



POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

Updated by	Richard Daniels
Updated when	March 2024
Next Review Date	March 2026

1. Policy statement

- At Riverside Primary School and Nursery, it is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the school's Behaviour Regulation Policy.
- It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances staff may need to physically intervene when there is an obvious risk to the safety of its children, staff, or property. Such intervention or restraint is termed '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.
- Riverside Primary School and Nursery does not support the routine use of physical interventions.
- Positive handling should not be used for disciplinary purposes. It is always unlawful to use force as punishment.
- Positive handling uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming themselves or others or from causing damage to property.
- The scale and nature of the physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual and the nature of the harm they may cause.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school:
 - Clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary and,
 - Are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

2. Reasonable force

No legal definition of 'reasonable force' exists. For the purpose of this policy, the clarification provided in the DFE guidance document 'Use of Reasonable Force,' 2013 is used:

What is 'reasonable force'?

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers 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 student 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.
- It is acknowledged that in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injury as an accidental consequence of the intervention.

3. Different types of physical contact with pupils

Physical contact

There are different situations in which physical contact may occur between staff and pupils. Examples of where touching a pupil might be appropriate may include:

- Holding the hand of the child at the front or back of the line when moving around school;
- When comforting a distressed pupil;
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
- To demonstrate techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching;
- To give first aid;
- When supporting with intimate care.

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 arm or shoulders where the pupil is compliant. It may also involve blocking a child's path or preventing them from exiting through a door.

Physical control/restraint

This involves the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. It is important to note that the use of 'reasonable force' should be seen as a last resort. All such incidents must be recorded and be stored in an accessible way. If at all possible, more than one member of staff should be present if physical restraint is necessitated. The level of compliance from the pupil determines whether or not the interaction is an intervention or a control/restraint.

Dealing with potential aggression:

Some children have the potential to be quite physical towards adults; this is understandably a difficult situation for anyone to deal with. If you are faced with this situation:

- Move away from the child so that they cannot hurt you. Make sure they can get away from you and that your stance is not preventing them from moving.
- Ensure you use a very calm tone of voice with the children even if you are feeling stressed. Do not get into any kind of discussion or argument with the child. Do not tell them their behaviour is unacceptable. You can issue a choice such as 'you can go to the Sunflower Room or you can sit in the reading corner' but make sure the choice includes something they will not find threatening.
- Reduce your language. Children under stress get more and more stressed and anxious when people speak to them. Children with ASD struggle immensely with this.
- Do not prevent them from going anywhere e.g., out of the classroom, into another room, onto the field unless they pose a risk to themselves or others. If they run off, you can refer to Learning Mentors or SLT.
- Understand that when a child gets to this point, they are at crisis point and are not able to make rational decisions. It is not aimed at you personally.
- Praise when you see them calming e.g., 'Well done, I can see you taking deep breaths and starting to calm yourself down'.
- Send for help if you think a child's behaviour is escalating to this point. You can do this by sending a child or a note to the office asking for immediate assistance.

Team Teach

The Team-Teach approach is designed to reduce reliance on restraint and restriction by expanding the toolbox of positive behavioural supports. Riverside Primary School and Nursery currently has a number of staff who are trained in Team Teach methods (see appendix 2).

Guidance: Before an Incident

Any physical intervention involves a degree of risk; an assessment of the level of risk must be undertaken before deciding to intervene.

The positive handling of a pupil should lead to the calming of the situation and not lead to greater injury or an escalation of violence.

All efforts to avoid physical intervention should be taken.

Positive handling is a form of control which should only be used when the situation does not allow for any other method to be employed and when a situation is about to exist where:

- the actions of a pupil would place him / herself, other pupils or staff at the risk of serious injury;
- there could be serious damage to property.

The following considerations should form part of the risk assessment:

- The location of the incident and the potential for the restraint to be carried out safely;
- The restrainer's capacity to act calmly;
- The age, gender, physiques and any known medical conditions of the pupil and the restrainer;
- The scope to involve a second adult to assist or supervise or to call for a member of staff who has been trained in Team Teach methods;
- The clothing being worn by the pupil and the restrainer, together with any jewellery or spectacles / hearing aid;
- Any previous experience by the pupil of restraint and predictable reaction;
- The presence of any weapon.

Guidance: During an Incident

In any application of positive handling, the minimum reasonable force should be used to calm down the situation.

Help should be summoned from colleagues; other pupils should never be involved in a restraint.

The pupil should be approached calmly but firmly. Where possible, explain the consequences of refusing to stop the behaviour.

The method of restraint employed must use the minimum force for the minimum time and must observe the following requirements:

Restraint must not:

- Involve hitting the pupil;
- Involve deliberately inflicting pain on the pupil;
- Restrict the pupil's breathing;

- Involve putting the restrainer's full weight on the spine or abdominal area;
- Involve contact with sexually sensitive areas.

During any incident, the restrainer should:

- Offer verbal reassurance to the pupil;
- Cause the minimal level of restriction of movement;
- Reduce the danger of any accidental injury.

Guidance: After an Incident

Following an incident involving positive handling, a record should be made by the restrainer and any other adult who was present; the details of the restraint must be **logged on Arbor** (under the physical intervention tab). The pupil should also be requested to provide an account.

This record should be printed off and given to the Headteacher.

All records should be signed and dated and should include that of the Headteacher or senior member of staff on duty at the time.

The record should include:

- Details of where and when the incident took place;
- Circumstances and significant factors that led to the incident;
- The nature and duration of the positive handling used;
- The names of all staff and pupils who witnessed the incident;
- A description of any injuries sustained by the pupil or member of staff and any subsequent medical attention;
- A description of any action taken after the incident.

This report should be completed as soon as possible and not later than the end of the working day in which the incident took place.

Following an incident involving restraint, both the pupil and member(s) of staff involved should be given the opportunity to discuss it with an appropriate person who was not party to the incident.

Parents should be advised of the incident.

A record is kept on the google drive of any incidents. This is shared with the SLT and the Chair of Governors.

Consideration should be given as to whether the restraint complied with this guidance and whether it raised any Child Protection issues.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

The governing body will monitor the impact of this policy every two years.

Appendix 1: Staff currently trained in Team Teach methods:

Member of staff	Type of Training	Role	Date trained	Date training expires
Richard Daniels	Team Teach	Headteacher	6/1/2024	6/1/2026
Ghazala Hussain	Team Teach	Learning Mentor	23/10/2020	23/10/2023
Rosana Dirkin	Team Teach	Learning Mentor	6/1/2024	6/1/2026
Sarah Barnard	Team Teach	Assistant Headteacher	10/6/2023	10/6/2025