



Positive Handling Procedure 2021

Introduction:

This guidance should be read in conjunction with:

- *DfE Guidance - Use of Reasonable Force in Schools – July 2013*
- *DfE Advice and Guidance - Behaviour and Discipline in Schools – January 2016-updated 2020*
- *Keeping Children safe in Education 2021*

And the school's:

- *Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy (2021)*
- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy + Checklist (2021)*
- *Moving and Handling Procedure*
- *Whistleblowing Procedure*

Personal development, behaviour, wellbeing and safety at John Chilton School is outstanding. Staff, pupils and parents form very positive relationships and, in general, our pupils interact with others in a very positive manner. Positive touch is part of our everyday interactions with our pupils for example:

- holding younger pupils' hands when walking around the school
- massage and sensory integration
- supporting a pupil to access an activity
- participating in a therapy programme
- comforting a distressed pupil
- praising and congratulating a pupil
- giving first aid
- demonstrating an action in a movement or PE session

For the vast majority of our pupils positive handling in terms of physical intervention/restraint will never be required. However, on occasion a pupil may become very distressed/upset and at times their behaviour may challenge those around them or be deemed dangerous to themselves or others. Keeping the pupil and those around them, safe at these times is essential and this may mean physical intervention/restraint is required. Usually this would be a one off situation and staff will deal with this in a sensitive, professional manner. Occasionally a pupil may require physical intervention/restraint as part of their Behaviour Plan. If this is required a Positive Handling Plan should be written with all members of the team, the pupil (as appropriate) and, where possible, involve the parents/carers. A Positive Handling Plan for an individual pupil should relate to their Positive Behaviour Programme, and the fundamental values and ethos of JCS. Its success will be derived from a whole school, holistic response to positive behaviour support. All areas of a pupil's behavioural needs (including analysis of triggers, environment, patterns, issues) are explored carefully whenever a pupil requires Positive Handling and staff debrief afterwards to reflect on the strategies, procedures and 'holds' used and include SLT in this feedback regularly.

Positive Handling Strategies

Physical Intervention should only be used where it is reasonable to do so to prevent harm occurring to the pupil or others and it is this philosophical stance that links the legal framework with good practice.

The DfE states that schools 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.

Staff are trained in positive handling techniques on a cycle of CPD by our in-school, specialist team who have been trained to lead training sessions by external specialist provider. Staff also have regular refreshers. The staff who lead training receive regular training and refreshers. Staff and teams who work with pupils with Positive Handling plans have additional opportunities for refreshers and bespoke sessions linking to specific pupils where required.

In the event of a legal challenge the school would be expected to provide evidence to show how the behaviour procedures promoted the avoidance of harm being caused. A Positive Handling Plan clearly links policy to practice and shows how an individual planned approach has been developed for the pupil. When producing Positive Handling Plans reference should always be made to the school's policy, multi-agency involvement where appropriate, this includes the involvement and support of both the pupil and their parents/carers, wherever possible.

The Positive Handling Plan is based upon five main criteria:

- That the pupil is involved, as much as possible, from the outset
- That the plan promotes and on occasion, improves curriculum access
- That a specific target is set which aims to reduce physical intervention
- That the plan is based upon changing conditions and approaches toward the pupil from one of control to one of co-operation
- That it affords the individual pupil with opportunities to own and subsequently change their behaviour

It is acknowledged that even with the best planning there may occur situations where the pupil may participate in aggressive behaviour. As professionals our response should be aimed at being proactive and attempting to anticipate the possibility of challenging behaviour and taking action to reduce the likelihood that they may occur.

Staff log all physical intervention on **'My Concern' Log**.

As a school we recognise that we need to retain, uphold and promote the dignity, independence and equality for each pupil. For this reason, staff only ever use Positive Handling with pupils who are wheelchair users to limit their movement or access if their choices are leading to danger to themselves or others. The school deems the removal a pupil who is a wheelchair user or limiting their movement in this chair to keep them safe as an act of Positive Handling and this is logged and analysed. This is discouraged and only deemed appropriate in instances of extreme imminent danger.

Unlawful Actions:

All staff must be aware that they must not:

- use force as a punishment as this action would fall within the definition of corporal punishment, which has been abolished;
- use pain to gain compliance;
- deprive the child of food or drink;
- require the child to wear inappropriate clothing
- require the child to wear clothing that marks them out as different;
- humiliate and/or degrade the child or young person;
- use punitive measures to intentionally cause discomfort or distress;
- confine pupils in rooms that are unsafe and/or unheated as punishment;
- lock pupils in rooms to isolate them.

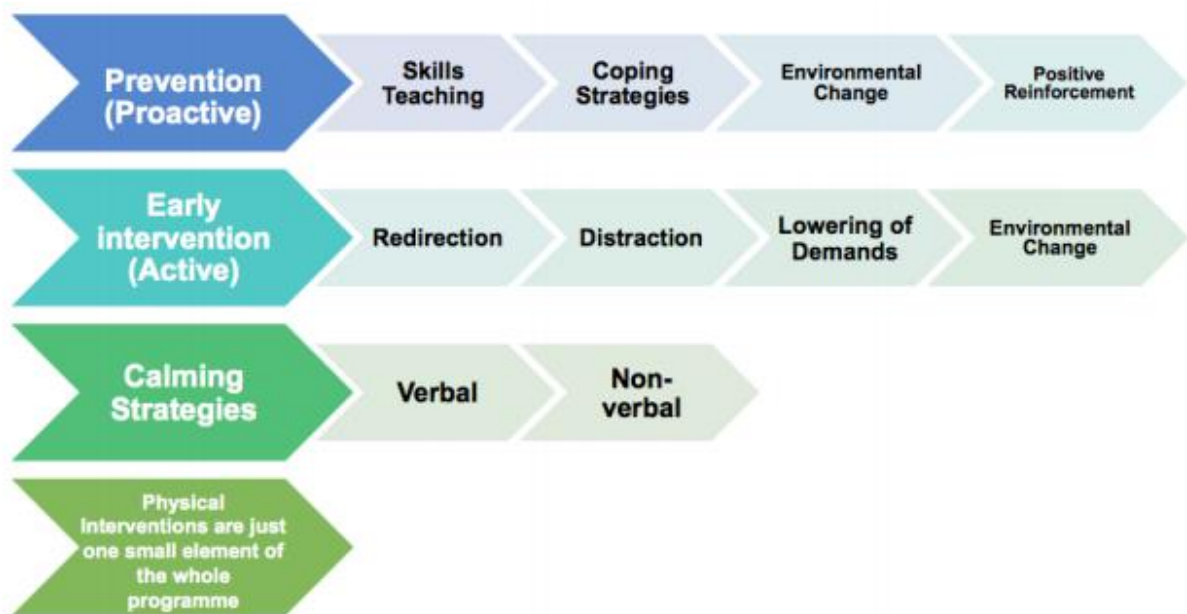
Prevention and De-escalation:

De-escalation techniques are most successful when used early, before the child or young person becomes physically challenging or dysregulated. To do this, it is necessary to be aware of and spot early signs of agitation such as:

- balled fists;
- fidgeting;
- shaking;

- ‘eye-balling’ another pupil;
- head thrust forward;
- clenched jaw;
- speech becoming more rapid or high-pitched.

The school will always seek to use prevention and de-escalation to promote positive changes to behaviours. This includes therapeutic interventions and changes to the environment to meet individual need. It is acknowledged that sometimes physical intervention is a **last resort**. In any physical restraint incident the pupil will be released at the earliest safe opportunity.



Pupils with Severe/Complex Learning Difficulties:

Often, due to the complexity of learning difficulty and the need for support, pupils with S/CLD require regular physical intervention. Therefore, in accordance with Ealing Guidance (2009) low and medium-level intervention would not be recorded unless the pupil has been identified as having particular behaviours that need monitoring through the school's behaviour logs.

Low level intervention includes:

- limitation of movement through the use of high level or double handles to doors
- leading by the arm
- being held or assisted in maintaining a position e.g.: sitting in a chair
- use of reins, wrist-straps, buggies for management and safety of the pupil out of school (especially in the early years)

Medium level intervention includes:

- removal of the pupil from an activity
- placing a pupil in a chair or other confined area with the intention of limiting mobility
- removal from an area of the classroom or playground
- catching a pupil by whatever safe means is possible, to prevent the pupil from harming him/herself or others
- holding a self-injuring pupil, e.g. by the hands while he/she becomes calmer.

On the occasion that high level intervention is needed, a Physical Restraint Incident Form will be completed.

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After any incident a member of the Senior Leadership Team will meet with the people involved and discuss the incident and the triggers and responses, to identify the strategies used, where the situation became critical and if any different actions or responses could be taken in the future. A record of incidents where positive handling techniques have been used will be kept and monitored for changes, patterns and trends and reductions due to impact of preventative measures.

High level intervention would include:

- lifting a pupil in order to remove them from a situation
- restraining in a chair (with arms), 2-3 members of staff maintaining an enforced control (one holding feet, one either side holding arms)
- holding a pupil, on the floor, in a seated position, one adult sitting supported by a firm surface, arms around the young person's body with a second adult maintaining control