



Phoenix Infant Academy
Together We Soar

Name of Policy	Physical Intervention and Positive Handling Policy
Scope of Policy	This policy applies to all members of staff at Phoenix Infant Academy
Approved by	Principal
Date of Approval	September 2023
Review period	Annually
Review Date	September 2024

GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER



**THAMES LEARNING
TRUST**

Purpose

At Phoenix Infant Academy we have high expectations of children's behaviour towards each other, the school and staff. Staff at Phoenix Infant Academy have a duty of care to intervene to keep all children safe and to prevent them from "hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or causing disorder" (Use of Reasonable Force, July 2013). Staff are specifically trained in Positive Handling and will follow this Policy if they needed to physically intervene.

Introduction:

This policy aims to provide a consistent and safe approach to support pupils who have Special Educational Needs, in particular social, emotional and mental health difficulties. It is designed to support staff to take appropriate actions that are suitable and absolutely necessary.

The term Positive Handling covers a range of supportive strategies to help staff manage challenging behaviour. Occasionally, this includes incidents when reasonable force is used to restrain a pupil. Physical restraint is used to prevent a pupil from injuring themselves or others or damaging property.

Positive Behaviour Management

Phoenix Infant Academy's behaviour policy focuses on rewarding positive behaviour, for example by rewarding effort and displaying our HEROIC values. Staff use a preventative approach to behaviour by fully understanding a pupil's needs, identifying possible "triggers" and looking for early warning signs. Zones of Regulation is used across the school so children learn to openly discuss their feelings and appropriate strategies to support them and others. Staff regularly speak to pupils about their interests, likes and dislikes to, where possible, incorporate these into their learning. These are also documented in pupil's Positive Handling Plans (PHP) and Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Parents are also invited to discuss these with the Class Teacher and Vice Principal.

Positive Behaviour Management Strategies

Physical restraint is used when a pupil is in immediate danger and/or other strategies have been implement in an attempt to de-escalate a situation. These strategies include:

- Reduced use of language
- Give instructions/directions to pupil to stop
- Reminders to pupil about expectations
- Reminders to pupil about rewards and consequences
- Removing other pupils and/or furniture
- Offer a safe space
- Reduced number of staff involvement (2 minimum)
- Distraction techniques
- Showing understanding towards pupil's feelings
- Modelling a calm and positive persona
- Consistent behaviour script used by all staff

Classroom Environment

Class Teachers carefully consider their classroom environment to ensure they meet the needs of their pupils. There may be occasions where a classroom has to be further modified. This may include:

- Storing blunt instruments
- Controlling accessibility to pointed instruments
- Appropriate table space for easy and quick removal from the classroom
- Visual supports for pupil

The Last Resort Approach

As previously mentioned, physical intervention is used when there is no realistic alternative. Although we don't expect staff to follow a check list of strategies and sometimes immediate intervention is required, staff must conduct a risk assessment to decipher the best cause of action.

At Phoenix Infant Academy, we use Team Teach de-escalation techniques and will only use physical restraint when absolutely necessary. We have 24 trained staff.

Assessing an Incident

Staff are trained to respond to an incident appropriately and reasonably. Staff are encouraged to consider the following when physical restraint is required:

- Have other strategies been used?
- How is this in the best interest of the child?
- Why do we have to act now?
- Who is the best person to do this?
- Do I need support?
- Why is this absolutely necessary?

Support for Staff

At Phoenix Infant Academy, staff support each other. This can be through offering advice, communicating with each other and intervening when appropriate. Staff discuss prepared phrases and/or questions to use when help is offered or needed to avoid confusion. These may include:

- "Help needed?"
- "More help required?"
- "Help required"

Types of Incident

The Education and Inspections act 2006 outlines that physical intervention can be used to prevent a child from, or continuing to:

- Injure themselves or others
- Commit a criminal offence
- Engage in behaviour that is harmful to maintaining good order at the school or its pupils, in or outside of the classroom

Examples of situations that might fall into these categories are:

- A pupil purposely injures another pupil or a member of staff
- Pupils are fighting each other
- A pupil is deliberately damaging property
- A pupil is misusing objects to cause harm
- A pupil tries to abscond from school

When intervention is needed in these cases, the positive strategies aforementioned should be used.

Following the incident, staff will talk to the pupil and reflect on their actions, the trigger and how it could be avoided in the future. A restorative conversation booklet is used to support children. Any consequences will also be explained to the pupil.

Absconding

Pupils should be prevented from trying to abscond from site where possible. Staff should assess the absconding situation and inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team if possible. Suitable strategies should be implemented to prevent absconding.

If a pupil does abscond from the school site, a member of the Senior Leadership Team and another member of staff should follow the pupil at a distance. The Police will be called if the pupil is purposely putting themselves at risk and parents will be informed of the situation and invited to school.

As above, a member of staff will speak to the pupil following the incident.

Searching Pupils

Schools are able to screen or search pupils for weapons under the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006. It is unlikely that a pupil would bring a weapon into school, so therefore staff have not been trained in this area. The Principal can undertake a search if any of the following is suspected in school:

- Knives
- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Stolen items
- Cigarettes, tobacco, filters or cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Lighters

Health and Safety

All staff have a responsibility to comply with the school's health and safety policy to make the school safe. If necessary, this policy would be reviewed.

Risk Assessment

Before physical intervention is used, staff should conduct an informal risk assessment of the situation.

Following the incident, the Class Teacher and Vice Principal will create a risk assessment for the pupil alongside their PHP and IEP. Risk assessments will be shared with parents and relevant staff. They are regularly reviewed.

Complaints

Pupils can sometimes make allegations following an incident. Parents, carers and pupils should use the school's complaint procedure. This also applies to staff.

If staff have a concern about a child's welfare, they should follow the Safeguarding policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Recording

All incidents should be recorded on the school's secure online platform, CPOMS. All staff have received training in how to use CPOMS and have a unique username and password. All staff involved in an incident should complete a detailed record as soon as possible and before the end of the working day.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Complaints Policy
- "Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings", October 2015
- "Use of reasonable force - Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies", July 2013
- "Keeping children safe in education - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges", July 2015
- Team Teach related guidance from website: www.team-teach.co.uk