



Parklands Community Primary School

Positive Handling Policy

Date of Approval : Spring 2025

Review Date : Spring 2027

Reviewed by : Premises, Health & Safety Committee

POLICY FOR POSITIVE HANDLING

This policy has been prepared for the support of all staff who come into contact with pupils and for volunteers working within the school to explain the school's arrangement for positive handling. The policy is available to parents on request.

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to ensure a safe and happy environment, where everybody in the school community feels safe and respected.

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils is vital to ensure good order in our school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the expectations set by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff in school. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to act in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school:

- clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary
- are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

The application of any form of physical control places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

Reasonable force will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk.

Who was initially consulted?

All staff were consulted in drawing up this policy.

Relationship to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Safeguarding Policy and the Positive Relationship and Behaviour Policy.

Implications of the policy

The 1996 Education Act (Section 550 A) stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom, during a teaching session or elsewhere within school (this includes authorised out-of-school activities).
- Serious self – injuring.
- Causing injury to others.
- Committing a criminal offence.
- Damaging school property.

Definitions of Positive Handling:

Positive Handling uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming himself/herself, others or property.

The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be **proportionate** to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled, and the nature of the harm they might cause. – DFE July 2013 Use of Reasonable Force.

The three types of positive handling are described as follows:

1. **Physical Contact** – Situations in which proper physical contact occurs between staff and pupils, e.g. in the care of pupils and in order to support their access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
2. **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. Guiding a pupil to a safe outside area, or withdrawal room.
3. **Physical Control/Restraint** – This will involve the use of **reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property**. It is important to note that the use of ‘reasonable force’ should be seen as a last resort. **All such incidents must be recorded** and be stored in an accessible way.

The level of compliance from the pupil determines whether or not the interaction is an intervention or a control/restraint.

In this school, staff have a responsibility to follow this policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention. Reasonable force will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management/de-escalation strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk.

When can reasonable force be used?

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

- In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.
- The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- 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.

Schools cannot:

- use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Power to search pupils without consent

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following “prohibited items” :

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

Strategies for Dealing with challenging behaviour

Staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage pro-social/valued behaviour and good order.

Every effort will be made to deescalate situations and resolve conflicts positively and without harm to pupils or staff, property, buildings or the environment.

De-escalation strategies include:

- Verbal advice and support.
- Using diversion.
- Using diffusion.
- Using negotiation.
- Choices/consequences.
- Time out offered.
- Re-assurance.
- Planned ignoring.
- Humour.

Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches should be taken according to the circumstances of the incident:

- Verbal acknowledgement of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain;
- Further verbal reprimand stating that this is the second request for compliance; an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable; an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues;
- Warning of intention to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies. If possible summon assistance;
- Physical intervention. Reasonable force uses the minimum degree of force to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Authorised staff

At our school, teachers and LSAs are authorised to use physical contact as defined within this policy.

What does physical contact look like at Parklands?

There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.

- Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:
- Holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school;

- When comforting a distressed pupil;
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching;
- To give first aid.

Reasonable Force and Restraint/Control of Pupils

Only specifically trained staff (through the Team Teach program) have control or charge of pupils may use reasonable force to manage or control pupils.

Where the use of restraint is necessary on more than one occasion, a positive handling plan will be put in place in agreement with the parents and carers.

The Headteacher is responsible for making clear to whom such authorisation has been given, in what circumstances and settings they may use force and for what duration of time this authorisation will last.

The Headteacher will ensure that those authorised are aware of, and understand, what the authorisation entails. Those whom the Headteacher has not authorised will be told what steps to take in the case of an incident where control or restraint is needed, for example to contact an authorised member of staff.

The office staff will keep a list of all staff who are Team Teach trained. This list will be updated as required when staff are trained.

SLT, Team Leaders and the Safeguarding Team will undergo training as appropriate. The training will be renewed as required by Team Teach.

Types of Incident

The incidents described in Circular 10/98 fall into three broad categories:

Where:

- action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously compromising good order or discipline.

Examples of situations, which fall within these categories, are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils are fighting;
- a pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing damage or vandalism to property;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by misusing dangerous materials or objects;
- a pupil is running in a corridor in a way which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others;
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school;
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is **seriously** disrupting a lesson, causing distress to the pupils and/or a breakdown of order.

Training

- Training for all staff will be made available and will be the responsibility of the Headteacher.
- No member of staff will be expected to undertake the use of reasonable force without appropriate training.
- Parklands Primary School acknowledges that physical techniques are only a part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management. The governors of the school are committed to working within the LA's framework for accessing training in that: - It will review its behaviour/positive handling policy on at least a two-year cycle.
- Training will be delivered on a needs-based approach and procedures are in place to monitor incidents.

Recording

Where physical control or restraint has been used a record of the incident will be kept.

This record should be made on a serious incident form and a positive handling record.

The serious incident form will be completed as soon as possible after the incident, by the members of staff involved. A positive handling record will also be completed highlighting the techniques used prior to the positive handling used and the holds used. See Appendices.

The serious incident form will be placed on the pupil's file and a copy given to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

Parents will be informed either at the end of the school day or by telephone.

A Health and Safety Accident/Incident Form will be completed and returned to the Authority in situations where injury has occurred to either members of staff or pupils.

It is important to ensure that staff and children are given basic first aid treatment for any injuries that require treatment. Where staff and pupils have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force they should have access to emotional support. Debriefing must take place on the same day as the incident if possible.

Monitoring incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use reasonable force, this will always be recorded and documented following agreed procedures.

Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/SENCO to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour may require the use of reasonable force.

Monitoring of incidents will take place on a regular basis by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/SENCO and the results used to develop individual behaviour plans.

Action after an incident

The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/SENCO will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Review of Behaviour Plan.
- Child Protection Procedure.
- Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure.
- School Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy.
- Exclusions Procedure in the case of violence or assault against a member of staff.
- The member of staff will be kept informed of any action taken.
- In the case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

Individual Risk Assessments

An Individual Risk Assessment:

- Provides a structured intervention to manage pupil behaviour.
- Is designed to support the pupil to modify or change certain behaviours.

An Individual Risk Assessment should include:

- The target behaviours causing concern.
- The triggers for this behaviour.
- Strategies to address the behaviour.

The Behaviour plan should be agreed by the SENCO, class teacher, TAs pupil and parents. All members of staff working with the pupil needs to be aware of the plan.

Complaints

The availability of a clear policy about reasonable force and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them.

Any complaints about staff will be investigated through the School's Complaints Policy. If necessary the complaint will be dealt with by the Staff Disciplinary Procedures and/or Child Protection Procedures.

Use of physical force that is unwarranted, excessive, or punitive is not acceptable. Failure to comply with this principle, when considering or using physical force should be dealt with under school disciplinary procedures.

Parklands CP School - Positive Handling Record
Serious Incident Form (where sustained physical control or restraint has been used)

Name of child:	Class:
----------------	--------

Date:	Time:	Time span:
-------	-------	------------

Location:

Activity:	Your name:
-----------	------------

Name of others involved:

Reason for intervention:	Immediate danger of personal injury to pupil		
	Immediate danger of personal injury to member of staff		
	Disruption to other pupils		
	To avoid damage to property		

Antecedents (what events led to the incident?)
--

--

Behaviour:

Severe disruption to session	Spitting	Biting	
Kicking	Hitting	Throwing objects	
Property damage	Head butting	Self harm	
Running	Other(detail)		

De-escalation techniques used:

Verbal advice	Reassurance	Distraction	
Options offered	Negotiation	Humour	
Time out offered	Planned ignoring	Success reminded	
Staff change over	Choices/consequences	Well done/reward	

Team Teach Techniques used:

Single elbow	Double elbow	Wrap	
Wrap in chair	Wrap on floor	Cradle on ground	

Has there been post incident support / advice?
--

Any actions taken to prevent a reoccurrence / promote change
--

Medical Intervention.

Details of any injury sustained by child

Details of any injury sustained by staff

Was either pupil or staff referred for further medical advice/treatment?

Yes / No. If yes please give details

Line Manager Signature: _____ Date:

Parents informed home/school book telephone in person (circle as appropriate)

PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THIS FORM IN THE PUPILS FILE AND A COPY TO DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

Headteachers Monitoring: (if injuries occur)

Was sufficient / appropriate de-escalation undertaken? ()

Were there grounds for physical control? ()

Were approved physical controls used? ()

Has appropriate post incident action been taken? ()

Is the record keeping comprehensive and complete? ()

Were all relevant people informed? ()

Were there any staff/pupils complaints? ()

Other comments by Headteacher:

Signed: _____ Date:

Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher

Serious Incident Reporting Form			
Pupil Name			
Date		Time of incident	
Staff involved	Name	Initials	Position
Location/s			
What happened?			
<i>Please describe events clearly, use clear facts, states times, locations, and who was present. Clearly state what staff and pupils have said in speech marks. Clearly describe any use of physical contact</i>			
Positive handling form?		N / Y Date _____	
		Signed	
Report completed by			
Report seen by			