



POSITIVE HANDLING/ RESTRAINT POLICY- BOWBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. The Legal Framework

Positive handling or restraint should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Under the Children Order 1995, it is only permissible as described under the heading "Physical Control". Article 4 of the Education Order 1998 clarifies powers that already exist in common law. It enables trained staff in the school, authorised by the Head teacher, 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 himself)
- 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.

(Examples of possible situations are given in Appendix 1)

2:1 Definition of Positive Handling at Bowburn Primary School

Positive handling is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property.

2:2 General Policy Aims

Staff at Bowburn Primary School recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupil safety / well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline. Our policy on positive handling should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

2:3 Specific Aims of the Positive Handling Policy

To protect every person in the school community from harm.

To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.

To 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.

3. Why Use Positive Handling?

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. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which positive handling 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 should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.

Failure to positively handle a pupil who is subsequently injured or injures another, could, in certain circumstances, lead to an accusation of negligence. At the same time staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

3.1 Alternative Strategies

There are some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (e.g. is a pupil is about to run across a road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives e.g. use of assertiveness or de-escalation skills such as:

- the *broken record* in which an instruction is repeated until the pupil complies
- use of a distracter, such as a loud whistle, to interrupt the behaviour (such as a fight) long enough for other methods of verbal control to be effective
- withdrawal of attention (audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened
- other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour (in these cases the incident can be dealt with later when emotions are no longer running high)
- the employment of other sanctions consistent with the School's policy on behaviour, or which may be appropriate for a particular child.

3.3 Use of Positive Handling

Positive handling 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, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.

Named staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying positive handling, although there is no absolute definition of this, as what constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary.

In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective positive handling should be a last resort. When positive handling becomes necessary:

Staff will:

- Tell the pupil what they 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 staff 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 restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

Staff will not:

- Be involved in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck or chest
- Restrain a pupil on the floor as this could restrict breathing

3.4 Actions After An Incident

Positive handling 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. **A member of the leadership team 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, and their parents informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural support plan, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the SENCO.

It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

All incidents should be recorded immediately. All sections of this report should be completed so that in the event of any future complaint a full record is available. 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.

4 Risk Assessments

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

- Management of the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)
- 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 (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate
- Completion of a pupil risk assessment

5 Complaints

A clear positive handling 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 disciplinary procedures or by the Police and social services department under child protection procedures. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

We will review this policy on a yearly basis.

Policy completed November 2023

Policy ratified by governors.....November 2023.....

Policy due for review: November 2024

Headteacher Date

Chair of Governors.....Date

Appendix 1

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

Examples of situations that may require positive handling/ restraint are when:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils are fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway or outside of school in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others
- a pupil absconding from a class or trying to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area
- a pupil behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson.

Appendix 2

Named Staff:

Mrs N Maughan – Head teacher

Mrs C Foster **– Deputy Head teacher

Miss K Gates- PSA**

Mrs K Draper- Teaching Assistant

Mrs K Lisle- Class teacher

Mrs M O'Connor – Nursery teacher

Mrs P Featherstone – Teaching Assistant

Mrs B Brownless- Class teacher

Mrs V Walton- SEN 1-1

Mrs K Wright- SEN 1-1

Miss S Wilson- Teaching Assistant

(These staff have been trained in use of Team Teach- December 2020).

**** training updated June 2022)**

Appendix 3



Incident Report

		MIR Reference No: (office use only)	
Student Name:		Key Stage	
Age:		Year Group	
Date of Incident:	Time of Incident:	Duration of Incident	
Location of Incident:		Report Compiler	

Names of those involved

Names of others present/witnesses

Staff	Pupils	Staff	Pupils

BEHAVIOUR(S) REASON FOR INTERVENTION

...injury to other pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>	...member of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Violence & aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fight	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disruption	<input type="checkbox"/>	Harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inapp. Sexual behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
	—		—		—		—

Self harming	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medically related	<input type="checkbox"/>	Verbally abusive	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alcohol related	<input type="checkbox"/>
Absented	<input type="checkbox"/>	Absconding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Property damage/vandalism	<input type="checkbox"/>	other	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANTECEDENTS (a concise description of events leading up to the incident, set the scene)

BEHAVIOUR (describe the incident, what happened, who was involved, what did they do/say, what de-escalation strategies were used, time scales)

CONSEQUENCES (how was the incident immediately concluded/sanctions/outcomes/follow-up etc)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write the consequences of an incident. The box is currently blank.

DE-ESCALATION / INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES USED

Verbal advice and support

Other

Reminder of targets/plans

Positive touch

Distraction/Diversion

Reassurance

Restriction of Access

Calm talking

Time out offered

Appropriate Humour

Restriction of Exit

Negotiation

Staff changeover

Time out directed

Planned ignoring

Choices / limits / consequences

Length of Time for De-escalation; Minutes

JUSTIFICATION OF PHYSICAL CONTROLS (tick and delete as necessary)

Prevent/ interrupt injury to student/ students/ staff/others prevent/ interrupt absconding if judged prejudicial to students safety

Prevent/interrupt serious damage to property interrupt disruptive behaviour prejudicial to safe and secure environment

Nature of physical controls used: friendly, single elbow, Figure four, double elbow, wrap, shield.

	Hold	Min	Staff			Hold	Min	Staff			
			R	L				R	L		
1					Stand/sit	4					Stand/sit
2					Stand/sit	5					Stand/sit
3					Stand/sit	6					Stand/sit

POST INCIDENT SUPPORT/REPAIR/REFLECTION (must include views of pupil and involve staff concerned where possible)

MEDICAL INTERVENTION/SUPPORT (only complete following use of physical controls OR injury)

Pupil

* Asked pupil if they needed medical assistance yes No N/A Who by

* Checked by first aider post incident? yes No N/A Who by

Outcomes from the above checks

STAFF

* Any injuries checked by first aider post incident? yes No N/A Who by

* Medical attention sought? yes No N/A Who by

Outcomes from the above checks

COMMUNICATION

Incidents involving Physical Controls should be reported to a Senior Teacher without delay, as should incidents where the safety of persons or security of the building are at risk. All other incidents should be reported as soon as possible and no later than the end of shift

Others informed	Who	Time	Who by
Parents/Carers			
Social Worker			
Police			
Other			
Other			

I agree that this is a true and accurate record of my involvement in this incident:

Staff involved

Print name

Sign name

Date

PUPIL'S VIEWS (with particular reference, if relevant, to any physical interventions, sanctions, etc.)

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Pupil print name

Sign name

Date

