

Positive Handling Policy



September 2025

Approved at committee: 1st October 2025

Adopted & ratified by full governing body: 1st October 2025

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

OUR CHRISTIAN VISION

‘To be the best we can in the sight of God’

Inspired by St Paul’s teaching ‘You are all one in Christ’ (Galations 3:28)

We aspire for everyone in our school family to be accepted and be accepting, welcoming all. To be a community that treats others equally, with respect and kindness. To be aspirational, having hope and celebrating the value and purpose of our unique abilities. To love learning and to embrace new experiences and challenges with courage and creativity, as we become the best version of ourselves. We want to promote peace. To love and serve our diverse local and global community, making a difference for others.

OUR SIX AIMS

Aim 1: (Standards) To ensure that **each child** including all pupils with SEN achieves their highest standard and makes good progress in all areas of school life.

Aim 2: (Teaching and Learning) To provide **all** pupils with high quality teaching in order to meet **each child’s** learning needs by means of a broad, balanced curriculum.

Aim 3: (Environment) To provide a secure, well resourced, high quality learning environment **for all children, including those with SEN.**

Aim 4: (Management) To support the work of the school by effective management of finance, curriculum, administration and personnel including that related to SEN pupils..

Aim 5: (Ethos) To create a happy, positive, **inclusive** school culture in which to promote our children’s spiritual, moral and cultural development and in which **all children feel valued**, no matter what their needs and abilities.

Aim 6: (Partnership) To promote a mutually supportive learning partnership with governors /parents and to extend children’s skills and interests to the wider. Parents of pupils with SEN will be kept informed about their child’s progress as detailed in the policy

Meeting a Child’s individual needs

We at St Thomas’ Leesfield C of E Primary School are committed to making our best endeavours to meet the special educational needs of pupils and ensuring that they achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes. In line with our mission statement, we aim to achieve ‘the best we can in the sight of God’ for every child and we believe that every teacher is a teacher of every child, including those with SEND.

On occasion, children with identified special needs or children who may be experiencing difficulties or frustrations in their lives at home or school, may need some form of physical support. When a

child becomes upset, they cannot always express their emotions and may become increasingly anxious.

Aims and Objectives for Children with Additional Educational Needs

We aim to:

- Target the most needy children in school for additional support
- Help every child make the best progress they can
- Provide National Curriculum access for all
- Meet a range of diverse needs through inclusive classroom practice
- Ensure the inclusion of a statemented child in our school is compatible with the education of other pupils
- Have a co-ordinated, structured and intelligent response to SEN where staff, parents and outside agencies work together to achieve the best result for the child
- Be sensitive to children's needs
- Recognise the crucial role of the class teacher in encouraging a positive attitude to learning, maintaining a child's self-esteem and motivating children
- Encourage other children to value SEN children as individuals
- Encourage all children to follow our Always Rules so behavioural difficulties do not encroach on children's learning opportunities

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (September 2014) 3.65 and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (September 2014)
- Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)

This policy has been created by the school's SENCO, Mrs Elizabeth Schofield, and is to be used initially for consultation purposes with governors, staff and parents & carers of pupils with special educational needs and disability.

DEFINITION/ RATIONALE & PHILOSOPHY/OBJECTIVES

At St Thomas' Leesfield, we have a duty of care to pupils and staff, to keep them as safe as possible and take all reasonable steps to ensure safety is maintained. We aim to:

- create a learning environment in which young people and adults feel safe;
- protect every person in the school community from harm
- protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention, which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful; and
- develop and implement guidance for staff (teaching and non-teaching) so that they are clear about the circumstances in which they might use reasonable force to restrain pupils and how such force might be applied

Links With Other Policies

This policy dovetails into the school's existing behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy, child protection policy, special needs policy, health and safety policy and complaints policy. It also takes account of the staff development and welfare policy, teaching, learning and assessment policy and curricular policies.

Definition of Reasonable Force

The working definition of "reasonable force" is the **minimum force necessary** to prevent a pupil from physically harming him/herself or others or seriously damaging property, but used in a manner which attempts to preserve the dignity of all concerned.

All schools need to consider:

- planned intervention in which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies based upon a risk assessment and recorded within the pupil's education plan; and
- emergency or unplanned use of force / intervention, which occurs in response to unforeseen events, e.g. pupil fights

In schools, force is generally used to control or restrain pupils.

- Control can mean passive physical contact (eg. Standing between pupil's or blocking their path) or active physical contact (ushering a pupil or leading them).
- When members of staff use 'restraint', they physically prevent a pupil from continuing what they were doing after they have been told to stop. Restraint is generally in more extreme cases, such as when two pupils are fighting.

Preventative Strategies

The use of force should be seen as a last resort. The school actively promotes positive behaviour management strategies thus reducing the need for the use of any form of physical intervention, except in emergency situations. Preventative strategies for inappropriate behaviour(s) are in **Appendix 1** and also in our Behaviour Policy.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is one of our preventative strategies to minimise the risk of an incident escalating unnecessarily and will be a normal practice for our school where a pupil or a small number of pupils are known to exhibit disturbing or distressing behaviour (EBD). Risk assessment will be considered only for those pupils where there is a foreseeable risk and enable the school to plan and train accordingly. Risk assessment will be considered from two perspectives (a) environmental risk assessment or (b) individual risk assessment. This should form part of the pupil's education plan. The class teacher is responsible for carrying out the relevant risk assessments and identifying associated training needs, as they are the person who knows the child best. **(Appendix 2)**

Procedures - Support Structures

Staff all agree to support one another and it is recognised as good practice to ask for help. Staff know their pupils well and will become familiar with their personalities. Staff should aim to recognise when a child is becoming anxious and all steps should be taken to calm a pupil down and avoid the need for restraint. Staff should judge each individual situation and assess the risk to pupils and themselves. Where support is needed from a member of the SLT who is Team Teach trained, the TA should be sent to fetch them, or should cover the class while the child is escorted to a safe space, such as the Reflections Room, Willow Room, Zen Den or Head's Office. Where no TA is present, a sensible pupil can be sent.

Roles and Responsibilities

Reasonable force / safe handling can be used by any member of staff who is authorised by the headteacher to have lawful control or charge of pupils, e.g. teachers, classroom assistants, dinner supervisors. Several members of staff have been trained to use reasonable force and have an accredited Team Teach qualification.

Reasonable force / safe handling can be used by a teacher or other authorised person(s) on the school premises or when authorised elsewhere e.g., supervision on a residential visit, on other authorised out of school activities such as a sporting event or educational trip. Reasonable force should be limited to emergency situations and used only as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have been exhausted and where:

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

Examples that fall into the above 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 or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects

- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in which s/he might cause an accident likely to injure her / himself or others
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (Note: this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an instruction to leave a classroom
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

Forms of Reasonable Force

When other behaviour management strategies have failed - it should be the **minimum intervention or force** that should reasonably be employed depending on the age, sex, physical strength, size, understanding, medical condition and any special needs of the pupil and used in a way that preserves the dignity and respect of all concerned. The use of reasonable force / safe handling should involve a **calm and measured approach** at all times appropriate to the particular pupil and be in accordance with the schools agreed strategies and the following procedures:

- tell the pupil to stop the inappropriate behaviour
- ask the pupil to behave appropriately, clearly stating the desired behaviour
- tell the pupil that physical intervention will take place if inappropriate behaviour continues
- during the incident repeatedly reassure the pupil and tell him / her that physical contact will stop as soon as he / she is ready to behave appropriately
- if the teacher, classroom assistant or supervisory assistant feels at risk, e.g. from a large or older group of pupils, send for the nearest staff support

The forms of reasonable force the school will use will depend on the individual circumstances and include;

- physically interposing between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- holding
- pushing
- pulling
- leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- in extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds

Staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's 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

- holding a pupil face down on the ground

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

Health and Safety

When using reasonable force / physical intervention / restraint / safe handling, the pupil's health and safety must always be considered and monitored.

Physical interventions should involve the minimum amount of force necessary to resolve the situation and calm the pupil.

The use of reasonable force is only to be employed in **exceptional circumstances** or an emergency where a pupil appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and whose behaviour is presenting a threat to himself / herself or others. A member of staff should not intervene in an incident without help if there is a risk that he / she may be injured or may endanger his / her life.

Record Keeping

All incidents involving the use of reasonable force must be recorded in the schools agreed pro-forma "Record of the use of Reasonable Force" and logged on CPOMs. The school will keep an accurate up-to-date record of all such incidents. Immediately following any incident the member of staff concerned must inform the head teacher or other member of the senior management team and provide the contemporaneous written report. (**Appendix 3** "Record Of the Use of Reasonable Force")

The Governors and the head teacher will review annually the entries in the incident book.

Contacting Parents

Parents / carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This must also be recorded in the "Record of the use of Reasonable Force" (**Appendix 3**).

Complaints

Any complaint from a parent will be dealt with within the school's complaints policy / procedures.

In the event of a subsequent complaint made against a member of staff either by or on behalf of the child, this will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy / Procedure and in accordance with the Circular 1999/10, Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection.

Staff who themselves are subject to physical violence or assault should be supported, as appropriate, in taking legal action.

Training and Development

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff have regular awareness raising of issues relating to the use of reasonable force / safe handling, procedures and practices relating to behaviour management and child protection policy and procedures.

Date policy agreed by governors and staff: 1st October 2025

The majority of staff have attended an accredited Team Teach training course.

Appendix 1 Preventative Strategies

Appendix 2 Risk Assessment

Appendix 3 Record of the Use of Reasonable Force

Appendix 1

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and steps, which they can take to defuse and calm a situation. The strategies listed below as examples will be influenced by the age of the pupil(s) and the context in which they are applied.

1. Move calmly and confidently
2. Make simple, clear statements
3. Intervene early
4. Try to maintain eye contact
5. If necessary summon help before the problem escalates
6. If possible, remove audience from the immediate location

ACTION STEPS

1. Tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and tell him/her the possible consequences of failure to do so
2. If possible, summon another adult
3. Continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident
4. Make it clear that physical intervention will cease as soon as it is no longer necessary
5. Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include:
 - providing medical support
 - providing respite for those involved
 - accessing external advice / support

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem.

Appendix 2

Risk Assessment

A small number of pupils may exhibit disturbed or distressing behaviour which may require some form of physical intervention by staff. To minimise the risk of incidents escalating unnecessarily due to lack of foresight, planning and training, schools should carry out a risk assessment from two perspectives:

1. Environmental risk assessment
2. Individual risk assessment

Environmental Risk Assessment

- Identify situations or locations where there are increased risks of incidents happening
- Analysis of past incidents to identify medium to high risk locations
- Staff and pupils consulted
- Individual pupil consulted
- Decide the appropriate type and level of supervision
- Principal and SMT to make recommendations to Board of Governors on type and level of supervision to minimise risk
- Implement plan
- Review plan

Individual Risk Assessment

Where a school is aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force / safe handling, the school should plan its response by:

- consulting the pupil, as appropriate
- consulting the parents - specific action the school may need to take
- briefing staff - what action they should be taking (may require training or guidance)
- managing the pupil - e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict
- ensuring that additional support can be summoned wherever possible
- implementing plan and review
- reviewing Plan

Risk Reduction

Risk reduction should include:

- proactive measures to support the child effectively and prevent difficulties emerging
- early interventions to help the child in difficult situations and avert problems
- planned measures to manage the child and others safely, when unavoidable difficulties arise

• **Appendix 3**



St Thomas' Leesfield Primary School
Record of Incident Requiring Physical Intervention

Name: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Lesson: _____ Location: _____

Reason for behaviour: (tick)

Task Frustration	☐	Reaction to name-calling / provocation	☐
Home worries	☐	Re-emergence of earlier incident	☐
Change over	☐	Challenge of adult authority	☐
Not known	☐		

Give details:

What was the behaviour you witnessed which made Physical Intervention unavoidable: (tick)

Self-harm ☐ Violence towards pupils ☐ Violence towards staff ☐

Damage to property ☐ Serious disruption of the learning environment ☐

Attempts to place self in danger ☐ Refusal to stop unsafe behaviour ☐

Threat of absconding ☐ Fighting ☐

Antecedents/events prior to the physical intervention:

De-escalation Strategies used before and during the Physical Intervention: (tick)

Clear warning given ☐ Re-assurance/support ☐ Choices given ☐

Reminded of behaviour expectations ☐ Audience removed ☐ Rights / responsibilities talk ☐

Change of task ☐ Change of location ☐ Distraction ☐ Staff exchange ☐

Withdrawal offered ☐ Humour ☐ Planned ignoring ☐ Calm talking ☐

Other: _____

T.E.A.M. T.E.A.C.H. authorised holds. Number in order used.

guiding and escorting		figure of four		wrap to ground kneeling	
friendly hold		one person double elbow		wrap to chairs	
one person single-elbow		two person double elbow		wrap to chairs + leg sweep	
two person single-elbow		wrap hold		half shield	
small person escort		other			

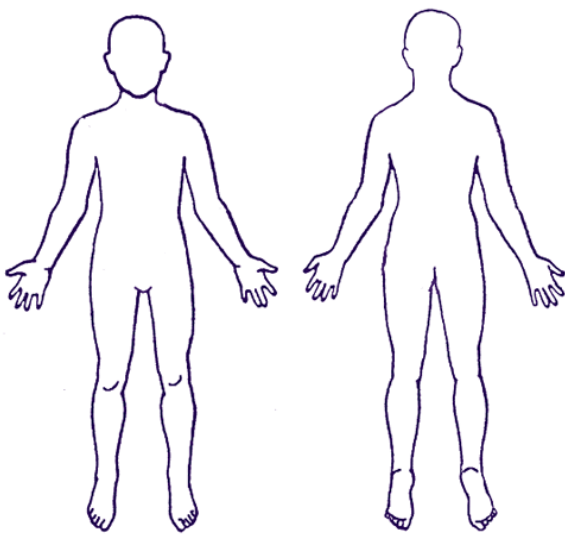
Give details of staff exchanges:

Were ABC monitored throughout PI? _____

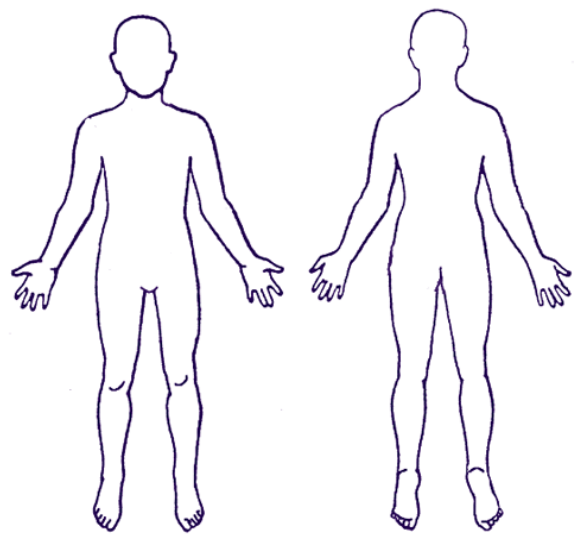
Duration of Physical Intervention: _____ Duration of Intervention overall: _____

Details of any injuries to:

Pupil



Adult



First Aid given? _____ By Whom? _____ See First Aid Log

How was the Incident resolved?

Headteacher/SLT pupil chat details:

Review of pupil's Risk Assessment and Care and Support Plan as a result of this incident:

Agreed by Staff: _____ Date: _____

Monitored/reviewed by: _____

Policy reviewed September 2025

Mrs E Schofield - SENDCo

Headteacher:..... Mr J Whittaker

Chair of Governors:Mrs Rebecca Ashton

Date approved (committee): 01.10.25

Date adopted (full governors): 01.10.25

Data Protection Statement

The procedures and practice created by this policy have been reviewed in the light of our Data Protection Policy. All data will be handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Data Audit For The Positive Handling Policy					
What ?	Probable Content	Why ?	Who ?	Where ?	When ?
Record of pupil incident	Name D.O.B. Teacher records Outcomes	Ensure triggers identified to avoid them For SEND records	All Staff Parents (as necessary)	Staff electronic records/ CPOMS Incidents monitored by LC and SLT Data is deleted / shredded as necessary	Held on File throughout a child's time at school Key data is passed onto a new School when moving on Some data is archived until the child is 25 (e.g. SEND pupil)

As such, our assessment is that this policy:

Has Few / No Data Compliance Requirements	Has A Moderate Level of Data Compliance Requirements	Has a High Level Of Data Compliance Requirements
	✓	

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if legislation / school systems change.