

Knowle DGE

Positive Handling Policy September 2017

Policy Statement

Staff at Knowle DGE Academy including the LoDGE are trained to look after the pupils in their care. In line with the DfE (2013) 'Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Head Teachers, staff and governing bodies'. Staff have a duty to and legal responsibility to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others. There may also be situations in which a child seriously disrupts good order in the Academy or causes damage to property. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow their Team Teach training on how to safely intervene to keep young people and adults safe.

Introduction

Pupils with severe behavioural difficulties sometimes present a risk to themselves and others. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 describes the circumstances in which teachers and others authorised by the Head Teacher 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.

The term 'Positive Handling' includes a range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. Included in this framework are a small number of responses which may involve the use of physical intervention to control or prevent a pupil from violence or injury. The term 'physical handling' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. These are referred to as 'Restrictive Physical Interventions' in national Guidance (DfES/DoH 2002) and 'control and restraint' in DfE, 2013 'Use of reasonable force'.

Reasonable force can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm (friendly hold) through to holds and interventions such as breaking up fights or where a pupil would need to be held due to violence against another pupil / staff member, injury to themselves or criminal damage to property.

All staff are Team Tach trained and the amount of force used is reasonable in the circumstances which means that no force will be used than is needed.

Staff should always avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, Scratches, bruises can sometimes happen and this does not demonstrate poor practice. Likewise, it is recognised that in extreme cases, especially where the pupil displays acts of violence towards others, it may not be always possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

This policy details how we implement the guidance in this Academy. It should be considered alongside the most recent local and national guidance. It is designed to

help staff to ensure that any actions they take are reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary.

Knowle DGE Academy & The LoDGE Expectations

The management takes seriously its duty of care towards pupils, employees and visitors to the Academy. Staff protection is an important part of child protection; both depend on confident and competent staff who feel supported by the management. This policy has a clear focus.

- 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.

The DfE (2013) 'Use of Reasonable Force' suggests that all school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force where it deemed necessary to do so. Knowle DGE trains all staff working directly with pupils in basic positive handling (Team Teach) with some staff working with higher risk pupils being trained in Advanced Team Teach. Although the DfE (2013) suggests that the Head Teacher can authorise anyone to use reasonable force, the Head Teacher **ONLY** authorises Academy staff to use reasonable force. Visitors, volunteers or parents are **not** permitted to use force on a pupil.

When will positive intervention be used?

At Knowle DGE Academy and the LoDGE, the decision whether or not to use physical intervention is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and it should always depend on the individual circumstances. Staff members would make a dynamic risk assessment based on the circumstances, ensuring that using physical intervention would be absolute necessary and the measures used would be reasonable and proportionate to the displayed behaviours.

- To support a disruptive pupil from a classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts the Academy (event or trip / visit)
- To prevent a pupil from leaving the Academy where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, to stop or prevent a fight.
- To prevent a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Positive Behaviour Management

All physical interventions at Knowle DGE Academy and The Lodge are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. Knowle DGE Learning & Engagement 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 Support Plans (PSP's) by focusing on positive alternatives and choices. Parents/carers are also encouraged to contribute. However, if problems arise, staff have an additional responsibility to support all pupils when they are under pressure and safely manage crises if, and when, they occur.

Alternatives to Physical Controls

A member of staff who chooses not to make a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk. They can:

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour 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.

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 Academy 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?
- Is 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 Knowle DGE is that all staff should support one another. This means that staff 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.

“I can see that you are feeling sad/angry and I am here to listen’.

The Last Resort Principal

At Knowle DGE 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. National guidance is clear on this point.

“If necessary staff have the authority to take immediate action to prevent harm occurring even if the harm is expected to happen some time in the predictable future.”

Para 10 Page 4 Department of Health – 1997 – “The Control of Children in the Public Care: Interpretation of the Children Act 1989” – London: H M S O

It does mean that we expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative. It also means that we expect staff to experiment and 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 behaviour from becoming dangerous provided that it is an agreed part of the Personal Support 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. 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 in the interest of the child 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:

- How is this 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 it is more likely that a physical intervention will be judged to be reasonable and proportionate.

Unreasonable use of Force

It is not 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 Academy.

Team Teach

It is the policy of Knowle DGE that all staff working closely with pupils are trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategies and techniques of Team Teach, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the Learning & Engagement Policy. Further details of the Team Teach approach can be found on the Team Teach website (www.team-teach.co.uk). Knowle DGE also employs Three Advanced Team Teach Tutors to provide ongoing training and guidance in relation to Team Teach and Positive Handling.

Types of incident where the use of Reasonable force may be necessary fall into 3 Broad Categories:

- 1) Action due to imminent risk of injury
- 2) Action due to developing risk of injury or significant damage to property
- 3) Action where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

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. At Knowle DGE, this person is Karen Baker. We all have shared responsibility to identify risk,

communicate potential risks and take active steps to reduce risk wherever possible. We recognise 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 try and think through the outcomes of the options available, balance the risks and choose whatever course of action which seems to involve the least risk.

As a minimum requirement, in order to comply with health and safety legislation, each employee has a responsibility to ensure that they are conversant with Academy 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 to.

When considering a pupil's behaviour staff should think about the following questions:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this pupil's behaviour?
- Have we got all the information we need to conduct a risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan as a result?
- What further steps can we take to prevent dangerous behaviour from developing?

Risk Assessment

Informal risk assessments should be a routine part of life for staff working with pupils who may exhibit extreme behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. If a proposed activity or course of action involves unacceptable risk the correct decision is to do something else.

Factors which might influence a more immediate 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.

Getting Help

At this Academy the following support structures are in place:

- PSP's are kept on file on the network to ensure all relevant information about each pupil is available to all members of staff working with them.
- Daily briefing sessions 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.
- Daily debrief sessions for all staff to share experiences, concerns and access support from each other, led by a member of the SLT.
- Termly refresher meetings in the Team Teach strategies and techniques for all staff, and continuous review by SLT to inform these.

Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and the Academy recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. It is not enough to thoughtlessly apply rules without thinking through the likely consequences. The key principals are that any physical intervention should be:

- in the best interest of the young person;
- reasonable and proportionate;
- intended to reduce risk;
- the less intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective.

Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning. Where possible, staff should always attempt to use diversion or de-escalation in preference to physical interventions. They should only use the techniques and methods approved for use in this school. In general, if staff act in good faith and their actions are reasonable and proportionate, they will be supported.

The Post Incident Support Structure for Pupils and Staff

Following a serious incident, it is the policy of Knowle DGE to offer support for all involved. People take time to recover from a serious incident. Until the incident has subsided the only priority is to reduce risk and calm the situation down. Staff should avoid saying or doing anything which could inflame the situation during the recovery phase. Immediate action should be taken to ensure medical help is sought if there are any injuries which require more than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded using Knowle DGE systems. It is important to note that injury in itself is not evidence of malpractice. Even when staff attempt to do everything right, things can go wrong. Part of the post incident support for staff may involve a reminder of this, as people tend to blame themselves when things go wrong. Time needs to be found to repair relationships. When careful steps are taken to repair relationships a serious incident does not necessarily result in long term damage. This is an opportunity for learning for all concerned. Time needs to be given to following up incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings,

suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective. When time and effort are put into a post incident support structure the outcome of a serious incident can be learning, growth and strengthened relationships.

Complaints

It is not uncommon for pupils to make allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force following an incident. The Academy has a formal Complaints Procedure. Pupils should be reminded of the procedure and encouraged to use the appropriate channels. The complaints policy applies equally to staff. We are an open Academy and promote transparent policy and practice in order to protect the interests of staff and pupils alike. Any staff concerns regarding the welfare of young person should be taken to the designated person for safeguarding and child protection. Any safety concerns should be reported to the designated person for Health and Safety.

Training

Staff within the Academy and anyone authorised by the Head Teacher who are expected to use planned physical techniques should be trained. This Academy has adopted the Team Teach Model of training. All training courses have been fully accredited by the Institute of crisis management (ICM) in accordance with DfES (2014) and Department of Health guidance. Positive handling training is always provided by qualified instructors with rigorous guidelines.

The level of training recommended is related to the level of risk faced by the member of staff. Our preferred approach is for whole staff team training. Office staff may not require the same level of training in physical techniques as those working directly with the most challenging pupils, however all staff benefit from the whole school training. The level of training required is kept under review and may change in response to the needs of our clients. Once trained, staff should practice regularly guidance of our in-house instructors and bring any problems or concerns to them.

Recording

Whenever force is used the incident must be recorded using the approved forms. The Incident/Concerns books are kept with the Head of Hubs, and the incident is recorded onto 'Sleuth'. All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the record which should be completed within 24 hours.

Staff should:

- Read through the Academy's recording form carefully
- Take time to think about what actually happened and try to explain it clearly.
- Complete all names in full.
- Sign and date all forms.

Bear in mind these records will be retained and cannot be altered. They will be kept for 75 years and could form part of an investigation at some time in the future.

Serious Incident Reports should not be completed until the individuals concerned have recovered from the immediate effects of the incident. They should not be rushed. A record is written into the Incident Book. This refers to supporting sheets and other relevant information.

Other Physical Contact with pupils

The DfE (2014) states that it is not illegal to touch a pupil and there are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force with a pupil is proper and necessary.

Examples of these are:

- Holding the hand of a child of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school;
- When comforting a distressed pupil;
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument or techniques during PE lessons and sports coaching;
- To give first aid.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Assistant Head along with the Head Teacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required. The Academy incident log is open to external monitoring and evaluation.

Follow Up

Following an incident, consideration may be given to conducting a further risk assessment, reviewing the PSP, Learning & Engagement policy or this positive handling policy. Any further action in relation to a member of staff, or an individual pupil, will follow the appropriate procedures. (See Safeguarding Policy and staff and pupil disciplinary policy)

Complaints:

The DfE (2014) 'Use of reasonable Force' does not require parental permission for schools to use force on pupils. However, at Knowle DGE all parents/carers are notified of our Learning & Engagement policy and Use of Force Policy on induction. Should a parent/carer or pupil complain about the use of force then complaints should be made to the Head Teacher in the first instance or the Chair of Academy Council.

Should a pupil, parent/carer or staff member have a safeguarding concern in relation to the use of force then Safeguarding policy should be followed.

Under the DfE (2015) Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', Knowle DGE recognises the duties we have at not only keeping children safe but also managing cases of allegations made against staff. Knowle DGE recognise that allegations such as where the adult may of:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may of harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offense against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.
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Knowle DGE will follow the safeguarding policy and work in line with the Academy's Code of Conduct. Knowle DGE would also complete any investigation by following the Learn@ MAT Disciplinary procedure.

Other Relevant Polices and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Learning & Engagement Policy

Exclusion Policy

Staff Disciplinary Policy

Health & Safety Policy

Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy

Steps to Managing Behaviour Procedure

This policy was implemented in September 2008

Updated October 2017

Updated and reviewed September 2018

To be reviewed September 2019