



Whitehouse
**Positive
Handling
Policy**

Whitehouse PRU is a setting for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Engaging, protecting and teaching ‘our children’ must be the starting point for all policies. This policy must be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding policy.

Introduction

Whitehouse PRU caters for students who present with emotional and behavioural difficulties and as such is a medium to elevated risk setting in terms of Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI).

The Joint Guidance (DFES/DOH: 2002) ¹

The Joint Guidance was produced for:

“staff who work with people who may have behavioural episodes where restrictive physical intervention is necessary for their safety and the safety of others.”

and to be used by those responsible for commissioning, providing and regulating:

“educational provision catering for students with severe behavioural difficulties, for example, those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, autism and learning difficulties which can result in students displaying extreme behaviour”.

It is therefore appropriate that we use the ***Joint Guidance*** and ***The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils Guidance for Schools in England DCSF: Revised 2010*** as our main references in matters concerning RPI.

The Head and the Governing Bodies recognise the serious implications for all concerned when the use of physical intervention becomes necessary. In particular, they acknowledge the stress and very real anxiety that such actions can and do generate in students and young people, parents/carers and staff. The production of this policy and guidance will ensure everyone has a positive and safe way of responding to behaviour that requires the use of physical intervention.

Objectives:

The objectives of our policy are in maintaining our duty of care in:

- protecting the safety of all students
- protecting the safety of staff
- protecting the good order of the learning environment
- preventing damage to property
- preventing students from committing criminal acts.

¹ * **GUIDANCE ON RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY AND AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER, IN HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE SETTINGS (2002)**
(Guidance issued under section 7 of the LASSL Act 1970. This document is issued jointly by Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills)

In discharging that duty of care, staff might be required to use force for the purpose of preventing a pupil from, for example:

- self-harming
- causing injury to other students or staff
- causing personal injury
- committing an offence
- causing damage to property
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline in a school or among any of its students.

Minimising the use of force

In order to minimise the use of force, staff work within the framework of the following principles and procedures:

- creating and maintaining a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require using force
- using Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning approaches to teach students how to manage conflict and strong feelings
- de-escalating incidents if they do arise
- only using force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force
- using risk assessments and positive handling plans for individual students.

Staff authorised to use force

All staff employed by Whitehouse who normally work with students are authorised to use force. This may also include volunteers.

Deciding whether to use force

Staff must consider the following guidelines when deciding whether or not to use force.

- There is a clear and unequivocal emphasis on the rights of students to be kept safe at all times.
- Physical intervention should only be used when:-
 - the situation is, or is likely to become, dangerous for students and/or staff
 - there is a risk to the maintenance of good order
 - a criminal act is being committed
 - property is being damaged

- or when previous history suggests that failure to act promptly will result in any of the above.

And

- all else has been tried
- the potential consequences of not intervening are sufficiently serious to justify considering use of force
- the chances of achieving the desired result by other means were low
- the risks associated with not using force outweighed those of using force.

Positive Handling Plans (PHPs) are produced for all students and keep staff informed about how to deal with the particular risks that each student presents. The PHP will also advise where a student presents a difficulty as a result of SEN/disability or personal circumstance, such as domestic violence

Using force

It is essential that staff use only the minimum force necessary to achieve the desired result. Staff are advised to give a clear oral warning to the pupil that force might have to be used. All staff are expected to be trained in Team Teach positive handling techniques and the types of force they use should be in accordance with their training.

Any form of restraint that is likely to injure a pupil (particularly anything that could constrict breathing) should only be used in extreme emergencies and where there was no viable alternative.

As far as possible, force should not be used unless or until another responsible adult is present to support, observe and call for assistance.

Training

All teaching and support staff are trained in the use of appropriate methods of holding and restraint and are expected to apply them in the best interests of the student, reasonably and proportionately. Training is provided by Team Teach and is accredited by the Institute of Conflict Management (ICM). Staff should complete the 12 hour Basic Team Teach Course. The school currently has three members of staff who are trained as Intermediate Instructors and one member of staff who is trained as Advanced Instructor.

The use of physical interventions including escorting, holding and restraint has been the subject of staff training days.

Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the student, 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 student remains safe.

Key aspects of the training are:

- Clear and unequivocal emphasis on the rights of students to be kept safe at all times.
- Physical intervention should only be used when all else has been tried and
 - the situation is likely to become dangerous for students and/or staff
 - there is a risk to the maintenance of good order
 - a criminal act is being committed
 - property is being damaged
 - or when previous history suggests that failure to act promptly will result in any of the above.
- Staff need to keep themselves safe at all times.
- Past experiences of students will affect the way they respond to physical interventions. Those with a history of physical or sexual abuse will often have painful and disturbing memories triggered by such interventions.
- Students with the above experiences could also experience adverse reactions to witnessing physical interventions.
- All actions must be conducted in the context of the school's policy.
- Staff have a right to be trained in the use of physical interventions.
- Clear and accurate records of the antecedents, behaviour and consequences must be maintained.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

All incidents involving restraint and/or the use of significant force must be recorded on the ***Positive Handling Record and Response*** form. The form must be completed on the day of the incident and include the names of all members of staff involved and any witnesses. The form must be left in the completed tray in the staff room on the day of the incident.

Mike Lloyd is responsible for ensuring the forms are viewed and signed and logging them in the bound and numbered book. The Behaviour lead holds responsibility for the overall logging, monitoring and evaluating of incidents.

When a ***Positive Handling Record and Response*** form has been completed for a particular student, it is the responsibility of the class teacher/support staff to ensure a

phone call is made to the student's parents/carers on the day of the incident(s). One call is sufficient for multiple incidents.

If it is likely that the student would come to significant harm as a result of such a phone call, then the incident would not be reported to the parents/carers but would be reported to the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer.

Data Protection: The school allows full on-site access for parents/carers/professionals to the positive handling forms and bound book where the information relates to their own children/clients.

In order to maintain data protection integrity for other children and staff who might be mentioned in these documents we do not allow the forms or copies of such to be taken off-site.

Post Incident Support

An essential element of the procedure following the use of restraint or significant force is the positive debrief. This takes place when all parties have recovered. Staff will encourage students to explore their feelings prior to the incident and how those feelings affected their behaviour. While acknowledging and understanding the student's feelings, staff should help him/her to plan alternative behaviours as a response to those feelings so as to avoid physical intervention in the future. Staff must ensure that students understand why physical force was used.

Similar post incident support is also available for members of staff where the need arises. It is an expectation that staff acknowledge the importance of discussing with a senior member of staff any personal issues raised for in the use of physical restraint.

Complaints and Allegations

If a complaint or allegation is made by a student about the actions of a member of staff, it will be investigated in the first instance by the Head Teacher who will contact the parents/carers of the student. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved by the Head Teacher, then the matter will be referred to the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer.

Monitoring and Review

The Head, the Governing Bodies and the Local Authority will support the actions of staff in the use of physical intervention provided that they have been conducted in the context of this policy and the methods drawn from recognised training have been followed.

The management committee view the policy and are presented with data regarding numbers of incidents. The member of staff with overall responsibility for the monitoring and review of this policy is the Behaviour Lead. This policy is reviewed annually.

Reviewed June 2017