasonable to use proportionate force when there is a significant risk to children, staff or property. It should be used as a last resort when no effective alternatives are available. All incidents involving restraint must be recorded and **reported using the 'Positive Handling Forms' kept in the Head Teacher's office**. The level of force and/or positive handling techniques used towards the child determines whether or not it is classified as restraint.

4. Positive Handling:

- Positive handling uses the minimum degree of force for the shortest period of time necessary to achieve the desired result.
- The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual and the nature of the harm they might cause.
- Positive handling techniques are intended to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child, maintain dignity for both adult and child and allow for communication.

Consideration must be made to clarify the distinction between:

- Seclusion: the term used where a child is forced to spend time alone against their will in a locked room or restricted space which they cannot leave. Staff are advised to follow guidance on the use of seclusion. Seclusion of a child should only be considered as an emergency response and where it is in the best interests of the child.
- Time out: this term is used informally to mean a cooling off period, giving space to calm down and reflect.

- **Withdrawal:** this term is used when removing the person from a 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

Staff Training and Authorised staff

The provisions of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 apply by default to all school staff who are authorised to have care and control of children.

The Head Teacher must consider the training needs for all staff and then retain a list of all staff that have been trained and when the training needs to be refreshed. This list is reviewed within a regular time-frame and consideration given to new members of staff and to volunteers/students/supply staff. Training for staff will be made available and will be the responsibility of the Head Teacher. Training needs should be assessed in relation to foreseeable risks.

Reporting and Recording

If a restraint has been administered, then the incident needs to be recorded in the Bound and Numbered Book which is kept in the Head Teacher's office. It should be considered reasonable and good practice for staff to collaborate when recording an incident in order to ensure the most accurate and complete record possible. If staff do not agree on details of an incident, they should write separate reports. The aim is to promote clear, accurate and useful records.

Records should normally be completed within 24 hours, but the welfare of those involved takes precedence over paperwork. If this is not possible, the Head teacher needs to be informed as soon as possible with the reason for the delay. Records should be kept for at least 7 years. After the review of the incident, a copy of the details will be placed on the pupil's file. Parents/carers of the child need to be informed following any serious incidents where force has been used.

A Health and Safety Accident/Incident Form will be completed and returned to the Authority in situations where injury has occurred to either members of staff or pupils. Where staff have been involved in an incident they should be given time to recover and have access to support such as counselling and debriefing.

Support for staff and children after an incident

The Head Teacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and take action as necessary, such as:

- Reviewing the child's Positive Handling Plan.
- Reviewing curriculum access.
- Reviewing staffing levels.
- Considering the Involvement of outside agencies
- Reviewing provision.

Remember, the priority after a significant incident is to look after the people involved.

Listening and Learning

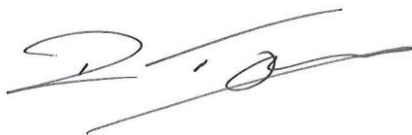
Incidents provide opportunities for teaching and learning. Staff should explain the reasons for any use of reasonable force according to the level of understanding of the child. They should clearly distinguish between restraint, which is designed to keep people safe, and sanctions or consequences. Staff should reinforce simple messages:

- We hold children to keep them safe from harm.
- We hold children to prevent them doing something they will regret.
- We care about children too much to let them be out of control.

Complaints:

If a pupil or parent complains about the use of force used the allegation will be investigated speedily and thoroughly, however it is the responsibility of the person making the allegation/complaint to prove any inappropriate actions by the staff member.

Suspension of staff will not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. School will refer to the 'Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Staff' guidance.



Agreed by Governors on

21st April 2021 23rd March 2022

To be reviewed on April 2024