



Positive Handling Policy

Last Reviewed: November 2024
Next Review Due: November 2025

Reviewed Annually

Introduction

Staff at Saxon Way 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.

Only staff trained in the appropriate positive handling strategy techniques will use physical intervention techniques with children when necessary, unless an emergency demands otherwise.

The term positive handling includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

The school takes seriously its duty of care to pupils, employees and visitors to the school and has regard to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Education and Inspections Act 2006

H & S A W Act: Section 2 – School duty to staff

"It shall be the duty of all employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health safety and welfare of all their employees whilst they are at work."

H & S A W Act: Section 3 – School duty to others

"It shall be the duty of every employer to conduct his undertaking in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons not in his employment who may be affected thereby are not thereby exposed to risks to their health or safety."

H & S A W Act: Section 7 – School duty of care to themselves and others

"It shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and of other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work."

E & I Act 2006: Section 93 - Power of members of staff to use force

"A person to whom this section applies may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing a pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following, namely—

- (a) committing any offence,
- (b) causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself), or
- (c) prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise."

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 and accredited staff will take over as soon as possible.

Staff at Saxon Way Primary School are trained in either Team Teach or Positive Handling

The Team Teach system is recognised by the Local Authority.

Positive Handling training is provided by Dynamis, a quality award centre with the Institute of Conflict Management.

See: <http://www.team-teach.co.uk/TT%20%20Accreditation%20Status%20April%202015.pdf>

Before using physical controls

- Showing care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiating and reasoning.
- Giving clear directions for pupils to stop
- Reminding them about rules and likely outcomes
- Removing an audience or taking vulnerable pupils to a safe place
- Making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons
- Using positive guidance to escort pupils to somewhere less pressured
- Ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and call for help

Restraint

At this school we only use physical restraint when there is no realistic alternative. We expect staff to risk assess and choose the safest alternative. It also means that we expect staff to experiment and think creatively about alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. The paramount consideration is to create safety in a situation where someone might be harmed as a result of the actions of another, balancing the needs and safety of the distressed pupil, the needs and safety of other pupils and the needs and safety of staff.

E.g.: Staff protecting themselves from an assault by the pupil might not meet this requirement, but would be acting lawfully, appropriately and logically.

Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate.

Physical restraint must only be in accordance with the following:

- The child should be in immediate danger of harming itself or another person or in danger of seriously damaging property.
- The member of staff should have good grounds for believing this.
- Only a proportionate amount of force will be used for the amount of time necessary.
- Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before applying restraint. These staff can act as assistants or witnesses.
- Once safe, restraint should be relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control.
- Restraint should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- Physical restraint should not usually be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate danger present to people and property.
- The restraint should be discussed with the child, if appropriate, and the parents at the earliest opportunity.
In addition, whilst or before intervention, staff should speak calmly as a way of reassurance e.g. I am doing this to keep you safe.
- Any restraint should be recorded as soon as practically possible after the event.

Responding to unforeseen emergencies

Even the best planning system cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. An unforeseen event may require an emergency response. After that event, staff have a duty to plan ahead and prepare a risk assessment.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are required for pupils who exhibit **extreme** behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong.

When considering a pupil's behaviour, staff will think about the following questions:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this pupil's behaviour?
- Have we got all the information we need to conduct a risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan as a result?
- What further steps can we take to prevent dangerous behaviour from developing?

Positive Handling Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Positive Handling Plan. The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. Any particular physical techniques which have been found to be effective should be named, along with any alerts to any which have proved to be ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Positive Handling Plans should be considered along with the child's Educational Health care Plan (EHCP) and any other planning document relevant to the pupil. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special needs and social context.

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 of School or Assistant Head teacher will make arrangements for the class group to be supported.

Recording

- All incidents of unacceptable behaviour should be recorded on CPOMS.
- All serious incidents or incidents involving restraint will be recorded in the appropriate book. Within these recording strategies, all details must be recorded by witnesses within twenty-four hours and signed by at least two members of staff. The Head of School needs to be informed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head of School will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required.

Parents

When there is concern about a child, parents will be invited to contribute to a risk assessment and Positive Handling Plan. Written parental agreement will form part of this. Parents will be informed of the school's policies. Parents will be informed following serious incidents.

Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints will follow the school's complaints procedure.