



BEECHWOOD
Primary School

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

April 2023

Approved by: **Leadership & Management Committee**

Date:

Last reviewed on: **April 2023**

Next review due by: **April 2025**

POSITIVE HANDLING

1. Guiding Principles:

Legal Framework:

Positive Handling should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and DFEE Circular 10/98 allow teachers, and other members of staff at a school who are authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in circumstances where the pupil may need to be prevented from engaging in behaviours which are likely to cause injury to themselves, others or damage to property. The guidance extends this to maintaining good order and discipline, for both on-site and off-site activities.

Positive Handling should only be used when all other strategies which do not employ force have been tried and found unsuccessful **or in an emergency situation**.

There is no legal definition of reasonable force. The Criminal Law Act (1967) allows any person to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent an offence (e.g. physical assault) being committed. Reasonable minimal force must be a matter of personal judgement. All teachers have a professional 'duty of care' within their job description which is underwritten by paragraph 58.7 of School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2002. Together with the legislative framework this enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence;
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil themselves); or
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

2. Definitions of Positive Handling:

Positive Handling is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property. The proper use of Positive Handling requires skill and judgement, as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of restraint.

The decision to use Positive Handling as restrictive physical intervention must take account of the circumstances and be based on an assessment of the risks associated with the intervention compared with the risks of not employing a restrictive intervention. The physical intervention must also only employ a reasonable amount of force - that is the minimum force needed to avert injury or damage to property, or to prevent a breakdown in discipline - applied for the shortest period of time.

Physical Contact

Some situations may involve some physical contact between staff and pupils, for example to support access to a broad and balanced curriculum. If pupils do require close contact with staff this will be carried out in public view, sensitively and will be age/person-appropriate.

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 arm or shoulder where the pupil is compliant. This type of physical intervention can lead to pupils being deflected from a potentially volatile situation into a less confrontational situation.

Physical Control/Restraint/Restrictive Physical Intervention

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. All such incidents will be recorded on a Record of Restraint form

See Appendix 1

3. Why use Physical Control/Restraint?

Positive Handling should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/herself or others. Positive Handling skilfully applied may be eased by degrees as the child calms down in response to the physical contact. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

The use of reasonable force advice suggests that reasonable force can be used to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have **repeatedly** refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- 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 behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a pupil 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.

4. Aims:

The staff at Beechwood Primary recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the strategies available to secure pupil safety/wellbeing and also to maintain good order and discipline.

Our policy on the use of reasonable force is part of our overall pastoral care procedures and closely related to our policies on managing pupil behaviour in the 'Expectations and Discipline Policy' and also to the Cheshire East Child Protection Guidelines.

To aims of this policy are to:

- protect every person in the school community from harm;
- protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful;
- provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations;
- use the minimum degree of force necessary to accomplish positive handling;
- give full support to staff who have been assaulted or have suffered verbal abuse from pupils or others;
- maintain accurate records of incidents where Positive Handling has been employed.

5. Risk Assessment:

Although most young people in Beechwood Primary will never require any form of Positive Handling, staff may have to deal with some young people who exhibit disturbed, distressed and distressing behaviour. It is therefore necessary to carry out risk assessment.

We will attempt to reduce risk by managing:

- the environment;
- body language;

- communication;
- actions taken.

Individual Risk Assessments

The school's respect for the rights of the individual takes into consideration the context of The Human Rights Act (1998) and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991). The school's ethos and the guidance in this policy is based on the presumption that every adult and child is entitled to:

- respect for his/her private life;
- the right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment;
- the right to liberty and security; and
- the right not to be discriminated against in his/her enjoyment of those rights.

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, it is our intention to plan how to respond if the situation arises.

Such planning needs to:

- manage the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary);
- involve the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take;
- brief staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance);
- ensure that additional support can be summoned if appropriate.

If Positive Handling is likely to be necessary, this should be included in the pupil's individual plan (SSP) together with information on: de-escalation strategies; the manner in which the pupil will be held; how support can be summoned if needed; any medical factors to be considered.

6. Training

Each year group across the school will have at least one member of staff trained. Staff working with children who often display challenging behaviour will also be trained where appropriate. Appropriately selected school staff are trained in Price techniques and the training sessions are delivered by the headteacher of a local special school that specialises in behaviour management. Each year there is a refresher session to ensure that staff are familiar with the most up-to-date legislation and correct techniques.

7. Procedures:

In the event of Positive Handling needing to be used, it is important to consider the strategies, which are deemed acceptable, and the recording procedures that should be in place.

Action Steps

1. Tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and state the consequences of failure to do so.
2. Summon another adult.
3. Apply the necessary escort or restraint and continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident.

4. Move the child to an appropriate area and make it clear that restraint will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
5. Appropriate follow-up action should be taken including providing medical support and/or respite for those involved; making an accurate record of the incident and inform parents/carers.

All staff will deal with any incidents in a calm manner at all times.

8. Injury to the Child:

Whilst the physical techniques are intended to reduce risk, there is always risk when two or more people engage to use force to protect, release or restrain. All physical techniques seek to avoid injury to the child, but it is possible that bruising, grazing 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 the child remains safe. Any injuries to pupils as a result of incidents involving restraint will be reported to the Headteacher or in their absence another member of the SLT.

9. Recording:

Staff should record all incidents of restraint in accordance with school policy and report these to the Headteacher.

Details should include:

- Name of pupil(s)
- Staff member(s) involved
- Factors necessitating physical intervention
- The strategies which were employed prior to using physical intervention
- How physical intervention was effected
- Outcome of restraint
- Any other action taken in the management of the incident

Parents/carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This action should also be recorded on CPOMS and the Record of Restraint uploaded onto the system.

10. Complaints:

We all have a duty of care to the young people in our school and cannot escape our legal responsibilities by avoiding taking appropriate and necessary action. Involving parents when an incident occurs with their child, together with a clear policy adhered to by the staff, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It will not prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the police and social services department under child protection procedures.

Staff, subjected to physical violence or assault, have the right to be supported in making a formal complaint to the police and, if necessary, taking private action against an assailant. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Adhering to the principles and procedures referred to in this policy statement is part of effective practice and should minimise risk to young people in our care and enhance our own self-protection.

11. Keeping Parents Informed:

In keeping with our home/school agreement, we will inform all parents/carers of our policy on Positive Handling. The positive handling policy can be found on the school website.

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Leadership and Management Governor sub-committee, held on _____

Date to be reviewed: April 2025

Signed:

Name of signatory:

S. Harper

J. Cargill

Role of signatory:

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

RECORD OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Name of Pupil Restrained:		DOB:	
Date of Incident:		Time of Incident:	
Location of Restraint:			
Why was it necessary to restrain?	Harm to Self	Harm to Others	Damage to Property
Was any verbal reasoning/de-escalation used prior to the restraint?	Yes		No
Were any weapons used?	Yes		No
If 'yes' please stipulate the type of weapon involved.			
Chair	Pencil	Bottle/Glass/Cup	Stick
Knife	Screwdriver	Other (please specify):	
Risk posed by person restrained:	Low	Medium	High
Amount of force applied during the restraint	Low	Medium	High
Outline of event leading to restraint - including other strategies tried and reasons for using Positive Handling rather than another strategy:			
Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint technique(s) and positions used: Set out what happened giving details of your part in the restraint and any holds you applied			
Member(s) of staff involved in restraint:			
Adult witnesses to restraint:		Child witnesses to restraint:	
Outcome of restraint:			

Description of any injury(ies) sustained by adult(s) performing the restraint and any subsequent treatment:		
Description of any injury(ies) sustained by pupil being restrained and any subsequent treatment:		
Date parent/carer informed of incident:	Time Informed and Method:	Informed by:
Outline of parent/carer response:		
Signature of staff member completing report:		Date:
Signature of Headteacher:		Date:
Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action:		

The use of force must only be used when it is:

- Reasonable in the circumstance, meaning that you believed that it was absolutely necessary and proportionate to the seriousness of the situation.

All completed Records of Physical Restraint MUST be uploaded onto CPOMS on the day of the restraint and when complete.

Single Person Escort/Prompt



Two Person Holding Technique



Straight Arm Immobilisation



Two Person Restraint



Cupped Fist



Seated Position/Kneeling

