



Positive Handling Policy

Rewritten: September 2025
Review Date: September 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy supports all teaching and support staff at Bradford Christian School who may need to use positive handling with pupils. Read this alongside related policies, especially the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and Staff Code of Conduct.

1.2 Ethos

Strong, professional relationships between staff and pupils are crucial to maintaining a safe and supportive environment. Most pupils respond positively to our behaviour expectations, ensuring everyone's wellbeing.

1.3 When Positive Handling Is Used

Positive handling is only ever used as a last resort, in emergency situations, and when all other behaviour management strategies have been exhausted. It is used to prevent:

- Harm to pupils or staff
- Significant damage to property
- Serious disruption to good order

1.4 Legal Framework

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows staff with lawful control of pupils to use reasonable force to prevent:

- Committing an offence
- Causing injury or damage
- Disrupting good order and discipline

Further guidance: [DfE guidance on reasonable force](#)

2. Application of the Policy

2.1 Definition

Positive handling is the use of force, with the intention of protecting a child from harming themselves, others, or property.

2.2 Principle

Staff recognise reasonable force is a last resort. We prioritise de-escalation and other preventative strategies.

2.3 Policy Aims

- Protect every person in the school community from harm
- Protect pupils from unnecessary or excessive physical intervention
- Ensure staff are trained and confident in positive handling and de-escalation

3. Using Positive Handling

3.1 Alternatives & De-escalation

Where possible, staff use alternative strategies such as:

- Clear, repeated instructions
- Distraction techniques
- Removing the audience (moving compliant pupils)
- Defusing with humour or non-confrontational approaches
- Use of sanctions per the Behaviour Policy

All staff receive regular training in de-escalation and positive handling techniques.

3.2 When Is Positive Handling Appropriate?

Examples include:

- Physical attacks or fights
- Pupils risking injury (e.g., running into the road)
- Misuse of dangerous items or substances
- Persistent refusal to follow safety instructions
- Serious disruption or absconding where there is risk

3.3 Guidance for Staff

DO:

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum necessary force
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Use clear, simple language
- Hold limbs above major joints (e.g., above the elbow)
- Relax restraint as soon as the pupil complies

DON'T:

- Act out of anger
- Hold in a way that restricts breathing or blood flow (e.g., around the neck)
- Involve other pupils
- Use pain, slap, punch, kick, trip, twist limbs, pull hair, or touch sexual areas

4. After an Incident

4.1 Immediate Actions

- Inform a member of the leadership team as soon as possible

- Debrief with staff and pupil(s) involved
- Offer support to any victims and inform parents/carers promptly (usually same day)
- Review risk assessments and behaviour plans if behaviour is part of a pattern

4.2 Recording and Reporting

Every significant incident of restraint or positive handling must be recorded immediately using the school's incident report form and logged in the serious incident log on MIS.

- All sections must be completed for a full record.
- Leadership to inform parents/carers as soon as possible.

4.3 Staff Support

Staff involved in incidents will be offered a debrief and further support if needed.

5. Risk Assessments & Positive Handling Plans

5.1 Proactive Planning

For pupils identified as at risk of requiring positive handling, a **Positive Handling Plan (appendix 2)** is developed, involving:

- Management strategies for the pupil
- Parental involvement and agreement
- Staff briefing and training
- Additional support as necessary
- Review plans termly or as required
- Link to pupil's EHC Plan and/or Pupil Passport where applicable

5.2 Health & Safety

- Assess for injury, pain, or psychological distress after any incident
- Record outcomes in the pupil's file

6. Training

- All staff receive regular training in de-escalation and positive handling techniques, including annual refresher sessions
- Training covers:
 - Legal and policy framework
 - De-escalation and alternative strategies
 - Safe physical intervention techniques
 - Reporting and recording requirements

7. Complaints

A clear policy, shared with all stakeholders, reduces complaints. However, any complaint regarding the use of force will be investigated under school, safeguarding, or disciplinary procedures as appropriate.

8. Monitoring and Review

- The Headteacher is responsible for policy implementation and monitoring.
- The policy is reviewed annually, or after any significant incident or change in statutory guidance.
- Policy to be read alongside:
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Staff Code of Conduct

9 Version Control

Date of Adoption of this Policy	7 October 2025
Date of last review of this policy	September 2024
Date of next review of this policy	October 2027
Policy Owner (SLT)	Jane Prothero

List of Staff at BCS authorised to use Positive Handling Techniques

Area of School	Staff Name
<p>Main School</p>	Esther Hutton
	Ella Marsden
	Vicky Peckover
	Ruth Garcia
	Jane Prothero
	Susanne Shackleton
	Sarah Walker
	Becca Ryan
<p>AP</p>	Stacy Garratt
	Jake Horton

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

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.)

Empty rectangular box for additional information or notes.

SIGNATURES:

SENCo or DSP Head:.....	Date:.....
Parent/Carer:.....	Date:.....