




RAISE THE YOUTH FOUNDATION

Positive Handling Policy

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Next review:	August 2025 or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new legislation.
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Signed	

Rationale

This document serves as a guidance for school leaders, managers, and staff members on how to effectively manage incidents within the school that require our team to undertake positive handling interventions using best practices. Our approach is based on psychological, biological, and neuroscientific evidence, which informs us that individuals need time, space, and support to regulate their emotions and restore a sense of safety after experiencing dysregulation. Therefore, it is crucial for our school to handle incidents mindful of these factors and to take proper care for the well-being of our child or young persons based on our behaviour policy and up-to-date evidence-based practices as well as our staff's wellbeing.

When a child or young person enters a crisis state and becomes dysregulated, they may exhibit socially, emotionally, and morally challenging behaviours, such as breaking school rules, engaging in illegal activities, and acting in a manner that may cause them to harm themselves and or others. Staff members may be exposed to these powerful emotions and witness the inability of the child or young person to communicate and manage them effectively. As a result, the child or young person might display anger, rage, and aggression verbally or physically towards themselves, other young people, and or staff and school visitors.

Our main duty is to ensure the safety of all children and young person and our staff members. Therefore, if a child or young person is losing control and poses a risk to themselves or others due to their inability to regulate emotions, we must intervene in their best interest, as well as for the safety of other children and staff members. It is critical to prevent harm from occurring. In situations where staff members have to dynamic risk assess and manage a child or young person 's crisis state, it is essential that the adult helps and supports the child or young person to remain safe, avoid causing harm to themselves or others, and assist them in co-regulating and self-regulating wherever possible. If all de-escalation and verbally and emotionally approaches of support are not successful and the child or young person requires further help and support the school will follow our policy on using positive handling techniques taught and trained using Team-Teach training.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with RAISEs Positive Behaviour and Restorative Discipline policy and Raise Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies. It details how we will implement guidance provided by DfE, Team Teach and other relevant advice.
- 1.2 The term 'positive handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports all Children and young people, including those with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

- 1.3 Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent Children and young people from hurting themselves or others, damaging property that causes significant risks to themselves and others, or in order to maintain good order and discipline so that everyone is safe, the school is and feels safe, and that the expectations of safe and positive behaviour within school is maintained. Furthermore, the school takes seriously its duty of care to Children and young people, employees and visitors to the school.
- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care.
 - The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.
- 1.4 Staff will be trained to look after Children and young people in their care and aim to focus on de-escalation techniques wherever possible. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically, they will follow the Schools behaviour and safeguarding and child protection policies.
- 1.5 The DfE non-statutory guidance document 'Use of reasonable force' (dated July 2013- reviewed 2015) provides advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies and our independent school is guided by these documents
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf
- 1.6 Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (the Act) enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force.
- 1.7 DfE guidance on the [use of reasonable force in schools \(2013\)](#) also states that in addition to the general power to use reasonable force, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for "prohibited items". Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.
- 1.8 DfE guidance and the Act make it clear that school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. However, wherever possible, only staff trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategy techniques of Team Teach will use physical intervention techniques with children, and only when necessary.
- 1.9 **Although any member of staff may be required to physically intervene with a Child and or young person who is endangering themselves or others, damaging property where there are risks associated with potential harm, or to maintain good order and discipline, we would expect accredited staff to take over as soon as possible.**

- 1.10 In March 2019 the Equality and Human Rights Commission published the guidance document, 'Human rights framework for restraint'. This guidance sets out key principles of articles 3, 8 and 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), incorporated into domestic law by the Human Rights Act 1998, which govern the use of restraint across all settings:
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/human-rights-framework-restraint>

2. Team Teach

- 2.1 Team Teach is accredited through ICM (Institute of Conflict Management). Our Staff undergo 12 hour course every two years led by two qualified in-house intermediate trainers with annual refresher courses and briefings during twilight sessions and staff briefings.
- 2.2 Further details of the Team Teach approach can be found on the Team Teach website. The website address is <https://www.teamteach.co.uk/>
- 2.3 School staff trained in Team Teach techniques meet together a minimum of 3 times a year to share their experiences and practice their techniques, in order to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.
- 2.4 The school will keep a list of staff qualified to use Team Teach.

3. Before using physical interventions

- 3.1 We take effective evidence based approaches to de-escalate and reduce risk by:
- Showing care, compassion, curiosity, and concern by acknowledging young people's behaviours that are of concern and requesting alternatives using relational approaches and negotiating and reasoning skills.
 - Giving clear directions for Children and young people to stop and to enquire with compassion and curiosity to what emotions and thinking is taking place and how can adult professionals help.
 - Reminding the Child and or young person about rules and likely outcomes.
 - Removing an audience or taking vulnerable Children and young people to a safe place.
 - Making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons.
 - Using positive guidance to escort Children and young people to somewhere less pressured.
 - Ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and call for help.
- 3.2 Whilst or before intervention, staff should speak calmly as a way of reassurance. e.g., "I am doing this to keep you safe."

4. Use of Intervention

The term 'physical intervention' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance.

4.1 Physical intervention should only be used when there is no realistic alternative and for the shortest amount of time possible. A dynamic risk assessment or use the written risk assessment. Staff to think creatively about alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the child and that it reduces rather than increases risk. Any response to challenging behaviour should be **reasonable, proportionate and necessary**. Physical intervention must only be in accordance with the following:

- The member of staff should have good grounds for believing the child is in immediate danger of harming themselves or another person, in danger of seriously damaging property that would cause further risks and or not maintaining good order or discipline specifically a risk of the child losing control and or choosing to break the law and cause harm.
- Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied.
- Every effort should be made to secure a minimum of two Team Teach trained members of staff present before applying the intervention. Other staff can act as assistants or witnesses.
- Once safe, the intervention should be relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control.
- Intervention should be an act of care and control, NOT punishment.
- Physical intervention should not be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate danger to people and property.
- After the event, the intervention should be discussed with the child, if appropriate, and the parents at the earliest opportunity.

4.2 The definition of reasonable, proportionate and safe practice can change and evolve and that this will be kept under review.

5. Dynamic Risk Assessment - Responding to unforeseen emergencies

5.1 Even the best planning system cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet.

5.2 An unforeseen event may require an emergency response with a dynamic risk assessment. After that event, staff have a duty to plan ahead and prepare a risk assessment detailed in their individual Child and or young person plan which could be the Child and or young person Education Plan or Pupil Passport.

6. Positive Handling Plan (including risk assessment process)

- 6.1 Risk assessments are required for Children and young people who exhibit challenging behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. Parents will be involved with the writing of the risk assessment.

When considering a Child and or young person's behaviour, staff and parents will think about the following:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this Child and or young person's behaviour?
- Have we got all the information we need to conduct the risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan?
- What further steps can we take to prevent dangerous behaviour from reoccurring?

- 6.2 Staff may also need to make an individual risk assessment where it is known that force is more likely to be necessary to restrain a particular Child and or young person, such as a Child and or young person who is considered to be at greatest risk of needing positive handling interventions due to their special educational need (SEN) or disability. Plans should be compatible with a Child and or young person's EHCP and properly documented in the school records.

- 6.3 Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All Children and young people have a Child and or young person Education plan or Pupil passport. The plan details strategies which have been to be found effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are to be avoided. Any particular physical techniques which have been found to be effective should be named, along with any alerts to any which have proved to be ineffective, or which have caused problems in the past. Child and or young person Education plans or Pupil passports should be considered along with the child's EHCP or any other planning document relevant to the Child and or young person such as an Individual Health Care Plan or Pupil Passport. The Child and or young person Education plan or Pupil passport should take account of the age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special needs and social context.

Post Incident Debrief

- 6.4 After any incident a full debrief should take place so that learning can inform practice.
- 6.5 Following an incident, it is the policy of the school to offer support to all involved. This is an opportunity for learning, and time needs to be given for following up incidents so that Children and young people and staff have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate another person's perspective.

- 6.6 It is difficult to devise a framework of support that meets the needs of all. As individuals we all vary in how much support we need after an unpleasant incident. Generally, a member of senior staff would expect to talk to staff and children involved in any incidents involving any intervention. If the staff or Children and young people need time to rest or compose themselves, then the Principal, Deputy Principal or Snr Assistant Principal will make arrangements for this to happen.
- 6.7 Following an incident, consideration may be given to conducting a further risk assessment, reviewing the current risk assessment. Any further action in relation to a member of staff or Child and or young person will follow the appropriate procedures.

7. Recording

7.1 Good practice requires that:

- All incidents where friendly guides, escorts, and physical intervention and restraint are used are to be recorded as a Safeguarding event following school policy and recorded on the schools Behaviour watch system.

7.2 Within these recording strategies, all details must be recorded within 24 hours of the incident and signed by the staff member involved and the DSL. Parents can receive a full account of incident and a copy of the report upon request. All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the record which should be completed before the colleague leaves site that day or, in the event that is not physically possible, at the latest within 24 hours of the event occurring.

7.3 All records will be kept for 25 years from the Date of Birth of the Child and or young person with their Child and or young person record.

7.4 Any injury/harm to staff or children involved in an incident must be reported on MyConcern Safeguarding Reporting system and recorded within the first aid procedures.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

8.1 The Principal and DSL will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further actions as required. This information will be shared with the governing Body.

8.2 Paragraph F2 of the [Human rights framework for restraint](#) states *'To know whether discrimination is occurring, public bodies should collect and analyse data on their use of restraint, to identify if restraint is being used disproportionately against people with particular protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, or who share other identifiable group characteristics, for example, women, ethnic minorities, or people with particular impairments such as learning disabilities.'* The principal will regularly review the use of intervention to avoid unintended discrimination.

9. Complaints and Allegations

9.1 Any complaints will follow RAISE 's Complaint Procedure.

10. Other physical contact with Children and young people (DfE Use of reasonable force 2013)

10.1 It is not illegal to touch a Child and or young person. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a Child and or young person is proper and necessary.

10.2 Examples of where touching a Child and or young person might be proper and necessary:

- When comforting a distressed Child and or young person
- To meet and greet a child and young person when entering and leaving school and classrooms e.g., handshakes, fist pumps, and side hugs.
- When a Child and or young person is being congratulated or praised
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument.
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching
- To give first aid

10.3 This list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where physical contact is proper and necessary.

This policy must be followed and used in conjunction with the following policies.

- Safeguarding and child protection
- Positive behaviour and restorative discipline policy
- First aid policy
- Complaints policy