



Stoke Prior First School

Positive Handling Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

1.1 This policy is based on DfE "The Use of Reasonable Force 2013".

1.2 At Stoke Prior First School we work to ensure each individual pupil is able to reach his or her potential. Every child is entitled to learn and every teacher should be free to teach in an environment that is safe, secure and free from distraction. The guiding principles to achieve this is established in Stoke Prior's policy on behaviour management.

1.3 Staff at Stoke Prior First School are committed to providing the highest standards in protecting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people entrusted to their care. We recognise there is a need in line with the DfE "The Use of Reasonable Force 13" to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to pupils, staff and property.

1.4 For the most part this is achieved through the fostering of good relationships, and the normal application of positive behaviour management to support and intervene. However, in exceptional or extreme circumstances this may involve the use of reasonable force.

1.5 It should be emphasized that if used at all, restraint (referred to in this document as **Positive Physical Interventions (PPI)**) should be seen in the context of a further positive action of care and concern. In line with DfE "The Use of Reasonable Force 2013", it is used as a '**last resort**' option and in the most extreme cases, other strategies will always have been attempted first.

1.6 As best practice regarding PPI this policy should be considered alongside other relevant school policies, especially those involving behaviour, health and safety and child protection.

2.0 Staff Training:

2.1 The Positive Behaviour Team organizes and delivers the PPI training programmes. We keep training up to date.

3.0 What is The Real Use of Reasonable Force to Control Pupils?

3.1 Teachers and other persons authorized by the senior school leaders to have charge of pupils, may use reasonable force to prevent pupils:

Causing injury to themselves or others

Committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility).

Causing disruption by engaging in behaviour which is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline.

3.2 Reasonable force has no legal definition but:

Staff must take into account the circumstances of the incident, age, development, sex and special educational needs and disability of the pupil.

The degree of force must be proportional to the seriousness of the situation, behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent, and always be the minimum force needed.

Force could not be justified for a trivial misdemeanour or a situation that could be resolved without it.

Everyone has the right to self-defence provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force. Corporal punishment is illegal.

4.0 Objectives of this Policy

4.1 To provide all staff, governors, parents and pupils with an understanding of care and control and the use of force.

4.2 To emphasize that the use of PPI is:

Part of a positive care and control approach to discipline and welfare.

Last resort or a **necessary** expedient option to be used in extreme circumstance.

4.3 To ensure that all members of staff or authorised persons who may have to positively handle pupils clearly understand the options and strategies open to them.

5.0 Who Can Use Reasonable Force?

5.1 We recognise that most of the time PPI will be used infrequently, that is, as a **last resort** to maintaining a safe environment.

5.2 All teaching staff by the nature of their roles are authorised to use PPI as appropriate.

5.3 Non-teaching staff require specific authorisation. This authorisation can only be given by the Head Teacher or someone deputising in his/her absence.

5.4 At Stoke Prior First School all **trained** staff are authorised to use PPI.

6.0 Circumstances when Reasonable Force Might be Appropriate

6.1 We recognise that some children may not be able to control their reaction to events as well as others and at times may place themselves or others at risk through their uncontrolled behaviour. As indicated in 2.1, reasonable force might be appropriate when:

Action is necessary in self-defence or because of imminent risk of injury.

Examples:

- Pupil attacks a member of staff, another pupil, attempts self-injury, pupils are fighting.
- Pupil running in classroom or corridor in a way that is likely to cause injury to self or others.

There is a serious and developing risk of damage to property, including the pupil's own property.

Examples:

- Pupil is causing or about to cause deliberate damage or vandalism.
- Pupil is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, rough play, misuse of dangerous materials or objects.

Where pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline.

Examples:

- Pupil persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave the classroom.
- Pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

6.2 NB Wherever possible early support from colleagues will be sought. Single handed intervention increases the risk of injury to both parties and does not provide the person intervening with the support of a colleague acting as a critical friend.

6.3 Strategies other than force will be considered.

Examples:

- Providing the disruptive pupil with a choice of locations to exit to
- Giving clear directions
- Allowing 'take-up' time thus allowing a 'face-saving' opportunity
- Removing the audience, ie requesting that other pupils leave the room
- Implementing Team Teach help protocols/script so that another member of staff takes over the strategic lead of the incident, if he/she feels it is appropriate to do so.

7.0 Procedures and Practical Considerations During Specific Incidents within the setting

7.1 Wherever practicable staff are expected to:

- Use a calm and measured approach
- Give clear direction to the pupil
- Seek assistance from other colleagues at as early a stage as possible
- Staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil have a responsibility to provide a presence, and to offer support and assistance should this be required
- Try to defuse the situation orally and prevent escalation
- Try to remove the pupil from the peer audience
- Attempt to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident
- In as calm a manner as possible, explain that the reason for intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe
- Make it clear that PPI will stop as soon as the pupil calms and the risk assessment indicates it is no longer necessary
- If it is not possible to control the extreme pupil without risk of injury to yourself or others, remove the other pupils who may be at risk and summon assistance.
- If de-escalation is not possible and pupil is at risk of injury, staff will use positive intervention to escort the pupil to a designated isolation room. This room will be used to give the child a place of safety.
- Staff must consider the health and safety of the pupil whilst they are in the isolation room, for example, remove furniture or objects that might cause harm.
- Pupil will be supervised by a minimum of two members of staff, and a member of SLT to be informed immediately.
- The decision to prevent a pupil of leaving of their own free will, will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- The length of time of the seclusion, is determined by a member of the SLT, and the length of time in isolation should be a minimal as possible.

8.0 Application of Force During Specific Incidents

8.1 Methods that staff **may use** in appropriate circumstances where a risk assessment judgement supports this:

- Shepherding a pupil away by a light touch on the elbow or near the shoulder
- “Guiding” – remembering this is the positive application of force to control a pupil and would be used in rare circumstances, eg if the pupil is in extreme danger and no other alternative is available, or where reasonable force is used to assist a pupil’s movement.
- Holding – for security and to reduce anxiety where there is potential risk, even if the pupil is not yet out of control. The purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation.

When intervening staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted as aggressive. All holds are devised to minimise the risk of injury. They should not cause pain.

Where pupils are presenting with more challenging behaviour which may require more restrictive holds, it is important that these techniques have been delivered by appropriately qualified Team Teach instructors in line with Team Teach protocols.

8.2 Staff **may not** carry out action that might reasonably be expected to injure by:

- Holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the ability to breathe.
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint.
- Tripping a pupil.
- Holding or pulling the pupil by the ears or hair.

8.3 Other considerations for **non-urgent situations** where the risk to the people or property is not imminent:

- Consider carefully whether positive handling is the right course of action
- Try to deal with the situation through other strategies before using force.
- Try to defuse and calm the situation to establish good order; the use of positive handling could lead to an escalation of the problem.
- Take into account the age, understanding, personal characteristics of the pupil.
- The use of positive handling to enforce compliance is likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older pupils.
- Never use force as a substitute for good behaviour management.
- In non-urgent situations force should only be used when all other methods have failed.

9.0 Reporting and Recording Incidents

9.1 Should an injury occur as a result of an incident at school, immediate steps will be taken to secure appropriate medical attention. This will be reported and recorded in accordance with Worcestershire CC systems.

9.2 All incidents that result in restraint (where a child has to be held) will be recorded in detail using the Bound and numbered book within 24 hours. A Positive Handling Plan will then need to be put in place or reviewed accordingly.

9.3 Restraint is **“the positive application of force with the intention of overpowering the client” (DOH 4/93 Section 5.2).**

9.4 The member of staff concerned will report the matter orally to the Head Teacher or a senior member of staff as soon as possible. The incident will be recorded in the Bound Book by staff at the earliest opportunity.

9.5 A staff member will inform parents/carers about the incident by the end of the school day.

9.6 A log will be kept of any occasion when PPI is used.

9.7 When PPI has been used and pupils have been held using Team Teach techniques reports will be completed in a Bound numbered book with a body map and signed by the Head Teacher.

9.8 The Bound Book will be reviewed by the Head teacher or a person with responsibility for Special Needs termly to consider control measures and possible training or further training needs etc.

9.9 A copy of the Positive Handling Plan will be placed in the pupil’s file.

10.0 Debriefing Following Serious Incident

10.1 Pupils and members of staff will be checked for any sign of injury and first aid will be administered if required.

10.2 The pupil will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise/observe him/her. When the pupil regains complete composure, a senior member of staff and staff involved in the PPI will discuss the incident with the pupil and try to ascertain the reason for it.

10.3 All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff will provide support to the member of staff involved.

11.0 Other Procedures Concerning Incidents

11.1 If necessary and appropriate the Chair of Governing body, will be informed/consulted.

11.2 Help, support and reassurance will be given where appropriate to any persons involved.

11.3 Where possible an attempt will be made to help the pupil modify their behaviour.

11.4 Where possible, the pupil should apologise, this should be meaningful or appropriate. If this cannot be undertaken then other consequences/sanctions reparations and monitoring should take place.

12.0 Planning for Incidents and Meeting Training Needs

12.1 If we are aware that a pupil is likely to require PPI on more than one occasion in a half term we will plan how to respond in line with Team Teach protocols and guidance. This can include involving the parents to ensure they are clear about what specific action we might need to take and obtaining

medical advice if the child has any specific health needs. A risk assessment and a positive handling plan will be drawn up, in consultation with all concerned and included as part of the pupil's Personal Educational Plan (PEP) or Pastoral Support Plan (PSP). It will be regularly reviewed on a half termly basis.

12.2 Staff involved will, through risk assessment, have identified their training needs in this area. In cases where it is known that a pupil will require PPI appropriate training will be provided.

13.0 Arrangements for Informing Parents

13.1 For some children there may be the need to use specific techniques to manage their challenging behaviour or to keep them safe. This will be recorded in their PEP, Positive Handling Plan or PSP. Such arrangements will be fully discussed with parents/carers, on an individual basis, in advance of their implementation. All intervention will be routinely recorded and monitored.

14.0 Physical Contact with Pupils in other Circumstances

14.1 Staff must be sensitive to matters relating to culture and gender issues and any known individual characteristics or special circumstances relating to pupils.

14.2 Some physical contact may be necessary eg during PE lessons, sports coaching or if a member of staff has to administer first aid or medication.

14.3 Young children and children with SEN may need staff to provide physical prompts to help.

14.4 Physical contact must always be age appropriate and done openly.

15.0 Complaints

15.1 This policy is in accordance with the DfE "The Use of Reasonable Force 2013". as such, those acting in accordance with it, providing they act in good faith, working within the authority guidelines, will be positively supported in their actions.

15.2 Involving parents when an incident occurs, and our clear guidelines about physical contact with pupils that staff adhere to will help avoid complaints from parents. Providing staff with approved training will also help.

15.3 All complaints will be recorded and followed up by the Head Teacher or their representative in the first instance. Where appropriate the Local Authority will be notified/kept informed.

15.4 A complaint or dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation under disciplinary procedures or by the Policy under Child Protection procedures.

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE:	L Satchwell
DATE POLICY AGREED:	October 2021

TO BE REVIEWED BY:	September 2024
DISTRIBUTION:	Staff / Governors / Website