



**CHEPSTOW
SCHOOL**
INSPIRING LEARNING

CHEPSTOW SCHOOL

POSITIVE HANDLING

POLICY

Approved by: Full Governing Body

Last Reviewed on: 11/07/2024

Next Review Date: 10/07/2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour for Learning and Safeguarding Policies. It details how we will implement guidance provided by LA, Team-Teach and other relevant advice.
- 1.2 The term 'positive handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports all pupils, including those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.
- 1.3 Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, damaging property, or in order to maintain good order and discipline. Furthermore, the school takes seriously its duty of care to pupils, employees and visitors to the school.
- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care.
 - The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.
- 1.4 Staff at Chepstow are trained to look after pupils in their care and aim to focus on de-escalation techniques wherever possible. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically, they will follow the school's Positive Handling Policy.
- 1.5 The WG guidance document 'Safe and effective intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons' provides advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies: Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, replaced Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:
- committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
 - causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
 - 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.

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The staff to which this power applies are defined in section 95 of the Act.

They are any teacher who works at the school, and any other person whom the head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils. This:

- I. includes support staff whose job normally includes supervising pupils such as teaching assistants, learning support assistants, learning mentors and lunchtime supervisors.
- II. can also include people to whom the head has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils such as paid members of staff whose job does not normally involve supervising pupils (for example catering or premises-related staff) and unpaid volunteers (for example parents accompanying pupils on school organised visits).
- III. does not include prefects. Those exercising the power to use force must also take proper account of any particular Additional Learning Need (ALN) and/or disability that a pupil might have. Under the Equality Act 2010 schools have key duties:
 - not to treat a disabled pupil less favourably, because of his/her disability, than a non-disabled pupil;
 - not to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably because of a reason related to their disability, without justification;
 - not to apply a provision, criterion or practice that puts or would put a disabled pupil at a particular disadvantage compared with a non-disabled pupil, without justification; and to take reasonable steps to avoid putting a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a non-disabled pupil (known as the reasonable adjustments duty).

In Chepstow School, wherever possible, only staff trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategy techniques of Team-Teach will use physical intervention techniques with children, and only when necessary. Although any member of staff may be required to physically intervene with a pupil who is endangering themselves or others, damaging property or to maintain good order and discipline, we would expect accredited staff to take over as soon as possible.

2. Team Teach

Team Teach is accredited through ICM (Institute of Conflict Management). Team Teach Training provides practical de-escalation and intervention strategies that can be used to minimise risk and conflict safely and respectfully at Chepstow School. It builds individual confidence and expertise so everyone knows how to support behaviour appropriately and consistently.

Further details of the Team-Teach approach can be found on the Team-Teach website. The website address is <https://www.teamteach.com>

3. Before using Positive Handling practices

3.1 At Chepstow we take effective action to reduce risk by:

- Showing care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiating and reasoning.
- Giving clear directions for pupils to stop.
- Reminding the pupil about rules and likely outcomes.
- Removing an audience or taking vulnerable pupils to a safe place.
- Making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons.
- Using positive guidance to escort pupils to somewhere less pressured.
- Ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and call for help.

3.2 Whilst or before intervention, staff should speak calmly as a way of reassurance e.g. "I am doing this to keep you safe."

4. Use of Reasonable Force

4.1 The judgment on whether to use force and what force to use should always depend on the circumstances of each case and - crucially in the case of pupils with and / or disabilities – information about the individual concerned.

4.2 Decisions on whether the precise circumstances of an incident justify the use of significant force must be reasonable. Typically, such decisions have to be made quickly, with little time for reflection. Nevertheless, staff need to make the clearest possible judgments about:

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- the seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified;
- the chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely using force may be justified;
- the relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

Examples of these situations:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils are fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others;
- pupils committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate, serious damage to property;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school other than at an authorised time. Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place is not enough on its own to justify use of force. It would be justifiable where allowing a pupil to leave would: i) entail serious risks to the pupil's safety (considering age and understanding), to the safety of other pupils or staff, or of damage to property; or ii) lead to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline, such as disrupting other classes.

5. Using Positive Handling techniques

Before using Positive Handling techniques staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil to stop misbehaving and communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout the incident. Staff should not act out of anger or frustration, or in order to punish a pupil, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. The types of Positive Handling used could include:

- passive physical contact resulting from standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path;
- active physical contact such as: i) leading a pupil by the hand or arm; ii) ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back; iii) in more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds, which require specific expertise or training such as Team Teach.

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6. Recording and Reporting Incidents

6.1 All incidents at Chepstow are recorded to ensure any force used, is in accordance with school policy and procedures. The purpose of recording is to ensure policy guidelines are followed, to inform parents, to inform future planning as part of school improvement processes, to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the incident and to provide a record for future enquiry.

Such records can provide evidence of defensible decision making in case of a subsequent complaint or investigation. It is possible that not all of the specifics of an incident can be recorded where it is not known on whom Positive Handling was used, as for example where a member of staff has hastily had to part several pupils encircling a fight. The staff member may (understandably) focus on and recall the identities of the fighting pupils and not the individual spectators who were drawn aside to allow access. Staff may find it helpful to seek the advice of a senior colleague or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report.

6.2 The member of staff involved in an incident will complete a Significant Incident / Restraint / Restriction Record immediately and the member of staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding will check the record and provide the member of staff involved in the incident with a copy.

6.3 The record is likely to form part of the pupil's educational record as it is a record of information which is processed (obtained, recorded and held) by or on behalf of the Governing Body of the school (or teacher at the school, other than for personal use), relates to the pupil, and originated from or was supplied by a teacher employed by the Governing Body or the local authority.

6.4 When recording such incidents, staff should bear in mind that, if this information is later passed to the police, it may be included in a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure. The school will retain records of such incidents until the member of staff involved has reached normal retirement age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

6.5 After any recordable incident, the parent / guardian will be informed and a face to face meeting offered.

6.6 All injuries will be recorded in accordance with school procedures. The school will act to report relevant injuries to staff or pupils to the Health and Safety Executive's Incident Contact Centre www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/index.htm

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6.7 It is good practice for governors to monitor incidents where Positive Handling has been used. Head teachers have an important role in reporting such incidents to the Governing Body and the Local Authority who ask schools to record and report on all Restrictive Practices.

6.8 Members of staff who have been assaulted will wish to consider reporting that to the police.

6.9 All Restrictive Practices, including Positive Handling are recorded and reported to the LA.

7. Risk Management

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk, should have a risk assessment. The plan details strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are to be avoided. Parents and pupils will be involved in writing risk assessments.

8. Positive Handling Plans

Where a risk management plan needs to include the use of positive handling techniques, an additional Positive Handling Plan will be created with parent and pupil consent to use certain positive handling techniques in order to support the pupil during periods of extreme crisis. Positive Handling Plans are only created in the most extreme cases where a pupil frequently poses a risk of physical harm to themselves, peers and staff that cannot be managed in any other way other than planned and agreed Positive Handling.

9. Post Incident Debrief

After any incident a full debrief should take place so that learning can inform practice school to offer support to all involved. This is an opportunity for learning, and time will be given for following up incidents so that pupils and staff have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate another person's perspective.

10. Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints will follow the school's Complaint Procedure.

Contact details for further information on Team-Teach. School Behaviour Management, Safeguarding policies etc will be available from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.