Appendix 1: Reasonable Force, 'Positive Handling' and Positive Touch

This policy covers all premises known as The Levels School.

Positive behavioural support

There is evidence about how to effectively support children and young people with learning disabilities who display behaviour described as challenging. Understanding the function, or reason, for a child's behaviour allows effective support to be put in place and their quality of life to be enhanced.

The British Institute of learning Disability (BILD) accreditation framework and Positive and Proactive Care (Dept of Health, 2014), all state that Positive behavioural support (PBS) represents the most effective evidence-based approach to supporting people with learning disabilities whose behaviours challenge services. The NICE guideline and a recent Briefing Paper (Challenging Behaviour Foundation, 2016) clarify that this applies to children as well as adults.

(*'Statement on restrictive physical interventions with children', The Challenging Behaviour Foundation, January 2016*)

The term 'positive handling' refers to the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that would involve a degree of physical contact with students.

Physical intervention will never include:

- Holding a child around the neck, collar or other way that may restrict breathing
- Slapping, punching, kicking or tripping a child. Holding or pulling a child by their hair or ear.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against joints.
- Indecently touching or holding.
- Holding a child face down on the ground
- Lifting a child off the floor in order to intimidate

Our Positive Handling ideology is designed to control a potentially harmful situation with a minimum of direct force. This can range from guiding a student to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student(s) needs to be separated to prevent violence or injury.

Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path. School staff would 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 student.

Staff at the Levels School are not trained to use physical intervention and it is not used by the school but 'reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed to keep a child safe.

In the event of Positive Handling becoming necessary, before touching the child, the staff member will inform the child calmly and repeatedly that they will physically intervene, and how the child can change their behaviour so that restraint will not need to be used.

A second adult should ALWAYS be called for immediately to reduce risk of bodily harm to staff or students and to ensure a witness is present should allegations of be made against the staff member.

While applying control, the member of staff must:

- employ minimum physical force necessary for the minimum period needed
- wherever possible keep talking to the child and give choices as to how they could behave in a manner that would end the need for restraint
- avoid committing any act of punitive violence
- keep his or her temper

Types of restraint which may be appropriate:

- Any holding tactic in which a young child is restrained without injury until the young child calms down
- Physical contact with a young person designed to control the young person's movements, which pose a danger (e.g. holding by the arms against the side of the body). Standing by the side of the young person is likely to minimise the risk to adult and young person.
- The holding of a young person's arms or legs to prevent/restrict striking/kicking.
- The use of sufficient physical force – without causing injury – to remove a weapon/dangerous object from a young person's grasp (if foreseeable this requires specialised training).
- Physically preventing a young person from exposing themselves to possible danger by leaving the premises.

Students must never be placed on the floor. Specialist training is necessary for this procedure.

In the event of an incident a full report must be made as soon as possible (within 24 hours), by witnesses and the member of staff who applied the Positive Handling. Initial report must be logged in MyConcern. A report should also be made with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or the Deputies (DDSL). The student's family must be informed

as soon as possible and a meeting should be arranged with SLT and (D)DSL, ideally within 24 hours of the incident. If an injury occurs usual procedures will be followed. The report for the incident will be copied to the office, MIS, MyConcern and the student's family.

Training

The Head teacher and board of Governors will ensure that all authorised staff are appropriately trained by approved trainers and accept responsibility of their role by being aware of the guidelines in this Appendix.

This training will be reviewed by the DSL and SENCO annually and will be rolled out to new staff as part of their Induction training.

All records of incident, training and review regarding statutory guidance will be monitored by the Governor for Safeguarding (Angela Baker), as and when they take place.

Positive Touch

At the Levels School we recognise that students who attend our provision will at times need a level of support to manage their anxiety and regulation that may include staff to student physical contact such as a hug. It is important that this is student led, appropriate to the developmental stage of the student and consensual.

Positive Touch in Prep - Within the Prep school it is recognised that there may be times when the children will seek age appropriate physical support for regulation. Annually, prep parents will be reminded about the possibility of Positive Touch use with their children. This process is designed to allow parents to provide consent or review need as the child gets older. It will be used as a teaching opportunity for the pupils to discuss consent and understand appropriate touch. Where staff feel uncomfortable, they are directed to self-report to the Headteacher.

Positive Touch in KS3 & KS4 – In the early stages of KS3, as pupils transition in to young adults, we recognise that the expectation for physical contact will reduce, and we work to support them with that. Should it continue to be a requirement as part of their learning need, the SENCO will review on a case-by-case basis. From this point the SENCO will speak with parents, the pupil and individual staff members. The SENCO will confirm who the agreed staff member(s) will be for that student to be supported in Positive Touch. This will be logged in the SEND/SEMH/Safeguarding keyworker logs, identifying the student, confirmation of parent contact and agreement, what the physical contact will specifically look like and which member(s) of staff are confirmed to provide this.

Staff are guided that should a student initiate physical contact that feels inappropriate they must ask the student to stop and explain why it is not OK and then email the Headteacher to report what has occurred.

It is acknowledged that staff will never initiate physical contact with pupils, nor ask for physical contact with a pupil.

Physical interventions with pupils will always require staff to self-refer to the Headteacher. If staff feel more support or clarification is needed on how to work with these requirements, they will be expected to review it with the SENCO.

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