

North Petherton Community Primary School Positive Handling Policy



Version 1
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Vision

Our vision is to enable our children to become outward looking, independent individuals. Who have been given the educational, social and emotional tools to contribute to society through collaboration, creativity and aspiration.

Or

Our aim is to empower our children to evolve into outwardly focused, autonomous individuals. Equipped with educational, social, and emotional resources, so they can actively contribute to society through collaboration, creativity, and aspiration.

Aim

Our aim is to promote a safe and positive learning environment by using preventative and positive behaviour management strategies, including de-escalation techniques and, when necessary, physical intervention in accordance with Team Teach principles. We will achieve this through maintaining the following core principles that align with the school's behaviour policy

Respect and Dignity (Be Kind)

All students are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their behaviour. A trauma informed approach is at the heart of all interactions. As a school we aim to build positive relationships and trust, encouraging children to be kind to themselves and others. Staff, visitors and volunteers will model respectful communication and positive behaviours, promoting an inclusive and caring environment.

Safety and Well-being (Be Safe)

The safety and well-being of both children and staff are of the highest priority. Positive handling and any form of physical intervention will only be used when a child's behaviour poses a significant risk to themselves or others. All efforts will be made to de-escalate situations and ensure that children feel safe, secure, and supported.

Least Restrictive Practice (Be Safe and Be Ready)

When physical intervention becomes necessary, it will be carried out in the least restrictive way and for the shortest time possible, ensuring the safety of everyone involved. Staff will be trained to recognise when an intervention is needed and how to carry it out safely, always being ready to assess the situation and act in the best interest of the child.

Prevention and Early Intervention (Be Ready)

A proactive approach is taken to prevent challenging behaviour by being prepared with individualised strategies, Behaviour Support plan and/or Pastoral Support plan. Early intervention involves recognising potential triggers and providing appropriate support to avoid escalation. Staff are equipped with the skills and tools needed to implement positive behaviour support plans that encourage students to be prepared to manage their emotions and behaviours constructively.

Policy and Practice

This policy applies to all staff, students, and visitors within the school premises and during school-related activities.

Understanding Challenging Behaviour

As a school, who use a trauma informed approach we recognise that challenging behaviour can be a form of communication. It is crucial to understand the underlying causes, such as unmet needs, stress, trauma, or environmental factors. If, when reviewing behaviour, it is believed that it is indicative of the child suffering, or is likely to suffer, from significant harm staff, visitors and volunteers must refer to the school's safeguarding policy and report Designated Safeguarding Lead.

What is Team Teach

Team Teach is a UK-based training framework that focuses on de-escalation and positive behaviour management strategies. The primary goal of Team Teach is to promote the use of proactive and preventative strategies to reduce challenging behaviours and minimise the need for physical intervention. The approach is based on promoting a culture of positive behaviour, respect, and safety.

Our Expectations

We expect all children to consistently make the right choices. However, sometimes this isn't possible for individual children due to underlying causes, such as unmet needs, stress, trauma, or environmental factors.

When a child shows dysregulated behaviour staff at North Petherton Community Primary School have been trained in and expected to use Team Teach strategies.

Team Teach Strategies and Techniques

Calm Stance

All staff are expected to use a CALM stance. This is where the adult takes a step back, moving out of the child's personal space and turning to the side.

CALM stands for:

Communication: Improving verbal and non-verbal communication

Assessment and awareness: Making a dynamic risk assessment of the situation

Listening and learning: Showing the individual we are emotionally available

Making safe: Moving away from potential danger

Help Scripts

Help scripts are best used along with the CALM stance. The scripts are codes we can use when a situation is becoming difficult. They support clear and accurate communication between colleagues and with the children in our care.

Help script example for an adult to child interaction:

1. Start with the child's name to get their attention
2. 'Child's name I can see that something has happened.'
3. Then use any of the following to show that you are emotionally available
 - 'Talk and I will listen...'
 - 'Help me understand what happened'
 - 'I wonder if you feel ...'
 - 'I can imagine that...'
 - 'I notice that...'
4. Then finish by giving the individual direction. 'Let's go and...'

Help scripts to offer support to a colleague.

At North Petherton Community Primary School we use the following help script when offering support to colleagues when they are working with a dysregulated child.

Offer: 'Help is available...'

Response: 'You can help by...'

On occasions there are situations when the adult supporting the dysregulated child is not best placed to make decisions or may need to take a break. When these occasions occur it is the responsibility of the person offering help to make the decisions.

Offer 'More help is available.'

Response 'What do you suggest?'

Primary Strategies:

Primary strategies are the range of positive behavioural supports used continually to best support individuals in our care. These include considering the physical environment, building routines, developing clear communication, and providing additional support to meet an individual's needs.

Secondary Strategies

Secondary strategies are ways of defusing and de-escalating situations safely when individuals are becoming distressed. They are focussed on reassuring, communicating, and diverting. These strategies can include practised scripts and scenarios that allow us to respond rather than react to behaviours.

Tertiary Strategies:

Tertiary strategies are physical interventions used in the best interests of individuals to keep themselves and others safe. Tertiary strategies can be non-restrictive or restrictive. Non-restrictive strategies are where we may need to physically disengage from a situation, or prompt, and guide or escort someone to a safer, calmer environment.

Restrictive Strategies are when we may need to physically hold someone in order to keep them and others safe.

For stages of dysregulation and support please see Appendix 1

Training and Professional Development

- All staff involved in positive handling will receive comprehensive Team Teach training, including refresher courses.
- Training will cover de-escalation techniques, risk assessment, conflict resolution, and appropriate physical intervention strategies.
- Staff should be aware of the emotional and psychological impact of physical interventions on both students and themselves.

Recording and Reporting

- All incidents of positive handling and physical intervention must be recorded on MyConcern
- All incidences of restrictive strategies must be recorded in the Bound and Numbered Book and on MyConcern
- Reports should include a description of the incident, de-escalation strategies used, the type of intervention, duration, and outcome.

- Parents or guardians must be informed of any incidents involving positive handling on the same day or as soon as reasonably possible.

Post-Incident Support and Review

- **Debrief for Children:** A restorative conversation with the child involved should be held to reflect on the incident, understand triggers, and discuss alternative strategies.
- **Debrief for Staff:** Staff involved in an incident should have access to support and debriefing to discuss the event, reflect on practices, and identify any learning points.
- **Policy Review:** Regular reviews of incidents to ensure the policy is effective, safe, and in line with best practices.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The policy will be monitored regularly by the school's senior leadership team to assess effectiveness, safety, and alignment with the school's values.

Policies to be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy

Behaviour Policy
Exclusion Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Child on Child Abuse and Anti-Bullying Policy
Keeping Children Safe in Education
Code of Conduct
Working Together to Safeguard Children
Online Safety Policy

Appendix 1

Stage 1 Anxiety/Trigger

During Stage One, an individual may feel anxious, upset, or agitated, and they need support and reassurance.

Possible behaviours	Strategies to consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appearing anxious • Hands over ears • Hiding face in hands or bent over/under table • Pulling up collar or pulling down hat • Rocking, pacing or other verbal stimming • Repeatedly asking questions • Withdrawing from the group • Refusing to speak or dismissive • Some individuals may appear calm without showing obvious outward signs of distress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervene early to remove sources of frustration • Offer reassurance – including positive physical prompts such as guiding away from a potential trigger • Talk to the using the help script • Explain clearly what is happening and what will happen next • Use CALM body language • Talk low, slow and quietly • Divert and distract by introducing another activity or topic • Use strategies that have worked well for this individual in the past
Continue to assess the situation. Often, using these strategies will help support the individual and prevent further escalation	

Stage 2: Defensive/Escalation

At this stage, an individual is beginning to show higher levels of tension and distress

Possible behaviours	Strategies to consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making noises and moving in an agitated manner • Using abusive language • Talking louder, higher and more quickly • Changes to body posture and facial expressions showing they are feeling angry • Changes in eye contact • Pacing and other stimming becoming more noticeable • Breaking minor rules • Shouting, screaming, or crying • Low level damage to property • Picking up objects which could be used as weapons • Challenging instructions. 'I will not...you can't make me' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to use de-escalation responses • State desired behaviours clearly • Offer alternatives and options • Give clear limited choices • Move furniture and remove objects that could become weapons • Offer them a way out that maintains their dignity • Encourage any audience to move to a different environment

Continue to monitor and assess the situation and consider any ways to make the environment safer. Think about whether you may need assistance from a colleague, rather than waiting until the individual is in crisis.

Stage 3: Crisis

At stage 3, an individual is in a crisis and may pose a risk to themselves and other around them.

Possible behaviours	Strategies to consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head banging against people or surfaces • Shouting, screaming, or crying • Self-harming behaviours • Damaging property • Hurting others • Moving towards danger • Escaping from a situation • Using objects as weapons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the environment safer • Offer a change of environment to other individuals • Move furniture and remove objects that could become weapons • Ensure face, voice and posture are supportive, not aggressive • Use of help scripts for a change of face • Guide the individual to a place of safety if they are at risk • Use physical interventions if necessary
<p>Restrictive practices should only be used if they are reasonable, proportionate and necessary, and must be used for the least amount of time possible</p>	

Stage 4: Recovery

After an incident, an individual takes time to recover. It's possible to loop back into crisis without the right supports in place

Possible behaviours	Strategies to consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitting hunched over • Hiding face in hands or pulling up clothing to hide face • Rocking or tapping or pulling up clothing to hide face • Rocking or tapping and other stimming • Withdrawing • Refusing to speak • Feeling guilty and apologising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give space and time • Offer reassurance and support • Be present and available • Remove sources of frustration • Look for signs that the person is ready to communicate • Use individualised strategies that have worked in the past (see behaviour support plan)
<p>Continue to support and monitor, remembering that the self-regulation can take much longer than expected</p>	

Stage 5: Depression

After a significant incident, people can feel low and upset. They may not want to interact, but still need support and reassurance

Possible behaviours	Strategies to consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crying• Withdrawing from people• Feeling embarrassed or ashamed• Negative self-talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give time and space for recovery• Show the individual you are emotionally available when they are ready to talk• Positive praise focussed on strategies to self-regulate• Divert and distract with activities they enjoy
Use knowledge of the individual to assess any potential risks and continue to monitor and support as they recover.	

Stage 6: Restoration

It is vital to reflect on and repair relationships after a crisis. This is an opportunity to strengthen bonds and build strong lines of communication.

Possible behaviours	Strategies to consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signs that the person wants to communicate• Appear calm and self-regulated• Communicate as usual• Willing and able to reflect on what has happened• Joining in with activities they enjoy and usual routines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show concern and care, but do not attempt to resolve any issues at this time• Listen to the individual and reflect on their perspective of the situation• Respond to signs the individual wants to communicate• Continue to support, reassure and monitor
Continue to support and monitor, remembering that self-regulation can take much longer than expected.	