

# **Positive Handling Policy**

## **1. Introduction**

At Willow Nursery School, we believe that children need to feel happy, safe and secure and develop good relationships with the adults who work here. We promote the personal, emotional, social and physical development of each individual child. We believe that children need to have many opportunities for freedom of movement indoors and out. We believe that very young children, for their emotional development, need physical comfort/contact when appropriate. We have a behaviour policy in place which actively teaches children our codes of behaviour with a strong focus on positive praise. This policy works well for the vast majority of our children. However, for a small number of children, we may occasionally have to use positive handling.

## **2. Positive Handling**

At Willow Nursery School, we encourage children to be as independent as possible. As part of the process to becoming independent, children need varying levels of support from adults to access nursery successfully. Sometimes children seek emotional support from an adult in order to feel secure e.g. a guiding hand across a child's back, standing near to an adult, holding an adults hand. Children may need physical support when learning how to hold a pencil effectively or to balance across a beam. Children may also need support with self-care needs.

Occasionally, there may be some behaviours displayed by a child where physical intervention is needed e.g. guiding a child to sit in a certain place, moving a child so they are safe from danger.

## **3. Planning for the use of restrictive physical interventions**

The school environment is an unpredictable place, therefore it is difficult to plan for individual incidents. All staff are aware that the use of restrictive physical intervention is needed at times when ALL other forms of behaviour management have been unsuccessful. Staff take responsibility of their own safety in any situation and ensure that their own health and safety needs are met. Staff are not expected to carry out any physical intervention that they don't feel comfortable with but they have a duty of care for the children which is an overriding factor. Staff are encouraged to gain physical support and/or assistance from senior staff if at all unsure.

## **4. The use of reasonable force**

The law allows for teachers and other persons authorised by the head teacher to use restrictive physical intervention to prevent a child from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property

- Engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintain the good order or discipline

'Restrictive Physical Intervention' is the term used by the DFE to include interventions where bodily contact using force is used. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the head teacher has to, in specific circumstances, use 'reasonable force' to control or restrain pupils. There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force' however there are two relevant considerations.

- The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it.
- The degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent harm or damage.

## **5. Developing positive handling strategies**

We discuss children's needs at our weekly staff meeting. If any children are displaying challenging behaviours, we will discuss ways of dealing with these behaviours so that all staff are aware and are all consistent in the way that the behaviours are dealt with. If a child needs positive handling, staff with 'Team Teach' training will advise on strategies and/or carry out the positive handling. This challenging behaviour will be discussed with parents and if this behaviour continues, a detailed behaviour log will be carried out for at least three weeks, recording positive and negative behaviour to look for triggers to challenging behaviours. The behaviour log is then analysed and next steps are planned. The senior leaders and staff with 'Team Teach' training will be available to support throughout the process.

## **6. Guidance and training for staff**

As part of staff induction, all staff are informed about our behaviour policy and this policy. Training is arranged as necessary.

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