



**PensMeadowSchool**

*Living, Growing, Learning*

# Behaviour for Life and Learning Policy

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Staff Responsible: Marie Hunter

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## References:

Health and Safety Executive 5 steps to risk assessment

DfE behaviour and discipline in schools

Ofsted guidance for HMI inspectors

2013 BILD physical interventions accredited scheme

**Legislation** Education Act 1996 School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Education Act 2002 Education and Inspections Act 2008 Equality Act 2010 The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 Education Act 2011 Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012 The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2012 The School Behaviour (Determination and Publicising of Measures in Academies) Regulations 2012 Mental Capacity Act 2005 Mental Health Act 2007

**DfE associated resources** Home school agreements Use of reasonable Force – advice for head teachers staff and governing bodies Screening, searching and confiscation – advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies. Exclusions guidance. Safeguarding. SEN code of practice.

Checklist on the basics of classroom management (Charlie Taylor)

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools January 2016

Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention Consultation November 2017

Ofsted 2021: Positive environments where children can flourish; a guide for inspectors about physical intervention and restrictions of liberty

**This policy must be read in conjunction with:**

**Behaviour Approach**

**User Guide for Behaviour Monitoring**

**Associated formats for recording behaviour**

**School Code of Conduct**

## Introduction

Pens Meadow School staff and governors are committed to all aspects of positive behaviour support as we believe it is one of the essential foundations needed to create an effective learning and teaching environment, whilst ensuring a culture of respect, safety and security.

This includes a commitment to assist our pupils:

- To develop independence skills for use beyond school life
- To develop skills necessary to make informed choices, which others will respect, and to communicate these choices to others
- To make and maintain social relationships and friendships
- To continue in the ongoing process of self-discovery
- To reduce incidences of behaviour which adversely impact on one's own physical or emotional wellbeing, or on the emotional or physical wellbeing of others

We believe that challenging behaviour is most often the result of an unmet need, or a difficulty in communicating that need to others. We are aware that many of our pupils' experience sensory issues and may find particular environments and experiences overstimulating, frightening or uncomfortable. Adults and peers can be sources of unpredictable actions and sensory sensations; transitions and demands which interrupt routines and repetitive activities (which a pupil may rely on to give a sense of order and predictability to their day) can provoke anxieties which may be communicated to others through behaviour which is challenging in its nature.

We believe that, in order to be active and valued participants in society as adults, our pupils need to be empowered to respond to, and cope with a range of potential situations and demands. These include:

- Coping with waiting (for an activity, person, event etc)
- Coping with being told "no" (when something wanted cannot be given or is not available at all, regardless of how long you might wait)
- Coping with doing a non-preferred activity (doing something/going somewhere, even though you would rather not do it at all eg as an adult: doing housework, going to the dentist etc)
- Coping with criticism (when somebody passes judgment on your performance, justly or unjustly, and responding appropriately to this)
- Taking action when the activity/environment you are in becomes too unpleasant to stay

We recognise that pupils who attend Pens Meadow School present with a range of severe, profound, multiple or complex learning needs and consequently need support through skilled teaching, to learn the coping, tolerance and communication skills listed above.

By identifying unwanted behaviour, considering physical and sensory issues, addressing mismatches in the environment and focusing on a person's highly individualised strengths and needs, we aim to design programmes to teach more effective means of communication, more socially appropriate

interactions with others, and greater tolerance of the different environments and demands which will be encountered in everyday life.

### **Key points in the DfE guidance**

The Department for Education issues up-dated guidance on developing the school behaviour policy. However, their guidance does not relate to legislation recently introduced, but in fact re-emphasises schools' existing powers to discipline pupils. Importantly, it underlines the need for individual schools to develop their own best practice for managing behaviour in their school. Pens Meadow approach is outlined in this Policy and Guidance

The terminology used in this advice:

**must** denotes a statutory requirement; and

**should** emphasises what schools should have regard to.

Teachers have power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour which occurs in school, and in some circumstances, outside school.

The power to discipline also applies to all paid staff at Pens Meadow with responsibility for pupils.

The head teacher and governing board ensure there is a strong behaviour policy to support staff in managing behaviour, including the use of rewards and sanctions.

Governing bodies of maintained schools have a duty, under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, requiring them to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Pens Meadow is fully compliant with this requirement.

### **The School Behaviour Policy**

The head teacher must set out measures in the behaviour policy which aim to:

- promote good behaviour, self-discipline and respect
- prevent bullying
- ensure that pupils complete assigned work, and
- regulate the conduct of pupils (Section 89 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

When deciding what these measures should be, the head teacher must take account of the governing body's statement of behaviour principles. The head teacher must have regard to any guidance or notification provided by the governing body and includes the following at Pens Meadow:

- the power to use reasonable force and other physical contact;
- when to work with other local agencies to assess the needs of pupils who display continuous disruptive behaviour

The governing body of Pens Meadow expects all staff to act in accordance with the training they have undertaken. Staff receive regular training in the understanding of why certain behaviour happens, with an emphasis on identification and intervention. Some behaviour patterns are well-established and strategies are used to manage this in order to ensure as little disruption as possible to the pupils' learning.

The head teacher must decide the standard of behaviour expected of pupils at the school. He/she must also determine the school rules and any disciplinary penalties for breaking the rules.

Teachers' powers to discipline include the power to discipline pupils even when they are not at school or in the charge of a member of staff.

The head teacher must publicise the school behaviour policy, in writing, to staff, parents (those with parental responsibility) and pupils annually. This policy is available on the school website.

### **Discipline in schools – teachers' powers DfE key points**

Teachers have statutory authority to discipline pupils whose behaviour is unacceptable, who break the school rules or fail to follow a reasonable instruction (section 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006).

The power also applies to all paid staff with responsibility for pupils.

Teachers can discipline pupils at any time the pupil is in school or elsewhere under the charge of a teacher, including on school visits.

Teachers can also discipline pupils in certain circumstances when a pupil's misbehaviour occurs outside of school.

### **Legal Requirements**

Teachers can discipline pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could reasonably be expected of them. This means that if a pupil misbehaves, breaks a school rule or fails to follow a reasonable instruction the teacher can impose a punishment on that pupil.

To be lawful, the punishment (including detentions) must satisfy the following three conditions:

- The decision to punish a pupil must be made by a paid member of school staff or a member of staff authorised by the head teacher.
- The decision to punish the pupil and the punishment itself must be made on the school premises or while the pupil is under the charge of a member of staff.
- It must not breach any other legislation (for example in respect of disability, special educational needs, race and other equalities and human rights) and it must be reasonable in all circumstances.

A punishment must be proportionate. In determining whether a punishment is reasonable, section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 says the penalty must be reasonable in all the circumstances and that account must be taken of the pupil's age, any special educational needs or disability they may have, and any religious requirements affecting them. Schools will be aware that when adopting their school uniform policy (eg the wearing of items of jewellery etc) they must be mindful of the Equality Act 2010.

Corporal punishment is illegal in all circumstances.

Schools should consider whether the behaviour under review gives cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer, significant harm. This may be the case in certain cultures where family discipline is more likely to be harsh. Where this may be the case, Pens Meadow school staff should follow the schools' safeguarding policy. Pens Meadow staff will also consider whether continuing disruptive behaviour might be the result of unmet educational or other needs.

### **Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)**

Pens Meadow incorporates the principles of Positive Behaviour Support in our approach. This is widely acknowledged to be the most effective way to support people whose behaviour challenges the families, carers, schools and services that support them. From April 2014, this has been the required model for all adult learning disabilities, social care and health services to follow. In contrast to other models of behaviour change, the focus is not on eliminating behaviour by blocking reinforcing consequences and applying negative ones in their place. The use of punishment does not fit with this approach as the emphasis is instead on teaching alternative and replacement skills.

PBS focuses on a person's indisputable rights to be treated with dignity and compassion, to be valued, to be listened to, to be supported to have the best quality of life possible, and to be empowered to make choices and decide on how they want to live that life.

In relation to behaviour, the success of the approach is measured not in terms of whether behaviour has reduced and therefore services are finding it easier to cope, but rather on whether the individual who experiences the difficulties has a richer, more fulfilling and improved quality of life, with greater access to community services, opportunities and experiences.

A PBS approach makes use of the principles of applied behaviour analysis to observe, analyse and understand the messages which a person is communicating through their behaviour;

it recognises that behaviour occurs in part as a response to environmental triggers and demands, and seeks to create a better match between a person's needs and services offered, whilst teaching important coping and tolerance skills;

it makes use of effective teaching techniques to teach pupils new ways to get their needs met (for example, by developing or improving communication systems and skills, finding alternative ways to gain equivalent sensory feedback, teaching self-help and independence skills, or developing additional social interaction and play skills);



it acknowledges that reinforcement and reward strategies can be useful tools to employ when helping children to begin to use newly acquired skills and to employ self-control when this too is being developed;

and it emphasises that adult responses when undesired behaviour occurs can make the situation either better or worse, and consequently focuses on ensuring staff develop skills in recognising warm-up signs that a child is having difficulty and take steps to reassure, redirect and calm a pupil rather than confront, threaten a sanction or punishment and provoke escalation of the situation.

### **Pens Meadow Code of Conduct**

We expect all those associated with our school to act in accordance with the code of conduct detailed below;

#### **I will always try my best...**

To understand that everyone is different but we are all equal  
To communicate in my own way and have my choices valued  
To control my actions  
To look after my school and take pride in my community  
To work hard and allow others to do the same  
To take time to listen and understand

### **Pens Meadow Approach: Behaviour for Life and Learning**

Pens Meadow uses frequent positive reinforcement to develop pupils' understanding of appropriate behaviour. Individual class reward systems are in place (personal to that class, reflecting the needs of the pupils) and staff are also encouraged to report good work/behaviour to the Leadership Team, where they may receive a sticker or certificate. At the weekly assembly there is the opportunity to reinforce aspects of positive behaviour through the presentation of certificates. Class staff communicate regularly with parents and carers via the 'home-school diary' and the weekly 'wow' moments and parents are encouraged to share positive aspects of their child's behaviour of school.

Pens Meadow has in place a range of options and rewards to reinforce and praise good behaviour, and clear sanctions for those who do not comply with the school's behaviour policy. These will be proportionate and fair responses that may vary according to the age and developmental stage of the pupils, and any other special circumstances that affect the pupil.

Where poor behaviour is identified, and all options have been investigated to ensure it is not a result of an unmet need, sanctions will be implemented consistently and fairly in line with this policy. It is clearly understood these are consequences, not punishments. The range of disciplinary measures, only used where appropriate to age and stage of development, includes:

- a verbal reprimand;
- extra work or repeating unsatisfactory work until it meets the required standard;

- loss of privileges – for instance the loss of a responsibility,
- missing break time;
- school based community service or imposition of a task – such as picking up litter or weeding school grounds; tidying a classroom; helping clear up the dining hall after meal times;

**Note:** several of the above examples were added to the DfE guidance from 2014. However, school leaders at Pens Meadow are mindful of the fine balance of what is perceived to be a consequence sanction and what is perceived by others to be a sanction that imposes humiliation.

Because of the individual needs of the pupils, consequences of inappropriate behaviour are personalised. This is also dependent on the level of understanding of the pupil. All staff recognise that for pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder, what can be interpreted as ‘bad’ behaviour may be a stress reaction to a difficult situation. To reiterate, clear strategies are in place which can be found on each pupil’s ‘All About Me’ and this information is made available to all who work with that pupil.

Identified pupils have a behaviour support strategy (BSS) which is a working document and updated at least termly. The strategy identifies likes and dislikes of the individual, effective rewards and reinforcers, and specific antecedents for the pupil, along with strategies for managing the risks presented by the behaviour. Each BSS is written by class staff, in collaboration with the child’s parent/carer, as well as any other stakeholder who has a part to play in the pupil’s life.

All incidents regarding behaviour (see separate guidance) are recorded using the incident file and book, on which staff receive regular training updates. These are analysed on at least a monthly basis. The leadership team, governors and teacher responsible for Behaviour and Safety monitor individual incidents and ensure that follow-up action is taken to prevent these incidents recurring.

Where ongoing behaviour gives cause for concern, and strategies are ineffective, a multi-agency approach is established, in close consultation with parents and carers. This can involve seeking advice and support from the following:

- Social Care
- Educational Psychologist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Autism Outreach Team
- School Nurse
- Family Outreach Team
- Any other stakeholder who can make a positive contribution

Every effort is made to ensure that behaviour is managed positively, and the school does not exclude any pupil from an activity solely on the grounds of their behaviour. If the behaviour is likely to impinge on an activity a full risk assessment is carried out to ensure adequate levels of staffing. An alternative activity may be offered if the risk is deemed to be too great e.g. using hazardous tools and equipment in Design & Technology.

## Anti - Bullying

Pens Meadow school does not condone **any** form of bullying including cyberbullying or peer to peer and the behaviour support strategies in place for appropriate pupils act as a preventative measure. Bullying is also a component of the school's PSHE curriculum so pupils have the opportunity to develop their understanding of this. Reflection time is also used to address issues of inappropriate behaviour and staff are encouraged to share any concerns through the following channels:

- Staff briefing
- Phase meetings
- Designated weekly meetings; Team around the Child and Behaviour Support Meetings
- Reference to Leadership team
- CPOMS

## Exclusion

In more extreme cases schools may use temporary or permanent exclusion. Pens Meadow School is sensitive to the nature of every pupil's learning difficulties and their associated behaviour and this policy clearly states the range of strategies employed by the school to support these. However, Pens Meadow School does not condone the following:

- Persistent disruptive behaviour
- Physical assault against a pupil
- Physical assault against a member of staff
- Verbal abuse against a pupil/member of staff
- Damage to property
- Racial abuse
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Sexual misconduct
- Theft

There may be occasions when a pupil's behaviour is serious enough to warrant either a fixed term or permanent exclusion, due to the breach of this policy or because allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school. The length of the exclusion is both determined by, and at the discretion of, the Head Teacher. School exclusions are carried out in line with Local Authority Guidance and consistent with *Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units* (Ref: DfE / 2017). Parents and Carers are notified of their rights to appeal against the exclusion.

## Power to use reasonable force

The DfE states that members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom. Separate non-statutory guidance is available on the DfE website

– *Use of reasonable force 2012*. Ofsted has also produced guidance for their inspectors. This is due, Ofsted states, to increasing numbers of complaints received.

The use of force is usually either to control or restrain – ranging from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm, to break up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

Reasonable force means no more force than is necessary.

Control means either passive or physical contact eg standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom

Reasonable force may include;

- Removing disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so; Behaviour and discipline in schools – February 2014
- preventing a pupil from behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- preventing a pupil from leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- preventing a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restraining a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

**Note:** the DfE does not advocate a non-contact policy.

Schools do not require parental consent to use force, as defined above. However, Pens Meadow staff will speak to parents about serious incidents involving the use of force and will follow the school agreed formats for recording such serious incidents.

### **Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Physical Intervention**

This guidance is about:

- 'Restraint' – using force or restricting liberty of movement
- 'Restrictive intervention' – a deliberate act to restrict a person's movement, liberty and/or freedom to act independently

This guidance aims to help special education, health and care settings to develop plans to support children and young people whose behaviour challenges, in order to reduce the incidence and risk associated with that behaviour; and to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in their care. Eliminating inappropriate use of restraint is vital in this. It is particularly important in relation to children, who are still developing both physically and emotionally and for whom any trauma at this formative stage in their development could be very damaging and have long term consequences.

CQC and Ofsted will have regard to this guidance when assessing whether institutions and service providers are providing safe and appropriate education and care.

Eliminating inappropriate use of restraint and minimising its use calls for settings and services to have a positive and proactive approach to behaviour with:

- Policies, strategies and practices which promote a positive culture and positive behaviour.
- Arrangements which identify, assess and manage risk well.
- High quality training for staff.
- Involvement of children and young people, parents and carers.
- Tailored support for individual children and young people that takes account of their impairments and their interaction with the environment in which they are taught and cared for and responds to their growth and development over time.
- Clear arrangements for governance and accountability.

Settings and services will wish to have a 'hierarchy of responses' to support those whose behaviour challenges. This is likely to include:

- Adjustments to the environment in which children and young people are taught, treated and cared for to address factors that are likely to increase or decrease the likelihood of restraint.
- Deployment of approaches and techniques to de-escalate or calm situations that are appropriate to the child or young person and take account of their views.
- Use of appropriate external expertise when needed.

Sometimes restraint will be necessary. Staff must have reasonable grounds for believing that restraint is necessary in order to justify its use. Staff will need to use their professional judgement in each case, assessing the risks involved and taking account of the needs and circumstances of the child or young person (as set out in relevant support plans drawn up for them).

The Values and Principles are detailed fully in the guidance but include:

- Where possible, a decision to restrain a child or young person should be based on their best interests balanced against respecting the safety and dignity of all concerned, including other children, young people or adults present.
- There will be times when restraint is needed to safeguard the individual or others but, broadly speaking, restraint should be the last response to behaviour that challenges. De-escalation techniques, appropriate to the child or young person, set within a positive and proactive approach to behaviour, should always be used to try and avoid the need to use restraint.
- There would be a real possibility of injury or harm to the child or young person, other children or young people, to staff, the public or others if no intervention or a less restrictive intervention were undertaken.

Planned interventions are when staff employ, where necessary, planned and agreed approaches to challenging behaviour set out in a child or young person's support plan or care plan. Action to restrain a child or young person will be based on a careful risk assessment, including an understanding of their needs and evidence about the risks faced.

Unplanned interventions require professional judgement to be exercised in difficult situations often requiring split-second decisions in response to unforeseen events or incidents where trained staff may not be on hand. Such decisions, known as dynamic risk assessments, will include a judgement about the capacity of the child or young person at that moment to make a safe choice. Staff training and supervision of practice should support dynamic risk assessment. Unless the situation is urgent, staff should seek assistance from appropriately trained staff. If such assistance is not available, any response must be reasonable, proportionate and use the minimum force necessary in order to prevent injury and maintain safety.

Restraint can take a number of forms. These include:

**Physical restraint** (detailed further in the policy)

**Mechanical restraint;** this involves use of a device to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of a person's body with the aim of controlling their behaviour

**Medication (chemical restraint)**

**Withdrawal;** this involves removing a child or young person from a situation which causes anxiety or distress and taking them to a safer place where they have a better chance of composing themselves.

**Seclusion** refers to the supervised containment and isolation of a child or young person away from others, in a room/area from which they are prevented from leaving. It is designed to contain severely disturbed behaviour which is likely to cause harm to others. The courts have found that seclusion could be used with a young person where it was necessary in order to control aggressive behaviour but only for so long as was necessary, proportionate and the least restrictive option likely to succeed, and in accordance with a risk and restraint reduction plan and support plan designed to safeguard their psychological and physical health. **For young people 16 and over, without mental capacity, use of seclusion which amounts to a deprivation of liberty must be authorised under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.** At Pens Meadow seclusion may include use of an isolation room as detailed below.

**Blanket Restrictions** such as locked doors, lack of access to outdoor space or refreshments can have a negative impact on children and young people's behaviour and may breach requirements under the Human Rights Act or other legislation, for example relating to secure accommodation of children. **At Pens Meadow School all external doors and boundaries are secure. This has been risk assessed and is in line with our duty to safeguard the pupils in our care.**

### Isolation rooms

The DfE states that schools can adopt a policy which allows disruptive pupils to be placed in an area away from other pupils for a limited period. Pens Meadow has such a room at the Ridge Hill site known as the calm room. (Communicate, Acknowledge, Listen, Monitor) On occasions other areas of seclusion may be used. This is where there is a risk of significant harm is judged to be present by the staff member dealing with the situation. The clear guidance developed by school must be followed if seclusion is used.

We act reasonably in all circumstances when using this room. Pens Meadow also ensures the health and safety of pupils and any requirements in relation to safeguarding and pupil welfare.

The calm room / seclusion is available for use by pupils who may require a safe, calm environment as a means of safe management of inappropriate, unsafe behaviour. Pupils are able to take themselves to the room or can be directed by a member of staff where appropriate. Where the use of calm room / seclusion is required, it forms part of a BSS which is shared and agreed with parents. There are graduated strategies, leading up to the use of the calm room / seclusion if there is significant risk of immediate harm. Staff will use the calm room / seclusion if it is deemed necessary for the safety of the pupil themselves, other pupils, or staff. All use of the calm room / seclusion will be reported to parents. The door is open when possible, only being closed when there is a risk of immediate harm.

Access and use of the calm room / seclusion is carefully monitored and documented by staff and pupils remain only until they are calm and ready to return to their class. A member of staff remains vigilant, communicating with the child in a suitable manner.

The DfE suggests that it is for individual schools to decide how long a pupil should be kept in a separate environment, and for the staff member in charge to determine what pupils may and may not do during the time they are there. Pens Meadow ensures that pupils are kept in a separate location no longer than is necessary and that their time spent there is used as constructively as possible. We also allow pupils to drink and indicate the need to use the toilet. If seclusion is being used, this is discussed at weekly team around the child and behaviour support meetings, with alternatives being sought. It is not desirable for children to be using seclusion frequently.

As Pens Meadow School has pupils up to the age of 19 due regard is taken of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Mental Health Act 2007 in relation to pupils aged 16 and over. The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards inform decisions made. The key principles applied are those of best interests; anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity must be in their best interests and least restrictive intervention; anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity should be the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms.

In addition, the person should be regularly monitored and the reasons and duration should be recorded.

### **Staff Training**

Many pupils with severe, profound or complex learning disabilities experience difficulties in monitoring and regulating their own behaviour, and staff who work in these environments require a range of skills in order to meet these everyday challenges.

Pens Meadow School recognises the importance of continuing professional development and provides induction and INSET training to all staff to support them to fulfil their professional duties effectively.

Specific training in using the Pens Meadow Behaviour for Life and Learning model to support pupils to overcome behaviour difficulties is made available to staff at several points during the year. In addition, the school has identified particular staff (who have trained to a higher level in the Pens Meadow Approach) to act as advocates within school. Advocates have their own ongoing programme of training throughout the year, and are able to provide training and support to all staff in school to respond to the behavioural needs of their pupils.

With their own professional training, and the additional support offered by advocates, staff in school will be able to meet the everyday behavioural challenges of their pupils, without needing to produce additional behavioural support strategies. Where more specific actions and responses are needed, this may be accomplished by including guidance within a pupil's pen portrait or profile, individual education plan or similar documentation.

If required, pupils have an additional Behaviour Support Strategy, agreed by all involved with the pupil.

## Physical Interventions

We note that; ‘Schools owe a duty of care to their pupils...The duty of care requires that reasonable measures are taken to prevent harm.’

‘It may be appropriate to employ restrictive physical intervention to prevent a significant risk of harm’

‘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’

Pens Meadow School has developed an approach suited to the particular needs of the pupil population. This is known as Behaviour for Life and Learning. The behaviour team at Pens Meadow School, led by the headteacher, have been trained in the philosophy and strategies of this approach, and are now able to train and support all members of staff in Pens Meadow School, thus authorising them to use physical support when necessary.

**Physical contact** is an important part of teaching in a special educational setting, where it is sometimes necessary to prompt, guide, support, comfort or reassure a pupil. Please refer to Pens Meadow Positive Touch Policy However, there may also be times when physical contact may be needed to interrupt behaviour.

Under these circumstances, Pens Meadow define “**Physical Contact**” as:

**the interruption of a behaviour by means of 1 member of staff making physical contact with a pupil**

Examples of physical contact which may be necessary under these circumstances include:

- Holding a pupil’s hand
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm to another area – Safe Escort One
- Placing one or two hands (if the pupil is using both hands to initiate the behaviour) on a pupil’s forearms, or holding both hands, to block repeated attempts at self-injury
- Using one or two hands to move a pupil’s hand/s away from making contact with and hitting another pupil

Any physical contact which is used with a pupil as a planned strategy to interrupt a behaviour should be listed in their pupil All About Me documents. Although consent to use physical contact with a pupil is not required in law, it is important to ensure that parents/carers understand why any planned use of physical contact forms part of their child’s support plan and that it is only used to keep their child safe when either they, or someone else who shares their environment, may present a temporary risk to that safety.

At Pens Meadow School, the term “**Physical Intervention**” is used to describe contact made with a pupil when a behaviour that is being presented poses a greater risk to themselves or others and needs more than one member of staff to intervene to keep everyone safe from potential harm. “**Physical Intervention**” is defined as: **the interruption of a behaviour by means of 2 members of staff making simultaneous physical contact with a pupil**

Examples of physical intervention which may be necessary under these circumstances include two staff simultaneously making physical contact with a pupil (Safe Escort Two) in order to:



- Move the pupil to a less crowded, less dangerous or less stimulating environment to enable them to calm down
- Prevent or interrupt a serious physical assault on another pupil or member of staff
- Prevent or interrupt an action which would cause serious harm to the pupil him/herself, either intentionally or unintentionally
- Prevent or interrupt serious damage being done to a physical environment or piece of equipment or property within it

If it is used in an emergency as an unplanned response with any pupil, staff should carry out a dynamic risk assessment of the situation and consider what measures can be put in place to prevent the emergency situation recurring in the future.

### **School expectations**

The use of physical interventions in Pens Meadow is not seen as behaviour modification; rather, it provides a range of support intervention techniques designed to safely contain the pupil's behaviour and keep other pupils and staff safe during times of anxiety. Interventions are not designed to decrease the frequency/intensity of aggressive/violent behaviour *per se*.

Physical interventions are always seen within the wider context of approaches to the management of individual pupils. These include establishing and maintaining good relationships with children and identifying appropriate behaviour support strategies (BSS), in consultation with staff teams and parents/carers. Wherever possible, pupils will have timetables adapted to meet their needs thus reducing anxieties which could result in unwanted behaviours. This together with positive staff attitudes will promote a happy and inviting environment.

Use of physical force that is unwarranted, excessive or punitive is not acceptable; failure to comply with this principle, when considering or using physical support interventions, will be dealt with under school disciplinary procedures.

Consistent with Section 550A of the Education Act 1996, and with the philosophy of Pens Meadow Behaviour for Life and Learning, it is only appropriate to use physical interventions when:

- The pupil is putting themselves or others in immediate danger, through threatened or actual aggression
- The pupil is seriously damaging property of others or of the school

It is not appropriate to use physical support interventions to make a pupil comply with your wishes if neither of the bulleted points are an issue. This should be seen as a behaviour support issue and should be dealt with through regular review of the pupil's behaviour support strategy.

### **Risk Assessment and using physical intervention**

All identified behaviour necessitating the use of physical interventions are dynamically risk assessed, with the risk of intervening balanced with the risk of greater harm if not intervening. All staff are made

aware of the distinction between physical contact or touch, used appropriately in everyday situations to support, encourage, guide or comfort a pupil, and the use of force to restrict movement or disengage from pupils whose behaviour presents a clear risk of injury. The following techniques have been assessed and are recognised as safe, suitable and physical support interventions for use in Pens Meadow School:

- Safe Escort Two

Individual techniques should be identified on individual pupil's BSS, in terms of their appropriate use. In the event of disputes or concerns about techniques and methods used, an interim school strategy will be agreed and the matter referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer at Dudley LA.

### **Recording of physical interventions**

All incidents involving physical interventions are recorded at Pens Meadow School using an agreed procedure, on which staff are regularly updated (at least annually). A brief outline of the incident is noted in the school's Incident Book, and an Incident Form is completed as soon as possible, and within 24 hours of the incident taking place. The incident form details:

- the name(s) of the pupil(s) involved, and when and where the incident took place;
- the names of any staff who witnessed the incident;
- The reason (where appropriate) that force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil, another pupil or member of staff);
- How the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, physical support interventions used, how that was applied, and for how long;
- The pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident; (pupil observation)
- Details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil, or a member of staff, and any necessary first aid, and any damage to property.

The data from the incident forms are transferred to the school's management system for the purpose of data analysis. Incident sheets are collated on a monthly basis with an accompanying analysis.

The school will take action to ensure that parents and the Local Authority are informed about these incidents in accordance with agreed local procedures and time scales.

### **Monitoring the use of physical interventions**

The use of physical support interventions is monitored on a regular basis through the use of the school management system. The purposes of monitoring are to:

- Promote the well-being of the pupils
- Identify any emerging patterns of inappropriate behaviour
- Review practice

- Provide a basis for appropriate support
- Assess the appropriateness of the pupil's placement at the school.

Information on trends and emerging problems are initially raised with the Leadership Team, and are then shared with class staff. Monitoring information is reported on a half termly basis to school governors

### **Responding to complaints**

The use of physical support interventions can lead to allegations of inappropriate or excessive use. In the event of a complaint being received by

a school in relation to the use of force by staff, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with agreed procedures for handling allegations against members of staff (outlined in Dudley LA's Disciplinary and/or Child Protection Procedures)