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*Ysgol  
Gynradd  
Nant Celyn*



*Nant Celyn  
Primary  
School*

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# Positive Handling Policy

June 2023 (draft)

## *Foreword*

Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and staff is of paramount importance at Nant Celyn Primary School. This document attempts to ensure that staff have a safe, supportive, carefully managed and monitored environment, and that children's needs, safety and rights are respected and nurtured.

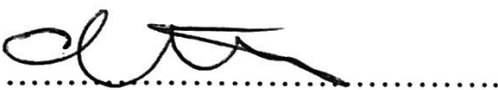
Regrettably it has to be acknowledged that whilst the majority of children are able to control themselves appropriately there are very rare occasions when a child may be so overwhelmed by their emotions that they place themselves and others at risk by their uncontrolled and challenging behaviours. It is important that parents and carers can be confident that the staff are fully prepared for effective management of extreme behaviours should they occur and that at all times the rights of all children in our care are protected. Adults who may be called upon to manage difficult and challenging situations need to be well informed and clear about what is or isn't acceptable and protected from any challenge around their actions.

The main purpose of this policy is to achieve this through presenting a clear summary of the key elements to be considered including an explanation of the terminology, making reference to current national guidance and setting out the contextual considerations that are necessary before, during or following any incidents.

Throughout this policy it is emphasised repeatedly that the use of both restrictive physical intervention and seclusion is only appropriate in exceptional and very rare situations: neither are a substitute for good behavioural management practice where children and young people are respected and supported positively (see also the school Good Behaviour Policy).

Staff acting in good faith, working within the remit of this policy will be positively supported in their actions.

**This Policy was adopted/updated by the  
Governing Body of  
Nant Celyn Primary School:**

<b>Headteacher:</b>	Ms Keri Smith (prev J Bates)
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	C Watkins
<b>Link Governor:</b>	
<b>Co-ordinator:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	23/06/2023
<b>Signed (Chair of Governors):</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	23/06/2023

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## **Care, Control and the Use of Positive Handling**

### **1.0 Policy Statement**

1.1 This policy is based on Welsh Office Circular 41/2010 “Safe and Effective Intervention”.

1.2 At Nant Celyn Primary School we work to ensure each individual pupil is able to reach his or her potential. Every child is entitled to learn and every teacher is free to teach in an environment that is safe, secure and free from distraction. The guiding principles to achieve this are outlined in the school’s policy on positive behaviour management.

1.3 Staff at Nant Celyn Primary School commit to providing the highest standards in protecting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care. We recognise there is a need, in line with the 1996 Education Act Section 550A, to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to pupils, staff and property.

1.4 For the most part this is achieved through the fostering of good relationships, and the normal application of positive behaviour management to support and intervene. However, in exceptional or extreme circumstances this may involve the use of reasonable force.

1.5 It should be emphasised that if used at all, positive handling should be seen in the context of a further positive action of care and concern. In line with School Service advice and guidance, it is used as a ‘last resort’ option and in the most extreme cases; other strategies will always have been attempted first.

1.6 As best practice regarding positive handling, this policy should be considered alongside other relevant school policies, specifically those involving behaviour, health and safety and child protection.

### **2.0 The Legal Use of Positive Handling to Support Pupils**

2.1 Teachers and other persons authorised by the Head teacher to have charge of pupils, may use Positive Handling to prevent pupils:

- causing injury to themselves or others
- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility)
- causing serious damage to property
- causing disruption by engaging in behaviour which is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline.

## 2.2 Weapons

- Where staff suspect a pupil has brought a weapon into school, they may exercise the statutory power introduced under Section 45 of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006, to search pupils, without their consent. This search power would apply to Head teachers and staff authorised by them, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has a weapon. Staff are not to search pupils if it is not safe for them to do so. In such an instance staff should call the Police - especially if they believe that pupils or staff are at serious risk.

## 2.3 Positive Handling has no legal definition but:

- Staff must take into account the circumstances of the incident, age, sex and development of the pupil
- The degree of force must be proportionate to the seriousness of the situation, behaviour or consequence. Positive Handling is intended to prevent, and should always be the minimum force needed
- Force could not be justified for a trivial misdemeanour or a situation that could be resolved without it
- Everyone has the right to self-defence provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force
- Corporal punishment is illegal.

## 3.0 Objectives Of This Policy

3.1 To provide all staff, governors, parents and pupils with an understanding of care and control and the use of Positive Handling.

3.2 To emphasise that the use of Positive Handling is:

- part of a positive care and control approach to discipline and welfare
- last resort, or a necessary expedient option to be used in extreme circumstances.

3.3 To ensure that all members of staff or authorised persons who may have to positively handle pupils clearly understand the options and strategies open to them.

## 4.0 Who Can Use Positive Handling?

4.1 We recognise that most of the time positive handling will be used infrequently, that is, as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment.

4.2 All teaching staff are by the nature of their roles authorised to use positive handling as appropriate.

4.3 Non-teaching staff require specific authorisation. This authorisation can only be given by the Head teacher or someone deputising in his/her absence.

4.4 Authorised staff will be notified formally and where positive, these staff will have up to date training in the use of Team Teach strategies for Positive Handling. A list of authorised and trained staff is listed in Appendix A

## 5.0 Circumstances When Positive Handling Might Be Appropriate

5.1 We recognise that some children may not be able to control their reaction to events as well as others and at times may place themselves or others at risk through their uncontrolled behaviour. As indicated in 2.1, Positive Handling might be appropriate when:

- Action is necessary in self-defence or because of imminent risk of injury;

Examples:

- A pupil attacks a member of staff, another pupil, attempts self-injury, pupils are fighting
- A pupil is running in a stairway or corridor in a way that is likely to cause injury to self or others
- A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school and he / she would be judged to be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school

- There is a serious and developing risk of damage to property, including the pupil's own property;

Examples:

- A pupil is causing or about to cause deliberate damage or vandalism
- A pupil is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, rough play, misuse of dangerous materials or objects

- Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline;

Examples:

- A pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave the classroom
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting the learning of others

5.2 NB Wherever possible, early support from colleagues will be sought. Single-handed intervention increases the risk of injury to both parties and does not provide the person intervening with the support of a colleague acting as a critical friend.

5.3 Strategies other than force must always be considered in the first instance.

Examples:

- Providing the disruptive pupil with a choice of locations to exit to
- Giving clear directions
- Allowing 'take-up' time thus allowing a 'face-saving' opportunity
- Removing the audience, i.e. requesting that other pupils leave the room
- Implementing Team Teach help protocols so that another member of staff takes over the strategic lead of the incident, if he/she feels it is appropriate to do so.

## 6.0 Procedures and practical considerations during specific incidents

6.1 Wherever practicable staff are expected to:

- Use a calm and measured approach
- Tell the pupil to stop, remind them of consequences, tell them what will happen if she/he does not stop
- Seek assistance from other colleagues at as early a stage as possible
- If they become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil have a responsibility to provide a presence, and to offer support and assistance should this be required
- Try to defuse the situation orally and prevent escalation
- Try to remove the pupil from the peer audience
- Attempt to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident
- In as calm a manner as possible, explain that the reason for intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe
- Make it clear that positive handling will stop as soon as the pupil calms and the risk assessment indicates it is no longer necessary.

If it is not possible to control the extreme pupil without risk of injury to staff or others, staff are to remove the other pupils who may be at risk and summon assistance.

6.2 It is good practice to:

- Give the impression you are in control
- Give the impression you have not lost your temper or are not acting out of anger or frustration
- Give the impression you are not trying to punish the pupil
- Call for assistance
- Intervene with the support of a colleague acting as a critical friend.

## 7.0 Application Of Positive Handling During Specific Incidents

7.1 Methods that staff **may use** in appropriate circumstances where a risk assessment judgement supports this:

- Physically interposing themselves between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Using classroom furniture to restrict movement
- Leading by the arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by a light touch on the elbow or near the shoulder
- "Assertive guiding" - remembering this is the positive application of force to control a pupil and would be used in rare circumstances, e.g. if the pupil is in extreme danger and no other alternative is available, or where Positive Handling is used to assist a pupil's movement
- Holding - for security and to reduce anxiety where there is potential risk, even if the pupil is not yet out of control. The purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation

- When intervening, staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted as aggressive. All holds are devised to minimise the risk of injury. They should not cause pain

- Where pupils are presenting with more challenging behaviour which may require more restrictive holds, it is important that these techniques have been demonstrated to trained staff by advanced Team Teach instructors.

7.2 Staff **may not** carry out action that might reasonably be expected to injure by:

- Holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the ability to breathe
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping a pupil
- Holding or pulling the pupil by the hair.

7.3 Other considerations for **non-urgent situations** where the risk to people or property is not imminent:

- Consider carefully whether positive handling is the right course of action
- Try to deal with the situation through other strategies before using force
- Try to defuse and calm the situation to establish good order, the use of positive handling could lead to an escalation of the problem
- Take into account the age, understanding, personal characteristics of the pupil;
- The use of positive handling to enforce compliance is likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older pupils
- Never use force as a substitute for good behaviour management
- In non-urgent situations, Positive Handling should only be used when all other methods have failed.

## 8.0 Reporting and Recording Incidents

8.1 All Positive Handling incidents that result in a child being held will be recorded in detail in the Team Teach book. For mainstream pupils, the book is kept in the Headteacher's office. For pupils within the ASD SNRB, a designated SNRB book is kept in HQ1.

8.2 The member of staff concerned will report the matter orally to the Head teacher or a senior member of staff as soon as possible. The incident will be recorded in the Incident Book by staff at the earliest opportunity, ideally before the end of the school day.

8.3 The Head teacher or his/her deputy will tell parents about the incident by the end of the school day. However, if parents cannot be reached a letter will be sent to inform them of the incident and offer them the opportunity to discuss the matter.

8.4 Other witnesses to the incident, staff, pupils, are to be noted in the Team Teach report.

8.5 The Team Teach Book will be reviewed by the Head teacher and Governor member with responsibility for Additional Learning Needs or Health & Safety termly to consider control measures and possible training or further training needs etc. In addition, the Local Authority Team Teach Lead will review the books on a regular basis

## **9.0 Debriefing Following Serious Incident**

9.1 Team-Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to a pupil or members of staff, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent “side-effect” of ensuring that pupils and staff remain safe. Pupils and members of staff will be checked for any sign of injury and first aid will be administered if required. This will be noted in the Team Teach record.

9.2 The pupil will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise him/her. When the pupil regains complete composure, a senior member of staff will discuss the incident with the pupil and try to ascertain the reason for it. The pupil will be given the opportunity to explain things from his/her point of view. All necessary steps will be take to re-establish the relationship between the pupil and the member(s) of staff involved in the incident. In cases where it is not possible to speak to the pupil on the same day the debrief will occur as soon as possible after the pupil returns to school.

9.3 All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff will provide support to the member of staff involved.

## **10.0 Other Procedures Concerning Incidents**

10.1 If necessary and appropriate the Chair of Governors, Local Authority, Children’s Services or police will be informed/consulted.

10.2 Help, support and reassurance will be given where appropriate to any victims involved.

10.3 Where possible an attempt will be made to help the pupil modify their behaviour.

10.4 Where possible, the pupil will apologise, this should be meaningful or appropriate. If this cannot be undertaken then other consequences/sanctions reparations and monitoring should take place.

10.5 In serious cases exclusion will be considered (see also Good Behaviour Policy).

## **11.0 Planning for Incidents and Meeting Training Needs**

11.1 If staff are aware that a pupil is likely to require positive handling on more than one occasion in a term staff will work with the pupil and his / her parent or carer to draw up a clear plan as to how the school will support that pupil and how school will respond should behaviour escalate. A risk assessment (Appendix C) and a positive handling plan (Appendix B) will be drawn up, in consultation with all concerned and included as part of the pupil's Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP). These documents will be reviewed on a termly basis.

11.2 Staff involved will, through risk assessment, have identified their training needs in this area. In cases where it is known that a pupil will require positive handling appropriate training will be provided (accessed through the Team Teach Advanced Trainers in the Pupil Referral Unit Outreach Team).

## **12.0 Arrangements for Informing Parents**

12.1 At the outset of the introduction of this policy, all parents/carers will be sent a letter outlining its introduction with information about how they can obtain their own copy.

12.2 Thereafter, a section about the school's legal duty to maintain a safe environment and the possible use of positive handling (as a very last resort) with pupil will be included in the school prospectus.

12.3 As indicated in 11.1, for some children there may be the need to use specific techniques to routinely manage their challenging behaviour. This will be recorded in their Individual Behaviour Plan, Positive Handling Agreement or Pastoral Support Plan (PSP). Such arrangements will be fully discussed with parents/carers, on an individual basis, in advance of their implementation.

12.4 All parents will be informed after an incident where positive handling is used with a pupil.

## **13.0 Physical Contact with Pupils In Other Circumstances**

13.1 Staff must be sensitive to matters relating to culture and gender issues and any known individual characteristics or special circumstances relating to pupils.

13.2 Some physical contact may be necessary e.g. during P.E. lessons or if a member of staff has to administer first aid or medication. In addition, young children and children with ALN may need staff to provide physical prompts, help or a reassuring arm around a shoulder.

13.4 Physical contact must always be age appropriate and done openly.

#### **14.0 Complaints**

14.1 Involving parents when an incident occurs, and having our clear policy about physical contact with pupils that staff adhere to will help avoid complaints from parents. Providing staff with approved training will also help.

14.2 All complaints will be recorded and followed up by the Head teacher or their representative in the first instance. Where appropriate the Governing Body or Local Authority will be kept informed.

14.3 The school has adopted the Local Authority Policy for Handling Complaints which should be followed in most instances. Where a serious concern or dispute about the use of Positive Handling by a member of staff might lead to an investigation under disciplinary procedures, or by the Police and Social Services under Child Protection procedures the school Safeguarding Policy should be consulted (both policies are available on the school website).

#### **15.0 Review**

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Head teacher and Governors and reviewed and updated every three years.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Headteacher**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chair of Governors**

**June 2023**

## Appendix B

**Positive Handling Plan**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class/tutor group:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Key Worker:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Review:**

**TRIGGER Experiences:** (Describe common behaviours / situations which are known to have led to Positive Handling being required. When is such behaviour likely to occur?)

**PREVENTATIVE arrangements:**

**Actions following incident and debrief:**

When debrief, restorative actions and consequences dealt with:

**Please sign:**

**Establishment:**  
**Placing Authority:**  
**Parents/Guardians:**

**Name:**  
**Name:**  
**Name:**

## Appendix C Risk Assessment Proforma

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**Appendix 1 – Risk Assessment Form**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

TOREAEV COUNTY BOROUGH  
BWRDEISTREF SIKOL TOREAEV

**RISK ASSESSMENT FOR:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ASSESSMENT UNDERTAKEN BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF ASSESSMENT:** \_\_\_\_\_ **REVIEW DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please use this for to assess generic or specific tasks, work activities or equipment. The person undertaking the assessment must be competent to do so.

HAZARDS	WHO COULD BE HARMED AND HOW?	WHAT ARE YOU DOING ALREADY?	WHAT FURTHER ACTION IS NECESSARY?	BY WHOM	BY WHEN	COMPLETED (DATE)

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