



**BRADGATE**  
Education Partnership

# Positive Handling Policy

## Stafford Leys Primary School

Version	Date	Author	Reason for Change
0.1	10/02/2023	NH	New Policy

**Approved:** Feb 2023  
**Review Date:** Feb 2026  
**Responsible Officer:** Head Teacher

The Bradgate Educational Partnership (BEP) takes seriously its duty of care towards pupils, employees and visitors. Touch is a sensitive issue requiring careful judgement. To safeguard both children and staff, the Trust aims to provide clear guidance and appropriate training within the resources available. This policy aims to help staff in our schools develop plans to support children and young people whose behaviour challenges, to reduce the incidents and risk associated with that behaviour; and to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in their care.

We take safeguarding very seriously and all our policies are developed with a high priority on pupils' safety and in light of our safeguarding policy. All our school policies are interlinked and should be read and informed by all other policies.

This policy has been written using advice taken from Use of Reasonable Force, Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies DfE July 2013. This policy needs to be read in conjunction with our Screening, Searching and Confiscation Policy based on guidance issued by the DfE in July 2022.

This policy applies to all pupils. Staff will respond with care and consideration to the age of the child when following the guidance in this policy. A preventative approach to supporting children and young people whose behaviour is challenging is always preferable and restraint should only be used when it is appropriate and necessary by trained staff and in line with the law, core values and ethical principles.

Headteachers and authorised school staff may also use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that they reasonably suspect have been or are likely to be used to commit an offence or cause harm. Force may not be used to search for other items banned under the school rules. The decision to use reasonable force will be made on a case-by-case basis. The member of staff will consider whether conducting the search will prevent the pupil harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder. See our Screening, Searching and confiscation policy for further details in this situation.

When considering using reasonable force staff should, in considering the risks carefully recognise any specific vulnerabilities of the pupil, including SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions.

### **What is reasonable force?**

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children.

Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from a 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 pupils' path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil back under control. It is typically used in extreme circumstances. (DfE 2013)

## Who can use reasonable force?

This power applies to any member of staff at the school. This power also applies to people whom the headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying pupils on a school organised visit.

## When can reasonable force be used?

Members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property and to maintain good order and discipline at the school or among pupils. For example, reasonable force may be used 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.

Positive handling will be used to prevent a child causing harm or injury to themselves or others or to property.

The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and will always depend on individual circumstances. However, incidents of physical restraint must:

- Always be used as a last resort
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Be applied by staff who are able to use safely techniques with which they are familiar and have been trained in. A child's Personal Handling Plan will be followed where in place.
- where possible be part of carefully planned responses to individual children known to be at risk of self-harm or of harming others.
- Never be used in anger or as a form of punishment
- Be recorded on school systems and reported to parents

All staff are aware of the distinction between physical contact or touch (used appropriately in everyday situations to support, encourage, guide or comfort a pupil) and the use of force to restrict movement or to disengage from pupils whose behaviour presents a clear risk of injury.

The safe holds that staff use are all part of the Team Teach approach and key staff have received this training.

**Planned physical intervention** will be agreed in advance by staff working in consultation with the child and those with parental responsibility and described in writing and incorporated into the child's Personal Handling Plan and / or other documentation which sets out a broader strategy for addressing the pupil's behavioural difficulties. An example Personal Handling Plan is included in Annexe A.

**Unplanned or emergency intervention** may be necessary when a pupil behaves in an unexpected way. In such circumstances, members of staff retain their duty of care and any response must be proportionate to

the circumstances. Staff should use the minimum force necessary to prevent injury and maintain safety, consistent with appropriate training they have received.

### **Training**

All staff at our school are trained in our school behaviour policy. Positive handling is a part of our approach to managing behaviour in our school and supporting all pupils to develop the skills to self-regulate. Named members of staff will have positive handling training to ensure they know how and when to hold children in safe ways within government guidelines.

### **Recording**

All incidents must be recorded on Arbor. Where physical control or restraint has been used parents will be informed verbally before the child goes home.

The log on Arbor must include:

- Where and when the incident took place and why it was thought necessary to use reasonable force.
- Describe the events leading up to the incident.
- Describe what actions were taken to de-escalate the situation.
- Describe what hold was used and for how long.
- Record any injuries to staff or child or any damage to property.
- Describe what has happened following the incident.

An example proforma is included in this policy at Annexe B

### **Telling parents when force has been used on their child**

We will always speak to parents about serious incidents involving the use of force. Such incidents will be recorded on Arbor including notification to parents.

In deciding what is a serious incident, teachers should use their professional judgement and consider the:

- pupil's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident;
- degree of force used;
- effect on the pupil or member of staff; and
- the child's age

### **Action after an incident**

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and the child and staff involved have an appropriate debrief. Debriefs with the child and the adult will take place as soon as is practicably possible. Following an incident a Risk Assessment and Personal Handling Plan will be drawn up to ensure procedures are appropriate and meet the needs of the child. These plans will be passed to all staff involved with the child.

### **Other physical contact with pupils**

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.

Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:

- Holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school;

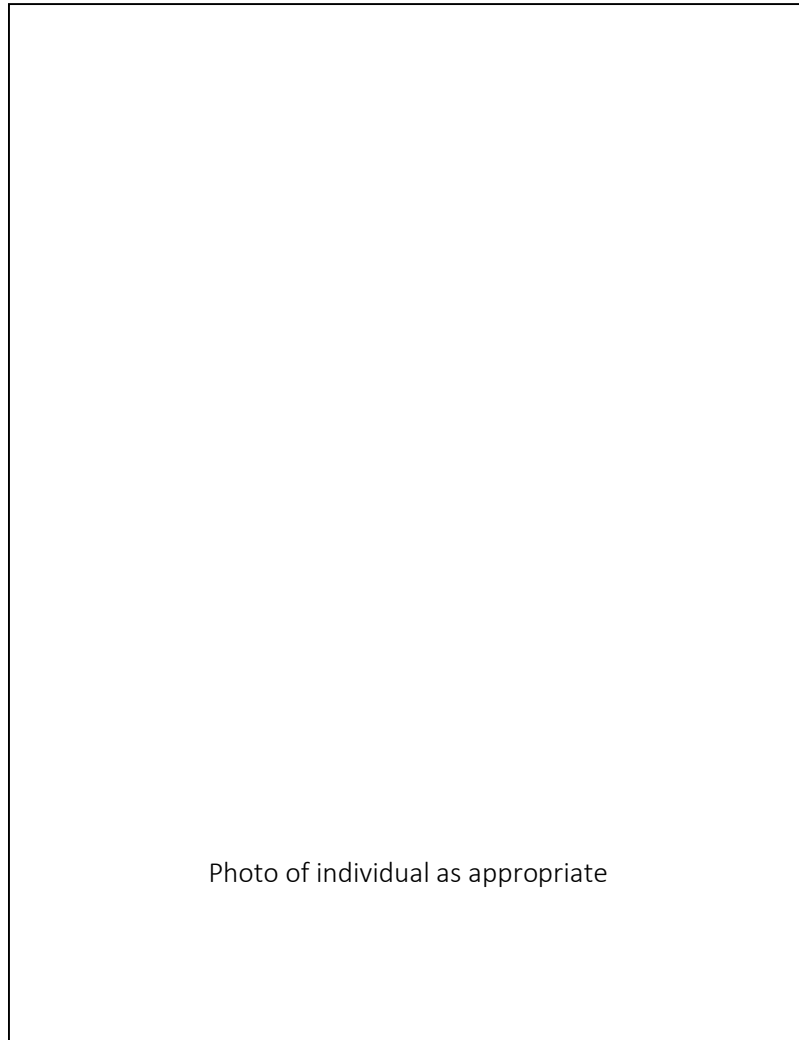
- When comforting a distressed pupil;
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching; and
- To give first aid

## **Complaints**

The use of restrictive physical interventions must always be considered within the wider context of other measures. These include establishing and maintaining relationships with pupils and using diversion, diffusion and negotiation to respond to difficult situations. Under no circumstances should food or drink be restricted.

Use of a physical intervention that is unwarranted, excessive or punitive is not acceptable. Failure to comply with this principle, when considering or using physical force, should be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedures.

## Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan



Name of pupil :	Name of Teacher:
Year group:	Date of plan:
Date of Birth:	Review Date:

## Strengths and Interests

## Identification and Assessment of Risk

Why is it necessary to have a behaviour management plan?

Describe behaviours likely to be exhibited

Who / what is affected by the risk?

In what situations does the risk occur

**Trigger Behaviours** (Describe common behaviours/situations which are known to have led to de-escalation techniques/positive handling being required. When is such behaviour likely to occur? E.g. Teasing from others pupils)

**Warning Signs** (Describe and behaviour that may be observed)

Describe Behaviour	How Likely is the risk to happen? High = daily / more than once a day Medium – Weekly Low – less than once a week.	How great is the risk to others? High = potential to serious injury to others, self and property Medium = some potential to injury and harm Low = Prevents learning – no risk of injury

Are there any medical or emotional considerations to be aware of?

**Preferred De-escalation Strategies:** (Describe CALM Strategies that, where and when, should be attempted before positive handling techniques are used). Tick and add details if required.

Verbal Advice/Support		Distraction		Reassurance	
Planned Ignoring		Contingent Touch		CALM talking/stance	
Time Out Offer		Time out Directed		Transfer to another adult	
Reminder of Choices/Limits/Consequences		Humour		Success reminder	

**Positive Handling Strategies (Team Teach physical interventions)**  
(Interventions to respond to adverse outcomes)

Single person holds and escorts		Two person holds and escorts	
Bar and Gate		Single Elbow	
Caring C		2 Person Double Elbow	
Help Hug		Response to deliberate dead weight	
Steering wheel / guide away			



Cradle Hug			
Small child escort/hold			
Single Person Double Elbow			

<b>Other Strategies:</b>	Manipulation of Jaw (Bites)	
	Responding to biting or head-butting	

**Additional Advice**

**De-Briefing Process following incident**

<b>Physical Condition:</b> Monitor/checked by first aider	
<b>Advice on counselling:</b> Refer to...	
<b>De-Brief Structure.</b> Pupil, Other pupils, Staff.	

**Recording & Notification Required:**  
Team Teach Bound & Numbered Book and Incident Form

Signature of Headteacher

Signature of Parent(s)



<b>Positive Handling Incident Report</b>				
<b>Pupil Name:</b>			<b>DOB:</b>	
<b>Location of Incident:</b>			<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Full Names of Staff Involved:</b>				
<b>Start Time of Incident:</b>	<b>End Time of Incident:</b>	<b>Any injuries:</b>		<b>Further information re: injuries</b>
<b>Duration of restraints:</b>		<b>Medical Check:</b>		
External Contact	Date/Time	By whom	To whom	Records Completed
				Accident Report Racial Incident Report Bullying Incident Report Other
<b>Record of parent contact conversation:</b>				

**Environment and Triggers:**

**Nature of Risk**

Injury to Person		Serious Disruption		Absconding	
Damage to Property		Criminal Offence		Bullying	

**Describe Precisely what the risk was**

**Who was at risk?**

**Managing Risk**

**Diversion, Distraction and De-escalation Attempted**

Verbal advice and support		Firm clear directions		Negotiation	
Limited Choices		Distraction		Diversion	
Reassurance		Planned ignoring		Contingent Touch	
Humour		Different adult		Success Reminders	
Other					