



Sharp Lane Primary School

Positive Handling Policy

Agreed by Governing Board	<i>November 2025</i>
Review Date	<i>November 2028</i>
Responsible for this policy	<i>Louis Parish</i>



Positive Handling Policy

“Aspiration, Belief, Commitment and Discovery”

At Sharp Lane Primary School, our positive behaviour handling policy seeks to ensure that good order and positive relationships with pupils are fostered. The majority of our pupils behave well and conform to the expectations of our school however in some cases we understand that further support and guidance may be necessary for some pupils. This policy seeks to outline our whole school approach to positive support. forms part of our wider behaviour policy, and should be read in conjunction with the school’s Behaviour and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies. Our approach is to prioritise preventative strategies, de-escalation and promoting positive relationships. Physical intervention is always viewed as a last resort and is used only when necessary, proportionate and in line with current legislation and training.

This policy reflects the DFE guidance on the ‘Use of Reasonable Force’ (2013), Behaviour in Schools (2022), and Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2023).

Specific Aims

- To support all learners and enable them to make positive choices about their behaviour.
- To enable good order, safety and discipline to be maintained in school and ensure that disruption is dealt with appropriately and swiftly.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and staff.
- To provide clarity on circumstances in which positive handling may be required.
- To promote a shared understanding of preventative and responsive strategies.
- To ensure staff act lawfully, proportionately, and in line with training and guidance.



What is Positive Support Handling?

As a school, we have a responsibility to operate an effective behaviour policy that encompasses a wide range of preventative strategies for tackling inappropriate behaviour. These strategies relate to whole school discipline, classes and individuals. DfE Guidance on Use of Reasonable Force (July 2013) clarifies that staff can use “such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do” any of the following:

‘Positive handling’ refers to a range of strategies that support safe behaviour and reduce risk, including both physical and non-physical strategies. These may include:

- Non-physical (*e.g., de-escalation, change of face, distraction etc.*)
- Low-level physical contact (*e.g., guiding pupils when compliant*)
- Restrictive physical intervention (*last resort to prevent harm*)

DFE guidance states that members of staff may use reasonable force to:

- Prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence.
- Prevent a pupil from causing injury to themselves or others.
- Prevent a pupil from causing significant damage to property.
- Maintaining good order and discipline in the classroom or wider school.

Physical restraint is not classified as any ‘physical contact’. Guidance from the DfE states that physical contact is a normal part of school work and some situations and lessons will require physical contact with pupils:

- Demonstrations in PE
- Administering First Aid
- Offering comfort to a distressed pupil

Staff should also be aware that for some pupils, touch may be unwelcome and this should be factored in to any response or interaction with pupils.

Definitions

Control: Passive or physical contact e.g., blocking a pupil’s path or standing between pupils. Alternatively, active physical contact – leading a



pupil by the hand or ushering a pupil away by placing a hand on the arm or small of the back.

Restraint: Physically preventing a pupil from continuing what they are doing, usually after verbal commands have failed or are likely to fail, this is used in extreme circumstances.

Reasonable Force: comprises of two concepts. Firstly, force is necessary or honestly believed to be necessary and the force used must be in proportion with the consequences it is intended to prevent.

Physical restraint **does not** include the use of physical prompting or guidance when the child is happy to comply and the aim is to assist him/her to participate appropriately in activities.

The use of physical restraint or force may be used when there is a clear risk of the pupil coming to serious harm.

When May Positive Handling Be Used?

Examples include but are not limited to:

- A pupil physically attacking another pupil or adult.
- A pupil damaging property or intending to do so.
- A pupil's behaviour is likely to cause an accident with injury or damage to themselves or others.
- A pupil attempts to abscond from the school/school grounds.
- A pupil is causing significant disruption to a lesson.
- A pupil is causing significant disruption to a school event or visit.

Wherever possible, staff are advised to use Control to diffuse situations however we understand and support staff if they have to take the difficult decision to Restrain a child (provided they have acted in accordance with school policy and other alternatives were not suitable).

When dealing with extreme behaviour, staff should always be mindful of their own safety as well as the pupils. If the member of staff does not feel comfortable to remove the pupil directly involved, they should focus their attention on removing any other pupils from the situation and ensure that they come to no harm.

Physical restraint must not be used as a form of punishment or if a less severe response might have effectively resolved the situation.



Team Teach at Sharp Lane

We have invested in whole-staff level 1 Team Teach training, and additional level 2 training for identified staff, to ensure that all adults working in school are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to keep pupils and staff safe. This training supports our commitment to a preventative, relational approach by strengthening staff understanding of de-escalation, positive behaviour support and personal safety. It also ensures that, in the rare circumstances where restrictive physical intervention is required, staff are in accordance with nationally recognised accredited practice, using only the minimum force for the minimum time and in line with authorised techniques. Embedding Team Teach principles across school promotes consistency, safeguards pupil wellbeing, and ensures that any intervention keeps the child's best interests at the centre.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we work closely with the Leeds Education Health and Safety Team and the Behaviour Intervention Team, whom we commission to provide bespoke staff training, audits, specialist advice and casework, and guidance on how to further develop our provision. These services help us strengthen our preventative approaches, ensure our physical environments are safe and supportive, and maintain high standards of practice.

~~To best inform practice, staff members (in a variety of roles) at Sharp Lane Primary have undertaken training with Team Teach via Leeds City Council. This allows staff to gather information and skills that will enable them to work with challenging pupils effectively. Throughout Team Teach, adults are reminded to keep the child at the centre of their thinking (a value echoed by Sharp Lane Primary in relation to everything that we do). Through this training, staff build de-escalation techniques, positive behaviour strategies and are taught how and when to successfully intervene with pupils. More information about Team Teach can be found at www.teamteach.co.uk.~~

Recording and Reporting

~~It is important that detailed reports of any incident where a member of staff uses force or restrains a pupil. Parents/carers must be contacted about these incidents and a member of the Senior Leadership Team must also be made aware by the end of the day. Members of staff using force of~~



~~restraint on a pupil must complete a Restraint Incident Report Form within 24 hours of the event taking place. This paperwork is Quality Assured by the Deputy Headteacher and logged alongside a CPOMS entry. Should any further action be required as result of the incident, the Deputy Headteacher will ensure that staff members involved in the incident, complete this within the 24 hour window following this incident.~~

Following any incident involving restrictive physical intervention:

- The pupil should be checked for injuries.
- Staff must complete a Restrictive Physical Intervention form.
- A record should be made CPOMS
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team must be informed the same day
- Parents/carers should be informed as soon as reasonably possible, ideally within 24 hours.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy