Pool House C P School

Care and Control Policy

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils and for volunteers working within school to explain the school's arrangements for care and control. Its contents are available to parents/carers and pupils. A statement about the schools discipline and behaviour policy is made to parents in the school prospectus. This statement includes information on the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils.

The policy has been developed in response to the recommendations of Circular 10/98 "The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils", issued following the enactment of Section 550A of the 1996 Education Act. It also follows the policies of the Lancashire Education and Cultural Services Committee.

The policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils.

The policy was prepared after staff discussion and has been accepted by the Governing Body. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy. The policy will be reviewed annually.

Purpose of Policy

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all members of the school community. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff at Pool House School:

- clearly understand that this policy and their responsibilities in te context of their duty of care in tasking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary and
- are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

The application of any form of physical control places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances describes in this policy. Staff, therefore have a responsibility to follow the policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

Reasonable force will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are ast risk.

Definitions

1. Physical Contact

Situations in which proper physical contact occurs between staff and pupils, eg: in the case of pupils with learning disabilities; in games/PE; to comfort and support pupils.

If at any time a member of staff feels that physical contact in order to comfort or support a pupil is inappropriate, or feels personally vulnerable they should deal with the child in a sensitive manner so as not to give the impression of rejection.

Inappropriate contact includes:

Pulling, pushing or dragging a child by their clothes or body unless you are a designated handler in the process of implementing the Care and Control policy (see 2 below).

2. Physical Intervention

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

3. Physical Control/Restraint

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. All such incidents must be recorded.

An exceptional situation or circumstance may require an undesignated member of staff to intervene under their Duty of Care responsibility.

Positive Handling Plan

Where it is expected that a pupil may require regular handling a Positive Handling Plan will be written and shared with staff, pupil and parents.

Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working at Pool House School has a right to:

- recognition of their true identity
- be treated with respect and dignity
- learn and work in a safe environment
- be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse

Pupils attending Pool House School and their parents have a right to:

- individual consideration of their needs by the staff who have responsibility for their care and protection
- expect staff to undertake their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the schools policies
- be informed about school rules, relevant policies and the expected conduct of all pupils and staff working in school
- be informed about the school's complaints procedure

The school will ensure that pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits which govern behaviour in the school.

Parents should have committed themselves through the Home-School Agreement to ensure the good behaviour of their child and that he/she understands and follows the Schools' Behaviour Policy.

Authorised Staff

Within the school, the following staff may use reasonable force to manage or control pupils.

Mrs Cole
Mr Parkinson

Authorisation is not given to supply staff, volunteers or parents.

The Headteacher is responsible for making clear to whom such authorisation has been given, in what circumstances and settings they may use force and for what duration of time this authorisation will last. The Headteacher will ensure that those who are authorised are aware of, and understand, what the authorisation entails. Those whom the Headteacher has not authorised will be told what steps to take in the case of an incident where control or restraint is needed, for example to contact an authorised member of staff or to provide help in the form of remaining to witness any action taken.

Strategies for dealing with challenging behaviour

All staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order.

Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to pupils or staff, property, buildings or the environment. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches should be taken according to the circumstances of the incident.

- Verbal admonishment of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain (this may include negotiation, care and concern)
- Further verbal reprimand stating that this is the second request for compliance; giving an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable; giving an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues
- Warning of intention to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies, if possible summon assistance
- Physical intervention. Reasonable force uses the minimum degree of force to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Escalating Situation

The 1996 Education Act (S550C) stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following\:

- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in the classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere (including extra curricular activities)
- self-injuring or placing him or herself at risk
- injuring others
- causing damage to property, including that of the pupil themselves
- committing a criminal offence

Types of incidents

Incidents fall into three broad categories:

- where action is necessary in self defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property
- where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order or discipline

Examples of situations which fall within one of the first two categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil
- pupils are fighting
- a pupils is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- a pupils absconds from a class or tries to leave school

Examples of situations which fall into the third category:

- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

Acceptable measures of physical intervention

The use of any degree of force can only be deemed reasonable if:

- it is warranted by the particular circumstances of the incident
- it is delivered in accordance with the seriousness of the incident and the consequences which it is desired to prevent
- it is carried out as the minimum to achieve the desired result
- the age, understanding and gender of the pupil are taken into account
- it is likely to achieve the desired result

Wherever possible assistance should be sought from another member of staff before intervening.

Physical intervention uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming himself, herself, others or property.

This form of physical intervention may involve staff:

- physically interposing themselves between pupils;
- blocking a pupil's path;
- escorting a pupil;
- shepherding a pupil away.

In extreme circumstances, trained staff may need to use more restrictive holds.

Any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way in which the staff exercise their responsibilities and the behaviour management strategies used. Wherever reasonable force is used, staff **must** keep talking positively to the pupil unless it has been agreed otherwise in an individual handling plan.

Recording

Where physical intervention has been used to manage a pupil, a record of the incident **may** need to be kept. Where physical control or restraint has been used a record of the incident will be kept. The record will include:

- name of pupil

- date, time and place of incident
- a brief description of the incident and actions taken

The record will be completed as soon as possible, signed by all staff involved and the Headteacher.

Where staff have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force they may need access to counselling and support which will be made available through the Headteacher.

Action after an incident

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated as necessary. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or pupil this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

Child Protection Procedures
Staff Facing Allegations of Abuse Procedure
Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure
School Behaviour Policy
Exclusions Policy

The member of staff will be kept informed of any action taken.

In the case of any action being taken against a member of staff he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

Complaints

The availability of a clear policy about reasonable force and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them.

Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's Complaints About Staff procedures.

The Chair of Governors will be informed of complaints but other governors will not be informed initially as a complaint may require further action on their part.

Monitoring of Incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use reasonable force, this will be recorded and documented. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Headteacher to the needs of any pupil whose behaviour can only be contained by the use of reasonable force. This process will also address patterns of incidents and evaluate trends which may be emerging.

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