



Ackton Pastures Primary Academy

Positive Handling Policy

2023 - 2025



Ackton Pastures Primary Academy: Positive Handling Policy

Headteacher	K Mason	Date	September 2023
Chair of Governing Body	H Causier	Date	September 2023

Positive Handling (Restraint of Pupils)

We acknowledge that Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows school personnel to use reasonable force to restrain a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- 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

(Department for Education – Use of reasonable force)

We understand that there is no legal definition when reasonable force can be used. 'That will always depend on the precise circumstances of individual circumstances of individual cases. To be judged lawful, the force used would need to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent. The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Use of force could not be justified to prevent trivial misbehaviour'. (Department for Education – Use of reasonable force)

We understand that under exceptional circumstances unpaid school volunteers or parents accompanying pupils on an educational visit who have been put in temporary charge of pupils by the Headteacher may use reasonable force if need be.

We do not support the use of force as a form of punishment under any circumstance.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Aims

- To make school personnel aware that they can use reasonable force to restrain a pupil only in extreme circumstances.
- To work with other schools to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel are aware that they can use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and visitors to the school are aware of and comply with this policy;
- the responsibility to reassure all school personnel that they will not be automatically suspended if they are accused of using excessive force;
- the responsibility to reassure all school personnel that they will be supported if they use excessive force;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- the responsibility of involving the School Council in the development, approval, implementation and review of this policy;
- nominated a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Headteacher and to report back to the Governing Body;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- ensure that parents are aware that the school does not need the consent of parents to use force;
- provide guidance and support to all staff;
- provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises;
- ensure that all school personnel are aware that they have a legal duty to 'make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs';
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- work closely with the link governor and coordinator;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

Role of the Governors

The Governors will:

- work closely with the Headteacher;
- ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
- ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;

- report to the Governing Body;
- report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy;
- take part in training in positive handling techniques (Team Teach training);
- be aware of their responsibility in assessing risks in particular circumstances;
- make judgements when the use of force is necessary and how much force is to be used;
- report to the Headteacher all incidents of restraint and record all incidents on the appropriate Incident report form;
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community

Role of Pupils

Pupils will:

- listen carefully to all instructions given by the teacher and other adults in school;
- ask for further help if they do not understand;
- participate fully in all lessons;
- treat others, their work and equipment with respect;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school;
- talk to others without shouting and will use language which is neither abusive nor offensive;
- liaise with the school council;
- take part in questionnaires and surveys

Role of Parents/Carers

Parents / carers will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- be asked to take part in periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school

Minimising the need to use force

We have the following in place in order to reduce the likelihood of any member of staff using force:

- A calm, orderly and supportive school climate.

- Strong and effective relationships between pupils and staff.
- A whole school approach to developing personal, social and emotional development.
- An effective staff development programme that develops the skills of positive behaviour management.
- Identifying when an incident is going to happen and taking preventative action where possible.
- Using effective strategies to manage all incidents that occur.
- Informing a disruptive pupil that force may be used before using it.

School Personnel authorised to use force

All school personnel whose job involves supervising pupils may use force to restrain a pupil but only in extreme circumstances.

All staff will receive periodic training in pupil restraint. Some staff will also undertake the 6-hour TEAMTEACH training, where there is a likelihood they may be required to undertake TEAMTEACH techniques as a more regular part of their role.

Deciding whether to use force

We believe that the use of force and what force to use must always depend on the circumstances of each incident.

We acknowledge that when faced with an incident there is very little time for school personnel to think before making a quick but effective decision.

However, school personnel must be aware of and consider the following:

- Assessing the seriousness of the incident that if force is not used then it could result in injury, damage or disorder.
- After considering alternatives for dealing with the situation, force is the only justifiable way of achieving a positive result.
- Assessing the number of risks connected with using force compared with using other strategies.

Types of Incidents

At Ackton Pastures Primary Academy we pro-actively foster positive relationships and only use reasonable force when there is no realistic alternative. This means that we expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative.

We expect staff to think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. There might be some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are no equal effective alternatives (a child is about to run in the road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives such as the use of assertiveness skills:

- Use a distraction to interrupt the behavior long enough for other methods of verbal control
- Withdrawal of attention(audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened
- Other techniques designed to defuse a situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour, in which case the incident could be dealt with later when emotions are running less high
- The employment of other sanctions consistent with the positive Behavior policy

Positive handling may be required in the following situations:

- **Fighting** - pupils fighting.
- **Attack** - a pupil attacks an adult or another pupil.
- **Damage to property** – a pupil deliberately damages property or is about to.
- **Injury or damage** – a pupil causes or is about to cause injury or damage.
- **Absconding** – when a pupil tries to leave school which could put his/her own safety at risk, the safety of others or the damage to property.
- **Disruption of lessons** – when a pupil’s behaviour seriously disrupts a lesson.
- **Disrupting a school event** – when a pupil’s behaviour seriously disrupts a school event.

Where physical interventions are needed to prevent injury to the student, other students or staff, or to prevent serious damage, these should be for the minimum length of time possible and using the least possible force. All staff must consider whether they are using reasonable force. In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate and effective positive handling should 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

- Use the intervention for the minimum time possible

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 intimate areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint

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Using Force

When faced with an incident and before force is used, school personnel must:

- act in a calm and measured manner;
- show no anger or frustration;
- tell the pupil to stop misbehaving or restraint will be used but will stop when the pupil behaves

School personnel may use the following types of force:

- **passive physical contact** by standing between pupils or by blocking a pupil's path;
- **active physical contact** by using restrictive holds, leading a pupil by the arm or hand or ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back. Where staff have had TEAMTEACH training, these techniques will be utilized.

School personnel must make every effort not to harm a pupil or restrain a pupil that could be interpreted as inappropriate conduct.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are in place for:

- a variety of potential incidents
- individual pupils

School Personnel Training

School personnel identified as requiring TEAMTEACH training must be trained in the techniques of restraint when they join the school and this training will be repeated every three years.

Recording Incidents

Records will be kept of all incidents on the appropriate incident record sheet (Bound and numbered book). Records should be completed as soon as possible and on the same day as the incident.

Reporting Incidents

All incidents will be reported to the Headteacher and communicated to parents as soon as possible after the incident occurred.

Post-incident

After an incident has occurred the following procedure will take place:

Support:

- First aid if necessary
- Medical help if necessary
- Emotional support to pupils and school personnel
- Discussions with parents / carers

Review:

- Debrief (with staff involved) - review and discuss de-escalation strategies and actions
- Try and identify triggers, with view to minimising further incidents
- Review risk assessments, if appropriate
- Provide further staff training, if appropriate

Complaints and Allegations

All complaints will be dealt thoroughly, speedily and will be appropriately investigated by using the procedures as stated in the MAT Complaints Policy.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School website
- meetings with parents where necessary

Training

We ensure all school personnel have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.

Periodic training will be organised for all school personnel so that they are kept up to date with new information and guide lines concerning equal opportunities.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed bi-annually or when the need arises by the coordinator / Headteacher and the nominated governors.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

Linked Policies

- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Health & Safety
- Positive Behaviour