



Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy

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PLEASE READ THIS DOCUMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANY SPECIFIC MYNYDD HAF SCHOOL PROCEDURES AS DIRECTED BY THE HEAD TEACHER.

1. Supporting Documents

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- [Positive Behaviour Policy](#)
- Report of Untoward Events and Accidents Policy
- Management of Aggression and Physical Violence at Work Policy
- [Safeguarding Children in Education Policy \(and Procedure\)](#)
- [Specialist Support Team Information](#)
- [Mental Capacity Policy](#)
- [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Reducing Restrictive Practices Framework 2022: Welsh Government guidance on reducing restrictive practices in childcare, education, health and social care settings.](#)
- [Education Wales: Safe and effective intervention: guidance for schools and local authorities \(March 2013\)](#)
- [Keeping Learners Safe 2022 \(Wales\)](#)
- [The Right Way – A Children’s Rights Approach to Education in Wales](#)
- [Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019](#)
- Safe and effective intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons (Wales 2013)
- ESTYN: Guidance on reducing restrictive practices in childcare, education, health and social care settings 2024
- Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Code of practice 2022

2. Introduction



This policy outlines both the practice guidance and the specific actions staff will take in their work to help children and young people develop relationships based on mutual respect and trust, an understanding about acceptable behaviour and positive responses to other children and adults. This policy should be read in conjunction with the pupil's individual education plan which contains behavior management planning and individual risk assessment.

This policy is based upon guidance from:

- Education Wales: Safe and effective intervention: guidance for schools and local authorities (March 2013)
- [Keeping Learners Safe 2022 \(Wales\)](#)
- The Right Way – A Children's Rights Approach to Education in Wales
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Children and Young Person's Act 2008
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998:
 - Article 3 -prohibition against torture, or inhuman or degrading treatment
 - Article 5 - right to liberty
 - Article 8 - right to private and family life, including personal autonomy and respect for physical and mental integrity
 - Article 14 - non-discrimination in the enjoyment of ECHR rights
- Equality Act 2010
- Physical Intervention: a Policy Framework (ICM Institute for Conflict Management)
- Team Teach Training in the Reduction of Risk and Restraint
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated 2020)
- Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019
- Reducing Restrictive Practices Framework 2022 (Welsh Government)

This policy should be viewed as supporting to the Mynydd Haf School "Positive Behaviour Policy" and any actions taken should follow the same principles outlined therein.



Before any member of staff makes the decision to intervene physically they must have attempted to use Team-Teach de-escalate strategies first – unless a person is in immediate danger of being significantly injured. Staff must always attempt to resolve any crisis situation without using physical intervention where possible to do so.

3. Aim/Scope

Principles outlined in the Mynydd Haf School policy on “Positive Behaviour” should govern all approaches to managing pupils who are likely to cause injury to themselves, others or to seriously damage property. The welfare of the pupil is paramount and staff should bear this in mind in any intervention.

Additionally Keys Group have a duty of care to their staff and accordingly staff should attempt to strike a positive balance by ensuring that:

- Any incident of physical intervention is only ever a “last resort” and is only carried out by suitable trained or competent staff (i.e. when all other attempts to divert, deflect or diffuse situations have failed)
- Any physical intervention should use the minimum force necessary for the shortest possible time
- The dignity of the pupil must remain at the fore front in the staff mind
- Where possible staff must ensure they are able to visually ascertain breathing changes in the pupil during physical interventions

The use of physical intervention to enforce compliance with staff instruction is **Strictly Prohibited**

Any physical intervention where the child falls to the floor should be immediately stopped.

The use of ground holds is **prohibited** unless there is a specific plan in place agreed with the placing authority and the Managing Director and/or the action taken is proportionate to the significant risk being presented and is in the best interest to keep everyone safe. Use of ground holds that have not been previously approved will be subject to internal review.

4. Abbreviations and Definitions

The following notes are taken from Team Teach Theory Book and training course and are considered good practice.

As a general rule nobody has the right to touch, move, hold or contain another person. However, people with a duty of care operate in exceptional circumstances where it is sometimes necessary to act outside the norm.

Whenever they do so they should be clear about why it is **necessary**.



The best legal defense would be to show that any actions taken were in the client's **best Interest** and that they were **Reasonable and Proportionate**

Restrictive physical interventions can be employed to achieve a number of different outcomes:

- to break away or disengage from dangerous or harmful physical contact initiated by a service user;
- to separate the person from a 'trigger', for example, removing one pupil who responds to another with physical aggression;
- to protect a child or service user from a dangerous situation – for example, the hazards of a busy road.

Restrictive Physical Intervention is the use of force to control a person's behaviour and involves the use of force to:

- Restrict movement
- Restrict mobility
- Disengage from dangerous or harmful physical contact

4.1 Important Definitions:

- Seclusion - Forced to spend time alone against their will. This requires statutory powers other than in an emergency.
- Time out - Restricting positive reinforcement as part of a planned behavioural programme, this requires a written agreed plan.
- Withdrawal - Removed from the situation but observed and supported until they are ready to resume.

It is helpful to distinguish between:

Planned intervention, in which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods which are based upon a risk assessment and recorded in the pupil's records and plans;

Emergency or unplanned use of force which occurs in response to unforeseen events.

At **Mynydd Haf School** we have designated time out spaces and all pupils are managed specifically on their individual needs. We would never use seclusion as a behaviour management tool unless in the case of an emergency response to a behaviour previously unseen. This can only be used once in an emergency situation then staff will immediately plan strategies based on the new risk assessment which will be recorded formally in the pupils Positive Handling Plans.

5. Policy Content



Pupils can present with behaviour that challenges. In Mynydd Haf School we understand, that this behaviour may be presented and we are committed to fully understanding its underlying causes to help and support pupils to finding alternative, socially acceptable ways to communicate and express themselves. Underlying causes could include:

- A medical condition (known or unknown)
- Sensory impairment
- Trauma and attachment disorder
- Neglect
- Frustration
- Learning difficulty or disability
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Mental ill-health
- Abuse and exploitation
- Substance misuse
- Domestic violence.

In fully understanding each pupils' individual needs, staff will know each individual well, with a strong commitment to meeting their needs through the application of positive approaches to behaviour management.

This will be achieved through:-

The application of are values in everything that we do – Excellence, Passion, Integrity and Caring.

A positive culture that works towards children and young people achieving their agreed outcomes.

Vocational, mandatory and essential learning and development via accredited and up-to-date training.

Assessing and regularly reviewing placement plans, through a multi-agency approach.

Fully involving our children and young people and those important to them, in developing behavior management plans in IEPs and ensuring their views and wishes are taken into account.

Assessment and management of risk through the development and dissemination of clear risk management plans.

Creating environments that support and empower children and young people to develop and thrive and which meet their individual needs.



The application of interventions that work to understand the cause of behaviours that challenge and work to de-escalate situations.

Only using restraint where it is deemed absolutely necessary to prevent serious harm to anyone and/or serious damage to property or severe disruption to others' learning.

Understanding that children and young people are developing human beings, the use of restraint has the potential to cause a negative impact. The use of repeated restraint can have damaging and re-traumatising effects.

5.1 Initial Management of Disruptive Behaviour

(Read in conjunction with Positive Behaviour Policy)

The level and nature of appropriate staff support, or intervention will wherever possible depend on the attitude and behaviour of the pupil.

When staff observes tension the initial approach should be low key and appropriate.

The pupil's response determines the route by which staff manage the pupil's difficulties. In many cases it is possible to **divert the pupil** away from aggressive or violent behaviours.

In some cases, the pupil will dismiss all avoidance options suggested by staff and persistently escalate aggressive behaviour towards confrontation and a violent outcome.

Some situations can escalate very quickly.

During an escalation staff must decide whether or not to summon support or take measures to safeguard the health and safety of all present.

5.2 Principles Governing Intervention Decisions

Staff may use many options and strategies to manage disaffected pupils. The selection of specific management techniques depends in part on the personality, character and temperament of individual staff. No set of strategies *guarantee* a successful outcome to behavioural confrontations. However, the following principles must govern intervention decisions.

It is essential that staff, when managing a disruptive pupil, should **remain objective and calm**, in both speech and actions. It is not possible to effectively manage a pupil when one becomes subjective and 'heated' by the circumstances.

It is important to **listen and respond quietly** to the pupil rather than overwhelm them with loud and insistent directives (loud, irritating demands).



If no immediate solution is obvious, if appropriate, one may deal with the difficulty at an agreed later time. Imposing an immediate 'solution' may not dispel the pupil's frustration, or defuse unacceptable behaviour, whereas **time and distancing** can sometimes help.

Always **maintain positive attitudes** that are constructive. By stressing positive behaviours regularly, staff reinforce desired attitudes in pupils. Refer to the pupil's previous achievements and promote self-esteem.

In confrontations, negative factors should be stated in a neutral tone of voice. **Factual statements should be used** as the basis for staff-pupil discussion.

Always **'clarify' choices and consequences**, rather than impose directives or make unachievable 'threats'. Pupils must be made aware it is their actions which decide the choices and that those decisions have obvious consequences, they make choices.

Use **'diversionary'** techniques involving other people in order to dispel the child/young person's aggression.

Resist becoming 'cornered 'in an argument or 'cornering' a pupil - you can become defensive very easily. It takes two to sustain arguments.

Decide, when appropriate to **involve other adults in support**. Management of disruptive behaviour requires individual attention. Supporting adults can encourage rational, sympathetic, supportive attitudes in other group members, in order to 'talk round' the aggressive child/young person.

When support is available, **remove the pupil or person from the 'unhelpful' environment**. Don't allow negative peer group 'encouragement'. Withdrawal can often enable staff to focus more clearly on difficulties and resolve them through two-way discussion or conversation.

It is sometimes preferable to let the pupil in crisis remain where they are and remove the audience for the situation.

Staff must assess the risks, **promote physical safety** and do everything possible to prevent physical injury.

Physical Intervention and Restraint

When aggression from a pupil escalates to confrontations, this can lead to a violent outcome. Staff as far as possible should **promote physical safety for all** pupil's involved. This may require the safe physical intervention of the child in crisis.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act (2006) enables school staff to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

- committing a criminal offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);



- Causing personal injury or damage to property;
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.
- No management strategy, including positive handling, which involves the deliberate ill treatment of a pupil by staff, is acceptable (e.g. pulling hair, punching, verbal or emotional abuse etc).
- Violent pupils may be restrained by using, the approved methods. These methods must be used **at all times**. Often the most at risk time, is when initially taking hold of the pupil, at these times it is imperative to place the pupil in an approved hold as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Once the crisis is over staff must complete a debrief with a senior staff member which includes reviewing CCTV footage of incident where available for reflective practice and a detailed physical intervention report (Untoward Education Event on RADAR) which includes any techniques used prior to being able to use the approved hold.
- If the pupil receives an injury from the incident then assessment to level of medical attention required must be made and offered immediately. Any refusal to access medical treatment must be documented accordingly. A body map should be completed to clearly highlight the exact location, type of injury (bruise, cut swelling etc.) and approximate size of injury.
- In the event that the pupil makes a complaint then the complaints procedure must be instigated.
- Later when calm, the pupil must be asked to discuss the reason for the incident. Discussion must include other, more acceptable options or decisions through which the causes for such an incident could have been resolved. This follow- up action is the crucial element of support for the pupil. It is essential that the staff devote sufficient time to this aspect of management of violent behaviour. It is preferable that the trauma road-map designed by Headteacher (Trauma Informed Practitioner) be used with the pupil as a visual scaffolding. A copy should be retained by Pastoral Team.
- The pupil after each incident should be encouraged to have their views recorded on the appropriate documentation. The head teacher must evaluate the full incident on the appropriate documentation.
- The incident must be recorded on RADAR, and reported to the Head teacher immediately, for appropriate and any further action to be taken.



- For assault (pupil on pupil or pupil on staff or staff on pupil etc.) this procedure must also be used in conjunction with Police Involvement Policy, refer to the procedures on assault and the use of 'Safeguarding Procedures'
- Staff and pupils involved in physical intervention will receive a debrief with their line manager / key worker whichever is most appropriate.

5.3. Further Guidance

Prior to using physical interventions staff should advise/warn the pupil that this is may happen. If it becomes necessary to physically restrain a pupil to avoid injury, the amount of force used must be the minimum necessary to hold the pupil safely.

Any offensive act towards a pupil such as punching, hitting or slapping is totally unacceptable.

Sudden violent pushing which results in the pupil falling over is also unacceptable.

Floor holds are unacceptable and should not be used. Any floor holds will result in a senior manager investigation.

Staff will be operating within the specific guidelines and their actions will be evaluated in this context after any incident of violent behaviour.

If during a physical intervention, staff or pupils stumble and end up falling to the floor, staff should release the hold and allow the pupil to stand up.

If the pupil becomes aggressive or violent in any way staff should immediately continue to de-escalate.

The length of time a pupil is restrained, and the degree of force used should be the minimum necessary to achieve the immediate objective of regaining control of the situation. As soon as it is safe, physical intervention should be gradually phased down to allow the pupil to regain self-control. Throughout any incident open communication between the adults and with the pupil is integral to the de-escalation process.

Physical intervention should never be used to enforce compliance with staff instruction.

Whenever possible, a member of staff faced with a situation where physical intervention is thought to be necessary should call for assistance so that there are two members present when a pupil is being held. The number of staff involved should be the minimum number to ensure the pupil's safety at all times.

Staff will use approved holds and every effort must be made to ensure that the pupil's dignity is retained throughout.

Throughout the use of physical intervention, the pupil should be spoken to in a quiet and soothing manner to encourage the speedy return of calm and self-control. The staff holding should make it clear that the pupil will be released as soon as calm is restored.



At no time during or after the incident must clothing be forcibly removed from the pupil, unless in the interest of Health and Safety and a full account must be documented.

Analysis of records will be made at regular intervals and appropriate evaluations discussed with all staff.

5.4. Possible Warning Signs

Many pupils experience extreme mood swings, which may involve a range of behaviours that demonstrate an emotional fragility. At such times pupils can react to their circumstances with increasing hostility and aggression.

Disruptive behaviour is often a symptom of fear, failure or frustration. Frequently pupils do not identify the true cause of their anxiety or emotional distress but fixate on an alternative 'supposed' cause.

Real or imagined slights, minor disruptive incidents, or tension within a group can provoke triggering incidents, which invoke hostile responses in an emotionally fragile pupil. With or without staff support to diffuse the pupil's tension and frustrated behaviour, the pupil may display an outburst of violence. The cause of which may originate outside of school or even be triggered by the pupil's history.

School staff need to be aware that 'feelings drive behaviour'. It is vital that all staff in school have the knowledge and skills to 'look past' the behaviours being displayed and attempt to get to the cause of why the pupil is feeling a certain way. Staff are encouraged to intervene early, this does not necessarily mean physically but staff should attempt to positively engage the pupils as soon as they possibly can. It is important to try and assess the stage of crisis the young person maybe in (As written in IEPs). This will then determine the appropriate staff response.

6. Responsibilities

Every physical intervention must be recorded on RADAR within 24 hours and be recorded with UTEE reference in Physical Intervention Log Book.

The pupil will undertake a de-brief about the incident, which will enable staff to review new ways to deal with incidents alongside the pupil.

In accordance with the present incident recording procedure the pupil's Social Worker, and if relevant and appropriate their parents/carers will be informed of the incident on the day it occurs.

Staff have a duty of care to both the pupils and to themselves.



During any incidents staff should also use the 'help scripts' set down by the school as we have in the past found these to be a very successful tool.

During the de-brief the Head teacher or authorised person must also ensure the pupil is aware that they can contact an advocacy service if they wish to discuss the incident further.

Similarly the pupil can make use any of the usual channels to discuss or raise issues if they are unhappy with the measure used - Complaints Policy, talking to the Responsible Individual, Social Worker, Local Authority, Child line etc.

The Head teacher must ensure they evaluate this use of the measure and follow up any issues/concerns on RADAR.

Scenarios to assist with clarifying recording

Proactively holding a younger child's hand to cross the road would not be classed as a Deprivation of Liberty/Restraint none physical.

Physically placing yourself between 2 young people arguing would not be classed as a deprivation of liberty/restraint none physical as long as both young people can move freely around you should they wish to.

Proactively arranging staggered mealtimes or having 2 dining tables to eat in smaller groups to ensure mealtimes are more positive when children are unsettled or not getting on is not a separation or a deprivation of liberty/restraint none physical.

Physically blocking a doorway to prevent a child leaving or entering a room or the building as they are a risk to themselves or to others is a deprivation of liberty/restraint none physical and must be recorded as such on RADAR. Even if the child does not resist and even if you do not lay a hand on the child.

Any action taken by staff that is taken specifically to prevent a child moving freely around the school or to prevent a child leaving the school is a deprivation of liberty/restraint none physical and should be recorded as such. There must be a clear reason for the intervention that staff which must be that the child is a risk to themselves or others. Restraint is only permitted for the purpose of preventing injury to any person (including the child) or serious damage to the property of any person (including the child's).

Schools, home and professional partners must work together in communicating regarding behaviours that challenge so that staff are prepared to effectively support a young people in a crisis. Any staff injuries/illness should be reported to line Manager and medical assistance offered.



7. Training Requirements

All staff at **Mynydd Haf School** are trained in the use of positive handling using **Team Teach** training

It is important that all staff are trained even if staff have medical conditions which does not allow them to physically intervene when a young person is in crisis.

It is very important that staff understand that intervention is 95% de-escalation and 5% physical intervention.

A list of trained staff can be found in the Head's office. This list details the names of both trained staff and staff authorised to physically intervene.

Staff who are not able to physically intervene should ensure that they support the staff team and students whilst any physical intervention is taking place. There will always be a number of pupils not involved who need positive praise and attention during times of crisis in order to reduce the possibility of young people becoming involved in the situation taking place. It is important to note that every role in this situation carries equal importance.

8. Equality Impact Statement

All relevant persons are required to comply with this policy and must demonstrate sensitivity and competence in relation to diversity in race, faith, age, gender, disability and sexual orientation. If you, or any other groups, believe you are disadvantaged by this policy please contact the Head Teacher.