



Positive Handling Policy

Date agreed: 08th December 2021

Review Date: Autumn 2023

We are a UNICEF Rights Respecting School

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 [Child Protection \(Safeguarding\) Procedures](#) and the [Code of Conduct for Staff](#).

The policy will be reviewed as required by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

2. Aim

At Stepney Park Primary we are committed to positive behaviour management which encourages pupils to make positive behaviour choices. With the right support we believe there should be very few situations where staff will need to intervene with positive handling. However, when such a situation does arise we aim to deal with it swiftly and in a manner that does not cause additional stress to the pupil or member of staff.

At Stepney Park, we feel that positive handling will be rarely used. However, other situations where staff and pupils come into contact include:

a) Physical Contact

Situations in which proper physical contact takes place e.g. in PE, to comfort pupils, or to investigate potential injuries and/or give first aid.

b) Physical Intervention

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, e.g. guiding or leading a pupil by the arm hand or shoulder, or a hand placed on the back, with little or no force.

In rare situations, it may be necessary to use Positive Handling;

c) Positive Handling

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or property

3. Guidance on Positive Handling

There are three types of incident where restraint may be necessary:

1. Self defence or imminent risk of injury

We believe this means an attack on an adult or pupil has taken, or is about to take, place.

2. Developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property

This would include:

- Fighting
- A pupil misusing dangerous objects
- A pupil trying to leave school
- Deliberate violent damage to property

3. Seriously disruptive or defiant behaviour

This would include:

- Persistent refusal to leave a classroom
- Persistent behaviour which seriously disrupts a lesson

If staff are in a situation where physical force may be needed, wherever practical they will first:

- Calmly tell the pupil to stop
- Calmly explain what will happen if they do not stop
- Calmly repeat the request for the pupil to stop

Throughout the incident staff will continue to talk calmly to the pupil, and make it clear that the physical contact will stop as soon as it is no longer needed.

It is important that the member of staff remain calm. If they are in doubt of this they will ask another adult to take over.

Positive Handling might involve:

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupils' path
- (In extreme circumstances) Holding a pupil
- Leading a pupil
- (In some circumstances) Carrying a pupil

It may, in some circumstances, be preferable for the rest of the class to be removed from the child who is acting out.

The degree of force used must always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Staff, pupils and parents should be aware that the safety of all pupils at Stepney Park Primary School is of the highest importance. All staff will receive training on Safeguarding and the use of Positive Handling is part of the Safeguarding training. This training is updated annually.

4. Procedures

The Positive Handling of a child is always a last resort. Adults will do everything they can to prevent Positive Handling being required by being aware of the changes in children's behaviour that can be warning signs of possible 'acting out' so they can respond appropriately, hopefully defusing the situation. See Appendix A for the stages children will go through before 'acting out'.

If it becomes necessary to use Positive Handling, a member of the Senior Leadership Team should be informed as soon as is practical afterwards.

The member of staff will be asked to record what form of Positive Handling was used and the reasons for it on a [Report on the use of Positive Handling](#) form (see Appendix B). It is not necessary for this form to be used for cases of Physical Contact or Physical Intervention – see above.

It is the member of SLT's responsibility to inform the parents or carers - they will be given a copy of the report – to upload the report and to enter the incident onto CPOMS. Where appropriate, the SENDco will be informed, so potential next steps can be considered.

Appendix A: Stages of a Child 'Acting Out' and Appropriate Adult Responses

| Stage | Child's Behaviour | Approach Needed by Adult |
|-------|---|---|
| 1 | <p>ANXIETY A noticeable increase or change in behaviour. This includes low level behaviours such as giggling, rocking, excessive fiddling, facial expressions etc.</p> | <p>SUPPORTIVE Use a non-judgemental approach to try to alleviate the child's anxiety. It is important the child knows they can talk to you and that you care about them. Your tone of voice is crucial – remember it isn't what you say but the way you say it. Ask questions such as "Are you ok?" "Do you need to leave the room?" etc.</p> <p>It should be recognised that some 'time out' may be beneficial for those concerned – the child, the other children in the class or the teacher. This 'time out' should not be used as a punishment but as a therapeutic intervention to prevent the 'acting out' escalating.</p> |
| 2 | <p>DEFENSIVE Questioning why – asking questions such as "Why should I?" "Why do I have to?" etc.</p> | <p>DIRECTIVE Take control of a potentially escalating situation by firmly, clearly and calmly setting limits by, for example, recapping rules, repeating what you want them to do, giving choices etc. Redirect as necessary and deal with refusals without overreacting or entering into a power struggle with the child, for example, if a child refuses to sit where you ask, find out why and maybe accommodate them.</p> <p>Again, it should be recognised that some 'time out' may be beneficial for those concerned – the child, the other children in the class or the adult(s). This 'time out' should not be used as a punishment but as a therapeutic intervention to prevent the 'acting out' escalating.</p> |
| 3 | <p>ACTING OUT Child loses physical and emotional control and so act out either verbally or physically.</p> | <p>If verbal – ignore child and, if possible, isolate them so they do not have an audience. If physical – an adult (teacher or support staff, or as a last resort – a responsible child) should phone a member of the leadership team or if no-one is immediately contactable – the office. You <u>may</u> need to use one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interposing between pupils • blocking a pupil's path • holding a pupil • leading a pupil • carrying a pupil (in some situations) • removing the other pupils from the class (or wherever the situation is playing out) <p>REMEMBER, THE POSITIVE HANDLING OF A PUPIL IS ALWAYS A LAST RESORT. If it becomes necessary to use positive handling, a member of SLT must be informed as soon as is practical afterwards and you must complete a report on what form of positive handling was used and the reasons for it. The member of the SLT will inform the parents or carers and they will be given a copy of this report.</p> |
| 4 | <p>TENSION REDUCTION Child's energy subsides and the acting out reduces. The child will calm down.</p> | <p>THERAPEUTIC RAPPORT Discussion with pupil about the school code of behaviour, the incident, including triggers, and establish ways that the child should handle a similar situation in the future.</p> |

Appendix B: Report on the use of Positive Handling



| Report on the use of Positive Handling | | |
|--|-----------------------|---------------|
| Date: | | |
| Name of Pupil: | Date of Birth: | Class: |
| Member of Staff involved: | | |
| Member of SLT informed: | | |
| Type of Positive Handling: | | |
| Reason for Positive Handling: | | |
| Follow- up Action taken: | | |
| Parents/Carers informed by: | | |
| Date and time Parents/Carers were informed: | | |
| Recorded on CPOMs by: | | |