



Kings
Education
Trust



POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

APPROVED: SEPTEMBER 2022

REVIEW: SEPTEMBER 2024

1. Introduction

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils who may need to be positively handled. This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils, specifically the school's Behaviour Policy.

The application of any form of positive handling places staff and children in a vulnerable situation. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for positive handling. Positive Handling will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk.

2. Definitions of contact

(a) **Physical Contact:** Situations in which proper physical contact takes place between staff and pupils, e.g. in games/ PE or to comfort pupils.

(b) **Physical Intervention:** This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

(c) **Positive Handling:** This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or property or if good order is being seriously prejudiced. All such incidents will be recorded using Safeguard and Positive handling book kept in the Headteacher's office.

Staff will ensure the appropriate people will be notified including the Headteacher.

3. Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working at Waterside Primary Academy has the right to:

- a recognition of their unique identity
- be treated with respect and dignity
- learn and work in a safe environment
- be protected from harm

Pupils attending this school and their parents have a right to:

- individual consideration of pupils needs by staff that has responsibility for their care and protection
- expect staff to undertake duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies
- be informed about school rules, relevant policies and the expected conduct of all pupils and staff working in the school
- be informed about the school's complaint procedure

The school will ensure that all pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits which govern behaviour in the school.

Parents should have committed themselves, through the Home-School Agreement, to work in partnership with the school to ensure that the child understands and follows the School's Behaviour Policy.

4. Physical contact with pupils

At Waterside Primary Academy we recognise that there are occasions when physical contact with a pupil, other than reasonable force, is proper and necessary. Examples of this may be:

- 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.

5. Team Teach

Waterside Primary Academy is committed to upholding a positive approach to behaviour. As a basis for our policy, we acknowledge the philosophy promoted by 'Steps Behaviour'. All members of staff received positive handling training via the Buckinghamshire PRU as part of 'Step Up' training in September 2021.

This approach aims to meet the care and safety needs of both pupils and staff. Clear expectations are set by staff and early intervention and distraction are used to prevent situations developing, wherever possible and in most circumstances. When a child's behaviour requires physical intervention, this will comply with the 'Steps Behaviour' guidelines as practised and promoted within the school. This is recommended and supported by Buckinghamshire Local Authority.

Staff have a duty of care to all pupils, to protect them from harm and to handle them in a gentle, respectful manner. Staff also have the right to protect themselves from injury.

5.1 Objectives and Principles:

The Headteacher and Local Advisory Committee members have a responsibility to maintain the safety of pupils and staff. There is a responsibility to prevent serious breaches of school discipline and to prevent serious damage to property. This policy should be communicated to all staff, pupils and parents.

As all members of school staff are authorised by law to use force the school does not have a no-contact policy. We are, however, committed to the principle that force and restraint should only be used in a reasonable way and when all other means of resolving issues are deemed to be inappropriate.

We recognise that force in schools is generally used for two different purposes:

- a) To control: control can mean either passive physical contact (e.g. standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path) or active physical contact (e.g. leading a pupil by the hand or arm, or ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back)
- b) To Restrain: When members of staff use "restraint" they physically prevent a pupil from continuing what they were doing after they have been told to stop. The use of restraint techniques is usually used in more extreme circumstances, such as when two pupils are involved in a fight and physical intervention is needed to separate them.

5.2 Minimising the Use of Force:

At Waterside Primary Academy we aim to create a calm and orderly environment that minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of force. This is done in a number of ways:

- Using resources including Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning to teach pupils how to manage conflicts and strong feelings
- Ensuring staff are aware of de-escalation techniques to manage conflict if it does arise
- Only using force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force
- Having up to date and regularly reviewed risk assessments and positive handling plans for individual pupils

5.3 Staff Authorised to Use Force

i. Permanent Authorisation:

Amanda Essex, Family Support Worker, has received full STEPS training on positive handling and is, therefore, best trained to use positive handling. Furthermore, members of the senior leadership team (Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher) are authorised to use positive handling where it is required as a last resort.

ii. Temporary Authorisation:

In some circumstances a) staff whose jobs do not normally involve supervising pupils and b) volunteers working with pupils will be authorised to be in control or charge of pupils, will have statutory power to use force. This might include:

- School trips
- Off-site learning activities
- After school activities

The names of these staff will be recorded in the risk assessment and plans for these activities and signed off by the Headteacher.

Staff will be kept informed about, and advised how to deal with, pupils who present particular risks to themselves. These pupils should have an individual risk assessment

and individual behaviour plan that determines the likely triggers for undesirable behaviour and the effective ways to manage such pupils.

If a pupil is suspected of having a weapon or any other dangerous object and is likely to resist a search, staff should alert the office staff and call the police to deal with the situation.

6. Staff Training

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff, as part of their induction to the school, are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the School Policy on Positive Handling.

At Waterside Primary Academy we will ensure the following training is in place:

- At least one member of staff will have received training by expert accredited providers in physical intervention and restraint technique. It is, however, not assumed that the named trained members of staff should be solely responsible for dealing with all incidents where physical intervention or restraint is required.
- All staff are made aware of the policy on the use Positive Handling with a particular focus on when, where and how force and restraint may reasonably be used and the way such incidents should be recorded.

7. Post Incident Support

If there is any injury to the child as a result of the use of restraint or force first aid and medical assistance should be sought immediately. Staff and pupils should be given appropriate emotional support.

Any member of staff who has been assaulted may decide to report the incident to the police or seek advice from their professional association.

We will ensure that there is clear follow up and use of sanctions, in line with the behaviour policy, to the poor behaviour of the pupil concerned.

We will work to help the pupil and staff involved to rebuild a productive working relationship so, where appropriate, they may resume professional contact.

8. Recording

Where positive handling has been used a record of the incident always needs to be kept on Safeguard and the Headteacher informed. All recording needs to be completed on the day of incident and needs to include the following:

- name of pupil
- date, time and place of incident
- a brief description of the incident and actions taken
- attempts made to calm the situation
- names of people who witnessed the situation
- any damage/harm to persons or property
- name of person informing parents
- after investigation a summary of action taken

After the review of any incident, a copy of the recording form will be kept by the Headteacher which can be found in the office.

9. Complaints

Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the King's Education Trust's Complaints Policy.

10. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will give a termly report to the Local Advisory Committee on the use of positive handling, force and restraint.

This policy will be reviewed alongside the School Behaviour Policy in a cycle determined by the Local Advisory Committee.