David Ross Education Trust

Broadening Horizons

Positive Handling Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Behaviour that challenges may signal a need for support and it is essential to understand its underlying causes. Staff at the Trust understand that it might be the result of a medical condition or sensory impairment, previous trauma or neglect, or be exacerbated by an unmet need or undiagnosed medical condition. It may reflect the challenges of communication, or the frustrations faced by children with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions and mental health difficulties, who may also have little choice and control over their lives. These factors may result in behaviours that are challenging.

1.2. The Trust is committed to providing a positive and proactive approach in anticipating potential triggers for behaviour that challenges, and in minimising the likelihood of, or avoiding the need to use restraint. Where the use of restraint is necessary to safeguard children or it is included in a pupil's safety plan, it will be consistent with clear values and sound ethical principles and comply with the relevant legal requirements.

1.3. Our academies are committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for pupils' safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving behaviour which will put someone in danger, commit a criminal offence or disrupt the good order of the school and only use restrictive physical intervention as a last resort. If physical intervention happens, it must be deemed to be reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary.

1.4. All members of the Trust acknowledge that the past experiences of children will affect the way they

4.1.3. Reasonable force covers the broad range of actions that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils. Restraint is usually used to control or restrain. Reasonable means using no more restraint than is needed.

4.1.4. Physical intervention includes escorting, holding and restraint.

5. The Trust's policy on Positive Handling

5.1. The core principles underpinning our policy on positive handling include

- every pupil deserves to be understood and supported as an individual;
- the best interests of children and young people and their safety and welfare should underpin any use of restraint;
- the risk of harm to children, young people and staff should be minimised. The needs and circumstances of individual children and young people, including their age, particular vulnerabilities, learning disability, medical condition or impairments, should be considered and balanced with the needs and circumstances of others. Decisions on whether or not to restrain or intervene with an individual affect others, including staff; and;
- a decision to restrain a pupil is taken to assure their safety and dignity and that of all concerned, including other children, young people or adults present.

5.2. The objectives of our policy are in maintaining our duty of care in:

- protecting the safety of all children
- protecting the safety of staff
- protecting the good order of the learning environment
- preventing damage to property
- preventing children from committing criminal acts.

5.2.2. In discharging that duty of care, staff might be required to restrain a pupil for the purpose of preventing the pupil from, for example:

- self-harming
- causing injury to other children, staff or teachers
- causing personal injury
- absconding
- committing an offence
- causing damage to property
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline in the academy or among any of its pupils/students.

5.3. Procedures

unless or until another responsible adult is present to support, observe and call for assistance. Physical intervention should only be used when all else has been tried and

- the situation is likely to become dangerous for pupils and/or staff
- there is a risk to the maintenance of good order
- a criminal act is being committed
- property is being damaged or
- when previous history suggests that failure to act promptly will result in any of the above, and all else has been tried
- the potential consequences of not intervening are sufficiently serious to justify considering the use of restraint
- the chances of achieving the desired result by other means are lower
- the risks associated with not using restraint outweigh those of using restraint
- restraint is not used to punish or with the intention of inflicting pain, suffering or humiliation.

5.3.8. Working with parents: Staff at the academy will seek to build positive relationships with parents in planning, developing individual safety plans and reviewing support for their child in ensuring they receive a consistent approach where planned positive handling might be required. Parents and carers will also be invited to contribute to discussions about strategies and approaches they consider might de-escalate or calm a situation.

5.3.9. As soon as possible after an incident, parents will be notified that restraint has been used. This should be included in a review of the incident which could involve a discussion about the warning signs of an impending incident, whether any previously agreed safety plans were followed, what de-escalation strategies were used and how effective they were, and what might be done differently in future. Where the incident is the first such incident requiring physical intervention, the academy will draw up a safety plan in discussion with the parents and keep this under review.

5.3.10. Post incident support: After incidents, the pupils and the staff involved will be given emotional support and basic first aid for any injuries as soon as possible. Immediate action should be taken to secure medical help for injuries that require other than basic first aid. All injuries should be

10. Related Policies

10.1. This policy is related to the following other Trust policies:

- The DRET Behaviour and Ethos policy
- The DRET Suspensions and exclusions policy
- The DRET Special Educational Needs policy
- The DRET Safeguarding and Child Protection policy