



Positive Handling Policy

Written November 2018 – Review date September 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy has been written to support all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils who may need to be positively handled. This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils specifically the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.
- 1.2 Good professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the School Behaviour Policy. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff.
- 1.3 Positive handling within Bradford Christian School will be limited to emergency situations and used only as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed; when pupils or staff are at risk or there is a risk of significant damage to property.
- 1.4 Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 teachers and other staff who have lawful control of pupils may use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:
- 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.

2.0 Application of the policy

- 2:1 Positive handling is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming themselves or others or seriously damaging property.
- 2:2 Staff at Bradford Christian School recognise that the use of reasonable force is the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupil safety / well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline.
- 2:3 The Specific Aims of the Positive Handling Policy are:
- 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.

3.0 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 within the above categories.

Staff should always act within the School's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour. Staff are 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.

Failure to positively handle a pupil who is subsequently injured or injures another, could, in certain circumstances, lead to an accusation of negligence. At the same time staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

3.1 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. if a pupil is about to run across a road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives e.g. use of assertiveness skills such as:

- Repeating an instruction 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. remove the compliant children rather than the disruptive child.
- 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)
- the employment of other sanctions consistent with the School's policy on behaviour.

3.2 Staff will receive training on use of de-escalation techniques as well as positive handling techniques.

3.3 Use of Positive Handling

Positive handling will 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. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.

Named staff (see list Appendix 1) are only authorised 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 or 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

3.3 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.

3.4 Actions After An Incident

Positive handling often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil.

A member of the leadership team should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised.

An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of an individual risk assessment and then add the detail of the risk assessment to the pupil passport for the immediate benefit of staff, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the SENCO.

It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

All incidents should be recorded immediately using the school incident report form and should be included in the serious incident log held by the school business manager. All sections of this report should be completed so that in the event of any future complaint a full record is available. A member of the leadership team will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

We recognise that staff who are required to use positive handling techniques may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with a member of the senior leadership team and to seek further support as appropriate.

4.0 **Risk Assessments**

4.1 If the school becomes aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Management of the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

4.2 A Positive Handling Plan (Appendix 2 for blank plan Appendix 3 for plan with guidance notes) for an individual pupil should be seen as an integral part of the whole school process of education and care. It must relate to the Students Pupil Passport and where applicable their EHC Plan and the fundamental values and ethos of Bradford Christian School. Its success will be derived from a whole school, holistic response to positive behaviour support and the process for appropriate implementation is firmly based within a procedural approach that is owned by all staff involved, but must also include the child and their parents/carers.

4.3 A Positive Handling Plan clearly links policy to practice and shows how an individual planned approach has been developed for the child. When producing Positive Handling Plans reference should always be made to the school's policy, multi-agency involvement where appropriate, which includes the involvement and support of both the child and their parents/carers.

4.4 Procedures for assessing risk and in particular risk assessment for pupils should be undertaken to ensure all aspects of Health and Safety are considered for both pupil and staff.

4.5 Positive Handling Plans must have the interests of the child as the primary consideration and must pay due consideration to their behaviour which may include autistic traits. At all times a 'Duty of Care' for and to the child should be of primary concern.

4.6 Any planned physical intervention should be justified in respect of what is known about the child, taking into account any SEN needs based upon multi-disciplinary assessment, alternative approaches/behaviour support which have been tried, an evaluation of the potential risks involved, and reference to Restraint Techniques training.

4.7 Pupils who receive physical intervention should be routinely assessed for signs of injury, pain or psychological distress and these should be recorded in the Care Plan section of the child's file.

4.8 Plans should have built in intrinsic experiences for the pupil which promote learning opportunities for them to own their own behaviour and the ability to develop coping strategies.

4.9 The techniques to be used during physical intervention should be clearly recorded on the plan and shared with all relevant staff, and parents/carers.

4.10 A Positive Handling Plan should be part of an overall Behaviour Support Strategy for the pupil and a copy of the plan should be kept in the pupils' Care Plan.

4.11 All Positive Handling Plans should be reviewed at least termly, or as the need arises. It is the Head Teacher who is ultimately responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of positive behaviour support plans.

5.0 **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.

6.0 **Review**

6.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

6.2 This policy was written in November 2018 and will be reviewed bi-annually. The latest review was completed in November 2022.

Formally agreed through compliance:	24/11/22
Signed Jane Prothero – Head Teacher	
Review Date:	September 2024

List of Staff at BCS authorised to use Positive Handling Techniques

Area of School	Staff Name
EYFS	Esther Hutton
Primary	Ella Marsden
	Vicky Peckover
	Ruth Garcia
	Jane Prothero
	Susanne Shackleton
Middle	Sarah Walker
	Becca Ryan
Upper	Phill Moon
AP	Stacy Garratt
	Kat Verity
	Jake Horton
	James Stannett

POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN

NAME:	CLASS:	YEAR:
EHCP/Pupil Passport/Healthcare Plan Y/N	REVIEW DATE:	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
eg Medical Data: known medication/asthma/nose bleeds etc

TRIGGER BEHAVIOURS: (Describe situations/behaviours which are known to have led to Positive Handling being required or that may potentially lead to Positive Handling being required)

TARGET:

SUCCESS CRITERIA:

This section and beyond should only be completed if we consider the child to be high risk of needing this level of intervention.

PREFERRED POSITIVE STRATEGIES: (Underline/Describe strategies which, when and where possible, should be attempted before positive handling techniques are used.)

Verbal advice/support	Planned positive distractions (what?)
Reassurance	Positive touch (who?)
Tactical ignoring	Descriptions of reality (Take up time.)
Negotiation/Partial agreement	Time-out to calm down offered/directed
Transfer adult	Choices/limits/consequences

Others:
ie classroom organisation
(It is only reasonable for named persons to have this level of expectation)

Preferred Handling Strategies: (Describe the preferred staff responses/holds by named members of staff)

Technique	Standing/Sitting	Number of staff	Breakaway Techniques

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REPAIR AND REBUILD PROCESSES FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT (What care is to be provided?)

What learning opportunities exist for the child? How will the child be reintegrated back into friendship groups/class/ school?
 What learning opportunities exist for the staff involved?

RECORDING AND NOTIFICATION REQUIRED

Incident Report Form Y/N

EVALUATION (This section is to be completed during the annual review.)

SIGNATURES:

SENCo or DSP Head:.....

Date:.....

Parent/Carer:.....

Date:.....

POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN - GUIDANCE NOTES

NAME:	CLASS:	YEAR:
EHCP/Pupil Passport/Healthcare Plan Y/N	REVIEW DATE:	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

eg Medical Data: known medication/asthma/nose bleeds etc

This information is vital if appropriate positive handling strategies are to be implemented. Any strategies must be on an individual needs basis and where appropriate link to the child's Health Care Plan and moving and handling strategies.

TRIGGER BEHAVIOURS: (Describe situations/behaviours which are known to have led to Positive Handling being required or that may potentially lead to Positive Handling being required)

Link to Risk Assessment. As part of the process it is important to evaluate current practice and collate data that affords the school with the opportunity to accurately assess environmental factors that may be influencing a child's behaviour.

TARGET:

A target should be set that is SMART and that looks to reduce the number of physical interventions necessary. The target should be based upon pre-requisite information about the child.

SUCCESS CRITERIA:

This section should include additional resources that may be required to meet the target.

PREFERRED POSITIVE STRATEGIES: (Underline/Describe strategies which, when and where possible, should be attempted before positive handling techniques are used.)

Verbal advice/support

Reassurance

Tactical ignoring

Planned positive distractions (what?)

Positive touch (who?)

Descriptions of reality (Take up time.)

Negotiation/Partial agreement

Transfer adult

Time-out to calm down offered/directed

Choices/limits/consequences

Others:

ie classroom organisation

This section links the behaviour policy of the school with the overall process of positive handling. Primary, Middle and Upper strategies that should be employed as whole school approaches are outlined and agreed prior to physical intervention taking place.

Preferred Handling Strategies: (Describe the preferred staff responses/holds)

It is important that the strategies for responding to individual behaviours are individualised in respect of meeting the needs of the pupil who presents the behaviour.

Technique	Standing/Sitting	Number of staff	Breakaway Techniques
<i>In line with the school's Positive Handling Policy and any training that may have been undertaken</i>	<i>Graded in terms of severity of intervention</i>	<i>Where appropriate staff should be named and have received training</i>	<i>Staff should not physically intervene if they are not confident or competent</i>

REPAIR AND REBUILD PROCESSES FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT (What care is to be provided?)

What learning opportunities exist for the child? How will the child be reintegrated back into friendship groups/class/ school?

What learning opportunities exist for the staff involved?

This is the medium which enables the child to begin their own individual behaviour and in turn develop alternative strategies. It is imperative that the approach adopted is procedural, certain and predictable with clear roles and responsibilities established within the plan.

RECORDING AND NOTIFICATION REQUIRED

A Positive Handling Plan does not replace the school's formal procedure for recording and reporting incidents.

Incident Report Form Y/N

EVALUATION (This section is to be completed during the review.)

Over time, behaviour patterns of individual pupils will change as will the benefits and risks associated with any physical intervention. Each review should include a formal meeting of all relevant personnel involved and the success of the plan should be measured against the original target.

SIGNATURES:

It is important to get people to 'sign up', especially parents/carers.

SENCo or DSP Head:.....

Date:.....

Parent/Carer:.....

Date:.....