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Restraint/Safe Handling Policy

General statements

- Good behaviour and self-discipline are actively and positively fostered at Elmfield and as such are the primary tools in managing behaviour
- Restraint of pupils must be seen within the context of the behaviour and discipline policies of the School
- Physical restraint is an extremely rare occurrence at Elmfield and therefore not a situation that staff members are likely to encounter with any regularity
- In this policy, restraint is defined as “using force or restricting liberty of movement”
- Elmfield’s policy falls within Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 Circular 10/98
- It is recognised that warm physical contact can be an appropriate and comfortable part of school life. Staff may at times give appropriate physical comfort especially with younger pupils where they judge it would be beneficial for the pupil in the event, for example, of pupil distress. Usually it is best for adults not to initiate such contact.
- Reassurance may occasionally be appropriate, for example a pat on the arm or shoulder

Strategies for avoidance of behaviour which may require physical intervention include:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- An individual programme or report book
- Liaison with parents
- Awareness raising of behaviour or situations likely to become problematic at the appropriate departmental or staff meeting, or at the College of Teachers’ meeting
- Consistency of approach by staff towards pupils

Situations which might require the use of physical intervention or restraint, including the use of reasonable force:

- Where a pupil is causing or is highly likely to cause injury to themselves or to another person
- Where a pupil tries to attack someone
- Where someone is causing serious damage to property
- Where a child is running out of the building or school grounds and likely to place themselves at an unacceptable risk
- To prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence

Defusing the situation

Physical restraint, including the use of reasonable force, should only be used when all other strategies have been exhausted. Staff should always attempt to defuse the situation first, by for example:

- Giving appropriate verbal instructions and warnings, e.g. ‘Stop it!’
- Making clear the expectations of all concerned and the likely consequences if behaviour deteriorates further
- Using eye contact with positive and calming facial expression
- Making appropriate use of humour
- Adjusting body position to ensure minimum threat to pupil and maximum safety for all concerned: generally a sideways stance
- Seeking help from other staff to defuse the situation

Restraint

- Restraint should only be used as a last resort and the degree should not exceed the level of force of the presenting behaviour
- A calm and measured approach is crucial. Restraint should always be used with care
- Restraint should not be used if it is likely to make the situation worse. (Of course, this is very hard to judge in advance.)
- Restraint must always be an act of care and control and never punishment or result from a loss of control by the staff member
- The minimum force necessary to prevent the possibility of harm to persons or property should be used
- It should only continue for the minimum time for it to be effective
- The intention is to help the young person regain their self-control
- The method of restraint must depend for its efficacy on the technique rather than the size of the staff member
- Every effort should be made as far as possible to ensure the presence of another member of staff as witness and assistant

Permissible methods of restraint

Degree of force must be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent and must be appropriate considering the age, understanding and gender of the pupil concerned. It should be the minimum necessary to achieve the desired results, for example:

- Blocking a pupil's path
- Physically interposing between pupils
- Holding
- Leading by hand or arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back, or, in more extreme circumstances, using more restrictive holds
- Attempting to calm the situation by communicating and making it clear that the contact will stop as soon as it is no longer necessary

Examples:

- A young child striking out, hitting, scratching, biting or pulling hair may need their hands and/or feet holding
- A young child may need to be taken to another space to have a tantrum/scream/speak out

The following are not permissible:

- Holding around neck, by collar or in such a way as might restrict breathing
- Slapping, punching or kicking,
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping up
- Pulling or pushing
- Holding or pulling by hair or ear
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground
- Holding in a way that might be considered indecent
- Using threats of violence

Post incident support, monitoring and review

- All incidents of restraint, or accusations of physical intervention, should be reported to the Education Lead and Chair of College immediately, using the appropriate incident form (below), which must be completed in full immediately
- Witnesses will also be interviewed if appropriate
- Parents must be notified immediately
- There must be a post incident review with the pupil (if deemed old enough) as soon as it is judged likely to be effective
- Implications for this policy should be considered as a part of the outcome
- The school has a duty of care to secure the health and safety of its staff and pupils and therefore exclusion may result from such a situation.

Last reviewed 30th June 2017

Diana Ball

INCIDENT FORM

To be completed on day of incident

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------|
| Person reporting incident: | Date of report: | Time of report: |
| People involved: | | |
| <u>What happened?</u> Time: _____ Date: _____ Details: | | |
| Who was present? | | |
| Follow up action taken: | Were any of the following required? 1. First Aid 2. Emergency Services 3. Emergency Repairs 4. Other | |
| Who has been informed? 1. Class Teacher/Guardian 2. Parents 3. Departmental Lead 4. Safeguarding Lead 5. Education Lead 6. Chair of College 7. Estates 8. Bursar 9. Police 10. Other [delete any that are not applicable] | | |
| Further Action Needed/Recommended: | | |