



Positive Handling Policy

Positive Handling Policy

Mayflower School acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

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 policy will be reviewed bi- annually by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

The policy is based on the document ***Use of reasonable Force DfE 2013***.

Purpose of the policy

Good professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the behaviour policy approaches put in place by the staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in **exceptional** circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of positive handling may be required. Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in Mayflower Primary School:

- i. clearly understands this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary and
- ii. are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

The application of any form of positive handling places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. 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.

We are privileged in primary schools to be the introduction children have to their formal education:

At Mayflower School we endeavour to:

- Create the right ethos for children to work, grow and develop their individual potential, helping them to become competent and confident adults able to live their own lives and contribute to society.
- Provide a climate where children learn to co-operate with others, care for their peers and environment and respect the fact that not everyone looks, feels or thinks the same.

3. Definitions

(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.

Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working at Mayflower School 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 have 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 complaints 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 ensure the good behaviour of their child and that the child understands and follows the school's Behaviour Policy.

Training

Positive Handling training will be made available to designated staff and will be the responsibility of the Headteacher. No member of staff will be expected to undertake positive handling without appropriate training however *in exceptional circumstances, any member of staff may be called upon to assist*. Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken.

Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches will be taken according to the circumstances of the incident:

a) Verbal acknowledgment of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain; this includes negotiation, care and concern.

b) Further verbal reprimand stating:

-this is the second request for compliance

-an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable

-an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues.

c) Warning of potential need to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies. If possible summon assistance.

d) Physical intervention. Reasonable physical intervention using the minimum degree of contact to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Physical Intervention / Positive Handling: Use of Reasonable Force

At Mayflower School selected staff are trained in positive handling who can be called upon to support when required.

Positive handling:

- Focuses on prevention, de-escalation and avoidance
- Addresses the risks of physical interventions
- Teaches safe, non-harmful interventions
- Offers proven post-incident strategies to prevent future crises

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most staff 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 child needs

to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.

As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. 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.

Who can use reasonable force?

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

When can reasonable force be used?

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.

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.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

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.

We will NOT use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Examples of situations:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil
- pupils are fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing injury, damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of materials or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or in a way which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave the school
- a pupil persistently refusing to do as requested.
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

Acceptable measures of Physical Intervention.

Positive handling can only be deemed reasonable if:

- it is warranted by the particular circumstances of the incident
- it is delivered in accordance with the seriousness of the incident and the consequences which it is desired to prevent
- it is carried out as the minimum to achieve the desired result
- the age, understanding and the gender of the pupil are taken into account
- it is likely to achieve the desired result

Wherever possible, assistance will be sought from another member of staff before intervention.

The form of physical intervention may involve staff doing the following:

- physically interposing themselves between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- escorting a pupil
- shepherding a pupil away

Any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way in which staff exercise their responsibilities and the behaviour management strategies used.

Whenever positive handling is used, staff will keep talking to the pupil.

Recording

It is important that staff immediately report any incident of positive handling that takes place between themselves and a pupil, to the head teacher or most senior member of staff in school at the time. This should be followed by completing a full report of the incident, using the proforma in appendix A and then adding the incident to CPOMS. Parents will also be informed of any incident involving their child and will be given an opportunity to discuss the incident at the earliest possible convenience.

Staff completing recording forms will keep a copy for themselves for future reference.

After the review of any incident, a copy of the recording form will be placed on the pupil's file.

Action after an Incident

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

Child Protection Procedure

Staff Facing Allegations of Abuse Procedure

Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure

School Behaviour Policy

Exclusions Procedure

Members of staff will be kept informed of any action taken. In case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

Complaints

The availability of a clear policy regarding Positive Handling and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them. Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's Complaints about Staff Procedure Policy. The Chair of Governors will be informed of complaints but other governors will not be involved as a complaint may require further action on their part.

Policy Date: October 2022

To be Reviewed: October 2025

Record of an incident of force to control or restrain a pupil

Name of pupil involved:	
When did the incident take place?	
Where did the incident take place?	
Name of any members of staff who witnessed the incident:	
The reason that force was necessary:	
How the incident /began progressed:	
Details of the pupil's behaviour :	
What was said by different parties?	
Steps taken to calm the situation:	
The degree of force used / how it was applied / for how long:	
What was the parent's response and the outcome of the incident?	
Details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil or a member of staff and or damage to property:	
Staff signature:	Parent/carers signature: