

Positive Handling – guidance for Schools and Settings

Safeguarding in Education Team,
Hackney Learning Trust

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Introduction

Hackney Learning Trust believes that physical intervention should be the last possible technique used in managing children and young people's behaviour, however challenging that behaviour may be.

Behaviour is always a form of communication. Understanding that children are communicating through their behaviour gives adults the opportunity to respond differently. When children feel valued, respected and have their needs met, there is no longer a reason to use challenging behaviour to communicate. Punishing a child for a behaviour may stop the behaviour for the moment, but it does not give the child support or provide alternate ways to act in difficult situations. When adults help children find positive ways to communicate their needs to others, children learn important social and problem-solving skills that will help them throughout their life.

Children with challenging behaviour may be communicating to adults that something is making them anxious, angry or that their needs are not being met. There may be many triggers for a single behaviour, such as being hungry, scared, hurt, tired, bored, sad or angry. Some children may engage in behaviour that seems destructive, physically, emotionally or socially. Sometimes children feel unsafe or out of control, so they take inappropriate action over the things they can control, like being able to kick someone. A child who has tried several times to communicate to adults about what s/he needs, but whose needs remain unmet, will often use challenging behaviour as a way of sending a very loud message; for some children, negative attention may be better than no attention.

Children engage in challenging behaviour for a reason. The purpose may be to get someone's attention, stopping an activity they don't like, or satisfying sensory or emotional needs. Some children may not be able to verbally describe the problem or know what is expected of their behaviour in a situation. Some children find [emotional self-regulation](#) difficult, this may be due to previous or [ongoing maltreatment or abuse](#), other children may not have had appropriate responses modelled to them.

Adults and children are communicating something through their behaviour during every moment in every day, even if they are not aware of it. A child's challenging behaviour is a sign that s/he is upset and that something is not right. Behaviour is dependent on both the situation the child is in and the relationships they inhabit.

Since children often use their behaviour to tell us what they need, adults can help the child by figuring out the meaning behind the child's behaviour. All children, but especially those who display challenging behaviour, need the consistency of a reliable and caring adult who will provide support and guidance, especially during difficult times.

The purpose of this document

This document sets out Hackney Learning Trust's position in relation to the use of reasonable force and physical restraint in schools and settings across the borough. It details the legal position and best practice in this area.

Hackney Learning Trust believes everyone has a right to:

- Recognition of their unique identity;
- Be treated with respect and dignity;
- Learn and work in a safe environment;
- Be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse.

Pupils and their parents attending schools and settings have a right to:

- Individual consideration of pupil needs by the staff who have responsibility for their care and protection;
- Expect staff to undertake their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies;
- Be informed about school rules, relevant policies and the expected conduct of all pupils and staff working in school;

Managing challenging behaviour

HLT also recognises that there is a need, reflected in common law, to physically intervene when there is an obvious risk to the safety of children, staff and property. This applies both on and off setting sites. If used at all, the use of force to control or restrain pupils will be used in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the child in order to ensure minimal risk of injury to children and staff.

Hackney Learning Trust has adopted the term '**Positive Handling**' to describe such interventions.

All policies and practice regarding the supervision of children during the school day should be appropriate to the identified needs and behaviours of the child. This, combined with the whole school approach to behaviour management, should minimise the likelihood of requiring positive handling. HLT believes it is important for members of staff who may need to physically intervene to do so after other behaviour management techniques have been tried and preferably following training in such techniques.

It is expected that schools will have in place a variety of measures which will reduce the likelihood of the need for positive handling to be used. For example:

- A calm and supportive school environment;
- Positive relationships;
- Whole school approach to developing social and emotional skills;
- Structured approach to staff development.

Staff should understand the importance of listening to and respecting children to create an environment that is calm and supportive, especially when dealing with children who may have emotional and behavioural needs, which may increase their aggression. All staff should understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the child, which lie beneath the behaviour, as well as the behaviour itself.

If a child is behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every non-physical strategy will be used to manage the behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation. Staff should view physical intervention with a child as a 'last resort' and for the purposes of maintaining a safe environment.

All staff must be aware that they must not:

- Use force as a punishment as this action would fall within the definition of corporal punishment, which has been abolished;
- Use pain to gain compliance;
- Deprive the child of food or drink;
- Require the child to wear inappropriate clothing
- Require the child to wear clothing that marks them out as different;
- Humiliate and/or degrade the child or young person;
- Use punitive measures to intentionally cause discomfort or distress;
- Confine children in rooms that are unsafe and/or unheated as punishment;
- Lock children in rooms to isolate them.

In the following situations, staff must judge whether or not a physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate:

- Risk to the safety of staff, children or visitors;
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property;
- Where a child's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline;
- Where a child is committing a criminal offence.

This judgment will take into account the circumstances of the incident. All staff should be aware that the use of a physical intervention in response to a clear or developing danger of injury is intended to be used to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation.

De-Escalation techniques

In a relatively small number of circumstances usual classroom discipline and behaviour plans may be insufficient and a different approach is needed to manage children and young people's behaviour in a way that keeps them, the other children in the class and school staff physically and emotionally safe. Underpinning the success of managing the diverse needs that will be present in each classroom is the skill of the teacher in intervening early to de-escalate situations calmly when they arise.

However, de-escalation is difficult, often the techniques go against our natural fight-or-flight reflexes. Remaining calm, professional and objective is not always easy and therefore it is a skill that will need to be practised in order to respond in a different way when a challenging situation occurs. This guide from the Education Support Partnership makes interesting reading on [managing pupil behaviour](#).

Reasoning with an angry child is not always possible, the aim of de-escalation is to reduce the level of agitation so that at an appropriate time discussion becomes an option and a better outcome can be achieved.

When to de-escalate

De-escalation techniques are most successful when used early, before the child or young person becomes physically challenging or dysregulated. To do this, it is necessary to be aware of and spot early signs of agitation such as:

- Balled fists;
- Fidgeting;

- Shaking;
- 'Eye-balling' another child;
- Head thrust forward;
- Clenched jaw;
- Speech becoming more rapid or high-pitched.

Non-verbal strategies

The large part of what we communicate is through body language, much is through the tone of our voice and there are estimates that just 7% is through the words that we use. It is useful to remember this when you are trying to de-escalate. Ensure you are modelling the behaviour you want the child to emulate, relaxed and open body language can be helpful.

Non-verbal techniques include the following.

- **Appear calm and self-assured.** Make sure you are not displaying the same signs of agitation that can be seen in the child, unclench your fists, do not hold eye contact for too long and avoid standing square to the child;
- **Maintain a neutral facial expression.** Even our eyebrows can indicate we are surprised or angry, and similarly our mouths can betray our emotions unwittingly. Another natural reaction we often have when under stress is to smirk or giggle, which must be controlled;
- **Allow space.** Entering a person's personal space can be useful to refocus on a task when the situation is calm, but when a child is agitated this can indicate aggression and escalate the situation. Staying some distance away will also help keep you safe should the child become physically aggressive;
- **Control your breathing.** When we are stressed, angry or tense, our breathing becomes more shallow and rapid. If we take deeper, slower breaths, this will not only help keep us calm, but the child will begin to match our own breathing pattern. It can sometimes help to match the child's breathing initially then gradually slow it down.

Verbal strategies

- **Lower your voice and keep your tone even.** It is hard to have an argument with someone who is not responding aggressively back to you;
- **Distraction and diversion are extremely useful.** When a child is aggressive, they are responding with their own fight-or-flight instincts and not thinking about their actions. Distract them and engage their thinking brain, perhaps by changing the subject or commenting on something that is happening outside the window;
- **Give choices**, repeat these using the broken-record technique if necessary, and do not get drawn into secondary behaviours such as arguing back, which are designed to distract or upset you;
- **Acknowledging the child's feelings** shows that you have listened to them, and can be crucial when diffusing a situation; for example, 'It must be really difficult for you ... thank you for letting me know';
- **Use words and phrases that de-escalate**, such as:
 - I wonder if...
 - Let's try...
 - It seems like...
 - Maybe we can...
- **Tell the child what you want them to do** rather than what you do not want them to do; for example, 'I want you to sit down' rather than 'stop arguing with me';

- **Give the child take-up time following any direction** and avoid backing them into a corner, either verbally or physically.

Things to avoid

- **Do not make threats or promises** you cannot carry through, such as threatening to exclude the child;
- **Do not be defensive or take it personally.** What is being said may seem insulting and directed at you, but this level of aggression is not really about you;
- **Do not use sarcasm or humiliate** the child.

Sometimes, no matter how carefully and skilfully you try to de-escalate a situation, it may still reach crisis point. Know your school systems for summoning help and moving bystanders to safety. After any outburst or incident, always make time to debrief, repair and rebuild the relationship, without this the relationship is likely to continue to deteriorate. Problem-solve the situation and teach new behaviours where needed. Ensure any sanctions are appropriate to what has happened and remember that it is the certainty that behaviour is challenged that is important rather than the severity of what happens. Resolving conflicts is one of the most important skills to model.

Best Practice - Using Positive Handling

Teacher's power to discipline

Teachers have an express power to enforce school discipline which derives from their professional status as teachers. The NUT sought this change to eradicate the notion that teachers rely on delegated parental authority. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 sets out teachers' statutory powers of discipline and restraint. The DfE issued [guidance on Behaviour and Discipline in Schools](#) in 2016. The power to discipline includes imposing a penalty when a pupil's standard of behaviour falls below that which it is reasonable to expect, as well as the legal right to confiscate inappropriate items from pupils such as mobile phones or music players and to discipline pupils who behave badly on the way to and from school, for instance when travelling on buses and trains. All the powers should be exercised in accordance with the school, academy or college's behaviour policy.

Any physical intervention will take into consideration the age and competence of the child and will be the least restrictive alternative. In doing so the action must take proper account of any particular special educational need and/or disability that the pupil may have. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 schools have two key duties:

- Not to treat a disabled pupil less favourably, for a reason relating to his or her disability, than someone to whom that reason does not apply, without justification; and
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage to pupils who are not disabled (known as the reasonable adjustments duty).

Policy

HLT expects all settings to develop their own positive handling policy, which should incorporate, or have regard to, this best practice overview. This policy must be consistent with the school's behaviour policy and the DfE guidance [Use of Reasonable Force](#).

Schools should review their policies on positive handling regularly and ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of those policies. The guidance linked to this document gives support in carrying out such a review. Please see Appendix 2 for a Model Policy schools can adopt or amend.

Behaviour policies

All schools must have a Behaviour Policy that sets out in detail the following:

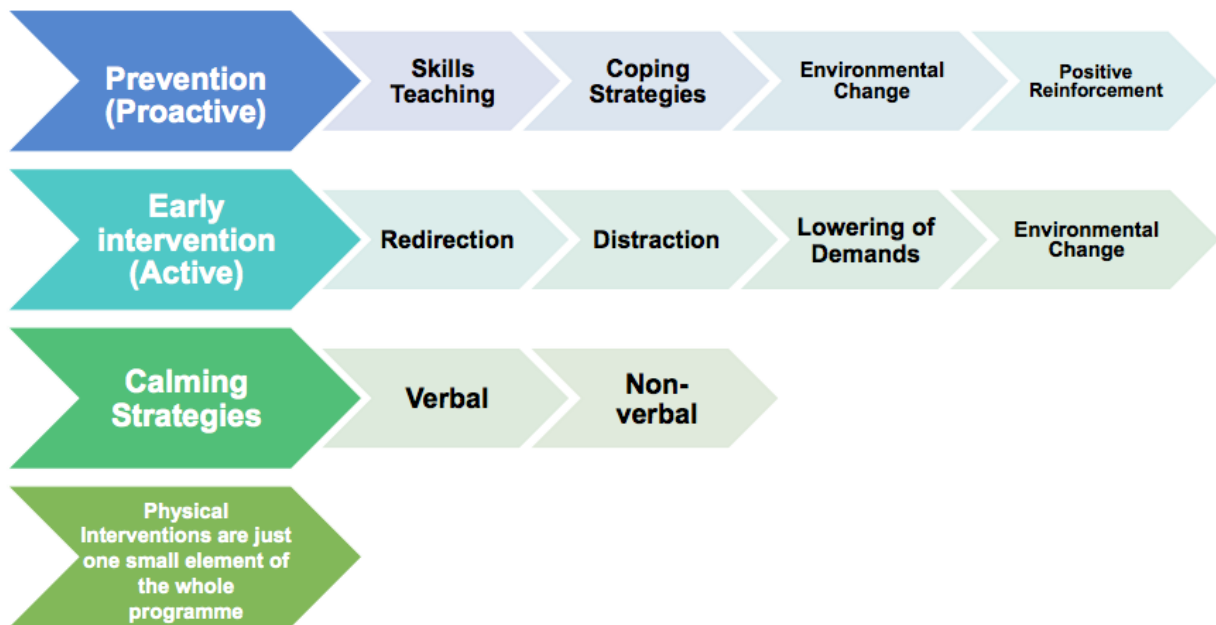
- Promoting good behaviour, self-discipline and respect;
- Preventing bullying;
- Ensuring that pupils complete assigned work.

DfE guidance have produced [guidance for Headteachers](#) regarding behaviour and discipline that can support schools in developing such a policy.

When deciding what these measures should be, the Headteacher must take account of the governing body’s statement of behaviour principles. The Headteacher must have regard to any guidance or notification provided by the governing body which may include the following:

- Screening and searching pupils;
- The power to use reasonable force and other physical contact;
- The power to discipline beyond the school gate;
- When to work with other local agencies to assess the needs of pupils who display continuous disruptive behaviour; and
- Pastoral care for staff accused of misconduct.

The below diagram illustrates the key principles of effective physical interventions, and the factors to consider and skills required in order to effect these.



Maintained schools

The Head teacher must set out measures in the behaviour policy which aim to:

- Promote good behaviour, self-discipline and respect;
- Prevent bullying;
- Ensure that pupils complete assigned work; and which
- Regulate the conduct of pupils.

When deciding what these measures should be, the Head teacher must take account of the governing body's statement of behaviour principles. The Head teacher must have regard to any guidance or notification provided by the governing body which may include the following:

- Screening and searching pupils;
- The power to use reasonable force and other physical contact;
- The power to discipline beyond the school gate;
- When to work with other local agencies to assess the needs of pupils who display continuous disruptive behaviour; and
- Pastoral care for staff accused of misconduct.

The Head teacher must decide the standard of behaviour expected of pupils at the school. He or she must also determine the school rules and any disciplinary penalties for 1 Section 89 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 breaking the rules.

Teachers' powers to discipline include the power to discipline pupils even when they are not at school or in the charge of a member of staff.

The Head teacher must publicise the school behaviour policy, in writing, to staff, parents and pupils at least once a year. The school's behaviour policy must be published on its website (School Information (England) Regulations 2008). Where they do not have a website the governing body should make arrangements for the behaviour policy to be put on a website and to make the address and details (of the website) known to parents.

Academy schools

The proprietor of an Academy school is required to ensure that a written policy to promote good behaviour among pupils is drawn up and effectively implemented. The policy must set out the disciplinary sanctions to be adopted if a pupil misbehaves. The proprietor is also required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

Information about the school's behaviour policy must be made available to parents on request. While Academies are not required by law to publish their behaviour policy on their website, it is good practice to do so. Parental engagement. After the Deregulation Act 2015, Schedule 16 paragraph 2 is commenced in January 2016 schools will no longer have a statutory obligation to have in place home school agreements.

Home-school relations are important but schools can determine how best to foster these relationships. If schools choose they can have voluntary home school agreements. Developing the behaviour policy. It is vital that the behaviour policy is clear, that it is well understood by staff, parents and pupils, and that it is consistently applied.

In developing the behaviour policy, the Head teacher should reflect on the following ten key aspects of school practice that, when effective, 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;
- Pupil support systems;
- Liaison with parents and other agencies;
- Managing pupil transition; and
- Organisation and facilities.

The school's behaviour policy should set out the disciplinary action that will be taken against pupils who are found to have made malicious accusations against school staff. The behaviour policy should acknowledge the school's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

Training

Teachers and other staff are not contractually obliged to carry out positive handling procedures and they are not contractually obliged to undertake training in any restraint procedures. However, HLT would advise staff to do so because they are expected to work within a duty of care. A breach of duty of care may involve either taking unreasonable action or failing to take reasonable action to prevent harm to another person.

It is not expected that all schools will need detailed training. However, schools should ensure that staff are aware of the principles and practices associated with best practice initially through their induction training and on an ongoing planned basis. It would be good practice for schools to maintain a record of all permanently authorised staff and ensure that they know who they are.

Schools/settings should ensure that appropriate training is provided for all staff. Staff should identify their training needs in this area. Schools/settings should approach The Learning Trust who has colleagues trained in the use of the Team Teach positive handling approach and techniques.

HLT is committed to providing training on positive handling to all staff but will prioritise training for those settings/schools deemed as higher risk settings, for example those settings supporting large numbers children or young people with special educational needs or disabilities.

The Legal Position – Who Can Use Force To Control or Restrain and When

Teachers and other school staff have a statutory power to use reasonable force to restrain pupils in a number of circumstances as set out in Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Teachers are generally permitted the use of reasonable force to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. The DfE guidance on the [Use of Reasonable Force](#) provides that teachers can use reasonable force:

- To remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- To prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- To 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;
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground;
- To restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

The statutory provisions can apply when a teacher or other authorised person is:

- On the premises of the school or academy;
- Elsewhere at a time when, as a member of school or academy staff, he or she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned, for example, on an out-of-school activity.

It should be noted that the use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant it. The degree of force should be in proportion to the circumstances and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent. The level and duration of the force used should be the minimum necessary to achieve the desired result, such as to restore safety. It is always unlawful to use force as a form of punishment or discipline.

It is impossible to describe definitively when it is reasonable to use force and how much may be used, beyond stating that this will depend on the circumstances of the case. Relevant considerations as to whether it might be reasonable to use force and the degree of force to be used could include, for example, the age and strength of the child. In some circumstances it will, of course, be inadvisable for a teacher to intervene without help, such as where a number of pupils are involved; where the pupil is older and physically mature; and where the teacher might be at risk of injury.

It is relevant that failure to respond in circumstances which merit it can be as serious as overreacting. In many circumstances, it is not a safer option for a teacher to do nothing or to take very limited action, when to take action could restore safety. This action may involve swiftly alerting a third party. So far as a teacher's duty of care is concerned, an omission can be significant if there is a subsequent claim for negligence. This will depend on the circumstances of the case. Teachers would not be expected to intervene to restore safety at the expense of their own personal safety.

The use of physical restraint

All members of staff working with students at the school are authorised to handle, use reasonable force or restrain students if/when such physical intervention is necessary. No member of staff is required to employ any physical intervention strategy if they are not comfortable or confident to do so effectively. No member of staff should intervene physically if they have reason to believe that to do so would worsen the situation/incident that is taking place.

A member of staff recognising that a situation is escalating to a point demanding positive handling yet feeling unable to carry this out must, as part of their duty of care, clearly tell the child(ren) to stop the behaviour and then seek help by any means available. Staff considering handling, use of reasonable force or restraint must provide opportunity for the student to alter their behaviour/actions before employing a physical intervention strategy and should continue to make instructions to the student and details of their intended interventions clear.

Staff intervening with children will seek assistance from other members of staff as early as possible, since single-handed intervention increases the risk of injury to both parties and does not provide a witness. Staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a child will have a responsibility to provide a presence and to offer support and assistance should this be required. Where possible, staff who have not been involved in the initial confrontation leading up to an incident may be in a better position to intervene or restrain the child if this proves necessary.

A child's behaviour may be adversely affected by the presence of an audience. Wherever possible, the audience will be removed, or if this is not possible, the child and member(s) of staff will withdraw to a quiet but not completely private, place (e.g. two members of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation).

Staff will tell the child being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner that the reason for the intervention is to keep the child and others safe. Staff will explain that as soon as the child calms down, she/he will be released.

The force used will be commensurate with the risk presented.

All staff should be aware of the school's planned procedures to enable staff to call for help in emergencies (e.g. a member of staff will contact Assistant Head teacher/Head teacher, either by phone or by sending a child).

Examples of situations where positive handling may be appropriate include:

- Child or young person attacks member of staff or another child;
- Child or young person is fighting;
- Child or young person is engaging in, or on the verge of, committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property;
- Child or young person is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- Child or young person absconds from school other than at an authorised time.
- Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place is not enough on its own to justify force. It would be justifiable where allowing a pupil to leave would:
 - entail serious risks to the pupil's safety (taking into account age and understanding), to the safety of other pupils or staff, or of damage to property or
 - lead to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline, such as disrupting other lessons
- Child or young person persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave a classroom;

- Child or young person behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson, or
- A pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school sporting event or school visit

The following approaches are regarded as reasonable in appropriate circumstances:

- Holding for security and to reduce anxiety where there is potential risk, even if the child is not yet out of control. This is best used when the child is anxious or confused. Its purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation. Staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted by the child as aggression.
- Physically interposing between children
- Blocking a child's path
- Pushing if restricted to situations where reasonable force is used to resist a child's movement, rather than a forceful push that might cause the child to fall over
- Escorting a child by the hand or arm.

Holds to be avoided

- Holding a child around the neck or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict a child's ability to breathe;
- 'Forcing a pupil forward when in a seated position because of the risk of positional asphyxia;
- Any hold that inflicts pain in order to gain compliance;
- Slapping, punching or kicking a child;
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- Tripping a child;
- Holding a child by the hair or ear;
- Holding a child face down on the ground

The procedure for restrictive physical intervention set out below must always be followed:

- Give the child clear warning. Offer an escape route from the situation, for example, through calming or following instructions;
- Once the restrictive physical intervention is judged necessary it should happen quickly, smoothly and confidently;
- Always remain calm and talk in a conciliatory tone. Ignore any abuse and let the high emotional state it run its course;
- Once things begin to calm, it can be coupled with significant changes in restrictive physical intervention, this should be on staff terms, not when demanded by the child;
- The aim is to talk through the situation and discuss the behaviour that caused the whole episode;
- The extent of force used should be no more than necessary to control the situation;
- An incident report should be completed.

There may be circumstances or settings (for example those settings supporting large numbers of children or young people with special educational needs or disabilities where the use of force/positive handling is undertaken on a planned basis, or is likely to be required, given historical patterns of behaviour. In such circumstances the school should:

- Undertake a risk assessment;
- Maintain records as part of a positive behaviour plan;
- Clearly specify the type of intervention to be used and when;
- Secure parental agreement to the plan;
- Review on a regular basis.

Recording an incident

All incidents where staff feel that they have used force to modify behaviour or conduct should be recorded. It is not necessary to record every incident of contact with a child, but where a member of staff perceives that contact has been received at all negatively, they are advised to record the circumstances.

Physical Intervention Recording Forms (examples in Appendix 2) are available in the staff room and should be submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Deputy or Head Teacher will be informed of the intervention that has taken place. It is the responsibility of the intervening member of staff to complete the record form on the day that the intervention took place.

The circumstances and nature of the physical intervention will be held on the record of the student involved. The DSL will inform any necessary agencies/authorities (eg. LADO) of the physical intervention in accordance with DFE and LA guidance. The Deputy or Head teacher will ensure that parents/carers are appropriately informed on the same day as the incident. It is also expected that the child's Social Worker be informed if they are Looked After. For the safeguarding of both staff and student, any subsequent investigation of the situation/incident should be undertaken by a member of staff other than the one applying the physical intervention.

A contemporaneous record (i.e. written as soon as possible and no longer than 2 hours after the incident's occurrence) should be made by the staff member involved in the incident and a copy given to a senior member of staff and parent/carer. Similarly, contemporaneous notes will also be made by all other members of staff involved (i.e. as witnesses or additional providers of support). The notes will be sealed and dated.

The record will contain the following information:

- The name(s) and the job title(s) of the member(s) of staff who used reasonable force;
- The name(s) of the child(ren) involved;
- When and where the incident took place;
- Names of staff and child(ren) who witnessed the incident
- The reason that force was necessary;
- Behaviour of the child(ren) which led up to the incident including any triggers;
- Any attempts to resolve the situation;
- The degree of force used;
- How it was applied;
- How long it was used for;
- The child's/children's response and the eventual outcome;
- Details of any injuries suffered by either staff or child(ren);
- Details of any damage to property;
- Details of any medical treatment required (an accident form will be completed where medical treatment is needed);
- Details of follow-up including contact with the parents/carers of the child(ren) involved;
- Details of follow up involvement of other agencies, police, social services.

Child witnesses may also be asked to provide a written account if appropriate.

A copy of this will be kept on the child's file and retained in line with HLT's guidance on keeping educational records. The school will report any injuries to child or staff and seek medical intervention immediately if necessary.

Debriefing arrangements

The child/young person and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. First aid will be administered to anyone who requires it, or medical treatment obtained.

The child or young person will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise him/her. When the child regains complete composure, a senior member of staff (or his/her nominee) will discuss the incident with the child and try to ascertain the reason for its occurrence. The child will be given the opportunity to explain things from his/her point of view. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish the relationship between the child 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 as the incident occurred, the debrief will take place as soon as possible after the child returns to school.

All members of staff involved should be allowed a period of debrief and recovery from the incident. A senior member of staff (or his/her nominee) will provide support to member(s) of staff involved.

The Head teacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity of any incidents where positive handling was used. The head teacher (or his/her nominee) will initiate the recording process if not already under way and review each incident to ensure that any necessary lessons are learned.

All parents/carers will be informed immediately after an incident where positive handling is used with a child. Parents/carers will need to be notified sensitively and to be made aware of the full circumstances.

Arrangements for informing parents

Parents/carers should be informed of the school's policy regarding positive handling and their behaviour policy. At the drafting of the positive handling policy, all parents/carers should be sent a letter outlining its introduction, with information about obtaining a copy for their own information.

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

Staff who work with particular children who have learning or physical disabilities (and who have Individual Education Plans, Individual Behaviour Plans and/or Pastoral Support Plans), may need to use specific techniques routinely to manage challenging behaviour. Such arrangements must be discussed with parents/carers in advance on an individual basis using positive handling plans. All interventions will be routinely recorded and monitored with the expectation that steps are taken to reduce the number of restrictive physical interventions year on year.

The Picture in Hackney

The approach adopted by HLT is inclusive of two main methods of behaviour management including restrictive physical intervention utilised in the London Borough of Hackney.

1. **Approach Training.** (This is explored in detail using the example provided by The Garden School in Hackney at Appendix 4 to this document.)
2. **Team-Teach.** (See Appendix 5)

1. Approach Training

'Supportive Holding' is advocated rather than restraint as it more accurately describes the way in which the techniques are used in the best interests of the child or young person to promote a safe environment for all. Supportive holding is viewed as being a last resort after other techniques have been tried and failed, the ideal application of the techniques would ensure that a situation has been de-escalated and diffused without the need for a physical intervention.

Good communication skills are a vital tool in de-escalation and diffusion and should continue throughout an incident (unless talking distresses the service user), even if supportive holding is required. Talking about the incident once calm has been restored will also be important learning opportunities for the service user and staff. A well-managed incident, even when it involves supportive holding, should lead to growth in relationships for all parties.

Principles of 'gradients of control' and 'using the minimum force for the minimum time' are central to the techniques meaning that holds can be applied lightly, with no force, whilst supporting freedom of movement and safety for those involved. To achieve this Approach works with the natural movements of the body so that staff do not have to rely on power and strength.

The guiding principles of Approach are:

- As preventative strategies, avoidance, de-escalation, providing positive options and communication are essential;
- Restrictive physical interventions should only be used when in the best interests of the service user;
- Service users must be treated fairly, with dignity and respect;
- Service users should be involved in decisions that affect their lives and helped to make choices.

The training is delivered by trainers with significant experience in the field and with expertise and proven skills in the management of challenging behaviour. Training delivered through group theory activities and practical activities, with sufficient time to practice and develop and understand new skills.

Legal defensibility is underpinned throughout the courses and the training meets the requirements of Health and Safety at Work regulations. Techniques are risk assessed and course materials are regularly updated to reflect best practice and new legislation and guidance.

Specific additional support to organisations is available from the Course Director, e.g. managing extremely challenging behaviour, developing protocols for individual service users, attendance at multi-disciplinary team meetings.

2. Team Teach

The following information describes the approach taken by an organisation named Team-Teach. The objectives of Team-Teach are:

- To promote the least intrusive positive handling strategy and a continuum of gradual and graded techniques, with an emphasis and preference for the use of verbal, non-verbal de-escalation strategies being used and exhausted before positive handling strategies are utilised;
- To enable services to develop acceptable and authorised responses to disruptive, disturbing, angry and aggressive behaviours in a manner that maintains positive relationships and provides safety for all, by training in Team-Teach;
- To reduce the number of serious incidents involving physical controls in all settings and to emphasise the importance of exhausting behaviour management strategies in the first instance;
- To increase the awareness of staff concerning the importance of recording and reporting, monitoring and evaluating, all incidents involving positive handling;
- To provide a process of repair and reflection for both staff and children.

The approach taken by Team-Teach is:

'distinct from most of the behaviour management strategies currently available to schools in that it includes both training in de-escalation skills and physical interventions, known as 'positive handling strategies'. Further, Team-Teach provides course members with reporting and recording skills; and equips them to rebuild relationships and manage their feelings. Policies and other documentation are part of the supportive framework provided by this approach. The emphasis of the approach is 'about the way people relate to each other' (Team-Teach, 2003, p.11).

Team-Teach views 'positive handling' as a concept confirming a commitment by organisations, and individuals within an organisation, to a framework of risk reduction strategies (non-verbal, verbal and where absolutely necessary physical).
Portsmouth University 2005

Team-Teach provides a wide range of risk reduction positive handling techniques. They have been endorsed via the Risk Assessment Panel and the U.K Steering Group (see News Section on the website for details of compositions).

All members of these groups have an in depth knowledge of the techniques, many being tutors themselves. Modifications and developments to techniques are passed through the Risk Assessment Panel.

No single technique is fool-proof or can be guaranteed to be 100% effective. The physical techniques of Team-Teach will reduce risk, their effectiveness being linked to the confidence and competence of the individuals concerned.

Basic tutor courses are quality controlled and assured by the NCRGSA Association, with potential new tutors having to pass both a theoretical test and a number of practical assessments.

There is a fixed format for the training courses and tutors are required to forward plans for each course to Team-Teach for approval and to produce a summary evaluation report that addresses critical questions concerning issues around safety and the holistic, whole setting approach to behaviour management. This summary evaluation report is returned to the Director of Team-Teach for monitoring and quality control.

All tutors are required to update annually and are only permitted to train within the boundaries of their licence. Courses held by tutors are liable to non-notified quality control monitoring from Team-Teach.

Appendix 1

DfE Guidance on the Use of Reasonable Force

What is reasonable force?

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.

As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.

Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention. School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

Who can use reasonable force?

- All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force;
- This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Head teacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

When can reasonable force be used?

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder;
- 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;
- The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

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; and
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Schools cannot:

- Use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Appendix 2

Model Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy

At (insert name of school) we are committed to a positive behaviour policy which encourages children to make positive behaviour choices. On rare occasions circumstances may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff. Our policy for physical intervention is based upon the following principles:

- Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed;
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required;
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned;
- Incidents must be recorded and reported to the Head teacher as soon as possible;
- Parents/Carers will be informed on the day of each incident.

The Legal Framework

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows 'teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Head Teacher who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Causing injury to his/herself or others;
- Committing an offence;
- Damaging property;
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline.

Our approach

At (insert name of school) we aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in managing situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Behaviour Policy.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the School's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and have a 'Duty of Care' to all children they are in charge of. They must, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure all pupils' safety and wellbeing. Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

Use of physical restraint

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allows the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this. What constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and

the pupil to whom it is being applied. Teachers should apply the training they receive to de-escalate where possible then use the appropriate holds as practised in the training. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

When physical restraint becomes necessary:

Do

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why;
- Use the minimum force necessary;
- Involve another member of staff if possible;
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition);
- Use simple and clear language;
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow;
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance.

Don't

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control);
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil;
- Involve other pupils in the restraint;
- Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct;
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint;
- Bend fingers or pull hair;
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck;
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil;
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment.

Actions after an incident

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. The Head teacher should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support. The parents/carers will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural IEP, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the SENCO. This may require additional support from, other services, for example the LA BST.

In some circumstances a CAF may be appropriate to help identify an additional need for a particular child.

All incidents should be recorded immediately on the Pupil Restraint Report Form (attached). All sections of this report should be completed so that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed.

In the event of any future complaint or allegation this record will provide essential and accurate information.

A copy should be filed in the child's appropriate file and in a central school file in order to inform individual and school risk assessments.

A member of the leadership team will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

Risk Assessments

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive and/or challenging way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention;
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known;
- Involvement of parents/carers to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take;
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking;
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate.

Complaints and Allegations

A clear restraint policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under the complaints disciplinary or [allegation management procedures](#). It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Searching pupils

On occasions a member of staff may have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is in possession of an item or items which contravene school regulations and could potentially cause harm to the student or others. Under these circumstances The Education Act 2011 extends the power of staff to search students without their consent. Searches will be conducted by two members of staff, at least one of whom will be the same sex as the student. Students will be offered the opportunity to have their parents/carers present. For further information the DfE have provided guidance on [Searching, Sreening and Confiscation](#).

(Insert name of school) does not endorse and will not undertake a physical search of any students' person. Where necessary a student will be asked to remove his/her coat and/or blazer, empty all pockets, open their bags and in some circumstances remove their shoes and socks. Possessions and items of apparel that have been removed may then be searched by the staff present.

If undesirable items are discovered the school will use its power of confiscation to retain the offending item(s). Parents/carers, if not present, will be contacted to explain what has been found and any subsequent sanctions that have been applied. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be invited to retrieve the offending property and asked to ensure that they are not brought to school again. In the event that illegal items are discovered then the Police will be informed immediately.

Positive Management Plan	
Name: Date:	
Environment and triggers (situations which cause / lead to difficulties)	
Prevention (describe any changes to routines, personnel or environment which might reduce the risk) Praise points/ Strengths)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
What might happen (describe the behaviour/ what looks like/ sounds like)	
Low level:	
Next step:	
Extreme:	
Things that help (strategies that help to calm)	Things to avoid

<p>Managing the crisis (what to do, step by step, who will do it)</p>
<p>Cooling off/ Follow up</p>

Physical Intervention Recording Form

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:

Appendix 3

Key Legal References

This Positive Handling guidance is written with reference to the following key legal concepts and documents:

- DfE Use of Reasonable Force Guidance;
- Offences Against the Persons Act 1861 (concepts of Assault and Assault and Battery);
- Common Law concepts of false imprisonment and common law defence;
- Duty of Care;
- DfE Circular 10/98;
- The Children Act 1989;
- DoH/DfES Joint Guidance on Physical Interventions 2002;
- The Education Act 1996;
- Education and Inspection Act 2006;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

The NUT also produce a guidance document called [Education, The Law and You](#), which provides a helpful summative overview.

The London Borough of Hackney's Legal team will also be pleased to offer additional advice. Tel: 020 8356 6196 or using the following email: lt.s4s@hackney.gov.uk

Appendix 4.

The Garden School's Journey

[The Garden School](#) have adopted this way of positively managing challenging behaviour, below is a case study detailing their journey:

Restrictive Physical Intervention

Our School

The Garden is a primary and secondary special needs school in Hackney for pupils with autism and severe learning difficulties. We have a current pupil population of 126. *The Garden* opened in September 2013 when Downsvie and Horizon schools merged. Two Ofsted inspections have taken place since then (one inspection each for both Downsvie and the newly formed *Garden*), and on both occasions, behaviour was judged to be outstanding. What sets *The Garden* apart from other similar schools, or indeed any school that caters for pupils with challenging behaviour, is that we virtually never have to use Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) to keep pupils safe. Our statistics are extraordinarily low for a school of our kind. Since September 2013, we have seen a steady decrease in the use of RPI throughout the school which has not been accidental but the result of whole school staff training, strong leadership and a relentless commitment from staff to improve the quality of life for all of our pupils, especially for those whose behaviour can be challenging. What follows is an overview of how we have sought to minimise the use of RPI at *The Garden*. You will notice that the section on *Approach*, which is the form of RPI used at *The Garden*, forms only one part of this overview since RPI cannot simply be seen as a series of holds to be learnt and then put into practice. At *The Garden*, we believe that RPI must be viewed within a broader context.

Our Pupils

Pupils at *The Garden* are aged from 4-16. The vast majority of them are robust and mobile, and all of them experience language and communication difficulties to varying degrees.

Learning Disabilities and Challenging Behaviour

It is important to highlight the fact that all of our pupils have a learning disability. This is significant because research suggests that people with a learning disability are at a greater risk of displaying challenging behaviour in order to get their needs met. The potential for pupils at *The Garden*, therefore, to display challenging behaviour is very real. This behaviour, when it occurs, can take many forms, but typically falls into the categories of self-harm (eg. head banging, biting) and harm to others (eg. hitting, pushing, punching, scratching, biting, throwing). Behaviours such as dropping to the floor, pica, swearing and soiling can also be challenging for staff to manage. Despite the potential that exists, our view is that challenging behaviour is not inevitable, and that we can teach our pupils functionally equivalent ways of getting their needs met.

Placing A Lens

Long before *The Garden's* inception, both Downsvie and Horizon schools had a lot of experience at managing pupils with extremely challenging behaviour which would often result in the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention in order to keep everyone safe. Many of these pupils, especially as they grew older, were extraordinarily strong, and capable of

causing significant injury to themselves and to others. The Senior Leadership Team at the time (which oversaw both schools) sought advice from the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD), and commissioned an audit of all behaviour-related practices and documentation. *The Garden's* willingness to place a lens on challenging behaviour has been relentless since then. BILD completed another full audit of *The Garden's* practices in April 2015 which was followed up with training in Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) for the entire staff body. The significant financial cost of commissioning BILD to provide these services might be seen by some schools as a luxury that they cannot afford. *The Garden* views it as an investment that has had a direct impact on pupils' quality of life by reducing, over time, the need for them to display challenging behaviour in order to get their needs met.

Strong Leadership

Strong leadership has been at the heart of *The Garden's* journey to minimise its use of Restrictive Physical Intervention. We believe that the culture of any organisation has to come from the top which is why *The Garden's* Senior Leadership Team is very public in its commitment to reduce and eliminate the use of RPI. Without such a commitment, there is always a risk that staff will view pupil 'restraint' (which is a term that we don't use at *The Garden*) as the first option available to them rather than as a last resort. At *The Garden*, minimising the use of RPI is seen as everybody's responsibility. *The Garden* can be a challenging school in which to work, and like any similar environment, staff look towards management for guidance and support. In the absence of strong leadership and clear guidelines, there is a risk that staff might feel empowered to manage behaviour according to their own values and beliefs. If these values and beliefs are of a destructive or cynical nature, then staff might actively cause pupils to behave in a challenging way, which we believe is unethical.

Behaviour Principles

One way that *The Garden* has sought to provide this leadership for staff is by summarising our beliefs into a short list of ten behaviour principles that form the foundation upon which all of our practice is built. These principles are unambiguous and make it very clear to staff how the school views behaviour. For example, staff understand that:

- All behaviour serves a function for the individual.
- All behaviour is a form of communication.
- Pupils should not be blamed, nor punished for their behaviour.
- Pupils who are motivated, and whose personal interests are incorporated into their daily school lives, are less likely to exhibit challenging behaviour.
- Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) should only be used as a last resort, and that the school's ultimate ambition is to reduce and eliminate the use of RPI altogether.
- The attitudes, perceptions and values of the staff working with pupils can have a dramatic effect on the incidence of challenging behaviour and the effectiveness of how it is managed.
-

Core Values

We have learnt, over the years, that only a certain 'type' of person can provide the quality of support that our pupils need and deserve, and that many people are simply not suited to a line of work that requires them to understand and manage challenging behaviour. Employing the wrong people to provide this support can be extremely detrimental, and can result in pupils displaying more challenging behaviour instead of less. Core values drive our actions, and are at the heart of best practice at *The Garden*. Unless staff share the same core values of social justice, equity and access, inclusion and participation, then *The Garden* is unlikely to be the right place of employment for them. Maintaining a staff body with the right core

values has been crucial in our efforts to minimise the use of RPI. Unless staff actually believe that there are alternative ways of managing behaviour (ie. other than using 'restraint'), then a change of culture is unlikely. The principle of 'last resort' is reinforced at every opportunity at *The Garden*, and staff work tirelessly to prevent challenging behaviour from happening in the first place so that pupils do not have to be held. When challenging behaviour does occur, self-reflection from those involved is crucial, not only in terms of 'unpicking' the chain of events but also whether the adults themselves might have caused or contributed to the incident involving challenging behaviour, because sometimes they do. At *The Garden*, we believe that this level of personal reflection is essential, and we encourage staff to be honest with themselves regarding their role in managing challenging behaviour. This isn't always easy to do, but the best staff will always ask themselves 'Did I do something to cause this pupil to behave the way they did?' or 'What can I do differently next time to prevent the same thing from happening again?'. At *The Garden*, we are explicit in our belief that pupils must never be blamed for their challenging behaviour and refuse to tolerate any views to the contrary.

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)

Prevention is one of the key aspects of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) that we pursue relentlessly at *The Garden*, and in order to achieve this, a lot of time and energy is spent in trying to establish the function that challenging behaviours serve for the individual pupil. Without this information, interventions are going to be little more than guesswork, and could potentially do more harm than good. As a result of whole school PBS training at *The Garden*, staff now use a diagnostic tool (in the form of a questionnaire) that allows them to establish the likely function of a specific behaviour in order to tailor their interventions accordingly. In our context, the most pertinent example relates to pupils who bite (given that approximately one third of our pupils displayed this behaviour at some point during the last academic year). For most of these pupils, biting is driven by a sensory need which is why many of them respond positively to having access to a 'chewy tube' (and which, in turn, reduces their need to have to bite people in order to experience this feeling of deep pressure in their jaw). However, if an attention-seeking function, for example, is wrongly attributed to a pupil with a sensory need to bite, then there is a good chance that staff might ignore this behaviour in a counterproductive, yet well meaning, attempt to manage it. Staff at *The Garden* also make common use of ABC and STAR charts to track challenging behaviours over a period of weeks in order to establish what might be driving and maintaining the behaviour. One other key aspect of PBS that defines our practice at *The Garden* is that we totally reject the use of aversive sanctions; that is, pupils aren't punished for their challenging behaviour. It is our view that to do so would be unethical, given that challenging behaviour, that stems from a person's learning disability, is often the only way that they have to get their needs met. At *The Garden*, we aim to create enabling environments, as well as teach pupils new skills, so that they are able to get their needs met in more socially acceptable ways.

Everyone On Board

The idea that we need to have 'everyone on board' might be an obvious one, but we know what it's like at *The Garden* to have a few 'bad apples spoil the bunch'. Over the past few years, we have had to deal robustly with those members of staff who, for whatever reason, decided not to share our core values and beliefs. We believe that you are either 'on board', or you're not. There is absolutely no room at *The Garden* for 'mavericks', and even though everyone brings with them their own views and experiences based on their own life story, these must be 'left at the door' so that the behaviour of all pupils is managed consistently, sympathetically, positively, proactively and with full regard to their human rights.

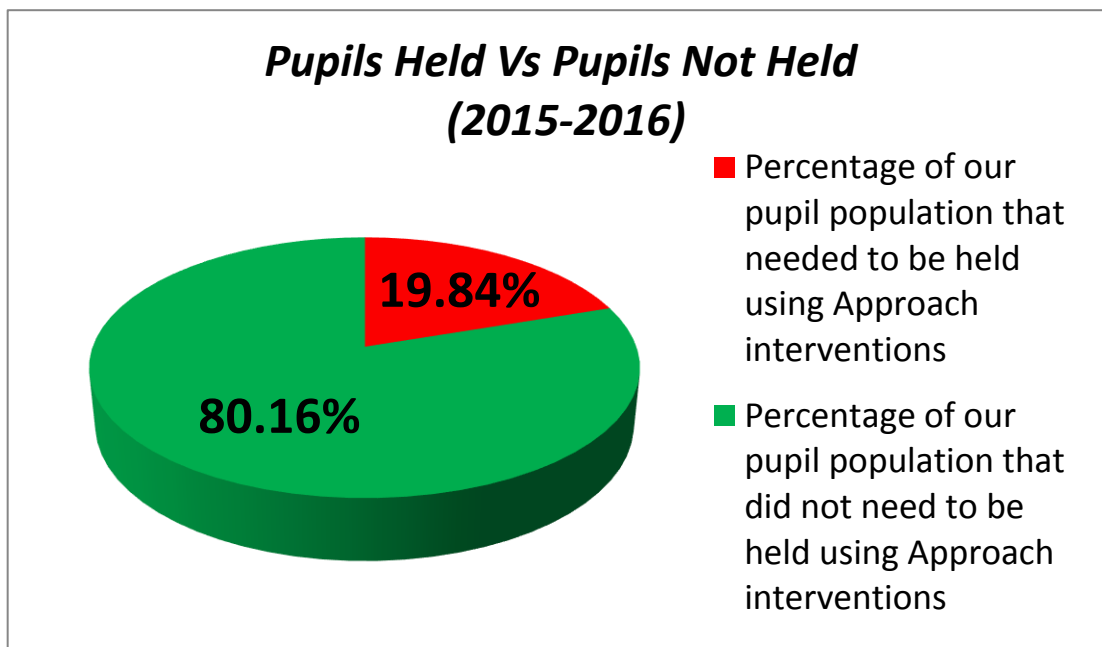
Approach

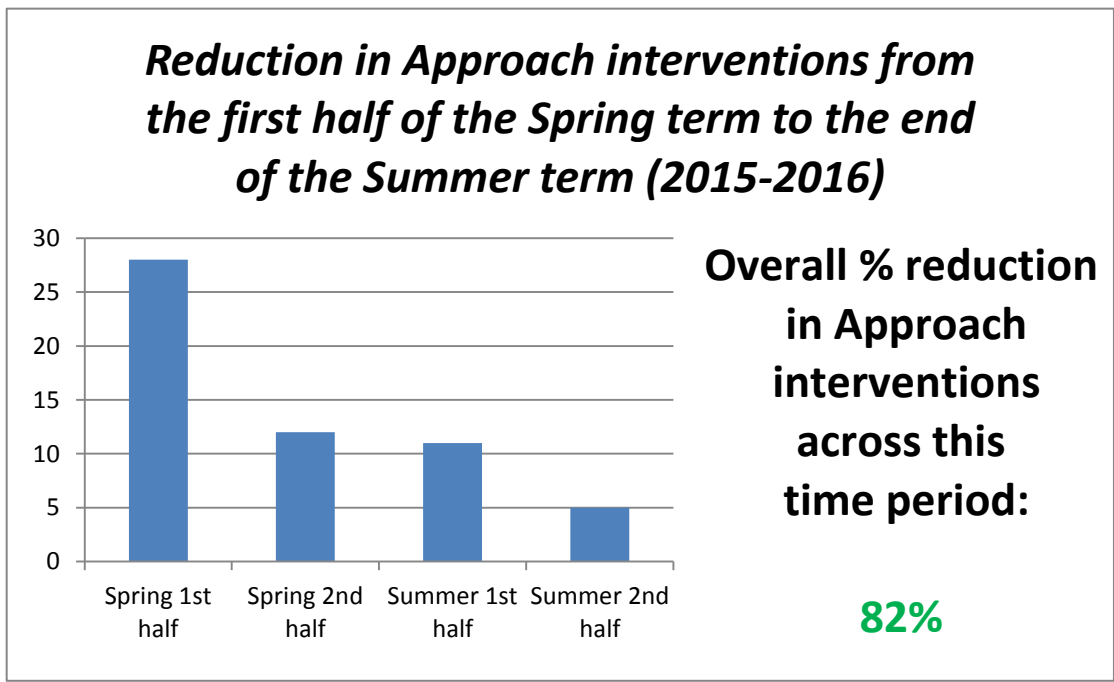
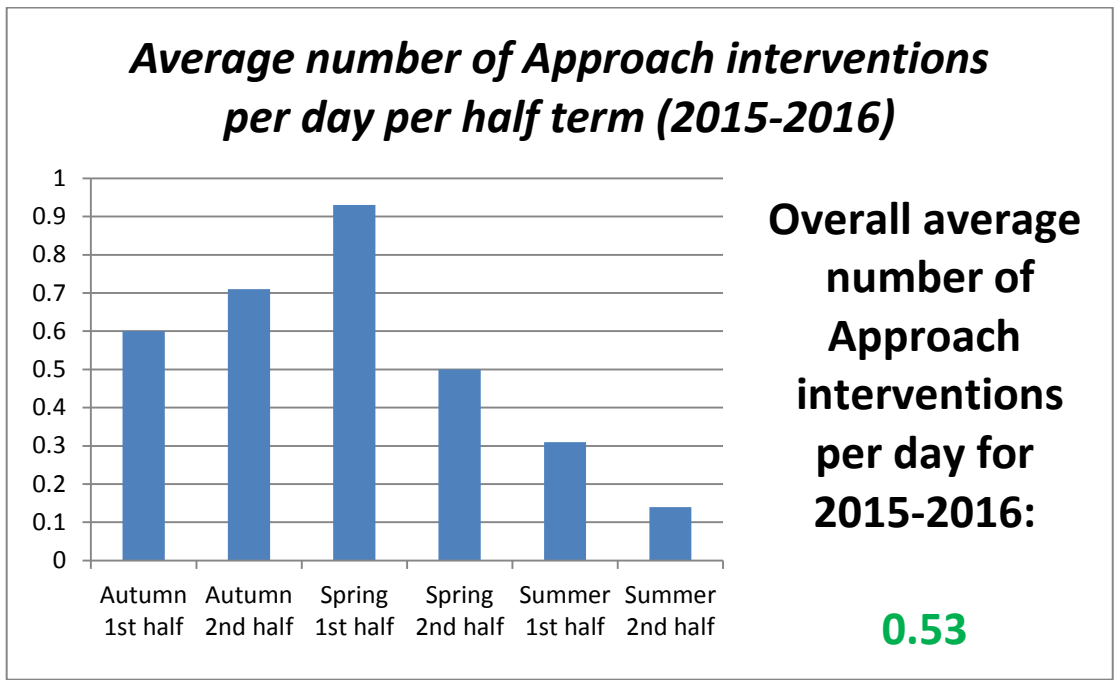
There are numerous forms of RPI training that schools are free to adopt. *Team-Teach* is a popular one, and for many years, this was the form of RPI adopted by both Downsview and Horizon schools. However, a decision was made several years ago to move away from *Team-Teach* in favour of *Approach (Training Limited)* which became the preferred RPI training provider for both schools, and continues to be the provider of choice at *The Garden* today. *Approach* was created by Bill Thorpe, an internationally recognised consultant and trainer whose background in mental health prompted him to develop safer and less restrictive ways of supporting people when they needed to be held. *Approach* has won both regional and national training awards for its standard and quality of excellence, and is accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD). Essentially, what attracts us to *Approach* is its philosophy and underlying principles. We like that it eschews the word 'restraint' in favour of 'isolating and supportive holding'. We are reassured by its strong focus on 'natural movement' of the body. We support its total rejection of 'pain compliance' as a means of managing behaviour. We like that it is person-centred. We embrace the strong focus on team-work. We like the emphasis that it places on de-escalation and diffusion. We appreciate the versatility of the supportive holds in so far as they can also be used to guide a pupil (which, in our context, is often necessary). And we are in full agreement with one other key underlying principle: that RPI should only ever be used as a last resort. If we didn't feel that the values and philosophy of *Approach* were consistent with that of *The Garden*, then we would have taken our business elsewhere long ago! We have four *Approach* trainers at *The Garden* who deliver annual refresher training to all staff. Our aim, when providing RPI training, is that staff should never have to use it. The 'toolbox' of supportive holds that staff take away with them is actually very small, which we see as a benefit. Over the past few years, in response to BILD auditing and our own data analysis, we have significantly reduced the number of holds and techniques taught to staff but have continued to provide blanket training. That is, all staff are taught the same core set of holds for one main reason: we want everyone to be able to support each other in the event that a pupil needs to be supportively held in order to keep them safe. 'Sky high' figures might suggest excessive and widespread use of RPI, but this is simply not the case at *The Garden*. Despite blanket training, our extraordinarily low RPI figures provide good evidence that staff only ever use *Approach* supportive holding as a last resort, and in full compliance with the planned tertiary or reactive strategies outlined in a pupil's Behaviour Support Plan. Duty of care is what compels us to provide our staff with RPI training. We want to minimise the risk of injury to staff whilst ensuring that pupils are supportively held in a safe and ethical manner. However, RPI training cannot exist in isolation. We believe that it is not enough to simply provide training in how to hold a pupil to keep them safe without viewing it within the wider context of Positive Behaviour Support. Without this wider context, there's a very good chance that a school's RPI figures will rise rather than fall because staff will be forever reacting to challenging behaviour instead of acting proactively to prevent it. Prevention has been key in successfully reducing our use of RPI at *The Garden*.

Data and Statistics

Every time that one of our pupils is held using *Approach*, a record is made inside a Physical Intervention Log that is kept within each class. These logs are analysed at the end of every half-term and data is produced. This allows us to monitor RPI use within the school especially in terms of any significant increase or decrease. In the interests of transparency, recording is mandatory at *The Garden*. As a school, this is the only way for us to judge whether our practice is being effective or not. Based on our gathering and analysis of data over the previous academic year (2015-2016), we know the following statements (as illustrated in the series of graphs below) to be true of our practice at *The Garden*:

- 25 pupils (out of a pupil population of 126) had to be kept safe using Approach interventions on at least one occasion throughout the year, which represents 19.84% of pupils.
- 101 pupils did not have to be kept safe using Approach interventions, which represents 80.16% of pupils.
- The average number of Approach interventions per day was 0.53.
- From the first half of the Spring term to the end of the Summer term (approximately 7 months), we saw an 82% decrease in the number of Approach interventions.





Conclusion

The potential for challenging behaviour to exist in a school like *The Garden* is very real. We could potentially have to use Restrictive Physical Interventions multiple times each day. Our rates of pupil and staff injury could potentially be 'sky high'. But none of these scenarios is true. *The Garden* is an exceptionally safe place for pupils to learn and for adults to work. We don't even average one Approach intervention per day. And that's because we have worked hard to change the way staff think about behaviour. Everyone knows that restricting a pupil's ability to move freely can only ever be seen as a last resort and that the overwhelming priority must be to prevent challenging behaviour from happening in the first place. Our adoption of the SCERTS curriculum, and the emphasis that it places on maintaining emotional regulation, has been key in getting staff to spot the early signs of dysregulation before they escalate. In the event that a pupil has to be supportively held, Approach training gives staff the skills and confidence to be able to do so safely and with minimal risk. Without mandatory reporting of RPI use, it is difficult to know how *The Garden* compares with other schools. However, in terms of the standards that *The Garden* has set for itself, anything less than the total elimination of Restrictive Physical Intervention (or as close as we can possibly get!) means that there will always be work for us to do.

The school has also developed a [Pupil Behaviour Policy](#) that supports their ethos and work in minimising the use of restrictive physical intervention.

Appendix 5.

Approach Training Ltd Contact Details:

Contact: Bill Thorpe, Course Director

Tel: 0151 548 3030

Fax: 0151 548 3110

Email: approachtraining@btconnect.com

Address: Unit 129, North Mersey Business Centre, Woodward Road. Knowsley Industrial Park.
Merseyside L33 7UX

Who is Approach training for?

Staff working with service users (children, young people and adults) in settings including;

- Education (Mainstream and Special Schools);
- Children's Services;
- Health;
- Private sector; and

Staff working with service users (children, young people and adults) with needs including;

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder;
- Moderate learning disabilities;
- Severe learning disabilities;
- Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties;
- Challenging Behaviour;
- Mental Health issues.

Accredited courses:

- 1-day Breakaway course;
- 2-day Team Support and Breakaway course;
- 8-day Instructors' Train the Trainer course.

Useful resources

- [Positive and Proactive Care: reducing the need for restrictive interventions](#)
- [Challenging behaviour: a unified approach](#)
- [BILD Code of Practice for minimising the use of restrictive physical interventions: planning, developing and delivering training](#)

Appendix 6.

Team Teach contact details

Alastair Reid (Principal Tutor for Team Teach)

Tel: 07946 539 936

E mail: alastairreid@blueyonder.co.uk

Schools/settings may wish to discuss what is involved in the training prior to contacting Team-Team

For further information, please visit the Team-Teach website:

www.team-teach.co.uk

The lead officer/named contact for Hackney Learning Trust

Paul Kelly – Head of Wellbeing and Education Safeguarding

Tel: 202 8820 7325

Email: paul.kelly@learningtrust.co.uk

In every instance accredited Positive Handling tutors will undertake an initial visit to the setting prior to any training being undertaken. On this initial visit the lead tutor will wish to meet the head and/or senior members of staff as it is expected that all senior managers including the head will undertake the training. The aim of this visit is to undertake a risk assessment using the Team-Teach format to:

- ensure the school/setting knows what it is asking for;
- ensure the school/setting knows what to expect;
- be clear about the numbers of staff to be trained;
- agree dates
- agree an appropriate training location
- agree roles and responsibilities in organising the training
- agree a charge

The aim is to train the whole school staff to ensure consistency of approach within the setting.

There must be a minimum of 1 trainer to 12 participants. So, for some larger schools, the training may need to be repeated over successive days to complete the training for the whole staff group.

All training will be led by Team-Teach staff. Some tutors may be accredited Learning Trust staff trainers or accredited trainers based in Learning Trust schools/settings.

All local staff trained in positive handling techniques update their training on a regular basis and ensure that their training record is kept up to date.

Team-Teach will offer three levels of training:

Level 1 – a 6 hour (1 day) foundation course for low risk schools/settings

The practical elements will account for no more than 40% of the programme. Only Level 1 holds (standing & sitting, plus least intrusive personal safety responses will be taught) the emphasis should be on the avoiding, deflecting and the diffusing of challenging behaviours. Theory modules will account for the remaining 60% of the programme.

Level 2 – a 12 hour (2 day) course for medium risk schools/settings

No more than 60% of the complete programme will be devoted to the practical elements.

Practical content will be decided by the school/settings need. Holds specific to the needs of the setting will be covered. All theory modules will be covered. Emphasis is on course members acquiring the confidence and competence to use verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques where and when

possible. The legal context as well as safeguards for services through policies, procedures and protocols will be looked at in depth.

Level 3 – a minimum total of 12 hours plus advance modular teaching for schools/settings perceived as being high risk

The content of this course will be decided by the needs of the school/settings. The practical curriculum will include holds specific to the needs of the setting. In addition, issues around transport situations can be covered, the legal context, as well as safeguards for services through policies, procedures and protocols will be looked at in depth.

Costs

Team-Teach will charge for the training. Team-Teach will directly invoice the school/setting for the full costs of the training. Hackney Learning Trust will invoice Team-Teach for the costs of any Learning Trust staff involved in the training.

Monitoring

The Team-Teach tutors will:

- Inform the Learning Trust contact of all requests for training;
- Inform the Learning Trust contact of all confirmed training;
- Forward to the Learning Trust all evaluation summaries;
- Feedback to the Learning Trust contact any concerns or issues arising from specific training.

Hackney Learning Trust contact will:

- Be available to discuss initial approaches with schools/settings;
- Maintain a log of all training requests;
- Maintain a log detailing all training and reaccreditation dates;
- Review all training evaluations;
- Forward any concerns following specific training to the relevant person/organisation;
- Maintain direct contact with Team-Teach;
- Maintain a log of Learning Trust trainers and ensure their training is up to date;
- Coordinate meetings between Team-Teach and local trainers to share practice updates;
- Coordinate meetings with representatives of trained schools to ascertain impact and changes to practice;
- Report annually on the training undertaken and impact;
- Continually review the status of Team-Teach as the preferred provider, by researching other providers.