



Sporting Stars Academy

Safer Handling Policy

<p><u>Agreed by the Directors:</u></p> <p><u>Last reviewed:</u></p>	<p><u>15</u></p>	<p><u>07</u></p>	<p><u>2022</u></p>
<p><u>Review Date:</u></p>	<p><u>July 2023</u></p>		
<p><u>Signed:</u></p> <p>Signed..... (Director of Premises, Recruitment & Public Relations)</p> <p>Signed..... (Director of Business, Finance & Enterprise)</p> <p>Signed..... (Headteacher/Director of Curriculum and SENCO)</p>			

School statement of purpose

At Sporting Stars Academy we are committed to providing a secure and stimulating environment for all of our children. We value excellence, recognise achievement and celebrate the success and effort of all, encouraging strong role models where everyone feels valued and is encouraged to recognise and achieve their full potential.

Aims

- ✓ To provide a happy, caring and stimulating environment where quality relationships are important and each individual is valued and respected
- ✓ To enable everyone to experience success and help children to develop lively, enquiring, imaginative and creative minds and reach their full potential
- ✓ To prepare children for the challenges and opportunities of adulthood in a changing world
- ✓ To provide an exciting, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum appropriate for individual needs
- ✓ To fulfil potential in all areas of school life
- ✓ To work together in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals so that they are fully informed and involved in their children's education

Inclusion

Sporting Stars Academy is committed to creating a school in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every member of the school matter. We seek to create opportunities for all children to achieve their very best in terms of academic attainments and personal attainments. We aim to make the curriculum accessible to all in a stimulating learning environment in which success is celebrated in all areas. We strive to make everyone feel welcome. We endeavour to work with parents, carers, other professionals and members of the community to create a supportive environment for learning.

Sporting Stars Academy predominantly caters for children who present with social, emotional and mental health difficulties and as such is open to the risk as a setting in terms of Physical Intervention. As a result, we have used the DFES document: Use of reasonable force -Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2013) and Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (September 2021) as our main reference in matters concerning physical intervention

The Head teacher and the school's Directors recognise the serious implications for all concerned when the use of physical intervention becomes necessary. In particular, they acknowledge the stress and very real anxiety that such actions can and do generate in children and young people, parents/carers and staff. The production of this policy and guidance will ensure everyone has a positive and safe way of responding to behaviour that requires the use of physical intervention.

Introduction

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils who may need to be positively handled. This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Directors. Please note that reference to KCSIE 2021 will include appropriate updates based upon the introduction of KCSIE 2022 which comes into force on September 1st 2022.

Purpose of the policy

Good 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 practiced by the staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of safer handling may be required.

The objectives of our policy are in maintaining our duty of care in:

- protecting the safety of all children
- protecting the safety of staff
- protecting the good order of the learning environment
- preventing damage to property
- preventing children from committing criminal acts.

In discharging that duty of care, staff might be required to use force for the purpose of preventing a pupil from, for example:

- self-harming
- causing injury to other children, staff or teachers
- causing personal injury
- absconding
- committing an offence
- causing damage to property
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff:

- ✓ clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary
- ✓ are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

The application of any form of positive handling places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described 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 safer handling.

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

Definitions

(a) Physical Contact Situations in which proper physical contact takes place between staff and pupils, e.g. in games/PE or to comfort pupils.

(b) 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.

(c) Safer Handling This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or property or if good order is being seriously prejudiced. All such incidents will be recorded.

Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working at Sporting Stars Academy has the right to:

- a recognition of their unique identity
- be treated with respect and dignity
- learn and work in a safe environment
- be protected from harm

Pupils attending this school and their parents have a right to:

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

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

Parents/carers have committed themselves through the Behaviour & Attitude for learning contract to ensure the good behaviour of their child and that the child understands and follows the school's Behaviour Policy.

In order to minimise the use of force, staff work within the framework of the following principles and procedures:

- creating and maintaining a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require using force
- using learning approaches to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings
- de-escalating incidents if they do arise
- only using force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force
- using risk assessments and individual support plans for individual pupils.

Training

Safer Handling training will be made available to designated staff and will be the responsibility of the Head teacher. No member of staff will be expected to undertake safer handling without appropriate training. Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken.

Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively. Where unacceptable behaviour is displayed and threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches will be taken according to the circumstances of the incident:

a) Verbal acknowledgment of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain; this includes negotiation, care and concern.

b) Further verbal reprimand stating:

- this is the second request for compliance
- an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable
- an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues.

c) Warning of potential need to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies. If possible, summon assistance.

d) Physical intervention. Reasonable physical intervention using the minimum degree of contact to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Escalating Situations

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 stipulates that reasonable physical intervention 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 a classroom, during a teaching session or elsewhere (this includes authorised out-of-school activities)
- ✓ self-injuring or placing himself or herself at risk
- ✓ injuring others
- ✓ causing damage to property, including that of the pupil himself or herself
- ✓ committing a criminal offence (even if the pupil is below the age of criminal responsibility).

Types of Incidents

Incidents described above fall into 3 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 pupil is causing, or at risk of causing injury, damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of materials or objects
- ✓ a pupil is running in a corridor or in a way which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself
- ✓ a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave the school

Examples of behaviour which fall into the third category are:

- ✓ a pupil persistently refusing to do as requested.
- ✓ a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

Acceptable measures of Physical Intervention

Safer handling 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 the gender of the pupil are taken into account
- it is likely to achieve the desired result

Deciding whether to use force

Staff must consider the following guidelines when deciding whether or not to use force:

- There is a clear and unequivocal emphasis on the rights of children to be kept safe at all times.
- Physical intervention should only be used when:
 - the situation is, or is likely to become, dangerous for children and/or staff or there is a risk to the maintenance of good order
 - a criminal act is being committed or property is being damaged
 - or when previous history suggests that failure to act promptly will result in any of the above and all else has been tried
 - the potential consequences of not intervening are sufficiently serious to justify considering use of force
 - the chances of achieving the desired result by other means were low or the risks associated with not using force outweighed those of using force

Individual Support Plans (ISPs) are produced for all pupils who may need physical intervention and keep staff informed about how to deal with the particular risks that each child presents. The plan will also advise where a child presents a difficulty as a result of SEN/disability or personal circumstance, such as domestic violence.

After any use of physical intervention, staff must update the ISP in line with any changes needed to procedures.

Wherever possible, assistance will be sought from another member of staff before intervention.

The form of physical intervention may involve staff doing the following:

- ✓ physically interposing themselves between pupils
- ✓ escorting a pupil
- ✓ shepherding a pupil away

Any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way in which staff exercise their responsibilities and the behaviour management strategies used.

Recording

Where safer handling has been used a record of the incident always needs to be kept. All recording needs to be completed on the day of incident and needs to include the following:

- name of pupil
- date, time and place of incident
- a brief description of the incident and actions taken
- attempts made to calm the situation
- names of people who witnessed the situation
- any damage/harm to persons or property
- name of person informing parents/carers

- after investigation a summary of action taken

All incidents involving restraint and/or the use of significant force must be recorded on the Positive Handling Record form. The form must be completed on the day of the incident and include the names of all members of staff involved and any witnesses.

The form must be given to the head teacher. The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring the forms are viewed and signed, then logged in the behaviour file.

When a Positive Handling Record and Response form has been completed for a particular child, it is the responsibility of the Head teacher to ensure a phone call is made to the child's parents/carers on the day of the incidents. One call is sufficient for multiple incidents.

Action after an Incident

An essential element of the procedure following the use of restraint or significant force is the positive debrief. This takes place when all parties have recovered. Staff will encourage children to explore their feeling prior to the incident and how those feelings affected their behaviour. While acknowledging and understanding the child's feelings, staff should help the child to plan alternative behaviours as a response to those feelings so as to avoid physical intervention in the future. Staff must ensure that children understand why physical force was used.

Similar post incident support is also available for members of staff where the need arises. It is an expectation that all staff acknowledge the importance of using a senior member of staff to discuss any personal issues raised for in the use of physical restraint.

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

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

Members of staff will be kept informed of any action taken. In case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

Risk Assessments

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises.

Such planning will address:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known
- Involvement of parents/carers to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate
- The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff

Complaints

The availability of a clear policy regarding Safer Handling and early involvement of parents/carers should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them. Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's Complaints Policy.

The HR Manager will be informed of complaints.

Monitoring of Incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use safer handling, this will always 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(s) whose behaviour can only be contained using positive handling. This process will address patterns of incidents and evaluate trends which may be emerging.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all policies and will be reviewed annually or after any major incident.

July 2022