



# Positive Handling Policy

<b>Agreed by the Governing Body</b>	<b>Date: 18 October 2022</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Date: October 2025</b>
<b>Review Schedule</b>	<b>Triennial</b>
<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>SENDCo / SLT</b>

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# 1. Introduction

## The Legal Framework

Positive handling should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Education and Inspections Act 2006 clarifies powers that already exist in common law. It states that staff can use reasonable force for the purpose of preventing a pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following,

- committing any offence,
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself), or
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

“Use of Reasonable Force” (DfE, July 2013) offers further guidance to staff to use such force as is reasonable in the following circumstances: -

- 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.

(Examples of possible situations are given in Appendix 1)

## **Definition of Positive Handling at Woodloes Primary School**

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

## **General Policy Aims**

Staff at Woodloes Primary School recognize 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 Relational and Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.

## **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.

## **2. Procedures and Practice**

### **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. 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 wellbeing.

### **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 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)

Positive Intervention Plans (Appendix 5) will be created for specific children with high level behaviour needs and these will identify alternative strategies for individuals to reduce or prevent escalation.

### **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.

Named staff (Appendix 2) are only authorized 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 and effective positive handling should be a last resort. When positive handling 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
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- 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

## **Actions After A Positive Handling Incident**

- All positive handling incidents should be recorded immediately using the Record of Restraint form – uploaded to CPOMS (appendix 3)
- A member of SLT should be informed as soon as possible
- Parents must be informed on the day of the restraint incident
- A member of the SLT should ensure debriefing of the staff and pupil involved
- Any victim or victims during the incident should be offered support and their parents informed

- If the incident becomes part of a pattern of behaviour, the pupil will be referred to the Behaviour Advisory Group (BAG) to create a behaviour plan which may include some or all of the following:
  - STAR analysis (appendix 4)
  - A Positive intervention plan (appendix 5)
  - A pastoral support plan (appendix 6)
  - A risk assessment
- The behaviour plan will involve parents and appropriate agencies to identify and support the needs of the child through clear objectives, effective strategies and regular review.

## **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.

## Appendix 1

### When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

Examples of situations that may require restraint are when:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils 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 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:

The following staff are trained to use positive handling:

Andy Mitchell Headteacher

Laura Morris Deputy Head

Tina Lambert SENDCo

Natalie Lyons teacher


Ingrid Hancox teacher

Julia De Araujo teacher

Tracey Fletcher TA

Kim Lowe TA

### Appendix 3

<b>Record of Restraint</b>		 Woodloes Primary School
Date of Incident:	Time of Incident:	
Pupil Name:		DOB:
Member(s) of staff involved:		
Adult / child witnesses to restraint:		
Outline of event leading to restraint:		
Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used);		
Outcome :		



Description of any injury sustained and any subsequent treatment:

Member of SLT informed:

Date/time parent/carer informed of incident:  
By whom:

Outline of parent/carer response:

Signatures:	
Name:.....	Name:.....
Signed:.....	Signed:.....

Name:.....	Name:.....
Signed:.....	Signed:.....

Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action:

## Appendix 4

### STAR Approach

Date & time	Setting	Trigger	Action	Result	Member of Staff
	Where did the incident occur?	What happened <b>just before</b> the incident?	What did _____ Do? How did they behave?	What was the result for _____? How did the adult/s respond? How did other children respond?	

## Appendix 5

### Positive Intervention Plan

This plan is intended to support everyone in returning to calm stage as effectively as possible.

Pupil \_\_\_\_\_

	Signs of agitation for this pupil		Staff interventions which work for this pupil
0	<b>ALL CALM</b> Pupil on task and behaving appropriately	0	Normal teacher /student interaction – positive reinforcement of desired behaves
1	<b>Low level behaviours which signify observable tension/anxiety</b>	1	<b>Supportive responses</b> (calm and clear)
2	<b>Medium level behaviours</b>	2	<b>Limit setting responses</b> continue level one responses plus respond calmly and clearly

**Positive Intervention Plan continued:**

3	<p><b>High level behaviours</b></p>	3	<p><b>High level responses</b> (continue to use L1 &amp;L2 responses)</p> <p><b>JUDGEMENT</b> re use of Physical Intervention</p>
4	<p><b>Recovery behaviours</b></p>	4	<p><b>Recovery responses</b></p>
5	<p><b>Depression</b></p> <p>After serious incident people can become depressed, may not want to interact</p>	5	<p><b>Depression supportive handling responses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and monitor</li> <li>• Respond to indication of communication from pupil</li> <li>• Show concern and care</li> <li>• Do not attempt disciplinary issues at this stage</li> </ul>

**Positive Intervention Plan continued:**

6	<b>Pupil ready to respond and communicate - Life Space Interview</b>	6	<b>Follow up</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive listening and debrief</li><li>• Recording, reporting and communicating</li><li>• Planning to avoid similar in future</li></ul>
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**Agreed by**

**Pupil** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/carer** \_\_\_\_\_

**School staff** \_\_\_\_\_

**Support/agency staff (eg EIS, IDS)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**to be reviewed on** \_\_\_\_\_

(This format should be completed with details of the particular observable behaviours, and responses known/considered to be effective for this pupil – it is not a checklist)

(It can be used as a recording format to highlight behaviours/ responses)

## Appendix 6

### PASTORAL SUPPORT PLAN/ RE-INTEGRATION PLAN

(delete as appropriate)

*To provide pastoral, emotional, social and mental health support (e.g. identified in Early Help)*

#### Part One: Details

Name:                      DOB:

Gender:

School:

Year Group:

SEND status:

<b>Additional Information:</b> <i>e.g. EAL, pupil premium, social care/early help, attendance, diagnoses/needs</i>	
<b>Specialist Support: Service Name Dates</b>	
<b>Staff overseeing PSP</b>  <b>Date PSP started:</b>	

- Please note the PSP needs to be reviewed with specialist support each fortnight, this will be a discussion to see whether the child is meeting objectives and whether further advice is needed or objectives/ strategies need tweaking. Parents/carers and child need to be informed/ involved.
- A formal review of the plan with parents/carers, staff, specialist service and child needs to take place every 6 weeks.
- If this is a re-integration plan there will need to be a proposed timetable to accompany paperwork.

**Date of mid-term review:**

**Date of final review:**

**Date of initial meeting:**  
**(agree part-time time-table timings if this is a re-integration plan)**

**Attended by:**

**Discussion Notes:**

Outline (pupil name) Social, Emotional and Mental Health Development needs:

*Examples: curriculum access, self-awareness, motivation, ability to manage feelings, social skills, empathy, relationships, lifestyle, self*

*-control, reckless or impulsive behaviour, substance misuse, sexual behaviour, offending, distractibility/ concentration, attention span. Triggers, precipitating and maintaining factors; times when the behaviour does not occur.*

## Part Two: Plan

<b>Objectives</b>  (2-3 SMART targets)  These need to be achievable, aim for 75-80% of time.	<b>Strategies</b>  (Include references to other documents like risk assessment, PIP, Boxall Profile, THRIVE Assessment, AET, rewards, staff responsibility)	<b>Review Date:</b>  Have objectives been achieved?  Do objectives or and strategies need amending?	<b>Amended Objectives</b>	<b>Amended strategies</b>
<b>Example:</b>  <i>To begin to recognise when his anxieties are heightening.</i>		Not achieved  Amend strategies		
1.				
2.				
3.				



## Part Three: Reviews

<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>Type of Review:</b> <i>e.g. fortnightly,</i>	<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Comments:</b> <i>What is working well/What could be better/Ways forward</i>

**SCHOOL BASED PASTORAL SUPPORT PLAN MID TERM REVIEW MEETING**

<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Have the targets been met :</b> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Comments:</b> <i>What is working well/What could be better/Ways forward</i>

**SCHOOL BASED PASTORAL SUPPORT PLAN FINAL REVIEW MEETING**

<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Have the targets been met:</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Comments:</b> <i>What is working well/What could be better/Ways forward</i>