



**British International School of Cracow**

**Positive Handling of Pupils Policy**

**June 2019**

## Introduction

BISC believes that behaviour is always a form of communication and that by helping pupils find positive ways to communicate they learn important social skills that are lifelong. Physical intervention should therefore be the last possible technique used in managing children. While reacting is better than not acting, we believe in being proactive by providing pupils the opportunities to self-regulate their emotions. This policy therefore sets out the responsibilities of the stakeholders (pupils, parents, school staff) as well as the measures the school takes to respond to situations.

## Rationale/statement of purpose for the policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out BISC's position on in relation to the use of reasonable force and physical restraint. The policy attempts to follow best practice in this area.

The key term which will be adopted to describe such interventions is **positive handling**.

Good professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of positive handling may be required.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff at BISC clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary and are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

The application of any form of positive handling places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for positive handling. Positive Handling will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed when pupils, staff are at risk or there is a risk of significant damage to property.

## Definition of terms

### **Physical Contact**

Situations in which appropriate physical contact takes place between staff and pupils, e.g. in games/PE or to comfort pupils.

### **Physical Intervention**

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

### **Positive Handling**

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or of significant damage to property.

## Details and advice on responsibilities

All school staff who are authorised to be in charge of pupils are automatically authorised to use reasonable force where necessary. Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, or from damaging property. Staff should use their own judgement and assess the risks before acting.

**Positive Handling training will be made available to designated staff and will be the responsibility of the Headmaster.** Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken.

If a child is behaving disruptively, every non-physical strategy will be used to manage the behaviour positively. Staff should view physical intervention with a pupil as a 'last resort'.

All staff must be aware that they must not

- use force as punishment
- humiliate and degrade children
- use punitive measures to intentionally cause discomfort and distress

In such situations, staff must judge whether or not physical intervention is reasonable/appropriate:

- risk to safety of staff or children
- where there is a risk of serious damage to property
- where a child's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order
- where a child is committing a criminal offence

The judgment will take into account the circumstances of the incident.

To respond to difficult situations and with a view to modelling positive behaviour, BISC staff will employ a range of non-verbal and verbal strategies:

### **Non-verbal strategies**

- appear calm and self-assured
- maintain a neutral facial expression
- allow space
- control your breathing

### **Verbal strategies**

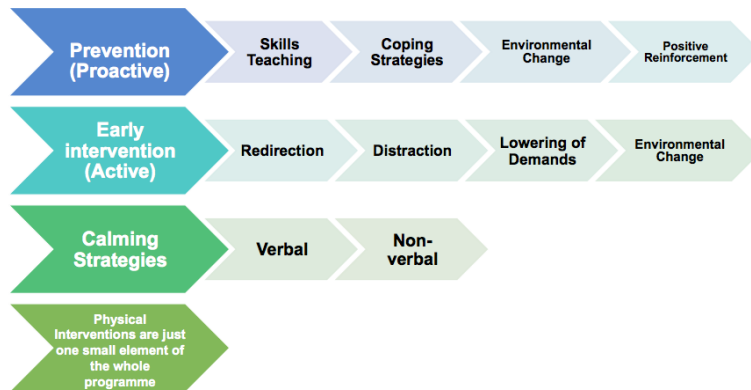
- lower voice and keep tone even
- attempt to distract and divert attention
- give choices
- acknowledge the child's feelings
- use words and phrases that de-escalate
- tell the child what we want them to do and not what we do not want them to do

BISC staff will refrain from making threats or promises that cannot be carried through, taking personally what pupils say, and using sarcasm with the intent to humiliate.

Teachers have a key role to play as caretakers and have the power to enforce school discipline. The power to discipline includes imposing a penalty when a pupil's standard of behaviour falls below that which is reasonable to expect, as well as the right to confiscate inappropriate items such as mobile phones.

### Measures taken to provide education and support

The following diagram illustrates the key principles of effective physical interventions:



Source:

[https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/hackney/fsd/files/hlt\\_positive\\_handling\\_guidance\\_mar\\_17\\_final.pdf](https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/hackney/fsd/files/hlt_positive_handling_guidance_mar_17_final.pdf)

On developing the behaviour policy, the Headmaster will reflect on the following ten key aspects of school practice that can contribute to improving the quality of pupil behaviour:

- a consistent approach to behaviour management
- strong school leadership
- classroom management
- rewards and sanctions
- behaviour strategies and the teaching of good behaviour
- staff development and support
- pupils support systems
- liaison with parents
- managing pupil transition
- organisation and facilities

In a school, force is used for two main purposes: to control pupils or to restrain them. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- 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

The use of force should always be proportionate, legal, accountable, necessary and reasonable.

Positive handling can only be deemed reasonable if:

- it is warranted by the particular circumstances of the incident
- it is delivered in accordance with the seriousness of the incident and the consequences which it is desired to prevent
- it is carried out as the minimum to achieve the desired result
- the age, understanding and the gender of the pupil are taken into account
- it is likely to achieve the desired result If the use of positive handling can be anticipated (e.g. a child refusing to come into school) then a response team should be on standby.

**Wherever possible, assistance will be sought from another member of staff before intervention**

### Frequently asked questions

#### **Are BISC staff permitted to physical restrain my child or others?**

Yes, if a staff member deems that not restraining the child will pose a risk to himself/herself or those around him/her. As per the above diagram, other measures must be considered prior to physical restraint.

#### Procedures - reporting, recording, monitoring

All incidents where staff feel that they have used force to modify behaviour should be recorded on the day that the intervention has taken place. **Physical intervention recording forms are available at the school secretariat** and should be submitted to the Headmaster. The senior management team will be informed of the intervention that has taken place.

The Headmaster will ensure that parents/carers are appropriately informed on the day of the incident. The form will be held on the record of the student involved. For the safeguarding of both staff and pupil, any subsequent investigation should be undertaken by member of staff other than the one applying the physical intervention.

The form will contain the following information:

- the name and job title of the member of staff who used reasonable force
- the name of the child involved
- when and where the incident took place
- names of staff and pupil who witnessed the incident
- the reason why force was necessary
- description of behaviour of the child which led up to the incident
- any attempts to resolve the situation
- the degree of force used
- how it was applied
- how long it was used for
- the child's response and the eventual outcome
- details of any injuries suffered by either staff or pupil
- details of any medical treatment required
- details of follow up including contact with parents/carers
- details of follow up involving other agencies, police, social services

The Headmaster (or respective line manager in their absence) will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy
- Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure
- School Behaviour Policy

Members of staff will be kept informed of any action taken. In case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from the Headmaster.

#### Policy review

This policy is the subject of continuous review by the Headteacher, the Senior Leadership Team, and teaching staff.

## Appendix A

### Physical Intervention Recording Form

Staff present: Name of child:	Date:
Name of child: Staff present	Time:
Children present:	Location:
Hold(s) used:	Duration:
Is there a behaviour plan?	
Description of situation leading to restraint:	
Description of restraint (including child's view):	
Outcome of restraint (including child's view):	
Signature staff member:	Date:
Signature Head teacher:	Date: