

# HEATHCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Positive Handling Policy

<b>Date adopted by Governors:</b>	<b>March 2023</b>
<b>Date for policy review:</b>	<b>March 2025</b>
<b>Person responsible for review:</b>	<b>Safeguarding Lead</b>
<b>Signed by Chair of Governors</b>	<b>March 2023</b>

## **1. Introduction**

### **The Legal Framework**

Positive handling should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Education and Inspections Act 2006 clarifies powers that already exist in common law. It states that staff can use reasonable force for the purpose of preventing a pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following:

- committing any offence;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- 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.

“Use of Reasonable Force” (DfE, July 2013) offers further guidance to staff to use such force as is reasonable in the following circumstances:

- 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.

(Examples of possible situations are given in Appendix 1)

### **Definition of Positive Handling at Heathcote Primary School**

Positive handling is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property.

### **General Policy Aims**

Staff at Heathcote Primary School recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupil safety / well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline. Our policy on positive handling should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.

### **Specific Aims of the Positive Handling Policy**

- 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.

## **2. Procedures and Practice**

### **Why Use Positive Handling?**

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. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self- control of emotions and behaviour.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which positive handling would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the School's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour. Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in *loco parentis* and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and wellbeing.

### **Alternative Strategies**

There are some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (e.g. a pupil is about to run across a road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives e.g. use of assertiveness skills such as:

- the *broken record* in which an instruction is repeated until the pupil complies;
- use of a distracter, such as a loud whistle, to interrupt the behaviour (such as a fight) long enough for other methods of verbal control to be effective;
- withdrawal of attention (audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened;
- other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour (in these cases the incident can be dealt with later when emotions are no longer running high);
- the employment of other sanctions consistent with the School's policy on behaviour.

### **Use of Positive Handling**

Positive handling should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control.

Named staff are only authorized to use reasonable force in applying positive handling, although there is no absolute definition of this, as what constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary.

In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate and effective positive handling must be a last resort. When positive handling becomes necessary:

## **DO**

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

## **DON'T**

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil

## **Actions after an Incident**

Positive handling often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. **A member of the leadership team should be informed of any incident as soon as possible** and an appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behaviour plan which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed with the SENDco and /or SLT. This may include a Level of Crisis – Behaviour Plan (Appendix 3) identifying behaviours and the identified response from professionals in school. A meeting is arranged with the parent/carer to share the plan and sign in agreement. Children maybe involved in this if they are old enough to understand the process. This ensures that the parent/carer is fully aware of the strategies used to support the child and all staff are using a consistent approach.

It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

All incidents should be recorded immediately using CPOMS (electronic safeguarding tool). Full details should be given so that in the event of any future complaint a full record is available.

### **Risk Assessments**

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. The school will develop a 'contract' / behaviour plan between child and class teacher.

This plan will address:

- clear expectations for the child in the form of goals
- management of the pupil (e.g. consequences and rewards)
- involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

### **Complaints**

A clear positive handling policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and children services department under child protection procedures. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

## Appendix 1

### When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

Examples of situations that may require restraint are when:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils are 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 absconding from a class or trying to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school);
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area;
- a pupil behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson.

## Appendix 2

### Named Staff:

Several staff may be trained to use positive handling. Please ask in school if you would like this information.

**Appendix 3 – different plans and examples:** (These formats are examples and should be completed with details of the particular observable behaviours, and responses known/considered to be effective for this pupil – it is not a checklist)

**These plans are intended to support everyone in returning to calm stage as effectively as possible.**

### Planning to Support Emotional Regulation

Name .....

Date .....

**Aims:**

- Staff to identify signs of dysregulation
- Staff to offer appropriate intervention at each level
- Pupil to develop emotional awareness and learn to self-regulate

	<b>Signs of dysregulation</b>	<b>Staff interventions which work</b>
0	<b>ALL CALM –..... on task and learning appropriately</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looks like this ...</li> </ul>	<b>Intervention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looks like this e.g. praise &amp; encouragement</li> </ul>
1	<b>Low-level behaviours, possibly self-calming behaviours.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may see ...</li> </ul>	<b>Supportive responses – calm and clear</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These will be ...</li> </ul>
2	<b>Medium level behaviours – becoming increasingly dysregulated</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may see ...</li> </ul>	<b>Consider changes to activity or setting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available options ...</li> </ul>
3	<b>High level behaviours</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may see ...</li> </ul>	<b>High level responses – continue to use level one and two responses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional high level responses may look like this ...</li> </ul>
5	<b>After a serious incident people can become withdrawn and may not want to interact.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. you might see no response – looks vacant,</li> </ul>	<b>Supportive handling responses – monitor and support; show concern and care; respond to indication of communication from pupil; do not attempt disciplinary issues at this stage.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other responses could include ...</li> </ul>
6	<b>Pupil is ready to respond and communicate.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gently ask if the pupil feels calm and ready to move on.</li> </ul>	<b>Follow up - a) immediate: return to agreed place and activity; b) at a later time as appropriate, listening, debrief, recording, planning to avoid happening again.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a) Possible suggestions .....</li> <li>• b) Arrangements for debrief and planning .....</li> </ul>

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Plan agreed by teacher:</b>
	<b>Headteacher:</b>
	<b>Other:</b>

This plan will be reviewed on .....

### XXX Day

8:45am	My trusted adult meets me from the car
	We go into school and I can have some breakfast
	How am I feeling?
	We start using my now and next board that helps me know what will be next
	Sensory time in my safe place – Hawthorn classroom
	I can see the timetable for the day
9:10am	I can choose my lunch from the menu or have a ham sandwich
	I go into the classroom for some learning
10:00am	I go to the toilet
	Sensory time in my safe place - Hawthorn classroom
	How am I feeling?
10:30am	I have playtime in the Y5 zone on the playground
	I can have a snack
10:50am	How am I feeling?
	I go into the classroom for some learning
11:30am	Sensory time in my safe place - Hawthorn classroom
	How am I feeling?
12:00pm	I go to the toilet
	I have playtime in the Y5 zone on the playground
12:30am	I go with my trusted adult to the hall to collect my lunch
	I eat my lunch in the corridor with my adult and a friend
	We play a game together
1:00pm	Sensory time in my safe place - Hawthorn classroom
	How am I feeling?
	I can see the timetable for the day
1:30pm	I go into the classroom for some learning
2:15m	I go to the toilet
	Sensory time in my safe place - Hawthorn classroom
2:45pm	I go into the classroom for some learning
	How am I feeling?
3:10pm	My trusted adult takes me to meet Mum and shares my day









Name: XXX

Setting:


XXX

Date: XXX

Personal Intervention Plan

	<p><b>Calm</b></p>  <p>Preventing the triggers</p>	<p><b>Trigger Phase</b></p>  <p>Spotting the triggers</p>	<p><b>Escalation Phase</b></p>  <p>Prevention</p>	<p><b>Crisis Phase</b></p> 	<p><b>Recovery Phase</b></p> 	<p><b>Depression Phase</b></p>  <p>Repairing the relationship</p>
<p>The Child</p> <p><i>-How they look</i> <i>-What they say</i> <i>-What they do</i></p>	<p>~Smiley and giggly. ~Chatty ~Compliant. ~Wants to do ability-matched tasks, but on his terms and out of the classroom.</p>	<p>~Not answering ~“Hhmm” ~“I’m not saying” ~Not feeling safe – fearing the next play activity won’t happen ~Immerses himself in play ~Not compliant</p>	<p>~Running up and down the corridor ~Uncontrollable laughing ~Frenzied ~Cannot listen or process what is being said</p>	<p>~Hitting ~Throwing purposely towards adults ~Kicking</p>	<p>~When he gets distracted, quickly calms down ~He is hot and thirsty ~He starts talking about the incident</p>	<p>~Approx. after 30 minutes ~Knows it is important to have the conversation afterwards ~Likes the colour monster ~Wants to apologise</p>
<p>Adult responses</p> <p><i>-What they say</i> <i>-What they do</i> <i>-What strategies are used</i></p>	<p>~“I wonder if...” ~“I bet you can’t...” ~Loves praise and stickers – sticker chart ~Photocopy work to show Mum ~Use now and next when he is calm ~Use activities and creative curriculum around his interests.</p>	<p>~Use a visual timer – “in 5 minutes you are going to put that away” ~Don’t introduce the next task/ expectation ~Talk about the colour monster</p>	<p>~Remove other children from area ~No demands ~“Connor, I am here when you are ready” ...repeat ~Adult doing a calming activity to distract/join in with ~Change of face if necessary</p>	<p>~Remove other children from area ~Adult to support – change of face if necessary ???</p>	<p>~Take his jumper off and get him a drink</p>	<p>~Use the colour monster: How were you feeling? How might they be feeling? Why? What can you do now? What could have happened differently for a different outcome? ~Guide through and support apology</p>
<p>Additional notes</p>			<p>Use: *Play doh *Jigsaw *Reading book</p>			

Appendix 4

<b>Record of Restraint</b>		
Date of Incident:	Time of Incident:	
Pupil Name:	DOB:	
Member(s) of staff involved:		
Adult witnesses to restraint:		
Pupil witnesses to restraint:		
Outline of event leading to restraint:		
Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used);		
Outcome :		



**Record of Restraint Page2**

Description of any injury sustained and any subsequent treatment:

Date/time parent/carer informed of incident:

By whom informed:

Outline of parent/carer response:

Signatures:	
Name:.....	Name:.....
Signed:.....	Signed:.....

Name:.....	Name:.....
Signed:.....	Signed:.....

Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action: