

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

The Trust recognises that there is a need, reflected in common law, to intervene when there is an obvious risk to safety to its pupils, staff and property.

We are committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and only use positive handling as a last resort in line with best practice. If used at all, it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive, trustworthy relationship with the child. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to YP and staff.

This policy must be read and implemented in conjunction with the schools' behaviour policy and approach to behaviour management.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 "enables school staff to use force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- (a) committing any offence (or, for a child under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older YP):
- (b) causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the child themselves), or
- (c) prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline within the schools.

We are not contractually obliged to carry out restraint procedures and are not contractually obliged to undertake training in any restraint procedures. This policy applies to all staff who are authorised to use positive handling.

Our approach to best practice

The best practice regarding positive handling outlined below should be considered alongside other relevant policies, specifically those policies involving behaviour, bullying, child protection and health and safety.

In line with Education and Inspections Act 2006 in the following situations, staff must judge whether or not positive handling would be reasonable or appropriate:

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

This judgement will take into account the circumstances of the incident. All staff should be aware that the use of positive handling in response to a clear or developing danger of injury will always be used to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation

Staff will view the handling of child as a last resort for the purposes of maintaining a safe environment. If children are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, strategies will be used to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation. These strategies (which are all Positive Handling techniques) include:

- Positive phrasing
- Limited choices
- Consequences
- Disempowerment
- Scripts.

If effective, incidents of physical handling of a child should decrease in severity and frequency. Regular monitoring of incidents will be carried out to check the effectiveness of any such handling within the team/by the SMT. Where the frequency or severity of incidents is not reducing, the positive handling plan for the pupil will be reviewed

Staff will understand the importance of listening to and respecting children to create an environment that is calm and supportive, especially when dealing with child who may have emotional and behavioural needs, which may increase their aggression.

All staff will understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the child, which lie beneath the behaviour as well as to the behaviour itself.

Practice regarding specific incidents:

All policies and practice regarding the supervision of children during the school day will be appropriate to the identified needs and behaviours of the pupils, this combined with the Norfolk Steps approach to behaviour should minimise the likelihood of requiring positive handling to an absolute minimum.

The physical action taken will take into consideration the age and competence of the child and will be the least restrictive option.

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.

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 to stop the behaviour and seek help by any means available.

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 at all possible no staff member is to be left alone with a child in crisis.

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

The force used will be commensurate with the harm prevented.

Positive Handling

Examples of situations where positive handling may be appropriate include:

- Child attacks member of staff or another child
- Children are fighting
- Children are engaging in, or on the verge of, committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- Child is causing, or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- Child absconds from the premises (this only applies if child could be at risk if not kept on the premises)

Holds to be avoided

The following holds should not be used:

- Holding a child around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict a child's ability to breathe
- Slapping, punching or kicking a child
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint, pulling or dragging
- Tripping a child
- Holding a child by the hair or ear
- Holding a prone or supine on the ground or basket type holds

Holds to be used

Only those holds described in the Norfolk Steps handling manual are authorised to be used when physically handling a child.

A copy of the Manual is kept in the staff rooms of the school for reference purposes.

Only those people who have up to date Step Up training are authorised to physically restrain a child.

When a child is a prolific spitter, one hand should be placed in front of the staff members face to protect them from spit entering the eyes or mouth. If the hand becomes too wet to hold the child effectively then it will need to be wiped on the nearest available material. In some cases this will be the child's shirt. During debrief any soiled clothes must be changed for clean ones and the soiled clothes sent home for washing.

Recording an incident

All incidents that result in non-routine interventions will be recorded in detail in the incident book with numbered pages

Contemporaneous record (i.e. written within twenty four hours of the incident's occurrence) will be made by the staff member involved in the incident.

Similarly, contemporaneous notes will also be made by any other members of Staff involved (i.e. as witnesses or additional providers of support). The notes dated.

The record will contain the following information:

- The name(s) of staff who used reasonable force
- The name(s) of the child involved
- When and where the incident took place
- The reason that force was necessary
- Behaviour of the child which led up to the incident
- Any attempts to resolve or de-escalate the situation
- The degree of force used
- How it was applied
- How long it was used for
- Details of any injuries suffered by either staff or child
- 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 involved, reflection, reparation and restoration meeting minutes
- Details of follow up involvement of other agencies - police, Social Services

Copy of this entry will be kept on the pupil's file

The school will report any injuries to child or staff in accordance with HSE Regulations 1995 Child who are identified as likely to require positive handling as part of their Behaviour management will require an Individual Risk Management Plan. This is drawn up in response to the risk posed by the child's behaviour and is shared with all staff.

Debriefing Arrangements

The child 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 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 her/his nominee) will discuss the incident with the pupil and try to ascertain the reason for its occurrence. The

child will be given the opportunity to explain things from her/his point of view. All necessary steps will be taken to restore the relationship between the child and the member(s) of staff involved in the incident.

Training Needs of Staff

In cases where it is known that a child will require positive handling on occasions, the School will ensure that appropriate training is provided. Staff involved will identify their training needs in this area.

Where the school anticipates that positive handling may be required on occasions, advice will be sought from the Norfolk Steps Team.

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

Authorisation of staff to use positive handling

We recognise that positive handling will be seldom used and it is a last resort to maintaining a safe environment

All trained staff are, by the nature of their roles, authorised to use positive handling as appropriate.

Best practice will be monitored. Frequent sessions to practice the use of techniques, as well as to disseminate any revised information will be included as part of the school's normal schedule or pastoral meetings.

These meetings will be open to all staff who have been authorised to use positive handling techniques

In the event of a complaint being received by the school in relation to the use of physical force by staff, the matter will be investigated in accordance with local authority procedures.

Arrangements for Informing Parents

Parents will be informed of the school policy regarding positive handling in the following ways:

- In their introduction to the school will be informed that our positive handling policy can be found on our website
- Staff who work with particular children who have learning or physical disabilities (and who have Individual Education Plans, Individual Risk Management Plans and/or Pastoral Support Plans), may need to use specific techniques routinely to manage challenging behaviour. Such arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers in advance on an individual basis. All interventions will be routinely recorded.
- All parents will be informed after a non-planned incident where positive handling is used with a child.

