

## BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT - POLICY AND PRACTICE



At The Gateway School we believe that all students can behave well and that we need to support them in developing strategies to help them deal with the various challenges they face in ways which will bring successful rather than negative outcomes for them. We believe that teachers have the right and the responsibility to teach and that students have the right and responsibility to learn and nothing should interfere with this process. All our school policies are aimed at promoting teaching and learning as we believe this is the most effective way of ensuring maximum success for each individual.

The behaviour management policy at The Gateway School is based on Assertive Discipline (Canter 1979). This is a structured approach to the positive management of pupils' behaviour and is designed to ensure that the maximum amount of class time is spent on teaching and learning. This approach fully supports the aim of the school which is to maximise the success of each individual.

**The policy applies at all times and in all situations unless specifically stated otherwise. All staff members are expected to implement this policy in its entirety and to adhere to the philosophy and practice described herein. Any variation to the rewards, consequences and/or rules or deviation from this policy will need to be agreed with the Principal first.**

All the current staff have been fully trained and new staff are given the opportunity to undertake training in the TGS approach to behaviour management. Details of the Assertive Discipline (AD) approach can be found in the AD handbook. This is kept in the Head's office and is available to each member of staff whose role is with the pupils.

### **Training and Updates**

All current staff may receive updates on the Behaviour Management Policy and participate in whole school training sessions (within allocated training days) and/or specific and targeted sessions to address certain areas of need (e.g. behaviour management linked to minibus travel).

### **Observations and Performance Management**

The monitoring of the implementation of the behaviour management policy is an integral part of the monitoring and evaluation policy and the lesson observation cycle. Currently, lesson observations take part in two clearly defined parts of the school year and have two clearly defined areas of focus; Curriculum and Behaviour Management. However, in all observations aspects of behavior management policy and practice are noted and fed back to relevant teaching and support staff.

The school staff induction pack provides at its core an overview of our ethos surrounding positive behaviour management based on the Assertive Discipline (AD) and staff should ensure that their practice reflects this.

Positive behaviour management and the effective management of pupils in the school are an integral part of the Teachers Standards and as such form a core part of the school performance management processes. As such, teaching staff will be set targets accordingly depending on the outcome of lesson observations, learning walks etc. Support staff receive feedback as part of the lesson observation cycle and any areas of need in this area will be highlighted in their performance management review and target setting process.

Outlined below are the basics of the approach we currently use to promote good behaviour and learning and this should be regarded as a practical guide to how we manage behaviour at TGS.

Pupils will receive updates and reminders of the constituent parts of the behaviour policy via the school curriculum and whole school assemblies. Personal Development, PSHEE, Citizenship and designated projects will form the key part of this cross-curricular, whole school approach. The school council will review the school behaviour policy and practice as an agenda item at least once a year.

## **RULES**

There are five school rules:

1. Follow all instructions
2. No swearing or teasing
3. Keep your hands and feet to yourself
4. Do not damage work, property or equipment
5. Be polite

In order to help students behave successfully the rules are taught in the same way any other subject is. It is essential that students understand exactly what is meant by each of the rules and, more importantly, what they need to do to 'get it right'. Whilst they have been reviewed regularly, the rules have not changed since they were first developed over 15 years ago.

## **REWARDS**

Our ethos of 'catching students being good' is strongly reflected in our rewards systems. There are three basic ways in which pupils can earn rewards:

### **1. Certificates**

At the start of each day every pupil will be given a certificate by his or her class tutor. The certificate will have written on it that pupil's short-term objective(s) (see IEP's) and they will earn one "certificate" if they achieve their target during a lesson for each lesson of the day. Four further "certificates" or points can be earned during each lesson if a pupil is properly equipped for the lesson (known as "Tools"); if they complete set tasks to the best of their ability (known as "Task"); if they choose not to break any rules; and if they arrive on time.

This equates to a maximum of five “certificates” per lesson or 35 per day. Where a pupil has excelled in any given way, a bonus certificate may be awarded. Pupils then “cash in” their certificates for various tangible rewards. This is done in ‘The Zone’ during morning break and at lunchtime. “Bonus” certificates are also given if a member of the Senior Leadership Team enters a classroom and “catches” pupils on task.

## **2. “No Rule Breaks”**

If a pupil completes five consecutive days without breaking a rule they are rewarded during Monday morning Assembly with a voucher for use at breakfast club. A pupil who accrues ten non-consecutive days of not breaking any rules can also earn these rewards. The number of rule breaks chosen by a pupil over a given period may also determine whether or not they have earned the right to go out on occasional trips and outings which are arranged from time to time.

## **3. Class Points**

Each class is set a target of 700 class points per week. This equates to 20 per lesson. Points are awarded during lessons all the time that the class remains on-task. They are also awarded as a means of motivating pupils who are finding it particularly difficult to settle to their work. Such pupils can earn great kudos if they feel they are earning rewards for the class and they are more likely to receive positive peer group pressure.

Classes that reach or exceed their target in a week are entitled to rewards as follows:

- A one-week reward - Tea & biscuits with class teacher
- Six weeks - video and a drink

This list is subject to change from time to time as more suggestions are made as to appropriate rewards.

**Class of the Week:** A running total of class points is kept over each term (or 4-week period if it is a long term) and the winning class is rewarded.

**Punctuality Points:** 5 points are available each lesson (175 per week) when the whole class arrives at their lesson within 3 minutes of the bell, with their certificates and pens at the ready.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

There are five levels of consequences that are imposed if pupils choose to break rules:

- Level 1 – Warning
- Level 2 - 1 minute detention
- Level 3 - 2 minutes detention (making 3 in total)
- Level 4 - A telephone call home (plus the 3 minutes)
- Level 5 - Refer to complete a “Think Sheet” (plus all the above)

There is also a “Severe Clause” which has the effect of placing a pupil immediately on

Level 5. This is imposed in situations where a pupil has chosen to be dangerously violent or where they have chosen to flagrantly break the school rules (e.g. getting up and walking out of class for no obvious reason).

If a pupil chooses Level 5 twice in one day they may be taught in isolation in order to re-focus on the five rules. This will happen in 'The Zone' and may be the result of staff and pupils identifying hotspot lessons beforehand or , depending on the availability of staff, internal exclusion so as to ensure pupils do not gain more level 5s and/or continue to disrupt and prevent teaching and learning occurring.

The members of staff also needs to reassure themselves that the pupil is ready to re-join their class without further incident.

When a pupil has chosen Level 5 on five occasions in any one week (from Monday to Friday) they may be taken home or internally excluded. It would normally be expected that the parent/carer would then be asked to arrange to bring their child back to school (preferably the following day) to meet with key staff in order to discuss what might be done to enable him/her to succeed. Where it is clear a pupil is manipulating the system in order to be sent home then that pupil, subject to appropriate arrangements being made, will be kept after school instead.

It should be noted that at the end of each lesson or session in the day, pupils go back to the equivalent of a 'Level 0'; i.e. if a pupil chooses Level 3 during Lesson 2, their first consequence in Lesson 3 will be Level 1 and not Level 4. For this purpose the sessions of the day are defined as:

1. Before school (i.e. up to 8.55 a.m.)
2. Morning Registration
3. Assembly
4. Lesson 1
5. Lesson 2
6. Break-time
7. Lesson 3
8. Lesson 4
9. Lesson 5
10. Lunch-time
11. Lesson 6
12. Lesson 7
13. After school (i.e. up until a pupil goes home)

In other words there are thirteen parts to the day and this means thirteen opportunities for pupils to attempt to behave well. In each of these twelve sessions there are five levels. This equates to sixty five chances each day to get things right and we think this is more than fair and reasonable.

Equally, wherever possible, we try to provide consequences (or levels as they are often referred to) as a choice. E.g. A member of staff asks a student to remove their hat and the student fails to do so. After a moment or two, the member of staff will ask again. If after the being asked the second time the student has still not removed their hat, the

staff member, having checked that the instruction has been understood, may then say that the student will need to remove their hat or they will choose level 1. In this way each student is given ample opportunity to follow instructions and/or rules.

If a student reached level 5 in this manner then it is clear that they will have had between 10 and fifteen chances to have responded appropriately. Reaching level 5 on 5 occasions in a week, would indicate that between 50 and 75 chances for the student to succeed will have been presented. This is one reason why we believe it to be fair and reasonable to send a pupil home should they reach level 5 on 5 occasions in a week.

## **RECORDING**

This is a crucial aspect of behaviour management as accurate recording ensures we achieve the level of consistency we strive for and which is so necessary to successfully implement an effective behaviour management policy.

Every time a pupil breaks a rule it is recorded on a 'Class Slip'. These are available from the staff room for each class. These should be handed to the member of staff coordinating which pupils have time to do at lunch time before being placed in the appropriate box in the staff room. At the end of the day the details are entered into the class teacher's electronic behaviour record.

These logs provide a wealth of information about our pupils and enable us to track pupil behaviour for the whole of the time they are here. Data from these logs is relied upon when devising individual behaviour plans for pupils ('SandIs' - see below) and in preparation for various meetings about them. Class teachers are expected to review these logs on a regular basis and to use them as the basis for discussion and target setting with individual pupils and class groups.

Such records provide a numerical representation of behaviour and can be used to effectively help pupils understand their behaviour, to set targets for improvement or for students to see just how well they can do.

## **Parental Consultation and Input**

As well as very regular contact with our parents and carers via the day to day implementation of our Assertive Discipline behaviour policy, we also feed back to our parents/carers on a tri-annual basis (to fall into line with our assessment cycle). Parents/Carers receive an overview of their child's behaviour plan data. This may include the reporting of a percentage success rate for achieving behaviour targets and level 5 data for that given period. Parent/carer input is greatly valued whether it be via an informal telephone conversation or as part of a Support and Intervention Plan which needs to bring together issues linked to learning and behaviour (see below).

In addition to this the Head of School, Home School Partnership Officer (HSPO) and the school Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO) develop an 'education package' for parents/carers of pupils transferring from primary schools and any in year referrals.

This clearly outlines the ethos of our approach to managing behaviour as well as the day to day operation, outcomes and impact.

### **Support and Intervention Planning (SandIs)**

Despite the behaviour management system being heavily weighted towards rewards as opposed to consequences, there are still a number of pupils who, from time to time, fail to thrive. In such cases it will often be appropriate to consider developing targets linked to such challenges within their Support and Intervention Plan. These plans are there also to address issues of attendance and learning as dips in behaviour are often strongly linked to these areas. It makes sense therefore to have them all interventions in one place with a clear focus, a record relevant people involved and a clear review process.

If a class tutor feels that a 'SandI' would be an appropriate intervention for a pupil in their class, they are expected to raise this at a staff meeting in order that all staff who work with the pupil might contribute to the plan. The proposed plan should then be discussed with the pupil and his/her parent(s) or carer(s) before being implemented. This may be done by telephone but should, after consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, preferably take place at a meeting of those concerned with the pupil.

A range of interventions is available to use when determining a SandI: In some circumstances it might suffice to offer a specific reward which will motivate the pupil to behave appropriately. For others who, for example, consistently choose Level 2 or 3 of the consequences before choosing to behave, it might be appropriate to alter their SandI so that the first consequence for them becomes Level 4 (a telephone call home), as it is this that seems to help them behave successfully.

This type of intervention is called "dropping down" as we are effectively opting to drop down the hierarchy of consequences. It may be that there are areas of need within the curriculum and/or timetable or with the same staff or at the same point in a week or school day. SandIs can be used to directly address such challenges in a way encourages pupil input to a plan which will help them become more successful.

**The guiding principle here, as it is throughout our behaviour management programme, is to do everything we can to help the pupil to succeed. SandIs are never therefore used or regarded as a means of punishing a pupil.**

Having established a clear set of rules, consequences and rewards, the fact that all this is scrupulously recorded and that individual arrangements can be made for pupils (SandIs), our pupils are encouraged to make positive choices about their behaviour; choosing to keep to the rules earns rewards, choosing not to, earns consequences. By weighting the system heavily towards rewards and through the positive teaching and strategies employed by the staff, pupils are supported in making choices that attract positive outcomes. As pupils learn that they can make "good choices" for themselves, their confidence to make further choices and to take risks is enhanced. It is in this way that real self-confidence and esteem is reinforced and developed and pupils learn how to let go of long established behaviour patterns which have hitherto proved unsuccessful for them.

The school behaviour management policy as described above directly addresses the school aim of working for the maximum success of each individual. By learning and developing successful behaviour patterns pupils promote their own learning capacity to learn and, as a result, Teachers are better enabled to teach thereby enhancing the learning of others.

## **EXCLUSION**

A decision to exclude a pupil, either for a fixed period or permanently is seen as a last resort by the school. The school is responsible for communicating to pupils, parents and staff its expectations of standards of conduct. A range of policies and procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and appropriate conduct.

No exclusion will be initiated without first exhausting other strategies or, in the case of a serious single incident, a thorough investigation.

An exclusion will not be enforced if doing so may put the safety of the pupil at risk. In cases where parents/carers will not comply by, for example, refusing to collect the child, the child's welfare is the priority.

### **Reasons for exclusion**

These may include:

- Serious breach of the school's rules or policies
- Persistent breaches of the school's rules or policies
- Damage to work, property, the building and/or equipment
- Risk of harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school
- Persistent bullying
- Persistent racist and other hate abuse
- Persistent refusal to comply
- The commission of criminal acts
- Drug dealing and substance abuse
- Assault(s) on another pupil
- Assault(s) on an adult
- 5 or more Level 5's

### **Fixed Term Exclusion**

Fixed-term exclusion is a temporary exclusion which should be for the shortest time necessary; Ofsted evidence suggests that 1-3 days is usually enough to secure benefits without adverse educational consequences.

For exclusions up to 5 days, parents/carers are responsible in law for providing supervision for the child in their care and for ensuring that the child is not found outside during normal school hours. The school will provide some homework to assist with this process if requested.

For exclusions beyond 5 days, i.e. 6 days or more, the school is required to make

alternative, full-time provision for the student concerned.

When a student reaches 15 days of exclusion in any one (long) term, their case will be presented to the Governors' Discipline Committee for their consideration. Fixed-term exclusion for a period of time from one to five days for persistent or cumulative problems would usually be imposed only when the school had already offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies within.

These could include (although not exhaustively):

- Discussion with the pupil
- Mentoring
- Report card
- Discussions with parents
- Target setting
- Individual Behaviour Plans
- Support and Intervention Plans
- Identifying challenges
- Detention
- Mediation
- Counseling
- Internal exclusion

Fixed-term exclusion will not be used for minor incidents (e.g. lateness, poor academic performance or occasional breaches of uniform rules), except where these are persistent and openly defiant.

### **Single incident**

Fixed-term exclusion may be used in response to a single but serious breach of school rules and policies or a disciplinary offence. In such cases the Principal or Head of School will investigate the incident thoroughly and consider all evidence relating to the alleged incident, taking account of any other relevant school policies. The pupil will be encouraged to give his/her version of events and the Principal/Head of School will check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying or racial harassment.

In cases of more than a day's exclusion, the school will:

- Where requested, ensure appropriate work is set and that arrangements are in place for it to be marked
- Plan how to address the pupil's needs on his/her return
- Plan a meeting with parents and pupil on his/her return
- Send a letter to parents/carers outlining:
  - whether it is a permanent or temporary exclusion,
  - the length of the exclusion
  - the terms or conditions agreed for the pupil's return
  - the appeals process



## **Permanent Exclusion**

A permanent exclusion may result from a single, one-off act which is so serious it may warrant this sanction. In addition to the above, if a student reaches 45 days of exclusion in an academic year, the exclusion will become permanent.

A permanent exclusion is a very serious decision and will only be implemented following the use, where possible, of a range of strategies and a full investigation. TGS regards this very much as an undesirable and last resort and, as such, will normally only be used in response to a very serious breach of school rules and policies or a criminal or disciplinary offence such as:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- Possession or use of an illegal drug on school premises
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Persistent bullying
- Racial harassment

The decision to permanently exclude will only take place following a full investigation of the relevant incident(s) and will include the opportunity for all relevant parties to give their account of what is alleged to have happened.

If the Principal decides to permanently exclude a pupil he/she will:

- Ensure that there is sufficient recorded evidence to support the decision
- Explain the decision to the pupil
- Contact the parents/carers, explain the decision and ask that the child be collected
- Send a letter to the parents within 24 hours confirming the reasons for the permanent exclusion and informing parents/carers of the review process.

The Governors will meet, usually within 15 school days, to review the Principal's decision and will decide to either:

- Uphold the Exclusion, or
- Reinstate your child at the school immediately or by a specific date

The school will invite the parent/carer to this meeting. If the Governors uphold the permanent exclusion of a child, parents/carers can ask an Independent Review Panel to review the Governors' decision. Parents/carers have this right, even if they do not attend the Governors' meeting.

The request must be made in writing, within 15 school days following written notification of the Governors' decision and parents/carers must state the grounds for the request, i.e. state what was wrong with the decision or exclusion procedure.

## **Behaviour outside school**

Pupils' behaviour outside school on school business e.g. on school trips, at sports

fixtures, is subject to the school's behaviour policy. Poor behaviour in such circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in school.

For behaviour outside the school, not on school business, the Head may exclude a pupil if there is a clear link between that behaviour and maintaining good behaviour and discipline among the pupil body as a whole, or if it is deemed to be damaging to the reputation of the school.

Pupils and parents/carers should be aware that pupils are subject to our behaviour policy from the moment they begin their journey to school and until they have returned home.

### **Pupils with special educational needs and those with 'Protected Characteristics'**

The school will take account of any special educational needs when considering whether or not to exclude a pupil. We have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against pupils with the protected characteristics that are specified in section 4 of the Act by excluding them from school for behaviour related to their disability or protected characteristic.

The Principal should ensure that reasonable steps have been taken by the school to respond to a pupil's disability so the pupil is not treated less favourably for reasons related to their protected characteristics or disability.

'Reasonable steps' could include:

- differentiation in the school's behaviour policy
- developing strategies to modify the pupil's behaviour
- requesting external help with the pupil
- staff training

Where reasonable adjustments to policies and practices have been made to accommodate a pupil's needs and to avoid the necessity for exclusion as far as possible, exclusion may be justified if there is a material and substantial reason for it. A specific incident affecting order and discipline in the school may be such a reason.

### **Marking attendance registers following exclusion**

When a pupil is excluded temporarily, he/she should be marked as absent using Code E.

### **Removal from the school for other reasons**

The Head may send a pupil home, after consultation with that pupil's parents and a health professional as appropriate, if the pupil poses an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of other pupils and staff, for example because of a diagnosed illness such as a notifiable disease. This is not an exclusion and should be for the shortest possible time.

## **PHYSICAL INTERVENTION - Our Positive Handling Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Staff at The Gateway School are trained to look after the pupils in their care. Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others. There may also be situations in which a student seriously disrupts good order in the school or causes damage to property. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow this, the school's Positive Handling Policy. Any parents wishing to view this policy may do so on request.

### **Introduction**

The term 'Positive Handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. Included in this framework are a small number of responses which may involve the use of force to control or restrain a pupil. The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. These are referred to as 'Restrictive Physical Interventions' in national Guidance (DfES/DoH 2002). A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

Pupils with severe behavioural difficulties sometimes present a risk to themselves and others. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and the Use of Force Guidance 2012 describe the circumstances in which school staff may use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. Examples of when such action may be reasonable are to prevent injury to people, damage to property or the breakdown of discipline.

This policy details how we implement the guidance in this school. It should be considered alongside the most recent LA policy statements and recent local and national guidance. It is designed to help staff to ensure that any actions they take are reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary.

### **Objectives**

The sole aim of the school is to work for the maximum success of each individual. The aim of all our school policies is to promote teaching and learning. Through the use of positive handling as one of a range of strategies to promote learning and positive behaviour, we hope our students will learn to manage their feelings safely and in ways which will not see them excluded, dismissed, marginalised or in any other way left out in the cold when they move on from TGS to other settings.

The primary objective of the use of force is to keep all of us safe. Beyond this we need to ensure that we protect our buildings and the equipment in them as well as ensuring good order and discipline around the school.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) takes seriously its duty of care towards pupils, employees and visitors to the school. Staff protection is an important part of child protection; both depend on confident and competent staff who feel supported by the

SLT and Governors. Our 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. All physical interventions at this school are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. The school behaviour policy is intended to reward effort and application, and encourage pupils to take responsibility for improving their own behaviour.

Part of our preventative approach to risk reduction involves looking for early warning signs, learning and communicating any factors which may influence bad behaviour and taking steps to divert behaviours leading towards foreseeable risk. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the development of their own Positive Handling Plans by focusing on positive alternatives and choices. Parents are also encouraged to contribute.

However, if difficulties arise, staff have a responsibility to support all pupils when they are under pressure and safely manage crises if, and when, they occur.

### **Alternatives to the Use of Force**

Our training tells that up to 95% of crisis situations can be resolved safely without the need for physical force. Staff are trained and supported in using alternatives to the use of force and may consider some of the following options whilst remaining effective:

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behavior and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason.
- Give clear directions for pupils to stop.
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.
- Remove an audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place.
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects, which could be used as weapons.
- Use positive touch to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressured.
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help.
- Provide pupils with choices or ways out with dignity.
- Acknowledge that the pupil feels challenged and let them know you are there to help
- Consider changing staff (see help protocol below) to help defuse a situation.

### **Modifications to Environment**

Ideally, staff will not be waiting until a crisis is underway before conducting a risk assessment of the environment. We know that some pupils at this school may exhibit extreme and possibly dangerous behaviour. In general it is a good rule to keep the environment clutter free. This may mean giving consideration to secure storage for a range of everyday objects when they are not being used. For example:

- How is the availability of pointed implements (including pens, pencils, compasses and darts) controlled?

- What small items are available to an angry pupil who may be tempted to use them as missiles?
- What objects are available to be used as blunt instruments?
- Do they all need to be left out all the time?
- Are there sharp edges or corners which present a risk?
- Are the design arrangements or furniture safe and appropriate for pupils who exhibit extreme behaviour?
- Is there a comfortable place to sit with an agitated pupil?
- Are protocols in place to encourage angry pupils to take themselves to a safer place?

### **Help Protocols**

The expectation at this school is that all staff should support one another. This means that in situations requiring the use of force, staff members always offer help and always accept it. Help does not always mean taking over. It may mean just staying around in case you are needed, getting somebody else or looking after somebody else's group.

Supporting a colleague does not only mean agreeing with their suggestions and offering sympathy when things go wrong. Real support sometimes means acting as a critical friend to help colleagues become aware of possible alternative strategies. Good communication is necessary so that colleagues avoid confusion when help is offered and accepted. They need to agree scripts so that all parties understand what sort of assistance is required and what is available.

### **Well Chosen Words**

A well-chosen word can sometimes avert an escalating crisis. When pupils are becoming angry there is no point in getting into an argument. Telling people to calm down can actually wind them up. Pointing out what they have done wrong can make things worse. The only purpose in communicating with an angry person is to prevent further escalation. It is better to say nothing and take time to choose your words carefully than to say the wrong thing and provoke a further escalation.

### **Use of Behaviour Management Policy**

Many students will have individualised behaviour plans (Support and Intervention Plans – SandIs) which will include strategies for coping with crises. Staff should make themselves aware of these and be prepared to help implement them. Some students may benefit from being reminded how many Level 5's they have had so far in order that they can start to self-manage and de-escalate.

### **Other Interventions**

Other aspects of the organisation of the school also contribute to the safe management of behaviour:

- Working tirelessly to create and maintain a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require using force

- Using Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) approaches to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings
- De-escalating incidents if they do arise
- Delivering a curriculum that addresses aspects of human behaviour (e.g. PSHE, Citizenship)
- Providing opportunities for students to benefit from key-worker sessions
- Devising Support and Intervention plans
- Individualising behaviour plans to help motivate students to succeed
- Only using force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force
- Risk assessments and positive handling plans for individual pupils.

## **Using force**

### **Deciding whether to use force**

This section could set out guidelines to help staff decide whether or not to use force in particular circumstances. For example, it could suggest that staff should only use force when;

- The potential consequences of not intervening were sufficiently serious to justify considering the use of force;
- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means were low; and
- The risks associated with not using force outweighed those of using force.

### **Awareness of risk and additional information**

Through the daily, morning briefings and in teachers' and other meetings, staff (including people with temporary authorisation to have charge or control of pupils) will be kept informed about and advised how to deal with pupils who present particular risks to themselves or others (as a result of SEN and/or other personal circumstances, such as domestic violence);

- Each staff member has a duty to appraise themselves of potential risks presented by our students and of the strategies in place to minimise them.
- Staff should not wait to be told and it is not acceptable for a staff member to claim simply that they did not know about a particular risk when that information is made broadly available to all staff.

### **Who can use force?**

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Head Teacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit. (Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006). Unless there is no other way, staff should not use force unless or until another responsible adult is present to support, observe and call for assistance.

## **When to use Force**

The Use of Force Guidance 2012 gives examples of when it may be legitimate to use force:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts
- To prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

This is an indicative rather than exhaustive list of examples of when to use force and each decision to use force should be judged on the criteria outlined in the sections “Reasonable and Proportionate” and “Risk Assessment” below.

Students, wherever possible and providing it is unlikely to further escalate a situation or endanger others, should always be given a clear oral warning that force may have to be used and, thereby, provided with the opportunity to self regulate and manage their behaviour.

## **The Last Resort Principle**

At the Gateway School we only use physical intervention when there is no realistic alternative. This does not mean that we always expect people to methodically work their way through a series of failing strategies before attempting an intervention in which they have some confidence. Nor does it mean always waiting until the danger is imminent, by which time the prospect of safely managing it may be significantly reduced.

It does mean that we expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest course of action which achieves the objective of keeping us all safe. It also means that we expect staff to think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective.

## **Proactive Physical Interventions**

It is sometimes reasonable to use physical controls to prevent extreme behavior from becoming dangerous and this may form part of a Positive Handling Plan. Examples of this are where a pupil has shown ritual patterns of behaviour, which in the past have led to the child becoming more distressed and violent. It could be that one student is teasing another and it is possible a fight could start.

In such circumstances it may be reasonable to withdraw the child to a safer place when the pattern of behaviour begins, rather than wait until the child is distressed and out of

control. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken on the basis of a risk assessment, is clearly in the interest of the student(s) concerned and that it reduces, rather than increases, risk.

### **Reasonable and Proportionate**

Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. People should not react in anger. If they feel they are becoming angry they should consider withdrawing to allow someone else to deal with the situation. Where staff act in good faith and their actions are reasonable and proportionate, they will be supported.

When physical controls are considered staff should think about the answers to the following questions:

- What are the risks?
- How are my actions in the best interest of the pupil?
- Why is a less intrusive intervention not preferable?
- Why do we have to act now?
- Why am I the best person to be doing this?
- Why is this absolutely necessary?

If staff can answer these questions clearly, it is more likely that a physical intervention will be judged to be reasonable, proportionate and justified.

### **Unreasonable use of Force**

The use of force as a punishment is never permissible. Neither is it reasonable to use force simply to enforce compliance in circumstances where there is no risk. Nor is it reasonable to use any more force than is necessary to achieve a reduction in risk. Under no circumstances should pain be deliberately inflicted or should pupils be deliberately subjected to undignified or humiliating treatment (this should not be confused with the unavoidable discomfort associated with some approved techniques for disengaging from assaults such as bites and grabs).

Other than as a one-off emergency measure to protect health and safety, force should never be used to keep a pupil secluded. Seclusion is only lawful by specific court order and cannot become part of a planned strategy at this school.

### **Team Teach**

It is the policy of TGS that all staff working with pupils are trained in the preemotive and responsive positive handling strategies and techniques of Team Teach, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the School Behaviour Policy. Further details of this approach can be found on the Team Teach website ([www.team-teach.co.uk](http://www.team-teach.co.uk)). The following is an excerpt from the home page:

*Our aim: to enhance quality teaching, effective learning and personalised caring, by increasing staff confidence and competence, whilst promoting and protecting positive*



*relationships.*

*Our method: providing training for child and adult services in positive behavioural strategies, designed to reduce anxiety, risk and restraint.*

*Our results: Team - Teach training has received the highest level of award in the U.K - a National Training Award - This government supported award is presented to entries who have demonstrated exceptional achievement through training and development. Judges were impressed by the support infrastructure and the robust quality control and assurance processes. They observed that it was a clearly needed service and its innovative approaches have delivered significant benefits to schools/services and local authorities/employers.*

*All TT techniques have undergone (2006, 2009 & 2012) a thorough legal and medical risk assessment review, carried out by three independent, medical and legal experts. Click onto "Current News" for information from the DfE concerning "techniques that present unacceptable risk"*

The TT Package trains staff in a gradual and graded approach to physical intervention, from the least to the most intrusive forms of physical control. It is therefore expected that staff will use only the strategies that they have been taught to use as these have been field tested and medically assessed as safe.

Although there is no legal reason preventing staff using alternative strategies, indeed the law entitles us to use reasonable force to defend ourselves, staff should be absolutely clear in their justification for deviating from that which they have been taught. In undertaking the risk assessments referred to throughout this policy, staff members have an advantage in knowing that the taught techniques have been consistently risk assessed by thousands of practitioners in a range of settings.

In any case, any form of restraint that is likely to injure a pupil (particularly anything that could constrict breathing) should only be used in extreme emergencies and where there was no viable alternative.

## **Health and Safety**

If dangerous behaviour presents a significant risk of injury to people, there is a legal Health and Safety issue to be addressed. Dangerous behaviour should be regarded just as seriously as dangerous equipment. Dangerous occurrences should be reported to the person responsible for Health and Safety in the school (currently The Principal).

We all have shared responsibility to identify risk, communicate potential risks and take active steps to reduce risk wherever possible, whilst recognising that it is not possible to entirely remove risk. Sometimes things go wrong even when we make our best efforts to do the right thing. Sometimes we are faced with unpalatable choices. In these circumstances we have to risk assess the situation, try to think through the outcomes of the options available, balance the risks and choose whichever course of action seems to involve the least risk without compromising safety.

As a minimum requirement, in order to comply with health and safety legislation, each employee has a legal responsibility to ensure that they are conversant with school and policy and guidance and to cooperate to make the school safer. It is also a requirement that they participate in training if they are directed to do so. This does not necessarily mean that all staff can be involved in all the physical activities. The non-physical aspects of positive handling training are crucially important too.

## **Risk Assessment**

Informal risk assessments should be a routine part of life for staff working with students who may exhibit extreme behaviour. All staff should think ahead to anticipate what potential dangers and pitfalls there could be. If a proposed activity or course of action involves unacceptable risk the correct decision is to do something different.

All decisions regarding whether or not to physically intervene and how to do so, should be based on an individual's risk assessment of the situation before them and the criteria describing when to use force as laid down in the Use of Force Guidance (DfE, 2012). Other factors which might influence a risk assessment, and therefore a decision about how to intervene, might include the state of health and fitness of the staff member, their physical stature, competence, confidence and relationships with the pupils concerned. Confidence and competence are often related to the level of staff training.

Other than in an emergency, staff should only attempt physical controls when they are confident that such action will result in a reduction of risk. When faced by extreme behaviour, or even in a fight situation, the judgement may be that by becoming involved, the member of staff will increase the chance of somebody getting hurt. In this the correct decision is to hold back from the physical controls, send for help and continue to give the instruction to stop.

## **Getting Help**

At this school the following support structures are in place:

- Send a reliable student for help and tell them to use the word "Urgent". Any staff member hearing the use of this word should make it their priority to assist having ensured that by leaving their own groups they are not increasing risk.
- Support and Intervention plans kept on file/the network to ensure all relevant information about each pupil is available to all members of staff working with them.
- Daily briefing sessions in the morning to update staff on current issues and share information.
- Use of help protocols and language to remind all staff of availability of colleagues to offer help including change-overs of staff during a crisis situation with a pupil.
- Debrief sessions after a crisis with the pupil(s) involved, reflecting on how crisis was managed by all involved and identifying any points for review or learning.

- Annual refresher training in Team Teach strategies and techniques for all staff, and continuous review by SLT to inform these.
- Staff access to advice regarding mental health and educational psychology.

### **Recording incidents**

Every incident in which restrictive physical force has been used should be recorded on the numbered report forms available from the office. The form should be completed by the lead member of staff in the incident in question and signed by all those who assisted or witnessed the incident.

Incidents involving very low level guides, e.g. the use of a “Caring C” to re-direct a student, need not be recorded. However, if there is any doubt about whether an incident should be recorded or not, the decision should be to record it. Further guidance can be sought from members of SLT and the TT instructors in the school.

The forms should be completed on the same day as the incident it records and handed to a member of SLT so that they can check it over at the same time as being appraised of the incident.

### **Reporting incidents**

Whilst there is no longer a requirement to inform parents/carers when force has been used with their children, it is good practice and therefore the practice at TGS that all recordable incidents are reported to parents/carers before the student arrives home. It is the responsibility of the person completing the form to ensure that this happens. It need not be that person who makes the call but they must ensure that somebody does.

The purpose of the call is to give the parent/carer a clear account of the incident and to report if the student got marked or hurt as a result of the incident. Doing this before the student gets home helps prepare the parent/carer to have a conversation with their child based on fact and helps reduce the potential for parents/carers to be unnecessarily upset by a version of the incident which minimises the student’s role in the incident while exaggerating that of the adults.

The only time when a call should not be made to a parent/carer is if a staff member believes or has been informed that such a call is likely to result in potential or actual significant harm to the pupil. In all such cases guidance should be sought from the Principal or Head of School.

### **Post-incident support**

All incidents involving the use of force require there to be a recovery period for all concerned immediately following the incident. Following recovery, this could be as little as a few moments for some but longer for others, there should be a review of the incident with the student concerned.

This review should look at how the incident developed, at which points could the

situation have been changed, how and by whom. It should conclude with what has been learned by all concerned and how we can all move forward having rebuilt relationships.

It is important too for staff members to have this opportunity to reflect and repair following a serious incident. The logistics of this in a busy day school setting often mean that this is difficult to implement, as staff often need to return to their classes etc.

However, where a staff member feels unable to return to their duties following a serious incident, they should make this clear to a member of SLT who will consider how this can be arranged. Equally, staff should feel free to use time after school to sit with relevant colleagues to talk an incident through. Any staff member approached about facilitating this should try to make it a priority.

### **Complaints and allegations**

Complaints made by students and/or parents/carers will always be thoroughly investigated. The Use of Force Guidance 2012 makes clear that the suspension of a member of staff about whom an allegation has been made need not automatically result in suspension from their duties. Any such decision will be made after thorough consideration of what would be in the best interests of all concerned. The guidance also makes clear that it is for the individual making the allegation to establish their case, not for the staff member to disprove the allegation. That having been said, it is anticipated that a thorough investigation will establish the validity of the complaint.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Principal is responsible for monitoring the use of force within the school. Monthly reports are provided by the front office whereby the Principal can monitor which children and staff have been involved, the frequency of such involvement, trends and injuries.

Where there is evidence, for example, that a particular member of staff appears to be involved in a disproportionate number of incidents, this will be reviewed with them and support provided. All incidents which result in injuries to staff or students will be reviewed and appropriate support and training will be provided by the Lead TT Instructor.

### **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

One of the key strategies staff at TGS use is the development of effective relationships with the students at the school. Because of previous life experiences, this can be very challenging for some students, particularly those who have been in relationships, which have in some way let them down, or worse.

The generous student to staff ratio means that we get to know our students very well indeed and, in many cases therefore, develop excellent relationships. Often these relationships will be on a more familiar level than you would expect to find in a mainstream school setting. It is common in most special schools for student - staff

relationships to be on a more intimate level and this is inevitable given the personal issues we often have to deal with in our settings. It is also inevitable then that there is likely to be a higher level of physical contact between staff and students.

We define the appropriate use of touch to be where failing to make physical contact could be regarded as inhumane, unkind and potentially psychologically damaging. Examples include the natural and beneficial use of touch in comforting a child who is in an acute state of distress. Failing to physically soothe a child when in the face of intense grief and/or upset can lead to a state of stress or distress.

In such states, touch can often be the only means of maintaining a connection with the child when he or she can no longer hear or make use of words or soothing tone/eye contact and therefore is in danger of dissociating, with all the detrimental effects that this can bring.

The staff at The Gateway School initiate and respond warmly to appropriate touch from all children. Each morning the children are greeted into the school and interactions will often include a physical interaction. This helps create the nurturing, warm, caring environment that is so essential for the students at our school.

Our policy on touch adheres to the belief that every individual needs to appreciate the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch. It is not uncommon for students to seek, and to be given, a hug or, particularly for secondary aged boys, for them to engage in play fighting with staff. Providing all normal safeguards are observed (see below) this can be an effective way in which social and emotional boundaries can be taught in regards to what is acceptable, or not, in relationships, especially in the cases of those who intellectually and/or emotionally struggle with the concepts of trust and appropriateness.

For some of our students it can be a means of teaching that there is such a thing as 'safe touch' between adults and young people and we believe it is essential to their future emotional well-being and the quality of their relationships that our students are given these learning opportunities whilst with us.

In addition to the above, many of our students join us having been excluded from mainstream schools, having attended other specialist settings and/or with a history of broken and/or harmful relationships. This understandably leads many to believe that that they are unlikable or in some way worth less than other young people. The most important building block in a relationship is whether or not both parties feel liked. We therefore ensure that our students know we like them and positive contact in the form of a hug or pat on the back etc. is an effective way of communicating this.

By 'Appropriate Touch' we mean touch that is not invasive, humiliating or could possibly be considered as eroticising or flirtatious. We agree that 'appropriate' places to touch are 'shoulders, arms and back.

Naturally, staff are also fully aware of touch that is invasive or which could be confusing, traumatising, or experienced as eroticising in anyway whatsoever. Should any such touch be used it would be deemed as a very serious breach of our expectations of staff,

warranting the highest level of disciplinary action.

As in all our activities at TGS we must ensure there are safeguards in place to protect students and staff. The following apply to all physical contact:

1. Any physical contact between students and staff should never take place behind closed doors or in any other way in private.
2. Physical contact should only take place in full view of other members of the school community and must always be when other staff are present.
3. Where possible, physical contact should take place in front of CCTV cameras for the additional safety of all concerned.
4. Unless implementing a behaviour management strategy aimed at keeping individuals safe, physical contact should never be imposed upon a student or staff member.
5. There are occasions when students attempt to go beyond a hug and attempt to kiss staff members. As a general rule, it should be made absolutely clear by staff that this is unacceptable and students should be instructed to desist. This is one way in which we can reinforce what is, and is not acceptable, in relationships between staff and students.
6. If either party requests the contact to stop then it should stop with immediate effect.
7. Touch should never be invasive or undertaken in a manner which could be confusing, traumatising, or experienced as eroticising in anyway whatsoever.

Approved by Governors 17th July 2013