



2025 -
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Positive
Handling
Policy



The ContinU Plus Academy

Positive Handling Policy



Introduction

The Positive Handling Policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils.

The policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils and for volunteers working within the ContinU Plus Academy (CPA) to explain the school's arrangements for the care and control of pupils presenting very challenging behaviour (its contents is available to parents/carers and pupils). A statement about the school's Positive Behaviour Policy is made to parents/carers in the CPA's Prospectus.

This statement includes information on the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils.

Purpose

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in the CPA. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in the CPA respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff in the CPA. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required. The CPA acknowledges that physical techniques are only part of a whole settling approach to behaviour management.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school/provision:

- clearly understand the Positive Handling Policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care for taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary; and
- are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations

Implications

The Education and Inspection Act 2006 stipulates that reasonable force 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 among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere within the school (this includes authorised out-of-school activities);
- self-injuring;
- causing injury to others; ➤ committing an offence.

Individual members of staff cannot be required to use physical restraint. However, teaching and non-teaching staff work in *loco parentis* and should always operate with an appropriate 'Duty of

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Care'; they could be liable for a claim of negligence if they fail to follow the guidance within the Positive Handling Policy.

The application of any form of physical control places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in the Positive Handling Policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the Positive Handling Policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

Reasonable force 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

Reasonable Force:

No legal definition of 'reasonable force' exists, however, for the purpose of the Positive Handling Policy and the implementation of it in the ContinU Plus Academy (CPA):

- positive handling uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming him/herself, others or property;
- the scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the nature of the harm they might cause.

Physical Contact:

Situations in which proper physical contact occurs between staff and pupils e.g. in the care of pupils with learning disabilities; in games/PE/Outdoor Education/boxing interventions/trampolining.

Physical Intervention:

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action e.g. guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

Physical Control/Restraint:

This will involve the use of 'reasonable force' when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. It is important to note that the use of 'reasonable force' should be seen as a 'last resort'. The level of compliance from the pupil determines whether or not the interaction is an intervention or a control/restraint.

Underpinning Values:

Everyone attending or working in the CPA has a right to:

- recognition of their unique identity;
- be treated with respect and dignity;
- learn and work in a safe environment;
- be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse.

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

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- individual consideration of pupil needs by the staff who have responsibility for their care and protection;
- expect staff to undertake their 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 school;
- be informed about the school's complaints procedure.

The school will ensure that pupils are given support to understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits, which govern behaviour in the school.

Authorised staff

In the CPA: all staff are authorised to use reasonable force within the context of The Education and Inspection Act 2006 – 'The use of reasonable force to control and restrain pupils'.

The school provides training for all staff and the headteacher retains a list of all those staff trained.

The headteacher is responsible for making clear to whom such authorisation has been given (in what circumstances and settings they may use force and for what duration of time this authorisation will last). The headteacher will ensure that those authorised are aware of, and understand, what the authorisation entails. Those whom the headteacher has not authorised will be told what steps to take in the case of an incident where control or restraint is needed.

Staff from external agencies working within the school

Support services will have their own policies for care and control of pupils. When working within the school, it is the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that colleagues from support services are aware of school policy and practice.

Training

It will be the responsibility of the headteacher to arrange suitable training. Training for all staff will be made available on a biannual basis. Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken. Arrangements will be made clear as part of the induction of staff and training will be provided as part of on-going staff development.

The ContinU Plus Academy School acknowledges that physical techniques are only a part of a whole school setting approach to behaviour management. The governors of the school are committed to working within the CPA's framework for accessing training in that:

1. Training will be delivered on a needs-based approach and procedures are in place to monitor incidents, following a behavioural audit and implementation of appropriate risk management procedures;

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2. All training will include theory on at least the following:

- causes of challenging behaviour;
- prevention strategies;
- positive behaviour management;
- de-escalation;
- risk assessment;
- behaviour support planning;
- de-brief following incidents.

3. Physical techniques are not treated in isolation and the school is committed to ensuring that, as a result of incidents, learning opportunities are created for children that allow them to 'own' and take responsibility for their behaviour.

In addition, procedures are also in place to ensure that appropriate support is provided for staff and that following an incident pupil/staff relationships are rebuilt and repaired to ensure that a positive learning environment is maintained.

All the techniques used take account of a young person's:

- age;
- gender;
- level of physical, emotional and intellectual development;
- special needs;
- social context.

Also, they provide a gradual, graded system of responses.

Where appropriate, Positive De-escalation Plans are written for individual children and, where applicable, these will be designed through multi-professional collaboration. Positive De-escalation Plans (PDP) need to be completed against each child when the likelihood of needing physical intervention is high. The assessment should identify the benefits and the risks associated with the strategies being proposed.

Strategies for dealing with challenging behaviour

As endorsed in the school's Behaviour Policy, staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order.

Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to pupils or staff, property, buildings or the environment. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches should be taken according to the circumstances of the incident.

- verbal acknowledgment of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain (this includes negotiation, care and concern);

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- further verbal reprimand stating:
- that 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.
- warning of intention to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies. If possible summon assistance from (cite school support structures i.e. staff on call/patrol/SLT).
- physical intervention. Reasonable force being used to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Types of incident

The incidents fall into three 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 engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway such that he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others;
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (NB: this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

Examples of situations which fall into the third category are:

- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom;
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

Acceptable measures of physical intervention

The school will put in place systems for managing and reviewing the following:

- strategies for preventing the occurrence of behaviours which precipitate the use of a physical intervention;
- strategies for 'de-escalation' or 'de-fusion' which can avert the need for a physical intervention;
- procedures for post-incident support and de-briefing for staff, children, service users and their families.

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- The concept of reasonable force where 'reasonableness' is determined with reference to all the circumstances, including:
 - the seriousness of the incident;
 - the relative risks arising from using a physical intervention compared with using other strategies;
 - the age, cultural background, gender, stature and medical history of the child or service user concerned;
 - the application of gradually increasing or decreasing levels of force in response to the person's behaviour;
 - the approach to risk assessment and risk management employed;
 - the distinction between:
 - **seclusion** where an adult or child is forced to spend time alone against their will in a locked room or room which they cannot leave (NB: this is not a permissible form of control).
 - **time out** which involves restricting the service user's access to all positive reinforcements as part of the behavioural programme;
 - **withdrawal** which involves removing the person from a situation which causes anxiety or distress to a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities;
 - the distinction between planned physical interventions (where incidents are foreseeable in that they have occurred previously and a response planned following a risk assessment/positive deescalation plan) and the use of force in emergency situations (which cannot reasonably be anticipated);
 - first aid procedures to be employed and those responsible for implementation in the event of an injury or physical distress arising as a result of a physical intervention;
 - **unacceptable** practices that might expose service users or staff to foreseeable risk of injury or psychological distress.

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

Positive handling at CPA is seen as a proactive response to meet individual pupil needs.

Recording

Where physical control or restraint has been used, a record of the incident will be kept (a hard copy and recorded on SIMS).

The Incident Report Form will be completed as soon as possible after the incident, normally prior to staff going off duty and be signed by all staff involved and the headteacher. After the review of the incident, copies of the form will be placed on the pupil's file. A Health and Safety Accident/Incident Form will be completed and returned to the Learning Trust in situations where injury has occurred to either members of staff or pupils. Where staff have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force, they should have access to support as appropriate.

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Monitoring incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use reasonable force, this will always be recorded and documented following agreed procedures. 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 may require the use of reasonable force. Monitoring of incidents will take place on a regular basis and the results used to inform planning to meet individual pupil and school needs.

Action after an incident

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:

- review of behaviour programme;
- child protection procedure (this may involve investigations by police and/or social services);
- staff or pupil disciplinary procedure;
- school behaviour policy;
- exclusions procedure in the case of violence or assault against a member of staff. The member of staff will be kept informed of any action taken.

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

Complaints



The availability of a clear policy about reasonable force and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them.

Any complaints about staff will be investigated through the school's Complaints Policy. If necessary, the complaint will be dealt with by the Staff Disciplinary Procedures and/or Child Protection Procedures.

Other relevant policies

Other relevant policies that cross reference with this one are:

eg: Positive Behaviour Policy, Exclusion Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, safeguarding.

 ContinU Plus Academy - Serious Incident Report Form 		
Name of Pupil:	Name of Person Reporting:	
Day:	Date:	Time of Incident:
Subject:		
Witnessed by:	Staff:	Location/s of Incident:
	Pupils:	
Description of Incident:		
Issues affecting pupil at present:	Possible triggers in school:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••	

CPA - FORM - Serious Incident Report (SIR) MARCH2017 HFD (Green)

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Criteria by which PHS was used:	
A) Pupil in danger of hurting self	
B) Pupil in danger of hurting others	
C) Pupil in danger of causing significant damage to property	
D) Pupil in danger of committing a crime	
E) Pupil disrupting the good order of the school	
PHS Used:	Staff Involved:
Were any injuries sustained during the incident or during PHS? Yes No	
If yes, who to:	
A) Pupil (please complete Pupil Injury Form and inform First Aider and Parents/Carers)	
B) Self (please complete an Accident Form)	
C) Both (ensure both are documented as detailed above)	
Why did the incident happen/why did the pupil do this:	
What could you do differently if this incident happened again:	
Professional skills used to used to de-escalate :	
How did you know the incident had finished?	
Signed (Reporting Staff):	Date:
Comments/Actions (phone call/report/letter home):	
Signed (SLT):	Report form information RAG rated :

CPA -FORM -Serious Incident Report (SIR) MARCH2017 HFD (Green)

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A copy of the Positive Handling Policy is published in its entirety on the CPA's website (www.continuplus.org.uk).

Date Policy Created: June 2021
Member of Staff Responsible: Adam Thompson (Deputy Headteacher)
Review Date: June 2026

Signed:

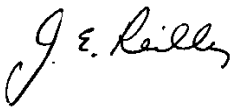
(Staff member responsible)

Signed:



(Headteacher)

Signed:



(Chair of Governors)