



Brampton Abbots CE Primary School



Bridstow CE Primary School



Oak Meadow Federation

Positive Handling Policy

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the Governing Body at least every three years. All references to 'the school' imply both Brampton Abbots and Bridstow Primary Schools.

Policy approved by Governing Body on 13th July 2020

Signed Daniel Brearey, Headteacher

Paul Mason, GB Chair

Policy due for review July 2023

Positive Handling Policy

1. Statement of Safeguarding Children

1.1 Our school community has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are our pupils. This means that we have a Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy. All staff including our volunteers and supply staff must ensure that they are aware of our procedures. Parents and carers are welcome to read these on request.

1.2 Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will always ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with their parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that this is not in the child's best interests. Our SEN and Safeguarding policies contains more information about information sharing.

2. Any physical intervention must be:

- **REASONABLE**; Did the incident warrant a physical intervention?
- **NECESSARY**; Will someone be hurt if no intervention occurs?
- **PROPORTIONATE**; Was minimum force used?
- And in the **BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD**.

2.1 This policy sets out the framework for the use of reasonable force or positive handling, but it must be clearly understood that this should always be set within the school's overall behaviour management framework and is only used as a last resort under-pinned by sound risk assessment. Providing successful inclusion may necessitate physical restraint but only as one of the strategies available for the management of challenging behaviour. Only in the event of failure of clearly defined protocols to bring control to the situation, or imminent danger to persons, should positive handling be considered.

3. Positive handling should also include non restrictive strategies:

- stance and posture
- changes to the environment
- non verbal communication
- facial expression
- intonation
- simple positive messages

4. Risk Assessments and Positive Handling Plans

Risk Assessments should consider

- the physical environment of the classroom
- breaktime activities and strategic hot spots
- staff deployment
- medical and health issues

5. Positive Handling Plans (PHP)

5.1 A PHP will be written for individual pupils assessed as being at greatest risk of needing restrictive physical interventions in consultation with the pupil and parents/carers.

5.2 Legislation that came into force on 1.9.98 (Section 550 of the Education Act 1996) together with national guidance (DfES Circular 10/98), establishes the power of teachers and other staff to use reasonable force if required. This applies to all occasions when that member of staff is in charge of children both on and off school premises.

6. Use of Force Guidance August 2011 (Applies to schools in England)

6.1 Key points

- School staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.
- Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

6.2 Staff 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.

6.3 Staff cannot:

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

6.4 Reasonable force would include those methods taught and practised in TeamTeach training. The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. In all cases, the person exercising the restraint must be authorised by the Head teacher (see Appendix 1, List of Authorised Staff) and have received appropriate approved training.

‘Team-Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of ensuring that the service user remains safe’ (George Matthews- Director)

6.5 Staff must take into account if the child has an **individual risk assessment** or is listed on the **SEN register** and follow any guidelines mentioned.

6.6 The school is aware of and will act upon our legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with Special Educational Needs.

7. Documentation

Incident reports

- The school will telephone the parents/carers as soon as possible.
- A detailed report will be produced of any occasion where force is used. It should be completed by those involved after everyone has recovered, signed, and dated. It may help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful should there be a complaint.
- The forms used will be structured recording forms; Risk Assessment, Positive Handling Plan, PHP Checklist, Serious Incident Record (as provided by Team Teach. See Appendix 2, Recording Forms)

7.1 These documents will be used to monitor and evaluate incidences and to inform positive handling plans. Records/copies of incidents of restraint should then be filed and kept for a minimum period of 25 years from the date of the incident.

8. Complaints

8.1 All complaints about the use of force will be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated. Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action. When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably. (DfE: [Use of reasonable force](#) updated: July 2013)