

St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School



Positive Handling Policy

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Headteacher:	Mrs E Poulteney	Chair of Local Governing Body:	Ms H Taylor
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Positive Handling Policy

St Thomas of Canterbury is a Catholic Primary School. Its religious dimension lies at its heart and is fundamental to its existence. Its ethos is based around Christian values as laid down by the person of Jesus Christ, and exemplified in His teaching.

Our Mission Statement expresses this clearly:



SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT



At St Thomas' we are learning to follow Jesus, showing respect and consideration for ourselves and others. We all have the opportunity to learn and work to the best of our ability in a safe and loving environment.

Introduction

Staff are trained to look after pupils in their care and have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow the school's Positive Handling Policy.

In all but crisis situations, only staff trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategy.

The term positive handling includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

The school takes seriously its duty of care to pupils, employees and visitors to the school.

The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care.

The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables a school's staff to use such force as is reasonable. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force.

Positive handling training

Support Staff undergo a one or two day course (depending upon the severity of behaviour of the children they are working with) led by qualified trainers with a single day refresher course undertaken every two years. Although any member of staff may be required to physically intervene with a pupil who is endangering themselves or others, we would expect accredited staff to take over as soon as possible.

Before using physical intervention we take effective action to reduce risk by:

- Showing care and concern by acknowledging dysregulated behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiating and reasoning.
- Giving clear directions for pupils to stop
- Reminding them about rules and likely outcomes
- Removing an audience or taking vulnerable pupils to a safe place
- Making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons
- Using positive guidance to escort pupils to somewhere less pressured
- Ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and requesting help.

Restraint

At St Thomas Catholic Primary School, we only use physical restraint when there is no realistic alternative. We expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative. It also means that we expect staff to experiment and think creatively about alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the child and that it reduces rather than increases risk. Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. Physical restraint must only be in accordance with the following:

- The child should be in immediate danger of harming itself or another person or in danger of seriously damaging property.
- The member of staff should have good grounds for believing there is an imminent risk or danger.
- Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied.
- Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before physical intervention. These staff can act as assistants or witnesses.
- Once safe, restraint should be relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control.
- Restraint should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- Physical restraint should not usually be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate danger present to people and property.
- The restraint should be discussed with the child, if appropriate, and the parents at the earliest opportunity.
- In addition, whilst or before intervention, staff should speak calmly as a way of reassurance e.g. I am doing this to keep you safe

Responding to unforeseen emergencies

Even the best planning system cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. An unforeseen event may require an emergency response. After that event, staff have a duty to plan ahead and prepare a risk assessment.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are required for pupils who exhibit *extreme* challenging behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate triggers and reactions. When considering a pupil's behaviour, staff will think about the following questions:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this pupil's behaviour?
- Have we got all the information we need to conduct a risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan as a result?
- What further steps can we take to prevent dangerous behaviour from developing?

Behaviour support plans

All pupils who have been identified as presenting with challenging behaviour should have Behaviour Support Plans. The plan details behaviours that a pupil may be presenting, together with behaviours that we wish to see and then strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual. Restorative strategies are also detailed appropriate to the child's needs and level of understanding. Any Behaviour Support Plans should be considered along with the child's EHCP/SEND need and any other planning document relevant to the pupil. They should take account of age, gender, level of physical, emotional and cognitive development, special needs and social context. Parents and class teachers are involved when writing Behaviour Support plans. The plans are reviewed termly

Post Incident Debrief

Following a serious incident, it is the policy of the school to offer support to all involved. This is an opportunity for learning and time needs to be given for following up incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future, appreciate other peoples' perspective and repair relationships. It is difficult to devise a framework of support that meets the needs of all staff. As individuals we all vary in how much support we need after an upsetting incident. Generally a member of the Senior Leadership Team would expect to talk to staff and children involved (if appropriate) in any incidents involving violence. If members of staff need time to rest or compose themselves, the leadership team will make arrangements for the class group to be supported.

Recording

- All incidents of challenging behaviour should be recorded.
- All serious incidents or incidents involving positive handling will be recorded on the google drive: Whole School / Positive Handling / Positive Handling Intervention Report Forms.

Within these recording strategies, all details must be recorded and signed by witnesses ideally within twenty four hours. The Head Teacher must be informed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head Teacher/Senior Leadership Team will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required.

Parents

When there is a possibility of physical intervention with a child, parents will be invited to contribute to a Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan. Written parental agreement will form part of this. Parents will be informed of the school's policies. Parents will be informed following serious incidents.

Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints will follow the school's complaints procedure.

Appendix 1: Positive Handling Intervention Report Form

We believe that reasonable force should only be used when absolutely necessary. With this in mind, this form has been created to ensure that all incidents of this type are recorded on the google drive:

Whole School / Positive Handling / Positive Handling Intervention Report Forms

Name of staff member	
Name of pupil	
Date	
Time	
Location	
Name(s) of staff member(s) who witnessed the incident	
Informed parties (parents, social workers, police, etc.)	
Circumstances prior to the incident	
Details of the incident	
Details of any negative impact on other pupils	
Reason(s) for physical intervention (please tick)	

Danger to self	<input type="checkbox"/>
Danger to others	<input type="checkbox"/>
Significant damage to property	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was it a planned intervention, e.g. in line with approved strategies for the behaviour of specific pupils? (Please circle)	Yes/No
Details of the intervention	
Any disciplinary additional action taken	
Injuries (if any) to staff members, the pupil concerned or other pupils	
Damage (if any) to property	
Recommendation(s) to avoid future incidents	
Signature: Head Teacher	_____
Signature: Staff member	_____