

Clifton Primary School



Positive Handling Policy

Date approved	Authorised Signature
26.02.25	A.Lattin

Clifton Primary School

Positive handling policy

Vision

Clifton Primary School is a safe and stimulating environment where children encounter challenging and creative learning experiences

Each member of the school community is motivated to be a life-long learner.

We will equip everyone with the skills to achieve their full potential in a climate of mutual respect and personal responsibility.

Statement of aims:

- to provide a supportive, stimulating environment in which each child is enabled and encouraged to attain the highest standard of achievement of which he or she is capable
- to ensure that the curriculum is broad and well balanced following all subjects in the National Curriculum
- to value each individual's contribution irrespective of race, gender, religion or ability
- to encourage children to be aware of their behaviour and how it affects other people
- to recognise that children have a variety of special needs and endeavour to provide appropriately for the needs of individuals
- to ensure that the curriculum reflects the richness of our multi-cultural society
- to foster and build on relationships with parents, governors and the wider community
- to provide a planned process of staff development

Legal framework

- Positive Handling should be limited to emergencies and used only in the last resort.
- Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and DfE Circular 10/98, allow teachers, and other members of staff at a school who are authorized by the headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in circumstances where the pupil may need to be prevented from engaging in behaviours which are likely to cause injury to themselves, others or damage to property.
The guidance extends this to maintaining good order and discipline, for both on-site and off- site activities
- 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**
- There is no legal definition of reasonable force. The Criminal Law Act (1967) allows any person to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent an offence (e.g. physical assault) being committed
- Reasonable minimal force must be a matter of personal judgement. All teachers have a professional 'duty of care' within their job description (School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2024). Together with the legislative framework this enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Headteacher to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:
 - committing an offence
 - causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself)

- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school
- among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

Statement of aims:

- to protect every person in the school community from harm
- to protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful
- to use the minimum degree of force necessary to accomplish positive handling
- to recognise that children have a variety of special needs and endeavour to provide appropriately for the needs of individuals

Equal opportunities: (Cross reference to Equality policy)

Clifton Primary School is committed to the following:

- opposing all forms of discrimination – individual and institutional, direct and indirect
- challenging all forms of discrimination about different groups in society
- translating good equal opportunities principles into all our policies and practice
- maintaining and developing an inclusive culture where every individual feel's valued and aspires to succeed.

Statement for parents

In keeping with our home/school partnership, we will inform all parents/carers of our policy on Positive Handling and the statement will be included on the school website.

The statement will highlight:

- our emphasis on care and protection for everyone within our school community
- our belief that restraint will be needed on very rare occasions
- our endeavour to handle situations with care and responsibility
- our intent to apply follow-up and repair strategies

The statement will outline:

- when staff are authorised to use reasonable physical intervention
- what steps will be taken after an incident has been dealt with
- the responsibilities of staff, pupils, and parents/carers in resolving situations
- to provide a planned process of staff development
- to give full support to staff who have been assaulted or have suffered verbal abuse from pupils or others
- to maintain accurate records of incidents where positive handling has been employed

Risk assessment

Although most young people will never require any form of Positive Handling, staff may have to deal with some young people who exhibit disturbed, distressed and distressing behaviour.

It is therefore necessary to carry out risk assessment. We will attempt to reduce risk by managing:

- the environment
- body language
- the way we talk
- the way we act

Individual risk assessments

The school's respect for the rights of the individual takes into consideration the context of The Human

Rights Act (1998) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991).

The school's ethos and the guidance in this policy is based on the presumption that every adult and child is entitled to:

- respect for his/her private life
- the right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment
- the right to liberty and security
- the right not to be discriminated against in his/her enjoyment of those rights

If we become aware, that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, it is our intention to plan how to respond if the situation arises.

Such planning needs to address:

- managing the pupil
 - reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict
 - holds to be used if necessary
- involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate
- if positive handling is likely to be necessary this should be included in the pupil's individual education plan (IEP) together with information on:
 - de-escalation strategies
 - the manner in which the pupil will be held
 - how support can be summoned if needed
 - any medical factors to be considered

Procedures

In the event of positive handling having been used, it is important to consider the strategies, which are deemed acceptable, and the recording procedures that should be in place

Action steps

1. Tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and state possible consequences of failure to do so
2. If possible summon another adult
3. Continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident
4. Make it clear that restraint will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary

5. Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include
 - a. providing medical support
 - b. providing respite for those involved

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem.

Recording

Staff should record all incidents of restraint in accordance with school policy and report these to the headteacher. Details should include:

- name of pupil(s)
- staff member(s) involved
- factors necessitating physical intervention
- the strategies which were employed prior to using physical intervention
- how physical intervention was effected
- outcome of restraint
- any other action taken in the management of the incident

Parents/carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This action should also be recorded

Situations when it might be appropriate to use reasonable force

1. Committing an offence
2. Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself)
3. Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or amongst its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

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)

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
- a pupil is behaving in such a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

Strategies

All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and steps, which they can take to defuse and calm a situation

- move calmly and confidently
- make simple, clear statements
- intervene early
- try to maintain eye contact
- if necessary summon help before the problem escalates
- remove audience from the immediate location

There are situations where staff should not intervene without help. Assistance should be sought when dealing with:

- a physically large pupil
- more than one pupil
- when the teacher believes that s/he 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

The method of restraint employed must use the **minimum force** for the **minimum time** and must observe the following requirements remembering that restraint **MUST NOT**:

- involve hitting the pupil
- involve deliberately inflicting pain on the pupil
- restrict the pupil's breathing
- involve contact with sexually sensitive areas

During any incident, the person restraining the pupil should:

- offer verbal reassurance to the pupil
- cause the minimum level of restriction of movement
- reduce the danger of any accidental injury

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- physically interposing between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- holding
- pushing
- pulling
- leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- in extreme circumstances, using more restrictive holds

Some dos and don'ts

DO

- be aware of any feelings of anger
- summon help
- continue to talk to the pupil in a calm way
- provide a soft surface if possible
- be aware of any accessories worn by you or the pupil
- hold the pupil's arms by his/her sides

DO NOT

- try to manage on your own
- stop talking even if the pupil does not reply
- straddle the pupil
- push arms up the back
- touch the pupil near the throat or head
- put pressure on joints
- try to manage on your own

Training

1. It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that all staff, both teaching and support staff are fully informed of the school policy and understand what authorisation entails
2. It is the responsibility of the headteacher to arrange training or guidance to staff
3. An up-to-date list of, authorised staff should be maintained within school and all staff should know who they are
4. There are **no** government approved training techniques for positive handling. The school may wish to consult with the Local Authority if a particular course of training is to be embarked upon
5. Additional advice and support on managing behaviour can be provided through the Educational Psychology Service or Behaviour Support Service
6. The headteacher should identify people, other than teachers, whom they wish to authorise to have control or charge of pupils and therefore be able to use force if necessary.
7. Authorisation may be on a permanent or long-term basis because of the nature of the person's job, or short term for a specific event such as a school trip.
8. The headteacher should explicitly inform the people concerned, and ensure that they are aware of and properly understand what the authorisation entails.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with Milburn Primary School's

- behaviour policy
- exclusion policy
- staff disciplinary policy
- health & safety policy
- child protection policy



Reporting and recording proforma

APPENDIX 1

RECORD OF RESTRAINT	
Date of incident	Time of incident
Pupil Name	Date of birth
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 injured pupil and any subsequent treatment	
Date parent/carer informed of incident	Time
By whom informed	
Outline of parent/carer response	
Signature of staff completing report	Date
Signature of teacher-in-charge	Date
Signature of headteacher	Date
Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action	