



POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

1. Policy Statement (Intent)

At Uplands Manor Primary School, we are committed to safeguarding the **rights, dignity, safety, and wellbeing of all pupils**. This policy sets out the legal framework, guiding principles, and procedures for the **safe, proportionate, and lawful use of reasonable force**.

The use of force is:

- **A last resort**
- **Part of a wider relational, trauma-informed behaviour approach**
- **Always undertaken in the best interests of the child**

This policy supports staff to act **confidently, lawfully, and proportionately**, ensuring that children, staff, and the wider school community remain safe.

2. Legal Framework

This policy complies with:

- **Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006 (power to use reasonable force)**
- **Children Act 1989 and 2004**
- **Children and Families Act 2014**
- **SEND Code of Practice (2015)**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest version)**
- **DfE Behaviour in Schools guidance (2022+)**
- **DfE Use of Reasonable Force guidance**
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**

3. Principles

All use of reasonable force must be:

- **Lawful, necessary and proportionate**
- **In the best interests of the child and others**
- **The least restrictive option available**
- **Used for the shortest possible duration**
- **Grounded in safeguarding and duty of care**

We prioritise:

- **De-escalation and prevention**
- **Relational and restorative approaches**
- **Understanding behaviour as communication**
- **Child voice and dignity**

4. Definitions

Reasonable Force

The term "reasonable force" covers a range of interventions used to **prevent harm**, including:

- Preventing injury to a child or others
- Preventing serious damage to property
- Preventing serious disruption to learning
- Preventing a pupil from leaving a safe environment where this would place them at risk

Types of Physical Intervention

- **Passive contact:** e.g. guiding, blocking, standing between pupils
- **Active contact:** e.g. leading a pupil away by the arm
- **Restrictive physical intervention (restraint):** holding a child to restrict movement when resistance is present

Restraint is only used in **high-risk situations** and must always be justified, proportionate, and recorded.

5. Prevention and De-escalation (Implementation)

Physical intervention is **never the primary strategy**. Staff will:

- Use **relational approaches** and consistent routines
- Apply **positive behaviour support strategies**
- Implement **reasonable adjustments** for SEND and SEMH needs
- Use **de-escalation techniques**, including:
 - Calm communication
 - Offering choices
 - Reducing stimuli
 - Removing the audience
- Follow **individual risk assessments and Positive Behaviour Support Plans (PBSPs)**

6. Risk Assessment

Planned Risk Assessment

For pupils with known needs:

- Individual **Positive Behaviour Support Plans** will be developed
- Plans include:
 - Triggers
 - Early warning signs
 - De-escalation strategies
 - Preferred interventions

Dynamic Risk Assessment

In unforeseen situations, staff will:

- Assess risk **in the moment**
- Consider:
 - Severity of risk
 - Likelihood of harm
 - Alternatives available

Staff must balance:

The risk of taking action vs the risk of not taking action

7. When Reasonable Force May Be Used

Reasonable force may be used to:

- Prevent injury or harm
- Stop a fight
- Prevent a child harming themselves
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent a pupil leaving a safe environment

Force must never be used:

- As punishment
- To cause pain, fear or humiliation
- In a way that could be considered degrading or unsafe

8. Safeguarding and Vulnerable Pupils

Extra care must be taken when working with:

- Pupils with **SEND / SEMH needs**
- Pupils with **trauma backgrounds**
- Pupils with **medical conditions**

All interventions must consider:

- **Proportionality**

- **Medical needs**
- **Psychological impact**

9. Staff Roles and Training

- All staff have a **legal power to use reasonable force**
- Staff must:
 - Read and understand this policy
 - Follow risk assessments
 - Use de-escalation first

Identified staff will receive **accredited training** (e.g. CPI or equivalent), including:

- Safe physical intervention techniques
- De-escalation strategies
- Risk awareness

Training is **regularly updated**, and practice is monitored.

10. Recording and Reporting (Accountability)

All incidents involving physical intervention **must be recorded**.

Records must include:

- What happened (antecedent, behaviour, response)
- Why intervention was necessary
- Type of intervention used
- Duration
- Outcome
- Any injuries

Recording expectations:

- Completed **within 24 hours**
- Logged on **SIMS (or equivalent system)**
- Reviewed by **senior leaders**

Parent/Carer Communication

- Parents will be **informed on the same day** wherever possible

Serious Incidents

- Recorded using **Health & Safety reporting procedures**
- Reported to Local Authority where required

11. Post-Incident Support

Following an incident:

For the Child

- Restorative conversation
- Emotional regulation support
- Review of support strategies

For Staff

- Debrief opportunity
- Wellbeing support
- Access to supervision/counselling if needed

For the School

Senior leaders will review:

- Risk assessments
- Provision and staffing
- External agency involvement
- Behaviour strategies

12. Monitoring, Review and Impact (Impact)

Leaders will:

- Monitor all incidents of physical intervention
- Analyse patterns and trends
- Use data to:
 - Improve provision
 - Reduce restrictive practice
 - Strengthen early intervention

Success is measured by:

- Reduction in incidents over time
- Increased use of de-escalation
- Improved pupil regulation and engagement
- Positive feedback from pupils and families

13. Linked Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Intimate Care / Safe Touch Policy