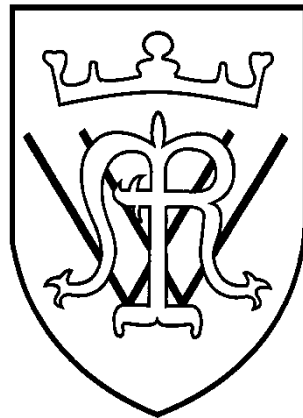


# Branton St Wilfrid's C of E Primary School



## Positive Handling Policy

Adopted by Governors: September 2023

To be reviewed: September 2025

***Achieve, Acquire, Appreciate***

***Living by our Christian Values***

*Generosity, Compassion, Courage, Forgiveness, Friendship, Respect, Thankfulness, Trust,  
Perseverance, Justice, Service, Truthfulness*

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## 1. School Ethos

Branton St Wilfrid's C.E Primary School is a warm and welcoming school where pupils and adults feel safe and enjoy being part of a learning community together. Our Positive Handling Policy reflects that it is our expectation that **everyone in our school community will behave respectfully towards each other and will work together to succeed in our joint learning journey**. Our Christian ethos and Vision Statement are central to all that we do and have been used as the basis for this policy and our class rules.

### ***Living by our Christian Values***

*Generosity, Compassion, Courage, Forgiveness, Friendship, Respect, Thankfulness, Trust, Perseverance, Justice, Service, Truthfulness*

## 2. Aims of the Policy

Through our Behaviour Policy we encourage all pupils to make sensible choices about their behaviour, however, we recognise that sometimes pupils do make the wrong choices. On rare occasions this may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff. Our Positive Handling Policy is based on the following principles:

- Physical intervention is used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed
- Physical contact used will only ever be the minimum required
- Physical intervention is used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Incidents are recorded and reported to the headteacher
- Parents are informed of each incident

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

## 3. The Legal Framework

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows 'teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Headteacher who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- causing injury to his/herself or others
- committing an offence
- damaging property
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline

This policy has been written taking into account DFE 'Use of reasonable force' advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2013 (see appendix 2).

#### **4. Definition of Reasonable Force and Restraint**

The DFE Guidance (2013) on the 'Use of Reasonable Force' defines and explains this in the following way:

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

All members of staff can use reasonable force and have a legal power to use it. This applies to any member of staff, not just Class Teachers. It can also apply to people whom the Head Teacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying pupils on a school organised visit.

#### **5. When can reasonable force be used?**

The DFE Guidance (2013) on the 'Use of Reasonable Force' states that schools can use reasonable force to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

This list is not exhaustive, but rather gives some examples of when reasonable force can be used. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

#### **Schools cannot:**

- use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

#### **Power to search pupils without consent**

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following "prohibited items":

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs

- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force **cannot** be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

## **6. The Branton St Wilfrid's Approach**

Through the consistent application from all members of staff of the school Behaviour Policy, we aim to promote excellent behaviour from all our pupils. The need for physical intervention should be a last resort and should be a rare occurrence in our school.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate. All staff have regular training which supports them to make well informed professional judgements in situations where a pupil's behaviour may become challenging. This include using de-escalation strategies, as well as identifying potential issues and intervening before a crisis point is reached where ever possible.

***Physical intervention is only used when all other strategies have failed to have the required effect on a pupil's behaviour.***

There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary. Examples of these are as follows:

- Holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of the line when going into Collective Worship, or when walking around school together.
- When comforting a distressed pupil.
- To demonstrate how to use a piece of equipment correctly, e.g. a musical instrument.
- To give First Aid.

Staff are aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day they are in *loco parentis* and have a 'Duty of Care' to them. Staff must therefore take reasonable action to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils.

## **7. Use of Physical Restraint or Intervention**

Physical restraint is 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 never takes a form which could be seen as punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint i.e. only applying force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below. In all circumstances, alternative methods are used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint a last resort. All staff, including MDSAs, were Team Teach trained in September 2023. New staff and refresher training will be considered for the 2025-2026 academic year.

In the rare event that physical restraint or intervention becomes necessary staff should consider the following guidelines:

<b>DO</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summon help / involve another member of staff if possible</li> <li>• Continue to talk to the pupil in a calm way using the Team Teach script</li> <li>• Use simple and clear language</li> <li>• Tell the pupil what s/he must do for them to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)</li> <li>• Use the minimum force necessary</li> <li>• Be aware of any feelings of anger</li> <li>• Use the holds you have been trained to use</li> <li>• Relax the restraint as soon as possible in response to the pupil's compliance</li> <li>• Offer support to members of staff if they are involved in managing challenging behaviour of a pupil.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to manage on your own</li> <li>• Act in temper</li> <li>• Allow a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil</li> <li>• Involve other pupils in the restraint</li> <li>• Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment</li> <li>• Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate</li> <li>• Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck</li> <li>• Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil</li> </ul>

## **8. Actions after an Incident**

Managing challenging behaviour is often stressful and difficult for staff. It is essential that there is time allowed for debriefing after the incident for both the staff and the pupil. For this reason it is essential that a member of the SLT is informed of the incident as soon as possible to facilitate the debrief process. The debrief should include the following:

- Consideration of the circumstances that precipitated the incident
- Exploration of ways in which future incidents could be avoided
- Whether the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern and therefore requires support from the SENCo and/or external agencies.

A 'Restraint Recording Form' (Appendix 1) should be completed, in full, as part of the debrief. This will be saved onto the pupil's CPOM file (either an electronically completed form or a scanned handwritten form is acceptable). This forms an important record of events should there be further incidents, or a complaint or allegation made regarding the incident.

A member of teaching staff must contact the pupil's parents as soon as possible after the incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to encourage them to meet with a member of SLT and the pupil to discuss the incident.

## **9. Risk Assessment**

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that may require the use of reasonable force, it is essential that school plan how to respond if the situation arises. This takes the form of a Behaviour Risk Assessment (see Appendix 2). This will enable staff to plan:

- Strategies to use prior to intervention
- Ways of avoiding known triggers
- Involvement of parents to ensure they are aware of and supportive of the specific action school might need to take

- Staff are fully briefed so that they know exactly what action they should take and what to avoid doing which may escalate the situation

## **10. Complaints and Allegations**

It is hoped, that by having a clear policy on the use of physical intervention that misunderstandings will be avoided and therefore parents and carers will feel that their children are treated safely and with care and compassion.

In the event that a parent or carer feels that they need to make a complaint, this will be dealt with through the School Complaints Policy, a copy of which is available from the School Office.

## Appendix 1: Record of Physical Handling/Restraint



### Record of Positive Physical Handling/Restraint

Pupil's Name:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Report completed by:

Events leading up to the incident:

Behaviour (how did the pupil behave, describe what happened):

Consequences (how did staff intervene, how did the pupil respond, how was the situation resolved):

Names of those involved (staff and pupils):

Names of witnesses (staff and pupils):



What de-escalation techniques were used prior to physical intervention? (tick below)

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> verbal support and advice | <input type="checkbox"/> choices, limits, consequences | <input type="checkbox"/> humour                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> reassurance               | <input type="checkbox"/> distractions                  | <input type="checkbox"/> success reminder       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> time out offered          | <input type="checkbox"/> planned ignoring              | <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> time out directed         | <input type="checkbox"/> take up time                  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Team Teach script         | <input type="checkbox"/> change of person              |   |

Why was the decision made to restrain?

- To prevent the pupil from causing injury to him/herself  
 To prevent the pupil from causing injury to other  
 To prevent the pupil from causing damage to property  
 To prevent the pupil from causing serious disruption  
 Other? Please specify.

Description of physical restraint holds used (please include approx.. time span of holds)

- Two person friendly hold  
 Two person friendly hold to chairs  
 Figure of four  
 T Wrap  
 Other (please specify)

Did the pupil or member of staff suffer any injuries as a result of this? (include injury location & description).

Child's views

Report read and discussed with the pupil. Yes  No   
 Pupil agrees with the content. Yes  No   
 If no, what is the pupil's view? If yes, does the pupil have any comment?

Post Incident Information

Was any post incident support offered to the pupil? (please detail)

Was any post incident support requested by or given to a member of staff?

Did the pupil accept debrief? Yes  No

Parent's views

**Appendix 2: Behaviour Risk Assessment** (for use when positive handling is likely to be required)



## RISK ASSESSMENT

For use where positive handling may occur

School: Branton St Wilfrid's Primary School		Risk assessment completed by:	
Name of child:	DofB:	Year:	
<b>Identification of Risk</b>			
Describe the foreseeable risks:			
Is the risk:	potential	occurring	
<b>Assessment of risk</b>			
In which situations does the risk usually occur?			
How likely is it that the risk will occur? (unlikely, possible, probable, likely)			
If the risk arises, who is likely to be injured or hurt?			
What kinds of injuries or harm are likely to occur?			
How serious are the adverse outcomes? (severe, substantial, minor, minimal)			
<b>Risk Reduction Options</b>			
What actions are being taken to minimise the level of risk?  (Consider changes to environment, awareness of triggers, de-escalation strategies, varying staff deployment, varying teaching group/size, access to quiet area etc.)			
Any immediate actions to be taken, by whom and by when?			
<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Role:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>		<b>Copy to:</b>	

### Appendix 3: Sample letter to parents/ carers

Dear [Name of Parent/Carer],

Today your son's/daughter's behaviour became extremely challenging and as such posed a health and safety risk to themselves, other children and /or staff. Staff supported him/her by following their agreed Behaviour Management Plan to reduce the risk and help him / her to calm down and regain control of themselves.

Although we followed their Behaviour Management Plan and tried everything we could to calm them down, at some point during the incident it was necessary to use Team Teach techniques to hold them safely – we tried everything we could to avoid this, but it was decided that it was the best risk reduction option for everyone involved, including your son/daughter.

Your son/daughter has been checked by school staff with a First Aid qualification and monitored since the incident and whilst he/she is currently not presenting any concerns, if you become worried at any point please seek medical advice.

Please be assured that your son/daughter's health and safety is our highest priority and we will do all we can to safeguard their welfare whilst managing to the best of our ability such challenging behaviour.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

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#### ***Behaviour Management and Team Teach***

I confirm that I have received a letter about my child being held during an incident.

Please tick the following boxes as appropriate:-

- I wish to come into school to discuss this further
- I would like someone from school to ring me to discuss this further
- I am happy about the way in which my child's behaviour is managed at school

Signed .....

Parent/Carer of ..... Date .....

#### **Appendix 4: Department of Education Guidance on 'Use of Reasonable Force'**

Information from the DfE on the 'Use of Reasonable Force' in schools can be found at the following web address:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/444051/Use\\_of\\_reasonable\\_force\\_advice\\_Reviewed\\_July\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf)