

FLANDERWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL



Positive Handling Policy 2024-2025

Date of Policy: May 2024

Date of Review: May 2025 (or sooner if required)

Statement of Principles

Pupils:

We all have a right to work, play and learn in a friendly, safe and helpful school

Teachers:

We all have a right to teach in a friendly, safe and satisfying school which is supported by the school community.

Parents:

We all have a right to feel welcome and to know that our children work, play and learn in a friendly, safe and helpful school.

Vision and Ethos

At Flanderwell Primary, we aim to...

... provide an environment where **'every child'** grows, thrives and is prepared for life in the modern world and feels safe, happy and confident.

...ensure that **'every minute'** of our time is used well to ensure our pupils have the best possible chances of success during their time with us.

...provide an engaging and relevant curriculum which sets down the foundations for **'every hope'** and aspiration a child may have.

At Flanderwell, we have high expectations for all of our children and believe, wholeheartedly, that happy children learn. For this reason, we foster a warm, caring and inclusive environment and keep our children's interests at the heart of all we do. This includes promoting and expecting the highest standards of behaviour among our pupils including developing core values of **respect, kindness and compassion, inclusion and aspiration**. Safeguarding pupil and staff welfare is of the utmost importance to us.

What is physical intervention ('reasonable force')?

The use of force is illegal if the physical circumstances do not warrant it. The force used should always be the minimum needed to regain and ensure safety and control for everyone involved or present. The Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Child protection/Safeguarding Policy.

Restrictive physical interventions may include:

- Bodily contact - where the physical presence of one or more people is used to control a pupil, e.g physically interposing between pupils; blocking a pupil's path; holding or 'shepherding' a pupil; using agreed, approved restricted holds
- Environmental – where a change is applied within the environment for example shutting a door or the use of locks or key pads to prevent access to a particular area.

Framework

This section provides a framework for risk reduction and the use of physical intervention within Flanderwell Primary and considers information provided in the DFE's revised and updated 'use of reasonable force' guidance dated July 2013 (revised July 2015).

Who can use reasonable force?

- All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force (Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

Positive Handling

- A number of staff at Flanderwell are trained in the TEAM TEACH risk reduction method and its aims, guidelines and approaches are incorporated in this policy. The staff who are trained are: Adam Cornes, Holly Wain, Val Albutt, Jade Towers, Amy Bingham and Karen Slater.
- Staff understand the core principle that any physical intervention should be -in the best interests of the child
- -be the minimum force for the shortest time
 - prevent injury pain or distress as far as is practicable
 - maintain dignity
 - be reasonable and proportionate
 - the action should be necessary and as (where appropriate) last resorts after all other strategies have been exhausted.
- The physical techniques are based on providing the maximum amount of care, control and therapeutic support.
- There is no legal definition of reasonable force. The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it and the degree of force employed is proportionate to the level of challenging behaviour presented of the consequences it is intended to prevent.
- It is essential that any discussion of physical intervention is set in the wider context of education and behaviour management; it should not be seen as an isolated technique. The use of physical intervention is embedded within a framework of de-escalation in order to encourage the promotion of socially acceptable behaviours for all concerned.

The Legal Context

The use of force is likely to be legally defensible when it is required to prevent self-harming, injury to other children or staff, damage to property or when an offence is being committed.

If a child is doing any of the below, the trained staff at Flanderwell may use reasonable force to-

- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip/ visit
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil.
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.
- Prevent a pupil from placing themselves or others in danger

Post-intervention procedures

As soon as is reasonably possible after an incident involving physical intervention, staff will record the incident on CPOMS and in the red and bound book. Communication to parents/ carers of the incident will be made. Discussions about strategies that the child could use in future will be had between staff and the child.

The Last Resort Principle

At Flanderwell we pro-actively foster positive relationships and only use reasonable force when there is no realistic alternative. This means that we expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative.

We expect staff to think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective.

- There might be some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are no equal effective alternatives (a child is about to run in the road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives such as the use of assertiveness skills:
- Use a distracter such as a whistle or loud bell to interrupt the behaviour long enough for other methods of verbal control
- Withdrawal of attention(audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened

- Other techniques designed to defuse a situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour, in which case the incident could be dealt with later when emotions are running high
- The employment of other sanctions consistent with Flanderwell's policy on behaviour

Where physical interventions are needed to prevent injury to the student, other students or staff, or to prevent serious damage, these should be for the minimum length of time possible and using the least possible force. All staff must consider whether they are using reasonable force.

In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate and 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, lying face down or pulling arms across the child's chest
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil

For further information, follow the link in Appendix – B

Positive Handling Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Positive Handling Plan (see appendix C). The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. If particular physical techniques have been found to be effective they should be named, along with alerts to any which have proved ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Positive Handling Plans should be considered alongside any other planning documents which relate to the pupil. They should take account of age, gender, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special need and social context. Positive Handling Plans should result from multi-professional collaboration and be included in a Pastoral Support Plan or SEND support form.

Staff Training

It is the policy of this school that all staff working closely with pupils are trained in the pro-active and responsive positive handling strategies and, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the School Behaviour Policy and Practice. In cases where a Positive Handling Plan is in operation, selected staff will be trained in any physical interventions to be used. These staff will be trained by the accredited provider and will be the only staff authorised to use the intervention. All non-teaching staff have been MAPA (Managing of Actual or Potential Aggression) trained using approaches adopted from Paul Dix, a behaviour specialist who promotes de-escalation techniques and strategies are used when managing difficult or challenging behaviours.

General Advice for Staff

- Be sure that you are aware of and complying with the school policy for behaviour and discipline and positive handling procedures.
- It is better to defuse situations wherever possible, as this prevents them from escalating to a level where force is necessary
- Send for the assistance of another member of staff as soon as possible, using the agreed call-out protocol
- All those involved should be de-briefed after incidents to explore more positive/effective responses to future difficult situations

Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. It is not enough to thoughtlessly apply rules without thinking through the likely consequences. The key principles are that any physical intervention should be:

- In the best interest of the child
- Reasonable and proportionate
- Intended to reduce risk
- The least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective.

Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning. Where possible, staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical interventions. They should only use the techniques and methods approved for use in this school.

Recording

Whenever overpowering force is used the incident **must** be recorded using the approved forms. The Incident book is kept in the Inclusion Manager's Room. All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the record which should be completed within 24 hours. The details recorded

on the forms are kept confidentially. Parents/carers must also be notified and this is to be recorded on the form (Appendix - A).

Staff should:

- Inform a member of SLT as soon as possible
- Complete the school recording form carefully
- Take time to think about what actually happened and try to explain it clearly
- Complete all names in full
- Sign and date all forms

Post-Incident Support

Incidents that require use of restrictive physical interventions can be upsetting to all concerned and could result in injuries to the child or staff. After incidents have subsided, it is important to ensure that staff and children are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should, of course, be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded in accordance with school procedures. The school should take action to report any serious injuries to staff or students in accordance with LA guidelines (see First Aid and Medicines Policy and Practice).

We need to consider:

- thoughts, feeling, emotions,
- emotional 'first aid'

Stage 1 – Immediate 'Are you ok' This should occur before people leave to go home.

Stage 2 – De-briefing checking people have adjusted to an emotionally difficult event. This should occur within 48 hours.

Stage 3 – Counselling: formal support. Support is available when requested by a member of staff, however it is not imposed.

Post Incident Review

Focus on actions and behaviours:

- Who did what, when, why, how?
- What was the outcome?
- What does it tell us about what we already know about the young person?
- What have we learnt and what or how does this inform our practice?

Monitoring use of Restrictive Physical Interventions

Use of physical intervention in school is monitored in order to help staff learn from experience, promote the well being of children in their care, and provide a basis for appropriate support. Monitoring can help the school to determine what specialist help is needed for children and to assess the appropriateness of the child's placement at the school. The use of physical intervention is monitored and evaluated regularly at Leadership Group meetings. Individual student risk assessments are reviewed termly.

Responding to Complaints

The use of restrictive physical intervention can lead to allegations of inappropriate or excessive use. In the event of a complaint being received by a school in relation to use of force by staff, the matter should be dealt with in accordance with LA guidelines and agreed procedures for handling allegations against members of staff (see Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff).

Policy Review and Evaluation

This policy has been developed in liaison with school staff and governors. It will be reviewed annually, or when relevant national or local guidance indicates additional need.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy and Practice
- Health & Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy and Practice
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff
- Staff Induction
- Volunteer Policy

The Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy was reviewed by:

Name/s and job title of reviewer	Date of review	Date of governor approval	Suggested date for review
Mr Adam Cornes Headteacher		28 th May 2021	May 2022

Appendix – A

RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION – INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Student(s): _____

Year:

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Location of Incident:

Describe incident in detail:

Restraint described:

Why was restraint needed? What did you do to try to defuse the situation before using restraint?

Was anyone injured? Yes/ No

If yes, was this recorded in the accident book? Yes/ No

Was the student checked for injuries by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident? Yes/ No. Please complete body map (attached)

Member(s) of staff involved:

Adult witnesses to restraint:

Pupil witnesses to restraint:

This incident form was completed by _____

Designation of person completing report _____

Parent/carer was informed by telephone / letter (with pupil), letter (by post), personally
(Please circle as relevant)

When were they informed? Time:

Date:

Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action:

Copy this form placed in the pupil file.
Original form to the headteacher.

Appendix – B

YES

NO



Appendix C – Positive Handling Plan

Name:		DOB:		Date:	
Situations likely to lead to physical intervention:					
Strategies used prior to physical intervention					
Remind		Distraction		State consequences	
Give time		Movement break		Call for other staff	Given a choice
Give space		Negotiation		Planned ignore	Repeat request
Verbal advice		State alternatives		Humour	Praise partial compliance
Other strategies used:					
Preferred handling strategy					
Single elbow	Double elbow		Friendly hold (arm around the shoulder)		Guide
block					
Debrief and discussion of further support needed:					
Signatures:					
Adult dealing with incident:					
Parent/Carer:					
Child where appropriate:					
Headteacher:					
Date:			Review date:		

