



# **Farnborough Road Infant School** **Positive Handling Policy**

“Learning, Caring and Achieving Together”

## **Introduction**

This policy sets out the framework for the use of reasonable force, restraint or positive handling, but it must be clearly understood that this should always be set within the school's overall behaviour management framework and is only used as a last resort underpinned by sound risk assessment. Only in the event of failure of non-physical strategies to bring control to the situation, or of imminent danger to persons, should positive handling be considered.

Legislation that came into force on 1st September 1998 (Section 550 of the Education Act 1996) together with national guidance (DfES Circular 10/98), establishes the power of teachers and other staff to use reasonable force if required. This applies to all occasions when that member of staff is in charge of children both on and off school premises. There is no legal definition of reasonable force, this would depend on the individual circumstances of each case. Only a court may judge what is reasonable in terms of the amount of force used in physical handling and obviously does so retrospectively.

## **Definition**

The definition of restraint is the positive application of force with the intention of calming and overpowering the child. The use of restraint requires judgement and knowledge of non-harmful methods of control. The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Positive Handling should only be used when all other strategies which do not employ force have been tried and found unsuccessful or in an emergency situation.

Reasonable force would **not** include any of the following:-

- Holding a child around the neck, collar or other way that may restrict breathing
- Slapping, punching, kicking or tripping a child. Holding or pulling a child by their hair or ear.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against joints.
- Indecently touching or holding.
- Holding a child face down on the ground
- Lifting a child off the floor in order to intimidate.
- Grabbing, pulling or dragging a child or the child's clothing

Types of incident where the use of force may be necessary are given as:-

1. Action due to imminent risk of injury
2. Action due to imminent risk of significant damage to property
3. Action where a pupil is compromising good order and discipline

Examples of situations that fall into one of the first two categories are

- 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 absconds from a class or tries to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

Example of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A pupil is behaving in such a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

## **Authorisation**

In all cases, the person exercising the restraint must be authorised by the Headteacher. At Farnborough Road Infant School, all staff have a duty to keep children and adults safe and therefore all staff are deemed authorised. The approach will be to de-escalate situations.

## **Implementing Positive Handling**

In the event of restraint becoming necessary,

- Before touching the child, the member of staff should advise the child calmly how the child might change his/her behaviour, in order that the restraint would become unnecessary.
- A second adult should be called to assist and reduce the risk of the member of staff or child suffering bodily harm and as a witness if allegations of assault are made later by the child.
- If implementation of positive handling is still deemed necessary the adult should explain calmly what they are going to do and why.
- The adult should maintain eye contact and ask the child to leave the room with the adult calmly.
- The adults should attempt to take the child's hand, if the initial request is refused, to lead them to a place of safety  
Eg -The Chill Out Room
- Wherever possible the adults should keep talking to the child giving him/her choices as to how they could behave in a manner that would avoid the need for restraint.
- While intervening, the member of staff must employ minimum physical force necessary for the minimum period needed.
- Stay with the child, either inside the room or outside maintaining a watchful presence.
- Keep reminding the child that they can return to class when he/she is calm and ready to continue with classroom activities.

We will not:

- Chase, if a child runs from the classroom- The adult should enlist the help of an additional adult and maintain discrete, watchful presence, apparently ignoring the child.
- Chase, if a child leaves the school – See Children who abscond from school policy

### **Types of restraint which may be appropriate:**

- Non-physical restraint until the young child calms down e.g. talking calmly and purposefully to the child, removing other children from the vicinity
- Physical contact with a young person designed to control the young person's movements, which pose a danger (e.g.holding hands, holding by the arms against the side of the body). Standing by the side of the young person is likely to minimise the risk to adult and young person.
- The holding of a young person's arms or legs to prevent/restrict striking/kicking.
- The use of sufficient physical force – without causing injury – to remove a weapon/dangerous object from a young person's grasp
- Physically preventing a young person from exposing themselves to possible danger by leaving the premises.

Pupils should not be placed face down on the floor. Specialist accredited training is necessary for this procedure.

If restraint is required for an extended period (for example, more than five minutes), a senior member of staff must monitor the situation closely with a view to safeguarding the child and the staff concerned.

### **When not to use physical restraint**

Staff must always use their judgement in deciding whether a situation warrants the use of physical restraint. Occasions when physical restraint, by an individual, should not be used include:

- A physically large pupil,
- More than one pupil, or
- When the teacher believes that they or the child may be at risk of injury.

In those circumstances where the member of staff has decided that it is not appropriate to restrain the pupil without help they should:

- Remove other pupils who might be at risk,
- Summon assistance from colleagues,
- Where necessary, telephone the police,
- Inform the pupil(s) that help will be arriving,
- Until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

## Recording

- After the incident, when physical restraint is required, it is vital that a full report is completed by all concerned within 24 hours (see Appendix 1, Incident Form) in order to support the child, the members of staff involved, any other children involved and the parents.
- If possible, all staff and children involved will undertake a de-briefing meeting with the Headteacher within 24 hours.
- The parents/guardians or carers should meet with the Headteacher as soon after the incident as possible.
- Copies of the form will be added to CPOMS and sent to parents.
- If an injury has been incurred to anyone involved, the usual procedures regarding this will be followed.

The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Governors need to ensure that, as far as possible, preparation and planning has taken place to identify areas where physical restraint might be used. When physical restraint takes place, the school will always endeavour to protect children and adults from physical harm, however, there may be cases in which some discomfort and/or bruising may occur, to both staff and children, as a result of the restraint taking place.

If physical restraint is necessary on more than one occasion to manage the behaviour of an individual, it would be appropriate to instigate a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) and a Positive Handling Plan during de-briefing meetings.

It is also necessary to compile an individual risk assessment in discussion with all staff, parents and any relevant outside agencies.

In the case of a child with an EHCP, there will be opportunities to address issues of challenging behaviour at annual review meetings and an interim review organised in exceptional circumstances.

Looked-After Children will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which features planning and strategies to address challenging behaviour, where appropriate.

If the incident that requires restraint leads to the child being sent home for respite on the grounds of Health and Safety or a fixed term exclusion, advice will be sought from the Educational Welfare Officer.

## Child Protection Issues

If, after receiving the report of an incident where physical intervention has occurred, the Headteacher considers the school's guidelines have been seriously breached and that further investigation is warranted. The incident should then be reviewed in accordance with Child Protection issues. In these circumstances, any school internal investigations must cease and no further statements should be taken. If the school's guidelines have been breached, the Headteacher will contact the LADO and advise the staff member to consult his/her professional association.

This policy will be reviewed regularly.

February 2023

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Headteacher**

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chair of Governors**



Appendix 1: Reporting and Recording Proforma

RECORD OF RESTRAINT	
Date of incident:	Time of incident:
Pupil Name:	D.o.B:
Member(s) of staff involved:	Adult witnesses to restraint:
Pupil witnesses to restraint:	
Outline of event leading to restraint – including other strategies tried and reasons for using Positive Handling rather than another strategy:	
Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used):	
Outcome of restraint:	
Description of any injury(ies) sustained by pupil or member of staff and any subsequent treatment:	
Date parent/carer informed of incident:	Time:
Outline of parent/carer response:	
Signature of staff completing report:	Date:
Signature of Teacher-in-charge:	Date:
Signature of Head:	Date:
Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action:	



**Farnborough Road Infant School**  
**RECORD OF RESTRAINT**

Date of incident:	Time of incident:
Pupil Name:	D.o.B:
Member(s) of staff involved:	Adult witnesses to restraint:
Pupil witnesses to restraint:	
Outline of event leading to restraint – including other strategies tried and reasons for using Positive Handling rather than another strategy:	
Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used):	
Outcome of restraint:	
Description of any injury(ies) sustained by pupil or member of staff and any subsequent treatment:	
Date parent/carer informed of incident:	Time:
Outline of parent/carer response:	
Signature of staff completing report:	Date:
Signature of Teacher-in-charge:	Date:
Signature of Head:	Date:
Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action:	

