



# Fairburn View Primary School

**Positive Handling Policy  
September 2020**

Signed by: Lynne Cranford  
Chair of Governors

**Review Date: September 2022**

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## Positive handling Policy (in connection with Behaviour Policy)

### Policy Statement

Staff at this school are trained to look after the pupils in their care.

Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from:

- hurting themselves or others
- seriously disrupting good order in the school
- causing damage to property

At Fairburn View Primary School, we only use physical restraint when there is no realistic alternative. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow the school's Positive Handling Policy.

### Introduction

The term 'Positive Handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. Included in this framework are a small number of responses which may involve the use of force to control or restrain a pupil. The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. These are referred to as 'Restrictive Physical Interventions' in national Guidance (DfES/DoH 2002). A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

Pupils with severe behavioural difficulties sometimes present a risk to themselves and others. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 describes the circumstances in which teachers and others authorised by the headteacher may use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. Examples of when such action may be reasonable are to prevent injury to people, damage to property or the breakdown of discipline.

This policy details how we implement the guidance in this school. It is designed to help staff to ensure that any actions they take are reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary.

### School Expectations

The management takes seriously its duty of care towards pupils, employees and visitors to the school. Staff protection is an important part of child protection; both depend on confident and competent staff who feel supported by the management. This policy has a clear focus.

- 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.



### **Alternatives to Physical Controls**

Before physical intervention becomes necessary staff will take effective action to reduce risk.

They can:

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation, reason and distraction
- Give clear directions for pupils to stop
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes
- Well chosen language is used to de-escalate situations
- Remove an audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons
- Use positive touch to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressured
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help.

### **Modifications to Environment**

Ideally, staff will not be waiting until a crisis is underway before conducting a risk assessment of the environment. In general, it is a good rule to keep the environment clutter free. This may mean giving consideration to secure storage for a range of everyday objects when they are not being used.

### **Help Protocols**

The expectation at this school is that all staff should support one another. Help does not always mean taking over. It may mean just staying around in case you are needed, getting someone else or looking after somebody else's group. Colleagues support each other by acting as critical friends during and after incidents.

### **Proactive Physical Interventions**

It is sometimes reasonable to use physical controls to prevent extreme behaviour from becoming dangerous provided that it is an agreed part of a Behaviour Plan. Examples of this are when a pupil has shown ritual patterns of behaviour, which in the past have led to the child becoming more distressed and violent. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the child and that it reduces, rather than increases risk.

### **Reasonable and Proportionate**

Any response to extreme behaviour should be REASONABLE and PROPORTIONATE. People should not react in anger. If they feel they are becoming angry they should withdraw to allow someone else to deal with the situation. Where staff act in line with the school policy they will be supported.

It is not reasonable to use force simply to enforce compliance in circumstances where there is no risk.

Nor is it reasonable to use any more force than is necessary to achieve reduction in risk.

### **Team Teach**

It is the policy of Fairburn View Primary School that as many staff as is possible are trained in the pre-emotive and responsive positive handling strategies and techniques of Team Teach. Only members of staff in receipt of this training and authorised by the head teacher are permitted to use physical restraint.

If dangerous behaviour presents a significant risk of injury to people, there is a Health and Safety issue to be addressed. Key to addressing any health and safety concerns is the risk assessment process, both at informal and written level.

### **Support Systems**

At Fairburn View Primary School, the following support structures are in place:

- Pre warnings communicated to staff
- Staff respond quickly to verbal requests
- IEPs and behaviour plans about each child available to all staff
- Pupil concerns shared with staff at meetings
- Input of SENCo
- Liaison with external agencies

### **Post Incident Support Structure for Pupils and Staff**

Following a serious incident, it is the school's policy to offer support to all involved. Time needs to be given to following incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective. This can be done successfully using Restorative Practice techniques.

### **Recording and Reviewing**

Whenever physical restraint is used the incident **MUST** be recorded using the appropriate form. A member of the Senior Leadership team will provide the relevant form. These records will be retained and cannot be altered.

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