

Stanford in the Vale CE Primary School
Positive Handling Policy

Adopted November 2016

To be reviewed November 2018

Introduction

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils who may need to be positively handled.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils, specifically the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

The policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Purpose of the policy

Staff at this school are trained to look after the pupils in their care. Staff have a duty to intervene in order to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others. There may also be situations in which a child seriously disrupts good order in the school or causes damage to property. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene physically they will follow the school's Positive Handling Policy.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in Stanford in the Vale CE Primary School:

- i. clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary and
- ii. are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

The application of any form of positive handling places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and **to seek alternative strategies wherever possible** in order to prevent the need for positive handling.

Positive Handling will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk.

Definitions

(a) Physical Contact

Situations in which proper physical contact takes place between staff and pupils, e.g. in games/PE or to comfort pupils.

(b) Physical Intervention

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

(c) Positive Handling

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or property or if good order is being seriously prejudiced. All such incidents will be recorded in the Bound and Numbered Book in the Headteacher's Office.

Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working at Stanford in the Vale CE Primary School has the right to:

- a recognition of their unique identity
- be treated with respect and dignity
- learn and work in a safe environment
- be protected from harm

Pupils attending this school and their parents have a right to:

- individual consideration of pupil's needs by staff that have responsibility for their care and protection
- expect staff to undertake duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies
- be informed about school rules, relevant policies and the expected conduct of all pupils and staff
- be informed about the school's complaint procedure

The school will ensure that all pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits which govern behaviour in the school.

Parents should have committed themselves through the Home-School Agreement to ensure the good behaviour of their child and that the child understands and follows the School's Positive Behaviour Policy.

Training

Positive Handling training, through Team Teach, will be made available to designated staff and will be the responsibility of the Head teacher. No member of staff will be expected to undertake positive handling without appropriate training. Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken.

Further details of the Team Teach approach can be found on the Team Teach website (www.team-teach.co.uk).

Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches will be taken according to the circumstances of the incident:

- a) Initially try to avert an escalating crisis by distraction, time out, a well chosen word....
- b) Verbal acknowledgment of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain; this includes negotiation, care and concern. Choose words carefully, less words are usually better.
- c) Further verbal reprimand stating:
 - this is the second request for compliance
 - an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable
 - an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues.
- d) Warning of potential need to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies. If possible summon assistance.
- e) Physical intervention. Reasonable physical intervention using the minimum degree of contact to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Escalating Situations

The 1996 Education Act (Section 550A) stipulates that reasonable physical intervention may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following;

- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils; whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom, during a teaching session or elsewhere (this includes authorised out-of-school activities)
- self-injuring or placing himself or herself at risk
- injuring others
- causing damage to property, including that of the pupil himself or herself

- committing a criminal offence (even if the pupil is below the age of criminal responsibility)

Types of Incidents

Incidents described above fall into 3 broad categories:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property
- Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order or discipline

Examples of situations which fall within one of the first two categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil
- pupils are fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing injury, damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of materials or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or in a way which he or she might have, or cause, an accident likely to injure him or herself
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave the school

Examples of behaviour which fall into the third category are:

- a pupil persistently refusing to do as requested.
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

Acceptable measures of Physical Intervention.

Positive handling can only be deemed reasonable if:

- it is warranted by the particular circumstances of the incident
- it is delivered in accordance with the seriousness of the incident and the consequences which it is desired to prevent
- it is carried out as the minimum to achieve the desired result
- the age, understanding and the gender of the pupil are taken into account
- it is likely to achieve the desired result

Wherever possible, assistance will be sought from another member of staff before intervention.

The form of physical intervention may involve staff doing the following:

- physically interposing themselves between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- escorting a pupil
- shepherding a pupil away

Any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way in which staff exercise their responsibilities and the behaviour management strategies used.

Whenever positive handling is used, staff will keep talking to the pupil.

Recording

Where positive handling has been used a record of the incident always needs to be kept in the Bound and Numbered Book in the Headteacher's Office. All recording needs to be completed on the day of incident and all sections must be completed.

Serious Incident reports should not be completed until the individuals concerned have recovered from the immediate effects of the incident.

After the review of any incident, a copy of the recording form will be placed on the pupil's file.

Action after an Incident

The child will need a quiet place in which to calm down, can take up to one and a half hours.

Time needs to be given to follow up incidents so that the child can express:

- what triggered the behaviour
- how it made them feel
- what they can do in the future if they feel that way again

The Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will speak to the parents of the child to make them aware that positive handling was used.

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Child Protection Procedure
- Staff Facing Allegations of Abuse Procedure
- Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure
- School Positive Behaviour Policy
- Exclusions Procedure

Members of staff will be kept informed of any action taken.

In case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

Positive Handling Plans

All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Positive Handling Plan. The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. Positive Handling Plans should be considered alongside any other key documents which relate to the pupil. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special need and social context.

Complaints

The availability of a clear policy regarding Positive Handling and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them. Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's Complaints about Staff Procedure Policy. The Chair of Governors will be informed of complaints but other governors will not be involved as a complaint may require further action on their part.

Monitoring of Incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use positive handling, this will always be recorded and documented. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Headteacher to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour can only be contained using positive handling.

This process will address patterns of incidents and evaluate trends which may be emerging.