



**Bramford**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Positive Handling Policy

Date: September 2023  
Review Due: September 2024

# Positive Handling Policy



Staff at Bramford Primary School are trained to look after pupils in their care. Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow the school's Positive Handling Policy.

## School Ethos

Every adult in the school has an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in dealings with children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we aim to:

- Create a positive, caring climate and emphasize the importance of being valued as an individual and as a group
- Promote a Values Based approach to learning and behaviour
- Ensure fair treatment for all and show appreciation of efforts and contributions

## Legal Framework

Positive Handling should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and DFEE Circular 10/98 allow teachers, and other members of staff at a school who are authorised by the Head i.e. those who have been trained, 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.

The DfE Use of Reasonable Force Guidance allows all staff at a school to use reasonable force to keep children safe. It also allows other adults in the school to use physical interventions where reasonable, proportionate and necessary to ensure the safety of children. Those might include classroom assistants, midday supervisors, specialist support assistants, including people accompanying pupils on visits, or residential visits organised by the school.

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 which is underwritten by paragraph 58.7 of School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2002. Together with the legislative framework this enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Head to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances.

## What is reasonable force?

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions that involves 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 student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

## Guiding Principles

## What does it mean to restrain a child?

Positive handling is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property. The proper use of positive handling requires skill and judgement, as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of restraining. The decision to use positive handling as restrictive physical intervention must take account of the circumstances and be based on an assessment of the risks associated with the intervention compared with the risks of not employing a restrictive intervention. The physical intervention must also only employ a reasonable amount of force – that is the minimum force needed to avert injury or damage to property, or to prevent a breakdown in discipline – applied for the shortest period of time (see section on use of reasonable force).

## Why use restraint?

Positive handling should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/herself or others. Positive handling skilfully applied may be eased by degrees as the child calms down in response to the physical contact. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour. Should physical restraint be necessary it will be utilised by staff trained in the correct procedures. Staff members trained in 'Team Teach' will be summonsed as quickly as possible with the intention of deescalating and reducing the risks to the child, other persons and property.

## C.P.I. (Crisis Prevention Institute) Safety Intervention <sup>TM</sup>

**C.P.I. Safety Intervention <sup>TM</sup> training is used at Bramford because we recognise that the training, philosophy, lessons, and skills taught in the program align with our professional values. Staff are trained in this approach by qualified C.P.I. instructors and carry a blue card in recognition of this.**

Although only accredited staff are permitted to use trained physical intervention techniques any member of staff may be required to physically intervene with a pupil who is endangering themselves or others. In this instance we would expect staff to ensure the safety of all but accredited staff will take over as soon as possible.

## General aims

The staff at Bramford Primary School recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the strategies available to secure pupil safety/well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline.

## The 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 provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations.
- To use the minimum degree of force necessary to accomplish positive handling.
- To give full support to staff who have been assaulted or have suffered verbal abuse from pupils or others.

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- To maintain accurate records of incidents where positive handling (including restraint) has been employed.

## Risk Assessment

Although most pupils at Bramford will never require any form of positive handling, staff may have to deal with some pupils 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 school environment
- Body language
- The way we talk
- The way we act

## Post Incident Debrief

Following a serious incident, it is the policy of the school to offer support to all involved. This is an opportunity for learning and time needs to be given for following up incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other peoples' perspective. It is difficult to devise a framework of support that meets the need of all staff. As individuals we all vary in how much support we need after an unpleasant incident.

Generally a member of senior staff would expect to talk to staff and children involved (if appropriate) in any incidents involving violence. If members of staff need time to rest or compose themselves, then the head teacher or deputy will make arrangements for the class group to be supported.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy and Behaviour Policy.