



Positive Handling- incl Touch Policy Engage MAT

Date of ratification: October 2017.....

Date of review: October 2020.....



1 Introduction

1.1 The Engage Trust recognises that there is a need, reflected in common law, to intervene when there is an obvious risk to safety to its pupils, staff and property.

1.2 The Engage Trust is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for pupils' safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and only use positive handling as a last resort in line with best practice. If used at all, handling will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.

1.3 This policy must be read and implemented in conjunction with the whole school behaviour policy and approach to behaviour management.

1.4 Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 “enables school staff to use force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

(a) Committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil):

(b) Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself), or

(c) Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.”

1.5 All staff positively handling pupils and young people must be aware that they may not:

- Use corporal punishment
- Use pain to gain compliance
- Deprive the person of food or drink
- Humiliate/degrade the child or young person

1.6 Unless medical evidence has been provided to the school, all staff are expected to undertake Steps training and be ready to use safe handling procedures if a pupil is putting themselves or others in danger.

2 Our approach to best practice

2.0 The best practice regarding positive handling outlined below should be considered alongside other relevant policies in the school, specifically those policies involving behaviour, bullying, child protection and health and safety.

2.1 In line with Education and Inspections Act 2006 in the following situations, staff must judge whether or not positive handling would be reasonable or appropriate:

- Risk to the safety of staff, pupils or visitors, or
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property, or
- Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline, or
- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence

This judgement will take into account the circumstances of the incident. All staff should be aware that the use of positive handling in response to a clear or developing danger of injury will always be used to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation.

2.2 Staff will view positive handling of pupils as a last resort for the purposes of maintaining a safe environment. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every strategy will be used to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation.

2.3 If effective, incidents of physical handling of a pupil should decrease in severity and frequency. Regular monitoring of incidents will be carried out to check the effectiveness of any such handling within the team by the Head teacher. Where the frequency or severity of incidents is not reducing, the risk management plan for the pupil will be reviewed.

2.4 Staff will understand the importance of listening to and respecting pupils to create an environment that is calm and supportive, especially when dealing with pupils who may have emotional and behavioural needs, which may increase aggressive behaviours.

2.5 All staff will understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the child, which lie beneath the behaviour as well as to the behaviour itself.

3 Practice regarding specific incidents:

3.0 All policies and practice regarding the supervision of pupils during school hours will be appropriate to the identified needs and behaviours of the pupils. This, combined with the whole school approach to behaviour, should minimise the likelihood of requiring positive handling to an absolute minimum.

3.2 The physical action taken will take into consideration the age and competence of the child and will be the least detrimental alternative.

3.1 Staff intervening with pupils will seek assistance from other members of staff as early as possible, since single-handed intervention increases the risk of injury to both parties and does not provide a witness.

3.2 A member of staff recognising that a situation is escalating to a point demanding positive handling yet feeling unable to carry this out must, as part of their duty of care, clearly tell the pupil(s) to stop the behaviour and seek help by any means available.

3.3 Staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil will have a responsibility to provide a presence and to offer support and assistance should this be required.

3.4 Where possible, staff who have not been involved in the initial confrontation leading up to an incident may be in a better position to intervene or restrain the pupil if this proves necessary

3.5 A pupil's behaviour may be adversely affected by the presence of an audience. Wherever possible, the audience will be removed, or if this is not possible, the pupil and member(s) of staff will withdraw to a quiet but not completely private, place (e.g. two members of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation).

3.6 Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe. Staff will explain that as soon as the pupil calms down, she/he will be released.

3.7 Any physical intervention will need to be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary. Staff will use the minimum force needed to ensure safe outcomes.

4 Positive Handling

4.0 Examples of situations where positive handling may be appropriate include:

- Pupil attacks member of staff or another pupil
- Pupils are fighting

- Pupils are engaging in or on the verge of committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- Pupil is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- Pupil absconds from school or room (this only applies if pupil could be at risk if not kept in school or a room)

5 Holds to be avoided

5.0 The following holds **must not** be used:

- Holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict a pupil's ability to breathe
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping a pupil
- Holding a pupil by the hair or ear
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground

6 Recording an incident

6.0 All incidents that result in non-routine interventions will be recorded using the Significant Incident form and registered in SIMS.

6.1 Records made by staff need to be written within twenty four hours of the incident's occurrence.

6.2 Similarly, contemporaneous notes will also be made by any other members of Staff involved (ie. as witnesses or additional providers of support). The notes will be dated.

6.3 The record will contain the following information:

1 The name(s) and the job title(s) of the member(s) of staff who used reasonable force

2 The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved

3 When and where the incident took place

4 Names of staff and pupils who witnessed the incident

5 The reason that force was necessary

6 Behaviour of the pupil which led up to the incident

7 Any attempts to resolve the situation

8 The degree of force used

9 How it was applied

10 How long it was used for

11 The pupil's response and the eventual outcome

12 Details of any injuries suffered by either staff or pupils

13 Details of any damage to property

14 Details of any medical treatment required (an accident form will be completed, where medical treatment is needed)

15 Details of follow-up, including contact with the parents/carers of the pupil(s) involved

16 Details of follow up involvement of other agencies - police, Social Services.

6.4 Pupil witnesses may also be asked to provide a written account if appropriate

6.5 Copy of this entry will be kept on the pupil's file and retained in line with best practice

6.6 The school will report any injuries to pupils or staff in accordance with HSE Regulations 1995

6.7 Pupils who are identified as likely to require positive handling as part of their Behaviour management will require a Risk Management Plan. This is drawn up in response to the risk posed by the pupil's behaviour and is shared with all staff, parents/carers and the pupil if appropriate.

7 Debriefing Arrangements

7.0 The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. First aid will be administered to anyone who requires it, or medical treatment obtained.

7.1 The pupil will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise him/her. When the pupil regains complete composure, a senior member of staff (or her/his nominee) will discuss the incident with the pupil and try to ascertain the reason for its occurrence. The pupil will be given the

opportunity to explain things from her/his point of view. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish the relationship between the pupil and the member(s) of staff involved in the incident.

In cases where it is not possible to speak to the pupil on the same day as the Incident occurred, the debrief will take place as soon as possible after the pupil returns to school

7.2 All members of staff involved will be allowed a period of debrief and recovery from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff (or her/his nominee) will provide support to the member(s) of staff involved.

7.3 The Head teacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity of any incidents where positive handling was used. The Head teacher (or her/his nominee) will initiate the recording process if not already underway (See 6.0) and review each incident to ensure that any necessary lessons are learned. If the Head teacher was involved, another designated safeguarding lead will review the incident.

7.4 Parents will be informed as per paragraph 10.1.

8 Training Needs of Staff

8.0 In cases where it is known that a pupil will require positive handling on occasions, the school will ensure that appropriate training is provided. Staff involved will identify their training needs in this area.

8.1 Where the school anticipates that positive handling may be required on occasions, advice will be sought from the Norfolk Steps Team.

8.2 Staff trained in positive handling techniques need to update their training in line with Norfolk Steps requirements and ensure that their training record is kept up to date.

9 Authorisation of staff to use positive handling

9.0 We recognise that positive handling will be seldom used and it is a last resort to maintaining a safe environment

9.1 All staff are, by the nature of their roles, authorised to use positive handling as appropriate.

9.2 Best practice will be monitored. Frequent sessions to practice the use of techniques, as well as to disseminate any revised information will be included as part of the school's normal schedule or pastoral meetings.

9.3 These meetings will be open to all staff, including non-teaching staff, who have been authorised to use positive handling techniques

9.4 In the event of a complaint being received by the school in relation to the use of physical force by staff, the matter will be investigated in accordance with our parental complaints process. If the complaint comprises an allegation of assault then the case will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer for advice.

10 Arrangements for Informing Parents

10.1 Parents will be informed of the school's policy regarding positive handling in the following ways:

- As part of the admission procedures, all parents/carers will be provided with information relating to the use of touch and positive handling within each school and alerted to the policy on-line.
- Thereafter, a section about the school's legal obligations to maintain a safe environment and the possible use of positive handling (as a very last resort) with pupils will be included in the school brochure.
- Staff who work with particular pupils who have learning or physical disabilities and who have Individual Healthcare Plans, Individual Behaviour Plans, Audits of Need, and/or Placement Support Plans, may need to use specific techniques routinely to manage challenging behaviour. Such arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers in advance on an individual basis. All interventions will be routinely recorded.
- All parents will be informed after a non-planned incident where positive handling is used with a child.

11 Touch

11.1 Pupils within the Engage Trust may require appropriate touch for reassurance, acceptance, and care using the Norfolk Steps approach, helping them to develop non-verbal communication skills by experiencing positive experiences of touch.

11.2 Appropriate touch may be necessary:

- Where a pupil's emotional needs are such that appropriate touch will help them to self-regulate.
- In younger pupils, appropriate touch may be used to direct pupils or support the development of essential skills.
- As part in many therapeutic approaches or sensory work.
- For medical care which should be detailed on an individual care plan.

11.3 All staff will understand that appropriate touch is caring, thoughtful, consistent, and not withdrawn as a consequence. Appropriate touch can be used as a means of welcoming and promoting

a sense of belonging. Risk management plans should detail the use of touch in individual cases. Staff should be note that some pupils will not want to be touched.

11.4 All staff will understand that appropriate touch is never invasive, humiliating, unwelcome, flirtatious, or sexually gratifying.

11.5 Staff must be aware that appropriate touch may be misunderstood by a pupil and cause sexual arousal. The member of staff must be alert to this and report any such concerns to their line manager or clinical supervisor.

11.6 Parents will be informed of any specific plans made to use touch as part of the care for a pupils within the school.

11.7 If a child takes hold of a member of staff in a time of crisis in a manner other than those accepted under Norfolk Steps (e.g. cuddling, clinging, lap-sitting), the member of staff should inform the senior member of staff and will be asked to write a record of the interaction with an explanation.

11.8 If a pupil inadvertently touches an intimate area of a member of staff, the adult should withdraw without giving negative feedback and record the incident as a safeguarding concern.

11.9 If a member of staff has any concern about the use of touch or observes practice that causes concern, these must be reported to an XLT designated safeguarding professional immediately.

Equality Impact Assessment.

This policy has been reviewed for its impact on issues of equality. The policy has been considered in relation to the following protected characteristics

Gender

Disability

Sexual Orientation

Ethnicity

We have not identified any issues in relation to these protected characteristics. We have carefully considered whether any element of this policy would adversely impact upon the equality of access or opportunity for any staff member or service user, and have been unable to identify any impact which would require mitigation