



LANCASTER STEINER SCHOOL

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

This Policy is currently being updated as staff require Team Teach training before any Positive handling can be carried out. No physical positive handling can be carried out in the meantime. If children cannot be contained within the building without physical contact then the police should be called and extra measures put in place.

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INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this policy are as follows-

- To protect the interests and well being of the pupils of Lancaster Steiner School;
- To protect staff in their duties in care of the children;
- To protect Lancaster Steiner School and its trustees, who have ultimate responsibility for actions of staff.

Positive Handling in Lancaster Steiner School involves the use of 'reasonable force', which is defined by The Department of Education as:

1. *"Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.*
2. *'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.*
3. *As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.*
4. *Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.*
5. *School staff should 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 pupil."*

(Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Head teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies. 2012)

Control by positive handling is the **last resort** intervention and should only be used where other de-escalation techniques have failed. Use of physical handling should only be used when

- the child is in danger
- other people are being harmed
- there is serious damage to property.

Immediate and significant injury would be defined as actual or grievous bodily harm; physical or sexual abuse; risking the lives of, or injury to self or others by wilful or reckless behaviour; and self poisoning.

Serious damage to property is defined as damage which places the child/young person or other people at risk of injury, or damage which is causing or would cause serious distress or trauma to others. It also includes protracted wilful damage to property i.e. where a child/young person sets out to do considerable damage as a premeditated act. It would not normally include 'one-off' temper tantrums unless the previous criteria were met.

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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy lays out a framework for positive handling for all staff at Lancaster Steiner School. Its aim is to inform all staff, families and pupils where appropriate, of the permissible forms of control.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES

Please also see Lancaster Steiner School Whole School Behaviour Policy, Inclusion Policy, Risk Assessment- positive handling (See Appendix 1) Complaints Policy and Procedure, Health and Safety Policy

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff and volunteers are responsible for-

- ensuring they are familiar with the contents of this policy;
- ensuring they work within the guidelines set out in this policy;
- asking for clarification or further training if they do not feel confident in their ability to comply with this policy;
- completing training where necessary and attending further training to maintain qualification;
- work in partnership with a child and their family to minimise any possibility that positive handling will become necessary.

IN ADDITION TO THIS, THE COLLEGE OF TEACHERS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR-

- ensuring that all members of staff and volunteers are given internal advice on Positive Handling and the approaches used in the school,
- providing school staff with the time and support they need to manage behaviour effectively in their classroom.

THE TRUSTEES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR-

- ensuring all the staff have access to training if it is required;
- monitoring the effectiveness of this policy;
- providing the College of Teachers with support in evaluating and developing this policy;
- ensuring the health and safety of the pupils and school staff.

PARENTS AND CARERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR-

- informing the class teacher or other member of staff where they believe children's behaviour may escalate beyond normal levels so staff can be prepared in their responses;
- sending their child ready and equipped to learn in school;
- work in partnership with the school staff to minimise any possibility that positive handling will become necessary.

INDUCTION

All staff and volunteers will be internally advised in the use of the schools positive handling approaches during their induction.

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PLANNING AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Staff are more able to act confidently and decisively where problems have been anticipated and possible interventions planned in advance. Pre-planning in respect of individual pupils where the need for positive handling might be anticipated because of the nature of a child's assessed needs should form a part of that child's Individual Pupil Plan (IPP) or Behaviour Management Plan (BMP). The plan should reflect the needs of the child and the training, skills and abilities of the school staff and address any need for them to receive additional support if necessary. Wherever possible, plans should also involve and take into account the views and opinions of the child and their family. Risk assessment should be carried out and regularly reviewed.

EXERCISING JUDGEMENT

The effective use of control by positive handling requires sound judgement and confident action on the part of the adult concerned. Risk Assessments must be undertaken to assist staff in exercising appropriate judgement as to when physical positive handling can/cannot should/should not be used. Discussions of the risks and procedures must take place in College and Early Years meetings around possible scenarios and analysis of actual incidents, enabling staff to build up a body of experience of good judgement and feel more confident about their decision making in crisis situations.

NON INTERVENTION

Control by positive handling as an intervention poses risks of its own - of injury to the staff member or child, damage to property or of escalating the situation and matters becoming generally worse. Staff need to be aware of all these possibilities when assessing a situation and determining what level of intervention to make. The fact that the criteria for control by positive handling are met does not mean that staff must use the intervention, especially if they have grounds for believing it would make matters worse. In these circumstances, withdrawal from a situation to seek support or find another way of reducing the risk should not be seen as a 'failure' on the part of the adult concerned.

TOUCH AND PHYSICAL CONTACT BETWEEN CHILDREN AND TEACHERS

It is recognised that hugs and warm physical contact may be an appropriate and comfortable part of school life, particularly with the younger children. It is best for adults not to initiate physical contact. Some examples of times when physical contact are acceptable are:

1. Times of reassurance e.g. through a pat on the shoulder or arm if a child is in distress and needs comforting.
2. Physical contact in the Early Years Department e.g. helping children use the toilet, dressing, comfort and general care and is likely to occur in general play activities.
3. Physical contact is necessary when administering first aid.
4. Physical contact may be appropriate during craft activities to help and direct a child.
5. Young children with Special Educational Needs may need staff to provide physical prompts or help.

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It is worth all staff and volunteers bearing in mind that some children may be particularly sensitive to physical contact because of their cultural background, sensory issues or because of abuse.

POSITIVE HANDLING TECHNIQUES

In line with our Whole School Behaviour policy, the teachers and staff work to use pre-emptive strategies to avoid the escalation of behaviour that might require the use of Positive Handling.

CONTROL BY PHYSICAL PRESENCE

This refers to the day-to-day 'supervisory' role of the school staff. At its simplest level, the presence of an adult in a room may be a deterrent to misbehaviour. Control by physical presence involves emphasising verbal instructions / directions by a look or gesture. It may also include standing in the way of a pupil who is not responding to verbal instruction or is losing control.

CONTROL BY HOLDING

Holding is an intervention that is intended to avert, distract, or discourage but does not use such force as to overwhelm the child/young person and prevent them from acting on their own volition. Holding is distinguished from physical positive handling in the manner of the intervention and the degree of force applied. It may be used most effectively with small children, especially where they are unlikely to respond to verbal influence alone. Incidents of holding should be recorded in the same way as physical positive handling.

If the child/young person forcibly resists or makes a major objection to either of these interventions, then the intervention could be gradual and graded in response to the levels of risk being presented, remembering the aim is to not allow a situation to escalate. Call for more support if necessary.

POSITIVE HANDLING

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, staff have been unable to receive positive handling training. Therefore, no physical positive handling can be carried out at this time. If children cannot be contained within the building without physical contact then the police should be called and extra measures put in place.

Positive handling should only be used as a last resort, when all other discipline strategies have been applied, in cases where there is an immediate danger to the child or others.

The principles behind the use of control by positive handling are:

- positive handling is an act of care and control, not a punishment and should never involve pain;
- to reduce the risk to the child, others and ourselves

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- pupils should be made aware of the circumstances in which control by positive handling may be used;
- that staff care enough not to let a child be out of control
- to allow all parties to leave a situation with the maximum dignity possible
- to increase staff confidence in their ability to avoid the need for use of control by positive handling e.g. through dialogue or diversion, and the child should be warned that physical positive handling may be used if they are unable to control themselves;
- before applying control by positive handling, every effort should be made to secure the presence of another adult to provide assistance or observe the situation;
- control by positive handling will only be used when other measures have not had the desired outcome or are unlikely to work and there is an immediate risk of injury or serious damage to property if physical positive handling is not used;
- only the minimum of force for the shortest period necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied to allow the child/young person to regain self control;
- parental consent is not required for the use of positive handling, in line with DfE guidelines
- a pupil should never be asked to or allowed to restrain another child.

An example of how the positive handling policy may be implemented can be seen as follows:

1. The teacher or assistant should first give verbal signals that are repetitive and familiar and that are generally used to hold the group, e.g. 'hands are for work and play', 'kind hands in the kindergarten'. Alternatively the practitioner may attempt to redirect play or engage the child in other activities.
2. If the child does not modify their behaviour as a response to these usual signals staff will attempt to encourage or lead the child by the hand to a place where they can have quiet time.
3. If the child does not modify their behaviour as a response to these usual signals staff will adopt a calm and measured approach and attempt to hold the child around the waist facing outwards in order to minimise injury to both the staff and the child.
4. If this measure does not calm the child, an attempt will be made to guide the child to another space to allow them to have a tantrum, scream, cry or speak out.
5. If the child is striking out [e.g. hitting, scratching, biting, kicking or pulling hair] at a teacher/assistant or another child, they may need to restrain their limbs until they can be removed from the situation.

RECORDING THE USE OF POSITIVE HANDLING STRATEGIES

See appendix 2 for recording form

All incidents requiring the use of positive handling strategies must be recorded. Each teacher has blank Incident Forms in their admin file original record should be completed as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours following the incident. The form should be signed by the parent of the child(ren) concerned and filed in the child's confidential file in the Teachers Filing Cabinet.

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DEBRIEFING INCIDENTS

Staff must be given a supportive environment in which to discuss and evaluate positive handling incidents. They may need time to reflect on the incident and to calm themselves before continuing with their duties, pupils also may need time to calm themselves and reflect. Learning can take place when pupils are provided with the opportunity to consider alternatives to the behaviour that caused the incident.

All recorded incidents of positive handling must be discussed at College or EY team meetings to analyse why they happened and how policy and risk assessments may be changed to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident in the future. The record should be used to analyse successful strategies which might be replicated as part of a future planned response.

COMPLAINTS

Control by positive handling generally causes emotions to run high and can upset a child to the extent that they or their family complain about their treatment. All complaints will be dealt with as defined within the Complaints Policy. In line with DfE guidelines *“When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true: it is **not** for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably”*
(Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Head teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies. 2012)

TRAINING

The holding required in early years is generally very basic and would not normally require specific training. However, when needs move out of the strategies described or involve risk to those involved, training would be sought as described in the lower school policy.

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APPENDIX 1

Risk Assessment for Positive Handling

Lancaster Steiner School

Risk

Assessment

Date of Assessment: 6 th June 2016				Assessor: The				
College of Teachers								
Activity: Behaviour: Positive Handling				Location: Lancaster				
Steiner School								
Hazard	Who does it Affect?	Risk			Control Measures	Residual Risk		
		S	L	R		S	L	R
Behaviour which could cause severe injury to self, or others	All	4	2	8	Implementation of Positive Handling Techniques: such as Control by Holding	4	1	4
Behaviour which could cause minor injury to self or others.	All	2	3	6	Implementation of Positive Handling Techniques: such as Control by physical presence	2	1	2
Behaviour which may result in a criminal offence being committed.	All persons above the age of 10	4	1	4	Implementation of Positive Handling Techniques: calling another member of staff to support the carrying out of the procedure	4	1	4
Behaviour which may result in significant damage occurs to property.	All	3	2	6	Implementation of Positive Handling Techniques: such as guiding the child away,	3	1	3
Behaviour which may result in a child trying to leave the school grounds	All	5	3	15	Following security procedures and if necessary Implementation of Positive Handling Techniques: such as Control by Holding	5	2	10

Risk = Likelihood x Severity

Likelihood Range 1-5

Control Measures Required

Severity Range 1-5

Control Measures Required

Control Measures Required

Severity

5 Fatalities

4 Major Injuries

3 Moderate injuries

2 Minor Injuries

• Negligible/No Effect

Likelihood

5 Almost a certainty

4 Probable

3 Likely

2 Unlikely

1 Negligible

Risk

21-25 Intolerable Additional

16-20 Substantial Additional

11-15 Moderate Additional

6-10 Acceptable

1-5 Trivial