

PENRYN COLLEGE

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

Approved by: Full Governing Body – December 2020

Responsible SLT member: John Harvey

To be reviewed: December 2022

Published: Virtual School, Website

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies and documents regarding:

- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Safeguarding and Child Protection

Introduction

This policy takes account of the following legislation:

- The Education Act 2011
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2014
- *Use of reasonable force – advice for Head Teachers, staff and governing bodies – July 2013*
- *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, Advice for Head Teachers and school staff (DFE, January 2016)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE September 2020)*
- *Reasonable Force policy – Safeguarding Sheffield Children’s Board (September 2016)*

Purpose of the Policy

- To ensure the health, safety and welfare of children, young people and those who work with them
- To enable staff to effectively dispense their duty of care towards young people

Scope of the Policy

This policy is for all staff working for Penryn College. All staff should be aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and for each student’s individual level of special educational need.

Governors and the Senior Leadership Team should ensure that all volunteers, parents and carers are aware of and adhere to the school’s behaviour policy, including the use of reasonable force.

Rationale

This policy underpins our school’s commitment to ensure that Penryn College is a community in which everyone is respected and supported to achieve their full potential. Our curriculum and school day are designed to support students’ individual needs and strengths within a safe, caring and supportive environment.

All students have the right to:

- Have recognition of their unique identity together with individual consideration of their needs and appropriate support / provision / adaptation
- Be treated with respect and dignity and feel valued members of the learning community
- Learn in a safe environment
- Be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse

To enable a secure and sustainable future for our students when they leave our school community, our curriculum focuses on a blend of academic achievement, independence, social communication and emotional regulation.

What is reasonable force?

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involves a degree of physical contact with students.

- **'Force'** is used to either control or restrain; e.g. breaking up a fight, or restraint to prevent violence or injury to self or others
- **'Reasonable in the circumstances'** means using no more force than is needed
- **'Control'** is either passive, e.g. standing between pupils, or active, e.g. leading a student out of a learning environment.
- **'Restraint'** means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control.

Minimising the need to use force

We constantly strive to create a calm and appropriate environment and curriculum (see behaviour policy) which minimises the risk of incidents that might require the use of reasonable force.

In addition to this all students have personal profiles which promote consistent and personalised approaches for supporting their individual needs. Students who present challenging behaviour also have Individual Support Plans which detail strategies and best approaches for de-escalating and supporting their behaviour. These plans are designed in consultation with parents, students and where appropriate, multi-agency collaboration. These are shared with other agencies and parents to facilitate a consistent and effective approach.

Who can use reasonable force?

All staff have a duty of care towards the students and can use reasonable force to keep themselves and others safe.

Three members of staff have undertaken TEAM TEACH training to enable them to promote deescalation skills and to ensure that where positive handling is needed it is done so in a safe and effective manner. These are:

John Harvey

Alison McGee Harrison

Fiona Williams

Stacey Marsh

Donna Watts

The TEAM TEACH techniques that are used, take account of a young person's:

- Age
- Gender
- Level of physical, emotional and intellectual development

- Special needs
- Social context

They also provide a gradual, graded system of response.

When can reasonable force be used?

Reasonable force can be used in the following circumstances:

'1. Preventing a child or young person causing harm to themselves

3. Preventing a child or young person causing harm to another person

4. Preventing the child or young person committing a criminal offence

5. Preventing any behaviour which is prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline.'

Examples include:

- **Removing** disruptive students if they have refused an instruction to leave the learning environment
- **Preventing** students from: disrupting a lesson, event, trip or visit / leaving the learning or social environment where this would risk their safety or hurting someone
- **Restraining** a student at risk of harming themselves or others through physical outbursts or self-harm
- **Stopping** a fight

Staff will be expected to follow a student's Individual Support Plan, in the first instance, to effectively manage an incident / challenging behaviour.

The use of physical intervention should always be in the **best interests of the child** and be '**reasonable, proportionate and necessary**'.

Positive handling should use the **minimum** degree of force necessary for the **shortest period of time** to prevent a student harming themselves, others or property.

Recording and Reporting the use of reasonable force

All incidents requiring any use of force should be recorded the Positive Handling Record (kept with Isabel Bennetts). Training will be provided on how to complete significant incident forms appropriately and each completed form will be reviewed by the schools DSL (John Harvey).

When compiling and reviewing entries to the Positive Handling Record, staff should reflect on how situations / incidents may be avoided / minimised in future. This may lead to the need to make adaptations to student individual support plans. Records should be kept factual and detailed.

Significant incidents will be recorded on SIMs (the school information management system) and will be analysed at regular intervals. Data will be provided to Governors at half termly Governors' Scrutiny meetings.

Parents / carers should, wherever possible, be made aware of incidents in which positive handling has been used and of any consequences / punishments issued for inappropriate behaviours. Staff will make every effort to contact parents / carers by telephone (or alternative preferred contact method) on the day of the incident.

Details of internal and fixed term exclusions will be recorded on the significant incident forms and input into SIMS by the year team support admin staff.

Dealing with concerns / complaints

All complaints about the use of force will be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated. Where a member of staff has acted within the law, that is they have used reasonable force to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder, this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution. Penryn College will always seek advice from the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and from Human Resources regarding any necessary decisions.

Staff responsibilities – all staff

- To provide an environment which supports the individual needs of all students in school
- To implement advice provided within Personal Profiles, Individual Support Plans and any other multi-agency guidance
- To read, be aware of and implement the schools behaviour and reward policy in addition to this positive handling policy
- To follow whistle blowing procedures where unsafe / inappropriate practice is seen
- To inform parents / carers of all incidents requiring physical intervention
- To follow schools recording systems for all significant incidents
- To follow the schools behaviour policy to reflect on and analyse student behaviour in order to inform future planning

Role of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- To lead on the development and review of all relevant policies and recording systems
- To report to the rest of SLT and to the governors' data and information relating to behaviour and significant incidents
- To report to LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) any claims of inappropriate use of physical intervention / force
- To maintain current knowledge of guidance and legislation and ensure it is reflected in policy and practice

- To liaise with other agencies as needed to meet the holistic needs of all students and staff in school
- To ensure that all staff are made aware of the relevant policies and of any changes made
- The Head Teacher will be responsible for making decisions regarding the need to use reasonable force to search for prohibited items

Role of Governors

- To support the development of relevant policy and practice.
- To ensure that all policies are ratified
- To ensure that all staff are made aware of relevant policies and that they are appropriately implemented across school
- To perform a range of monitoring activities to ensure that systems are effective across school.

Other staff / volunteers in School

Only the Head Teacher can authorise external support services or other staff in school to use physical intervention where necessary. Currently Alex Cocks (Premises Manager) is also authorised. Volunteers in school **will not be** authorised to use reasonable force.

Other physical contact with students

There are occasions where physical contact with students is proper and necessary, for example;

- Providing comfort, praise or congratulations
- Demonstrating how to use a musical instrument or an exercise / technique during PE lessons
- Administering first aid
- Holding the hand of a child moving around school or during off-site activities where it is appropriate to effectively support their individual needs or keep them safe.