

USE OF POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

SLIMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Approved by:	Full Governing Board	Date: November 2024
Last reviewed on:	December 2024	
Next review due by:	December 2026	
Created by:	Lisa Hillman (Headteacher)	

Our Vision

***Slimbridge Where Ambitions are Nurtured:
An inclusive school community, empowering GREAT
citizens of tomorrow.***

POLICY STATEMENT

At Slimbridge Primary School, we work to ensure each pupil is able to reach their potential. Every child is entitled to learn and every teacher to teach in an environment that is safe, secure and free from distraction. The guiding principles of this are set out in the school's behaviour policy.

Staff at Slimbridge School are committed to providing the highest standards in protecting and safeguarding the welfare of children entrusted to our care. We recognise there is a need to intervene when there is an obvious risk to the safety of pupils, staff and property.

For the most part, this is achieved through the development of good relationships, and the normal application of positive behaviour management strategies, through restorative practice, as set out in the behaviour policy. However, in exceptional or extreme circumstances, this may involve the use of positive handling and the use of reasonable force.

It should be emphasised that if used at all, positive handling should be seen as a further positive action of care and concern. It is always used as a last resort; other options will always have been attempted first. As best practice regarding positive handling, this policy should be considered alongside other relevant policies, specifically those involving behaviour, health and safety and safeguarding.

Staff and the Senior Leadership Team will review this policy informally each year and the Head Teacher will inform all parties if there are changes that affect them.

1. Objective of the Policy

- To provide all staff, governors, parents, guardians and pupils with an understanding of care and control, and the use of reasonable force.
- To emphasise that the use of positive handling is:
 - part of a positive care and control approach to discipline and welfare;
 - a last resort, or a necessary expedient option to use in extreme circumstances.
- To ensure that all members of staff or authorized persons who have to positively handle pupils clearly understand the options and strategies open to them.

The Legal Use of Reasonable Force

Reasonable force has no legal definition but:

- it must take into account the circumstances of the incident, age, sex and development of the pupil;
- the degree of force must be proportional to the seriousness of the situation, behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent, and always be the minimum needed;
- force cannot be justified for a trivial misdemeanour or a situation that could be resolved without it;
- everyone has the right to self-defence provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force.

Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 allows teachers, and other persons who are authorised by the Head Teacher to have control or charge of pupils, to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a pupil from causing disruption by engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere. See the list in Roles and Responsibilities.

2. Roles & Responsibility

We recognise that most of the time positive handling will be used infrequently and as a last resort to maintain a safe environment. All teachers and other staff authorised by the Head Teacher (see Appendix 1) to have control or charge of pupils under Section 550A, are allowed to use such force as is reasonable in all circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence;
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property;
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline.

3. Implementation

We recognise that some children may not be able to control their reaction to events or other people and at times and may place themselves or others at risk through their uncontrolled behaviour. Reasonable force may be appropriate when action is necessary in self-defence or because of imminent risk of injury, or if there is a serious and developing risk of damage to property.

Examples

1. A pupil attacks a member of staff, another pupil, attempts self-injury, or pupils are fighting.
2. A pupil is causing, or about to cause, deliberate damage or vandalism.
3. A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, rough play, misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
4. A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school who would be judged to be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school.

5. Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline.

Further examples

1. A pupil persistently refuses to obey a request to leave the classroom.
2. A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

NB Wherever possible early support from colleagues will be sought. Single-handed intervention increases the risk of injury to both parties and does not provide a witness.

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take necessary action that is consistent with the concept of reasonable force, for example, to prevent a young pupil running off a pavement onto a busy road, or to prevent a pupil hitting someone or throwing something.

Strategies Other Than Force That May Be Considered

- Providing pupils with a choice of locations to exit to, giving clear directions and allowing 'take up' time thus allowing a 'face saving' opportunity.
- Removing the audience i.e. the other pupils leave the room.
- Letting another member of staff take over the strategic lead in the incident.

Procedure And Practical Considerations During Incidents

Wherever practicable staff are expected to:

- use a calm and measured approach;
- tell pupil to stop, remind them of the consequences and tell him/her what will happen if s/he does not stop;
- seek assistance from other colleagues at as early a stage as possible; (Staff who are aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil have a responsibility to provide a presence, and to offer support and assistance.)
- try to defuse the situation orally and prevent escalation;
- try to remove peer audience;
- attempt to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident;
- explain, in as calm a manner as possible, that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe;
- make it clear that positive handling will stop as soon as the pupil is calm and the risk assessment indicates it is no longer necessary.

If it is not possible to control the extreme pupil without risk of injury to yourself or others, remove the other pupils who may be at risk and summon assistance.

It is good practice:

- to remain calm and not give the impression you are out of control;
- not to give the impression you have lost your temper or are acting out of anger or frustration;
- not to give the impression you are trying to punish the pupil;
- not to intervene in an incident without help unless it is an emergency or you are confident or being able to help without risk of injury or making the situation

worse.

Application of Force

Physical intervention can take several forms. It may involve staff:

- physically interposing between pupils;
 - blocking a pupil's path;
 - holding - for security and to reduce anxiety where there is a potential risk, even if the pupil is not yet out of control; (The purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation and may be particularly effective with a younger child.)
 - leading a pupil by the hand or arm;
 - turning a pupil away from any potential situation;
 - shepherding a pupil away using a light touch on the elbow;
 - using more restrictive holds in extreme circumstances.
- (See Appendix 6)

Unacceptable actions include:

- holding a pupil around the neck or by the collar or in any other way that might restrict the ability to breathe;
- slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- tripping up a pupil;
- holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear.

However, direct actions might be the only viable option in the most extreme situation when emergency action is needed to prevent the risk of serious injury or loss of life e.g. to prevent a pupil running on to a busy road or to stop an extremely violent assault.

Planning for Incidents

If the school is aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that may require positive handling, it will plan how to respond if a situation arises. (See Appendix 2) Such planning should address:

- managing the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used);
- involving parents and guardians to plan, review and monitor interventions and to ensure they are clear about what specific action the school might need to take;
- the provision of a positive handling agreement between school, parents, guardians and the pupil and include it as part of the pupil's IEP or PSP. It will be reviewed regularly;
- the provision of appropriate training for staff in cases where it is known that a pupil will require positive handling. Staff involved will through risk assessment identify their training needs in this area;
- briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking;
- ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate;
- In some cases, the school may need to take medical advice about the safest way to hold pupils with specific health needs.

The school will record all incidents in which positive handling is used to control or restrain a pupil and inform parents and guardians of any such incidents involving their child.

Debriefing

- Pupils and staff will be checked for any sign of injury and first aid will be administered if required.
- The pupil will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise. When the pupil regains composure a senior member of staff will discuss the incident with the pupil to try to ascertain the reason for it. The pupil will be given the opportunity to explain things from his/her point of view. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish the relationship between the pupil and the members of staff involved in the incident.
- All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. A senior member of staff will provide support to the members of staff involved.

Other Procedures Concerning Incidents

- If necessary and appropriate, the Chair of Governors, LA social services or police will be informed/consulted.
- Help, support and reassurance will be given where appropriate to any victims involved.
- If possible, meaningful or appropriate, the pupil will be encouraged to apologise and other consequences/sanctions or reparations will take place.
- In serious cases exclusion will be considered

Reporting and Recording an Incident

- Should an injury occur as a result of an incident at school, immediate steps will be taken to secure appropriate medical attention. This will be reported and recorded in accordance with LA policy.
- Records should include:
 1. Names of pupils involved, where and when the incident occurred.
 2. The names of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident.
 3. The reason that the force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil, another pupil or member of staff)
 4. How the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied and for how long.
 5. The pupil's response and the outcome of the incident.
 6. The details of injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil, or a member of staff and of any damage to property.

- All incidents in which positive handling is used to control or restrain a pupil will be logged on the school CPoms system.
- The member of staff concerned will report the matter orally to the Head Teacher or a senior member of staff as soon as possible. The incident will be recorded on CPoms by staff at the earliest opportunity.
- Staff may wish to seek advice from a senior colleague or their professional association when compiling a report. A written report should be completed within 24 hours of the incident's occurrence and should be signed and dated. Staff should keep a copy of the report for themselves.
- Other witnesses to the incident will also complete reports signed and dated.
- All incidents that result in holding will be recorded in detail using a Serious Incident Report Form (Appendix 5).
- The Head Teacher (or senior teacher if the head is unavailable) will inform the parents or guardians about the incident by the end of the school day. However, if parents or guardians cannot be reached, a letter will be sent to inform them and offer them the opportunity to discuss the matter.

Complaints

All complaints will be recorded and followed up by the Head Teacher or their representative in the first instance, in accordance with the Complaints Policy. Where appropriate the LA will be notified/kept informed.

Informing Parents or Guardians

All parents or guardians will be informed about the contents of this policy and will be advised about how they can obtain their own copy. Thereafter, a section about the school's legal duty to maintain a safe environment and the possible use of positive handling (as a last resort) with pupils will be included in the school handbook.

For some children there may be a need to use specific techniques to routinely manage their challenging behaviour. This will be recorded in their IEP/Behavioural Plan or PSP. Such arrangements will be fully discussed with parents or guardians on an individual basis in advance of their implementation. All intervention will be routinely recorded and monitored. All parents or guardians will be informed after an incident where positive handling has been used with a pupil.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy and its effectiveness will be monitored continuously by members of the Senior Leadership Team. The policy will be informally reviewed at the beginning of each academic year. Formal review by governors will take place every 2 years.

5. Relationship to other policies – Refer to

Behaviour, Discipline & Exclusion,
Health & Safety,

Safeguarding,
Equality .

6. Equality / Inclusion

The school recognises that it has to make special efforts to ensure that all groups prosper, including those with special educational needs; who have difficulties accessing the school or services; who speak English as an additional language; who have frequent moves and lack stability leading to time out of school (e.g. children in care); who as children are caring for others; who come from homes with low income and/or in adequate home study space; who experience bullying, harassment or social exclusion; with low parental support or different parent expectations; with emotional, mental and physical well being needs; who exhibit challenging behaviour; who come from ethnic minority groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers.

Policy prepared in accordance with DDA.

Appendix 1 List of all staff authorised to use positive handling techniques

Appendix 2 Planned Handling

Appendix 3 Report Log for records of incidents

Appendix 4 Letter to parents or guardians informing them of incidents
Appendix 5 Serious Incident report forms

Appendix 6 List of Positive Handling Techniques including de-escalation strategies

Linked Policies:

Safeguarding

Health & Safety

Appendix 1

SLIMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

LIST OF STAFF AUTHORISED TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN PUPILS

Mrs Lisa Hillman (Head teacher)

Mr Chris Ford (SLT)

Miss Beale (SLT)

**SLIMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL
POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN**

Name:		D.O.B.		Date:	
Triggers /Behaviours / Situations likely to result in Physical Intervention: <i>What is the behaviour like? When does it occur? Where does it occur?</i>					
Strategies to be used (where possible before physical intervention)					
Chill out time		Distraction		State alternatives /consequences choices/limits	Praise partial compliance
Give space		Reassure/success reminder		Other staff intervene	Repeat request
Talk calmly		Give a count		Planned ignoring	Remove stimulus
Verbal advice support		Negotiation		Contingent touch	Humour
Other strategies					
Preferred Handling Strategies to be used:					
Friendly Hold (arm around shoulder)				Shield	
Walking				Wrap	
Single Elbow				Double Elbow	
Standing				Ground	
Figure of Four				Chairs	
Other				'Get outs' that can be used when holding	
De-briefing process following incident: What care is to be provided. space, talk through etc					
Signatures Child (Where appropriate) Parent/Guardian Headteacher Date					
Review date					

Appendix 3

All incidents involving the use of force to control or restrain a pupil must be logged on the CPoms.reporting system

**SLIMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL
INCIDENT LOG**

Pupil's Name		Person completing form	
Details of Incident			
Date	Time	Location	Duration
Staff involved			
Pupils witnessing incident			
Describe behaviour and events leading up to incident ; include diversionary tactics that were used.			
Describe the Incident , who was involved, positive handling strategies used , duration of incident and pupil response			
Describe what happened after the incident , pupils response , any injuries to pupil, staff or other pupils, damage to property			
Any additional action taken			
Pupil views			
List of people who are to be informed (tick those informed)			
SENCO		PARENTS/GUARDIANS	LEA
Signature of staff involved		Date	
Signature of Head Teacher/Senior Teacher		Date	

Appendix 4

LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIAN INFORMING THEM OF INCIDENT

Date:

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: _____

I am writing to inform you that unfortunately it was necessary to restrain
_____ to prevent them from:

- injuring themselves or other pupils;
- injuring a member of staff;
- damaging property;
- other .

If you wish to speak with the class teacher to discuss this matter further, please see the teacher concerned after school to make an appointment.

We appreciate your continued support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lisa Hillman
Headteacher

Tel. 01453 890216

SLIMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

SERIOUS INCIDENT REPORT

<u>Record of Restraint</u>			
Date of Incident		Time of Incident	
Pupils Name		D.O.B.	
Member(s) of staff involved			
Adult witnesses to restraint			
Pupil witness to restraint			
<u>Outline events leading to restraint</u>			
<u>Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used and duration):</u>			
<u>Outcome of restraint</u>			
<u>Description of any injuries sustained by any pupils or staff and subsequent treatment:</u>			
<u>Date parent/carers informed of incident:</u>		<u>Time:</u>	
<u>By whom informed</u>			
<u>Informed by</u>	Telephone	Letter	Direct

Outline of parent/carer response

Signature of staff completing form

Date

Signature of Headteacher

Date

Brief description of any subsequent injury/complaint or action:

Appendix 6

Positive Handling Techniques & Preferred Handling Strategies

Friendly hold
Walking
Single Elbow
Double Elbow
Figure of Four
Wrap
Shield
Standing
Chairs
Ground

De-escalation strategies

Take up time
Space
Verbal advice and support
Negotiation
Choices & Limits
Humour
Consequences
Distraction using known interests
Planned ignoring
Chill out time offered / Chill out time directed
Contingent touch
Transfer adult
Success reminder