



Fallings Park Primary School

Positive Handling Policy

2025-2026

Positive Handling Policy 2025-26 – Fallings Park Primary

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

Introduction

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils or may need to be positively handled. It should be noted that whilst this document is relevant to all staff, **only designated staff** can undertake the positive handling section and must do so in line with their training and the Positive Handling Handbook.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- DfE publication - Use of Reasonable Force – Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies.
- Positive Handling for Schools Handbook
- School's Behaviour Policy.

Purpose of the policy

It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the discipline practised 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 our School:

- clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary.

- where appropriate are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working at Fallings Park Primary 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

The school will ensure that all pupils and parent/carers understand the need for and respond to school values and procedures which govern behaviour in the school.

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. **Only to be undertaken by trained staff.** All such incidents will be recorded.

When reasonable force can be used

- In a school, reasonable 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.

Positive Handling will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed, and only according to the conditions and procedures outlined in:

- DfE publication - Use of Reasonable Force – Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies.
- Positive Handling for Schools Handbook

The 1996 Education Act (Section 550A) stipulates that reasonable physical intervention may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following;

- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils; whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom, during a teaching session or elsewhere (this includes authorised out-of-school activities)
- self-injuring or placing himself or herself at risk
- injuring others
- causing damage to property, including that of the pupil himself or herself
- committing a criminal offence (even if the pupil is below the age of criminal responsibility)

The DfE 'Use of Reasonable force' Document states that 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
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Schools cannot:

- use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Examples of situations which may require reasonable force:

- 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

Training

Positive Handling training has been undertaken with designated staff. No member of staff will be expected to undertake positive handling without appropriate training.

The following members of staff have undertaken positive handling training

H Athersmith

L Gough

R Smith

H Atkinson

C Mason

S Darlington

N Heywood

S Pedley - HT

J Ebbelwhite - DHT

M Wiley – AHT

D Asbury – Learning Mentor

H Stoker – Year Leader

R Smith – Year Leader

Amanda Steventon- HLTA

Faye Thomas- Y1 Teacher

P Harar – L3 TA

Maxime Bott – L3 TA

Chloe Cooper - HLTA

Implementing Positive Handling

Positive Handling is only to be undertaken by trained designated staff and should not be undertaken alone .

Implementation is further outlined in the 'Positive Handling for Schools' Handbook used in training. Designated staff have hard copies of this document and undergo refresher training as a group.

Strategies for Dealing with Behaviours that Require Positive Handling

Refer to the School behaviour policy for our values and procedures for promoting good behaviour.

Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes reasonable force, 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 requiring reasonable force and that this will cease when the pupil complies. If possible summon assistance.
- d) Physical intervention. Physical intervention requiring force using the minimum degree of contact to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Outline of Positive Handling Procedures **De-Escalation**

When confronted with aggressive behaviour the first thing to try is to reduce the aggression and try and calm the subject down. The following things can make a difference to the subject's behaviour:-

- Using their name (status/rapport)
- Acknowledging their right to their feelings (fairness/status)
- Telling them why you are there (rapport/status)
- Telling them what they can do (autonomy/certainty)
- Offering a "get out" (status/autonomy)

Non-Harmful / Least Intrusive / Restrictive Methods of Control

- Prompting
- Escorting/Guiding
- Holding
- Low-Level / Least Restrictive Restraint / Intervention
- Cupped Fist Hold
- Straight Arm Immobilisation
- Seated Rest Positions
- Kneeling Positions

Working as a Team - Contact & Cover

The concept of contact and cover is used to maximize staff safety when dealing with pupils. The principal of contact and cover involves two clearly defined roles, namely the contact member of staff and the cover member of staff.

Recording

Where positive handling has been used a record of the incident using a concern form is kept. All recording needs to be completed on the day of incident and needs to include the following:

- name of pupil
- date, time and place of incident
- a brief description of the incident and actions taken
- attempts made to calm the situation
- names of people who witnessed the situation
- any damage/harm to persons or property
- name of person informing parents
- after investigation a summary of action taken

Staff completing recording forms forward a copy to the Headteacher and 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 behaviour file.

Further Action after an Incident

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will inform parent/carers where reasonable force has been used. 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.

Monitoring of Incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use positive handling, this will always be recorded and documented. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Headteacher to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour can only be contained using positive handling.

This process will address patterns of incidents and evaluate trends which may be emerging.

Power to search pupils without consent

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following "prohibited items"¹:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force **cannot** be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

Separate guidance is available on the power to search without consent – see the 'Further sources of information' section for a link to this document.