



Positive Handling Policy

Person(s) Responsible: Inclusion Lead & SENCo

Formally adopted by the Governing Body: March 2024

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This policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

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Purpose of policy

- To ensure care and protection for everyone within our school community.
- To reinforce our belief that positive handling will be needed on very rare occasions.
- Our endeavour to handle situations with care and responsibility.
- Our intent to apply follow-up and repair strategies.

This policy sets out the framework for the use of positive handling, but it must be clearly understood that this should always be set within the school's Behaviour Policy and is only used as a last resort to prevent harm. Only in the event of imminent danger to persons should positive handling be considered if all other strategies have been unsuccessful.

The term positive handling includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. Biggin Hill Primary School takes seriously its duty of care to children, staff and visitors to the school. The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care. The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them. [Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) enables a school's staff to use such force as is reasonable - there is no legal definition for when it is reasonable to use force.

The definition of positive handling is the application of force with the intention of overpowering the child. The use of positive handling requires skill, judgement and knowledge of non-harmful methods of control. The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident, the seriousness of the behaviour and the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

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 DFE guidance; [Use of Reasonable Force in Schools, July 2013](#), 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 listed below:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they are at risk of injuring themselves
- prevent a child from leaving the classroom where allowing the child to leave would risk their safety or the safety of others;
- prevent a child from harming a member of staff or another child;
- restrain a child at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Removal of other children would always be the first action in order to make sure all children were safe. Reasonable force will be used as a last resort.

Steps to be taken before using physical controls:

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiating and reasoning.
- Give clear directions for the pupil to stop
- Remind the pupil about rules and likely outcomes
- Remove an audience or take the vulnerable pupil to a safe place
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons
- Use positive guidance to escort pupils to somewhere less pressured
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and call for help.

At Biggin Hill Primary School, we only use positive handling when there is no other alternative. We expect staff to risk assess and choose the safest alternative. This also means that we expect staff to adapt and think creatively about alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the child and that it reduces rather than increases risk. Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate.

Positive handling must only be in accordance with the following:

- The child should be in immediate danger of harming themselves or another person.
- The member of staff should have good grounds for believing this.
- Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied.
- Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before using positive handling. These staff can act as assistants or witnesses.
- Once safe, positive handling should be relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control.
- Positive handling should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- Positive handling should never be used to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate danger present to people and property.
- The positive handling should be discussed with the child, if appropriate, and the parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.
- In addition, whilst or before intervention, staff should speak calmly as a way of reassurance e.g. 'I am doing this to keep you safe'.

Whilst intervening, the member of staff must:

- Call upon a second member of staff whenever possible
- Provide the child with an explanation of what is going to happen and why, giving the child an opportunity to change their behaviour in order to make positive handling unnecessary. This is not to be used as a threat or attack.
- Employ the minimum physical force necessary for the minimum period needed,
- Wherever possible, reassure and remind the child that changing their behaviour can end any positive handling.
- Remain calm throughout.
- Inform a senior member of staff

After the use of positive handling:

- Complete the positive handling form
- Ensure class teacher and SLT are aware
- SLT to inform parents/carers
- SLT to ensure the use of positive handling was necessary

Risk Assessments

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk will have a Risk Assessment. The assessment details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. Any particular physical techniques which have been found to be effective should be named, along with any alerts to any which have proved to be ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Risk assessments should be considered along with the child's Educational Health care Plan (EHCP) and any other planning document relevant to the pupil. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special needs and social context.

Post Incident Debrief

Following a serious incident, it is the policy of our school to offer support to all involved. This is an opportunity for reflection and time needs to be given for following up incidents so that children have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate the perspectives of others. It is difficult to devise a framework of support that meets the needs of all staff. As individuals they all vary in how much support they need after an unpleasant incident. Generally a member of senior staff would expect to talk to staff and children (if appropriate) involved in any incidents involving violence. If members of staff need time to rest or compose themselves, then the Deputy Headteacher will make arrangements for their class group to be supported.

Recording

All incidents of unacceptable behaviour should be recorded electronically on the [behaviour google form](#).

All serious incidents or incidents involving positive handling will be recorded on the [positive handling google form](#)

Monitoring and Evaluation

The SENCo will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required.

Parents/Carers

When there is concern about a child, parents/carers will be invited to contribute to a risk assessment. Written parental agreement will form part of this. Parents/Carers will be informed of the school's policies. Parents/Carers will be informed by a member of SLT following serious incidents.

Training

Training in positive handling is not a legal requirement however, learning support assistants plus members of the inclusion team have received and will continue to receive training to ensure that policy, legislation and practice is understood and positive handling is executed properly.

Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints will follow the school's complaints procedures.