



Relationships Policy

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To be read in conjunction with 'Relationships Policy Processes and Procedures' campus document.

Policy Review Schedule			
Date Policy agreed by SLT	30/08/24	Date Policy Agreed by Governing Body	
Policy Review Schedule	Annual	Date for Review	23/08/25
Signed by the Chair of Governors			
Signed by Headteacher	Jon Kelly		

Newhaven School Relationships Policy

This policy was reviewed in 2023-4 with input from staff and is also written paying due regard to 'Behaviour in schools- guidance for Headteachers and school staff' (DfE- 2024). It serves the function of what many schools call a 'behaviour policy' and is called the Newhaven Relationships Policy as it written in the context of Newhaven being a trauma and neurodiversity informed school, our belief that relationships and the skills to maintain them are the fundamental building blocks of success. It also follows the principles that all behaviour is communication and that the main driver for changing student behaviour is staff behaviour.

1. Values

This policy is informed by the underlying tenets of the school ethos and values whereby the development of trusting relationships will support students to feel safe in relationships with other students and staff and that active teaching of communication skills, emotional regulation and understanding of how neurodiversity and trauma impacts on their interactions with the world supports the development of sustained relationships and other achievements.

It is underpinned by three key tenets:

- That behaviour is a form of communication and will indicate the state of mind and levels of stress a student is feeling.
- That our response to behaviours must be personalised appropriately to meet the needs of students with SEND and/or a history of trauma. This will involve making significant planned adjustments and deep reflection on why things went wrong when they do. The 5P approach underpins this personalisation at KP and reflects the framework for work elsewhere in the school.
- That the main driver behind changing student behaviour patterns is changing staff behaviour.

Our primary concern is that students, staff and visitors should feel and be safe, cared for and feel a sense of belonging in the school at all times, have their wellbeing protected and being able to make academic progress whilst always being safeguarded. To achieve this we will aim to stay and keep children calm and therefore ready to learn (in the 5P green zone). To achieve this we will apply our deep understanding of student needs to our planning for them.

We also insist that all members of the school community must be treated inclusively and be free from any form of discrimination or prejudice and we will create and maintain an atmosphere and ethos of tolerance, equity, diversity, respect, understanding, kindness and a sense of citizenship throughout the school community.

As a staff, we recognise the need for our actions to ensure that students' needs are met both in and outside the classroom and as such will plan to minimise anxiety amongst our students and any other circumstances which are likely to trigger tricky behaviour. This process is structured through the 5P Approach at King's park which parallels our approach elsewhere:

5P element	What we do across Newhaven
Profiling	Assessments on entry; ongoing assessment (specialist); person centred planning; academic assessment; reviews; debrief insights; space to think; pastoral meetings.
Prioritising	What are the most important next steps for a child? Is it academic progress or is step one engagement with learning?; teacher planning; curriculum development; interventions; pastoral support; resets; restoration; space to think; annual reviews; reviews; parental meetings; work of specialists.
Problem Analysis	Working out what's going wrong? MDT; Teacher/ dept level planning; debriefs; reviews; annual reviews; space to think; parental meetings; outside agencies;
Problem Solving	
Planning	Lesson, programme of study, curriculum; tutor time; other interventions (literacy, emotional regulation; equity; outside agencies); MDT; annual reviews; CP based reviews.

We understand that external controls (sanctions and rewards), whilst important will only impact where behaviour is a matter of choice. By focussing on relationships, regulation and restorative approaches we will support the development of internal controls. Sanctions and suspensions will be used sparingly as these may serve to re-traumatise students and therefore reinforce negative behaviours. Therefore, we aim to provide pupils with a personalised response to supporting their personal development and well-being. Whilst each individual pupil will benefit from a consistent approach, being consistent and fair is not about everyone getting the same (equality), but everyone getting what they need (equity).

To achieve this we must begin by *'leaving our egos at the door'* recognising that behaviour may feel deskilling, unjust and anxiety provoking but that it is not personal. As the professional adults in the relationship, our job is to act with consistency (both individually and collectively), strive to understand the purpose of behaviour and reflect on our actions so that we learn from behavioural incidents. In cases of problematic pupil behaviour, regardless of how sustained and disruptive, the pupil's out-of-school circumstances, personal history and special educational needs and disabilities must be taken into account. Comprehensive support is given before or alongside disciplinary measures. "Thinking of a pupil as behaving badly disposes you to think of punishment. Thinking of a pupil as struggling to handle something difficult encourages you to help them through their distress".

These tenets are supported by the trauma informed approach outlined below and the 5Ps approach being embedded at King's Park this year.

2. Trauma Informed Approach

By using a trauma informed psychological approach, Newhaven seeks to understand the underlying causes of behaviour and how they are informed by students' history and individual needs. We understand that functions of behaviour may include communication, emotional regulation and adaptation to environmental circumstances. Newhaven is invested in supporting the very best possible relational health between;

- Parent and child
- Child and child
- Child and school staff
- Parent and school staff
- School staff
- School staff and senior leaders
- School staff and external agencies

Where we have been unable to plan to meet needs effectively and a child or other person has become heightened we will respond using an Emotion Coaching approach:

Empathise: aim to get alongside the child emotionally. Say things like 'I am sorry that happened to you, you must feel very sad/upset/angry/hurt/worried' or 'I can see that you get angry when that happens / when I do this / when I ask you to do this'.

Soothe: help them to regulate their emotions. This may involve remaining quiet and staying present and calm at an appropriate distance. Speak slowly and calmly giving time to process your words. Validate how they are feeling 'It's hard to be calm when that happens'; meet their individual needs by offering spaces where they feel calm key people for them to see or sensory tools that will help. Visual prompts may help here. Remember there is no time limit for this- it may take all day!

Label feelings: students will often find it hard to describe how they are feeling so we can help them by making suggestions. Always frame these as guesses or ideas and be aware that they may not agree with you! Say things like 'It's a difficult thing that happened, I understand that you may be upset / hurt; Maybe things feel hard and when we are stressed we all behave differently; I can tell something doesn't look right, maybe you're feeling sad/angry/confused, anxious....

Set limits: Defining and being clear about what is acceptable and what is unacceptable despite understanding the context of the incident is critical and timing everything. The student must be soothed enough not to be further triggered but you also have to keep them and everyone else safe. Say things like: I can see that you're feeling xxx and it must be hard for you, but I have to keep you safe.....; behaving like this is never ok, we can sort it another way; at Newhaven, the rules are that we don't.....

Problem solve: a key part of the process is that you teach the skills and language needed to resolve the situation more successfully next time. This needs to be when they are calm enough to think and speak. Refer to situations when they have dealt with similar circumstances in a better way: 'Remember when x happened and you?'; 'Try and do this next time you feel

this....'; 'Let's decide what you will do next time you feel like this....'; 'Have you thought about doing this instead?'; 'Let's do a safety plan together to help you to identify triggers next time and what you can do to manage the feelings and what I need to do to keep you safe'.

3. Equality and prejudice based Incidents

Newhaven will not tolerate any equality or prejudice based incidents (including homophobia, sexism, racism, and prejudice due to ability, gender reassignment, religion or any other protected characteristic) and aim to set the values and atmosphere where the community of the school do not accept them. We do recognise that there is a difference between hate based incidents and those born out of ignorance. We also recognise that the first step in addressing these is to educate the person doing the prejudice based behaviour. To set a baseline, the whole school will focus on these issues through the curriculum and assemblies. To this, our response takes a stepped approach:

Step 1: if it appears based in ignorance or as a response to anxiety triggers (ie phobic language not directed at anyone). Staff will explain why this is not acceptable using the law and the Equality Act 2010 as a framework. If the incident is more serious (ie directed at an individual) then this process will begin at step 2.

Step 2: a repeat of the issue will lead to parental contact and their involvement in the situation. Plus repeated education and possible internal seclusion.

Step 3: A further repeat will lead to a parental meeting with senior staff and internal seclusion.

Step 4: a meeting with senior staff and the school police officer and internal seclusion.

Step 5: If the issue continues then there will be an extensive education programme supported by specialist staff such as SALT and/or EP. This may be included earlier in the process where it is considered appropriate.

All incidents of phobic and prejudice behaviour must be clearly recorded on SIMS.

4. Responsibilities

All Staff

- To be familiar with and consistently apply the relationships policy using a trauma and neurodiversity approach.
- To remain calm and empathic during all interactions with students using the emotion coaching approach as needed.
- To reflect on what we can change about our own behaviour to develop the right circumstances for students to flourish both generally and specifically following an incident.
- To engage with students during any incidents of concerning behaviour witnessed- do not assume someone else is dealing with it.
- To give ongoing consistent support and credibility to student progress on behaviour.
- Record all achievement and behaviour on SIMS, complete incident and positive handling forms where necessary.
- Take part in debrief as a learning experience asking ourselves could we do this differently next time and get a better outcome.
- To be role models for the students in our interactions with others and our work to sustain our own relationships.
- To seek support, help and advice where we are struggling with our relationship with students.

Headteacher

- To provide leadership on behaviour for the whole staff team, ensuring (with the team) that work on behaviour is consistent with Newhaven's ethos and values and a safe environment in which bullying, physical threats or abuse and intimidation are not tolerated, in which pupils and staff are safe and feel safe and everyone is treated respectfully.
- To ensure the Management Committee are engaged with the development and monitoring of the behaviour policy.
- To ensure that staff are trained regularly to develop the skills to provide this safe environment.
- To ensure that staff have opportunities through debrief, line management, space to think sessions and individual psychology support to manage the emotional impact of dealing with extremely challenging behaviour.
- To ensure that Newhaven's relationship policy is highly visible to staff, parents and others and is developed in line with the School Improvement Plan.
- To ensure that all staff apply the behaviour policy consistently.
- To ensure, with SLT and others who lead, that debriefs are a safe space where incidents and issues can be discussed in a reflective manner.
- To have an overview of behaviour data and other behaviour-related measures of performance.
- To take part in an on call rota and provide support for staff in managing behaviour when called on.

Heads of Campus/ AHTs

- To support the Headteacher in providing leadership to the rest of the staff team.
- The Heads of campus will lead on ensuring the behaviour policy is consistently applied in their campus.
- To ensure that student behaviour does not normally disrupt teaching, learning or school routines, disruption is not accepted, and that appropriate support is put in place and action is taken to restore acceptable standards of behaviour
- To ensure that measures are in place with general, targeted and individual interventions designed to improve behaviour.
- To take part in an on call rota and provide support for staff in managing behaviour when called on.

Heads of AC/ SENCOs

- To ensure that parents and students are clear about the relationships policy at admission.
- To ensure that induction includes assessment and support in the development of the skills needed to access Newhaven School and a clear understanding of the behaviour processes and systems.
- To include in student profiles key strategies for staff areas that need developing in students and planned interventions to ensure they are supported to behave in a way that allows them to develop relationships and access the broader curriculum.

Pastoral managers and HLTAs

- To provide appropriate support for students during the school day to ensure that they are engaged with learning as much as possible.
- To ensure with tutors and mentors that students are notified of changes to their day well enough in advance.
- To work with SLT, SENCOs and others in the development of individual support plans that will give students the skills to manage their own skills at emotional regulation.

Heads of Department

- To take the lead in ensuring that behaviour does not disrupt learning in their department.
- To ensure that schemes of work support the development of skills needed to support strong relationships.
- To ensure that subject based rewards such as postcards and calls home are in place.

Teaching Staff, Support Staff

- To plan for and encourage the development of appropriate behaviour and emotional development through the curriculum, wherever possible.
- To ensure that the start of lessons gives students the best chance to engage (maybe greet at the door; Do Now task in place...) and seek support as necessary when this doesn't work.
- To take on a tutor or mentor role with named students, overseeing the welfare of those students and working with others.
- To implement the Relationships Policy consistently at classroom and individual level.
- To consistently use the 1-4 My Lesson system provide positive and developmental feedback in books and regular praise as wanted by student including shout outs for assembly.
- To contact parents regularly and as required ensuring that positive messages are communicated often and that challenging messages are delivered in a spirit of co-operation with parents so we can work together to develop their child's social and emotional skill set.

Parents/Carers

- Ask their child how things went today/ are going at school on a regular basis.
- Ensuring them and their child are clear about the expectations of the school.
- Supporting the school in matters of relationship difficulties by discussing them with their child and sharing the expectations of the school.
- Collaborating with the school in the development of home/school strategies designed to support their child's behaviour.
- To liaise with school staff during phone calls and other communication.
- Ensuring the best possible punctuality and attendance.
- Encouraging their child to achieve academic targets.
- Attending parent's evenings, achievement reviews and other meetings as required.
- Contacting the school when they are worried about something.
- Ensuring their child is suitably equipped for school
- Ensuring their child adheres to the uniform of the school.

Students

- To aim to get better at dealing with situations by working with staff to develop the skills needed to sustain relationships and resolve problems.
- Take part in restorative processes- reset, restore with staff and other students if things have gone wrong.
- Working to the best of their ability in lessons.
- To attend school as much as possible and be punctual to school and lessons.
- Ensuring their behaviour has a positive impact on other's learning.
- Asking for time out if needed in a polite way and using agreed strategies when heightened.
- Being polite and courteous to each other, staff and visitors whether in person or online.
- Avoid aggressive and threatening language and behaviour both in person and online.

- Communicating well, listening and using appropriate language at all times.
- Behave in a safe way at all times.
- Keeping hands to themselves at all times and avoiding play fighting.
- Keeping the school buildings and grounds clean and tidy and avoiding areas which are out of bounds.
- Not possessing or using drugs, alcohol or weapons.
- Not smoking or vaping on site.
- Taking a pride in their appearance, wearing correct school uniform at all times.
- Behaving in a sensible and courteous manner when travelling to and from school.

5. What the law says

The law gives teachers rights re managing behaviour in school and it is important for clarity that these are set out in the relationships policy. All of these must be applied in line with the values, ethos and requirements of the policy:

- Staff should take account of any contributing factors after a behaviour incident has occurred (ie SEND, recent bereavement, mental health difficulties, subject to bullying) before deciding on any sanctions.
- Teachers can sanction pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could reasonably be expected of them. This means that if a pupil misbehaves, breaks a rule or fails to follow a reasonable instruction, the teacher can apply a sanction on that pupil.
- Staff can issue sanctions any time pupils are in school or elsewhere under the charge of a member of staff, including on school visits.
- A sanction is lawful when it is carried out by a paid member of staff or an unpaid member of staff authorised by the headteacher, is on the school premises or off site during a school activity.
- Sanctions do not break any other legislation (ie SEND, equality, human rights) is proportionate and reasonable in all the circumstances (ie age, SEND, religious requirements).
- Adjustments to behaviour processes to meet students' needs must consider the perception of fairness to other students and may include considering alternative arrangements.
- For students with SEND we still expect high standards of behaviour, recognise whether SEND is the cause, ask if they understand the rule, make reasonable adjustments and provide additional support.
- School staff have the powers to issue detentions at break and lunch and after school if it does not compromise safety or transport and parents are warned (at Newhaven, this is not a regular sanction but will be used to address lateness or provide time to resolve other issues).
- The headteacher has the power to use suspension or exclusion to maintain a calm and orderly environment in the school **and** when more supportive measures have not succeeded.
- Headteacher must apply the civil standard of proof, i.e., 'on the balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt.'
- Headteacher should also take the pupil's views into account, considering these in light of their age and understanding, before deciding to exclude, unless it would not be appropriate to do so. They should inform the pupil about how their views have been factored into any decision made.

6. Rewards and Consequences at Newhaven

The aim of rewards and consequences are to highlight positive and negative behaviours whilst we recognise that they will not necessarily act to change the behaviour of traumatised or neurodivergent students as this implies choice. The most important element of any rewards or sanctions is the learning to reinforce and celebrate positive behaviours or in the case of negative behaviours, to support the student to act differently in the future. Staff should explain these at all times. Staff should make sure that positive input outnumbers negative significantly and recognise that they are much more effective if they are embedded in well-developed positive relationships between staff and students.

Rewards

“Carrots are better than sticks; smiles achieve far more than scowls; rewards succeed where punishments fail”.

We want to offer students opportunities to aspire to exceed our expectations. Recognising a pupil’s achievements whether publicly or privately is much more likely to result in a positive impact across the whole school and to support parents to understand where things are going well for their child.

The aim of the rewards systems is to encourage high standards in everything that they do and offer motivation to all students to be the best that they can be. Educational visits based either in the academic or other elements of the curriculum cannot be used as rewards. Where they are, the expectations to get on the trip must be achievable and communicated clearly well in advance of the visit.

Long Term Rewards					
Reward Trips/visits/ enrichment	End of year prize draw For students who get a 1 in the year.	Student council reward trip	Certificates		
Medium Term Rewards					
Certificates given by teachers and recognised publicly in assembly	Vouchers for achievement points	Vouchers for consistently excellent or much improved attendance	Reward/Visits/ Enrichment	A 1 , recognised through a gold postcard home for consistently good behaviour	
Every Day rewards					
Positive phone calls	A 1 , recognised through a gold postcard home	Postcards home	Reward time in class	Positive comments in books/ Face to face	Growth/A&E Points and postcards

Consequences

Consequence: Consequences can play a role in helping a student know what behaviour is acceptable, but they do not in themselves give the students the skills to act differently in the future. Staff should therefore monitor student behaviour patterns by thinking about the antecedents and consequences of difficult behaviour. This will inform discussions at debriefs and interventions and planning for the future.

Where there is an act of violence, threatening behaviour or abuse between pupils, or by pupils/parents/carers towards the school's staff, it will not be tolerated. If a student is violent this will generally result in a suspension and repeated threats of violence or will lead to the same. If a parent/carer does not conduct himself/herself properly, the school reserves the right to ban them from the school premises and, if the parent/carer continues to cause disturbance, they may be liable to prosecution.

- Restorative Practice: Part of this learning for students must always be a focus on the restoration of wrongs that they have done to others. They must always be encouraged to, and given opportunities, to "put it right" through a Reset.
- Resets with staff: This may be a simple recognition that they have done wrong and an apology or a piece of work to put things right. Appropriate individual support is put in place to ensure these meetings are as calm and successful as possible – eg inviting parents/carers, allowing time to calm down, considering the best adult to lead the meeting. Resets should always allow students to learn why their behaviour was unacceptable. On **very rare** occasions where the student finds a face to face meeting too difficult, a reset can be done by letter.
- Resets with students: both students should be allowed to express their views and feel listened to. Staff will decide who has suffered the greatest impact in any situation and make this clear to the students involved
- Catch up sessions for lateness at Gardens and a plan to improve punctuality at King's Park.
- Loss of choice time.
- Time out from lessons including parking.
- Loss of break and lunch time
- Removal of internet access.
- Removal of mobile phones, in accordance with the phone guidelines.
- Search – for "prohibited" items (knives, drugs and drugs paraphernalia, cigarettes/vapes where they have been smoked on site, metal combs, prohibited drinks and drinks in glass bottles, sweets where they have been misused or any other item specified by the Head and SLT.
- School based community service.
- Compensation; sought by the school for any damage to property.
- Loss of trips/Activities- this should not be the case for curriculum based trips/activities unless the risk assessment and recent behaviour in similar contexts indicates that the risks associated with the student are too high. The final decision on this is by the headteacher or SLT.

Students should also be supported to see the natural consequences of any behaviour. Students with autism and trauma can find it difficult to see cause and effect, making this all the more important. Students should be encouraged to recognise both positive and negative consequences eg "Thanks for holding the door open, that's make it a lot for easier as I'm carrying this big box" "When you were upset earlier you left the room in a big hurry. You knocked past me and it hurt my arm".

7. Suspensions and Exclusions

At Newhaven, suspensions and exclusions are seen as a last resort to respond to severe ongoing behaviour difficulties that are not responding to the interventions outlined in the rest of this document.

Internal seclusion: this should be one to one and support students to reflect on their behaviour, plan any necessary resets and restoration and catch up on any work missed during lesson time. Targeted intervention will take place at the appropriate time with appropriate staff and the student. This may happen in the Restart room at Gardens, Engage at KP, appropriate office or break out spaces or at the other school site.

Off-site direction: occasionally, when students' behaviour does not improve to a manageable level within a reasonable time they may be directed to other provisions within Greenwich.

Suspensions: Where a student's behaviour causes significant concern (such as an act of violence, significant threat or abuse or ongoing significant behaviour issues) and the range of strategies outlined have not impacted enough, there may be a suspension. This will generally be as short as possible and take place to give the student and the school the time and space to plan to ensure behaviour changes. Decisions to suspend will be made by the headteacher. There will always be a plan to support the reintegration of the student back into school. As part of our positive behaviour strategy the school is committed to using internal seclusion as much as possible as an alternative to suspension.

Exclusions: Newhaven is committed to not using exclusion. However where a student's behaviour is extreme and has not responded to significant intervention then an alternative placement will be sought. This will be the decision of the headteacher as delegated by the management committee. In the case of a student with an EHCP this will follow the emergency review process; for students at KP this will be in consultation with the SEND section at Greenwich; for other students at Newhaven, this process will be in conjunction with the Inclusion team and FAP.

8. Liaison with parents and other agencies

Working with parents/carers is an important part of supporting students with their behaviour. At Newhaven we make sure that parents/carers are informed of incidents involving their children, especially where this behaviour is of a serious or of a continuous low-level nature.

Parents/carers are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's education at all times. They will have an influence on their child's behaviour. The school acknowledges the importance of home school partnerships. This is strongly promoted through the school's Home/School Agreement where parents/carers are encouraged and expected to sign a commitment to the ethos and work of the school.

The school will provide opportunities for parents through parent partnership groups, meetings and referral to other agencies to develop their skills in managing their children's behaviour.

9. Physical Intervention and positive handling

Physical Intervention must never be used unless it is to prevent harm to the child or others. Wherever possible, physical intervention will be carried out by staff trained in the holding techniques. The legal framework allows staff and the headteacher considerable powers to use reasonable force on students. However, at Newhaven these powers are limited by the positive handling policy to circumstances when harm is being or likely to be caused to themselves or others. Damage to property or disruption of learning is not a reason to use force. Reasonable force must only be used to prevent harm to self or others.

Legal Framework

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'.

The legal framework allows the headteacher and delegated staff to use reasonable force to conduct a search for prohibited items. At Newhaven this is not the case unless there is an imminent risk of harm to self or others. If students refuse a search then parents/carers will be contacted to provide support and if necessary the police.

When considering using reasonable force staff should, in considering the risks, carefully recognise any specific vulnerabilities of the pupil, including SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions.

Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom. At Newhaven, blocking a student's path should only happen if it is believed that they are about to attack someone physically not, for example, to stop them leaving a lesson.

School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

The legal framework says you can use force to remove a student when they are disrupting and refusing to leave. This is not the case at Newhaven. In these circumstances, the rest of the class will be asked to move rooms.

It is always illegal to use force as a punishment.

Positive Handling at Newhaven

Physical Intervention must never be used unless it is to prevent physical harm to the student concerned or others. It is this philosophical stance that links the legal framework with good practice. 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.

Staff must make all attempts to de-escalate a situation by for example using trauma informed soothing techniques, minimising language input, calling for support or removing others before using physical intervention. This may not be possible if an incident develops very quickly.

Staff involved in physical restraint will ideally have been trained in the positive handling techniques. This is essential at King's Park. However, it may be necessary at times for staff not trained to restrain, in which case the protocols in this policy must be followed.

If you are in a situation where it becomes clear that you are going to have to use physical force in order to prevent physical harm you must, at the first available opportunity, raise the alarm and seek assistance (use a radio or whistle at Gardens or a radio at King's Park). DO NOT place yourself in a vulnerable position; if possible; await assistance before tackling a difficult incident alone. *Any physical intervention strategies must comply with guidance detailed in the Reasonable Use of Force Policy found within the behaviour policy.*

Staff must ensure that all incidents are clearly, comprehensively and promptly recorded on CPOMs as an incident in the 'Positive Handling' section, with a note kept on SIMS

All incidents of physical intervention must be reported to parents that day. Afterwards, staff must resolve the situation with the student by explaining why it was necessary. This should be done with the support of senior staff.

Plans

A positive handling plan must be developed when the student's record indicates that this is necessary due to a number or series of violent incidents requiring restraints recently or where there has been one occasion of restraint within the school. This decision is made by the head of campus in conjunction with the pastoral manager, the safeguarding lead and any relevant and involved outside agencies.

The Positive Handling Plan is based upon five main criteria:

- That the child 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 child 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.

Key Principles

When developing, implementing and evaluating Positive Handling Plans the following key principles should always be taken into consideration:

- Any member of staff carrying out positive handling as part of a plan must have completed the Approach induction training and refresher unless waiting for such a person to arrive at a situation increases the risk of harm to anyone.
- Procedures for assessing risk and in particular risk assessment for pupils should be undertaken to ensure all aspects of Health and Safety are considered for both pupil and staff.

- Positive Handling Plans must always have the interests of the child as the primary consideration and must pay due consideration to the child's special needs.
- At all times a 'Duty of Care' for and to the child should be of primary concern.
- Any planned physical intervention should be justified in respect of what is known about the child's special needs based upon multi-disciplinary assessment, alternative approaches/behaviour support which have been tried, an evaluation of the potential risks involved, and reference to Approach techniques and methodology.
- Pupils and their parents/carers should be actively involved in the process.
- Physical interventions should only be employed using 'the minimum degree of force for the shortest possible period'.
- Pupils who experience physical intervention should be assessed for signs of injury, pain or psychological distress and these should be recorded on an Incident Form.
- Plans should have built in intrinsic experiences for the pupil that promote learning opportunities for them to own their own behaviour and the ability to develop coping strategies.
- The techniques to be used during physical intervention should be clearly recorded on the plan and shared with all relevant staff, and parents/carers. A copy of the plan should be kept in the pupils' file.
- A Positive Handling Plan should be part of an overall strategy for the pupil.
- All Positive Handling Plans should be reviewed at least annually or after any incident.

When is it ok to touch a student?

Government guidelines indicate that it is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a student may be proper and necessary. Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary include. However, this should only ever be done within the knowledge of the student, what they will tolerate, what will support them and when absolutely necessary.

- When comforting a distressed pupil;
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching; and
- To give first aid.

Complaints re use of force:

All complaints about the use of force should be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated by the headteacher or a delegated member of staff. This investigation will include interviewing any person present and reviewing available CCTV.

- Where a member of staff has acted within the law and the school's policy – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.
- When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.

- Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. Schools will refer to the “Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff” guidance where an allegation of using excessive
- The headteacher must consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate.