

Houghton Conquest Lower School and Pre-School

## **Positive Handling Policy**

### **Our school policy is to avoid the need for physical intervention at all times**

#### **Aim**

Physical intervention will only be used as a last resort to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

Our positive Behaviour Policy aims to create a positive working environment through the use of sanctions and rewards - see Behaviour Policy.

The aim of this policy is:

- To establish clarity amongst Governors, staff, parents and pupils as to the circumstances in which physical intervention may be appropriate
- To describe what actions staff may take when incidents occur that may require the physical restraint of a pupil.
- To define the procedures that must be taken immediately after any such incident.
- To define who is allowed to use physical intervention – see Appendix 3.

#### **Circumstances in which physical intervention may be appropriate and definitions**

*A person to whom this section applies may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing a pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following, namely—*

*(a) Committing any offence,*

*(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.*

*Section 93 Education and Inspection Act 2006*

In the context of this document, physical intervention is the application of "reasonable force".

#### **Reasonable Force**

There is no legal definition of reasonable force provided by the DfE, so it is not possible to set out comprehensively when it is reasonable to use force or the degree of force that may be reasonably used.

The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of a particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil committing a trivial misdemeanour or any situation that can clearly be resolved without force.

The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

The first priority is the health and safety of pupils and staff.

### Preventative Strategies

All staff have a sound knowledge of the school's strategies for dealing with pupils who are distressed, angry or potentially violent. Techniques for calming pupils or re-directing their outbursts will always be used prior to the use of any physical contact.

The following actions should be taken to reduce the risk of escalation:

- Calming oneself
- Using appropriate body language, positive tone of voice and non threatening stance
- Attempting to calm the situation by talking down the problems and using calming techniques appropriate to the individual
- Listening and counselling
- Negotiating with all parties
- Asking onlookers to leave the scene
- Respecting the dignity of all concerned
- Taking the problem / issue seriously

### See also Appendix 2

Where time allows parents will be contacted and will be expected to come to the school to help resolve the issue with their child and to help to calm the situation.

### The decision to use physical intervention

Physical intervention will only be used in order for the school to carry out its duty of care towards the pupil concerned and / or other users of the building and property.

Staff faced with a situation where physical intervention may be required should adhere to the following sequence wherever possible:

1. Send for help immediately (if not to help with the incident itself then to ensure that there are adult witnesses).
2. Appraise the situation quickly and honestly and decide whether or not it is controllable by oneself – especially in terms of physical strength.
3. Send away any other pupils who may be at risk or who may be exacerbating the situation
4. Intervene non-physically as quickly as possible, using a calm voice and displaying a calm and authoritative demeanour.
5. Try to interpose oneself between the protagonists (or between the protagonist and the object at risk) without using physical contact, and without putting oneself at risk.
6. **If no other action is possible to prevent serious injury** use physical contact to restrain the pupil(s), bearing in mind the constraints listed below, whilst explaining in a calm and measured way why the action is being taken, and where the pupil is going.
7. Continue to talk calmly and *non-judgementally* to the protagonist(s) while they regain their composure and become able to follow normal verbal instructions.

### Physical intervention Techniques

The school **does not** include a policy of training staff in particular physical intervention techniques, as these would be inappropriate to the age and physical development of the pupils, and to the type of incidents that occur in this school. It is considered better to identify types of physical intervention that **should not** be used on children (see below).

Physical intervention will only be used as a last resort where a pupil is endangering themselves or others through their actions and where no other preventative action has proved effective.

Staff should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Remove other pupils from the area immediately
- Whenever possible ensure that two members of staff carry out any physical intervention
- If the situation can be contained in the short term send for a senior member of staff
- Proceed as previously listed

## **Unacceptable physical contact**

Do not use any of the following types of physical contact:

- holding a pupil around the neck or by the collar or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe (this includes double arm locks)
- twisting or forcing limbs against joints
- tripping up a pupil
- holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear
- holding a pupil face down on the ground
- holding a pupil in any way that may be considered to be indecent

## **School Procedures following an incident**

If any incident takes place which requires physical intervention or the physical restraint of a pupil, the following actions should be taken:

1. The Head Teacher or most senior member of staff present on site should be informed immediately.
2. The staff involved should complete a written report for the Headteacher (see Appendix 1) – no later than 24 hours after the incident.
3. The Head Teacher should make a decision as to the following issues:
  - whether or not medical help is required
  - whether or not the incident should be reported as a Child Protection issue
  - whether or not to contact the police
  - whether or not to contact the LA
  - when and how to contact parents
4. A record of the incident and a copy of any reports must be retained for future reference.
5. Any injuries must be recorded on the accident form and within 24 hours must be countersigned by senior teacher/Headteacher. Any reportable injuries needed to be input onto the AssesssNET online system by the School Business Manager within 3 days. (Ms Harvey is the nominated site administrator).

## **Monitoring of School Policy and Practice**

Incidents of physical restraint will be reported to the Governing Body.

**PHYSICAL RESTRAINT – INCIDENT RECORD**

Name of Pupil/s: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_ SEN status: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ M / F \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of adults present: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Incident: verbal abuse, threatening behaviour, refusal, kicking, punching, bullying, fighting, and other:

\_\_\_\_\_

Involving: staff, pupils, property, equipment, other:

\_\_\_\_\_

Why Physical Restraint was necessary:

Clearly define the circumstances that led to the incident, describing the pupil's behaviour, the danger perceived, and the restraint used. Include the duration of any intervention.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have any marks or injuries been suffered by staff or pupil(s) – give details

\_\_\_\_\_

Medical Treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken by the Headteacher: \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded in Accident Book | <input type="checkbox"/> Police/others contacted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Protection          | <input type="checkbox"/> LA informed             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Carer contacted    | <input type="checkbox"/> Racial Incident record  |

Name & Signature of Staff Member reporting \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Headteacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Form to be kept on file – Governing Body to be informed

**NON-PHYSICAL CRISES INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES**

<b>DO'S</b>	<b>DON'TS</b>
<b>Do appear calm and relaxed</b>	Don't: appear afraid and unsure of yourself appear bossy, arrogant, nor assume an "I don't give a damn about you" attitude
Do keep the pitch and volume of your voice down	Don't raise your Voice
Feel comfortable with the fact that you are in control (if you control yourself you will control the situation)  Project a calm assured feeling that you will see the situation through to a peaceful end whatever happens	Don't appear to expect an attack, this will provoke one
Do talk <b>with</b> the pupil, not at him/her	Don't give commands Don't make demands
Be very matter of fact if the pupil becomes agitated  Be sensitive and flexible  Be flexible yet consistent	Don't make threats – especially any that you cannot carry through  Don't maintain continuous eye contact  Don't gesticulate – this can provoke confrontation
Stay close to the pupil and attend only to him/her  Be patient and don't give up	Don't turn your back or leave
Monitor breathing (chest movements telegraph any aggressive responses)  If a pupil's agitation increases to the verge of attack:	If a pupil's agitation increases to the verge of attack
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge his/her feelings</li> <li>• Continue with a matter of fact attitude</li> <li>• Always leave the pupil an avenue of escape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't display emotion of any kind</li> <li>• Don't argue</li> <li>• Don't corner the pupil physically or psychologically</li> </ul>
Do remain seated as long as the pupil does	Don't get up and move towards the pupil – avoid crowding
Stay near him/her, about one arm length away. Stand to one side	Don't give up and don't move away
Learn how to relax your muscles and keep them under control	Don't tense your muscles

Teachers are automatically authorised by law to use physical restraint

Other staff who are authorised to use physical restraint when no other action is possible are indicated by role within school – they are as follows:

- Receptionist /Office Staff
- Admin Assistants
- Learning Support Assistants
- Lunchtime Supervision Team