

# Oak Hill First School



## Positive Handling Policy

**Reviewed: May 2023**  
**Review date: May 2024**

## **Contents**

1. Policy Statement
2. What is the legal use of force?
3. Objectives of this policy
4. Who can use reasonable force?
5. When might reasonable force be appropriate?
6. Procedures and practical considerations during specific incidents
7. Application of force during specific incidents
8. Reporting and recording incidents
9. Other procedures concerning incidents
10. Planning for incidents and meeting training needs
11. Arrangements for informing parents
12. Physical contact with pupils in other circumstances
13. Complaints
14. Review

# Oak Hill First School Policy on Care and Control and the Use of Force

## Policy Statement

This policy is based on DfE Guidance July 2013. At Oak Hill First School we work to ensure each individual pupil is able to reach his or her potential. Every child is entitled to learn and every teacher is free to teach in an environment that is safe, secure and free from distraction. The guiding principles to achieve this should be established in the settings policy on positive behaviour management.

Staff of Oak Hill First School are committed to providing the highest standards in protecting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care. We recognise there is a need in line with the Df E “The Use of Reasonable Force July 13” to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to pupils, staff and property. For the most part this is achieved through the fostering of good relationships, and the normal application of positive behaviour management to support and intervene. However, in exceptional or extreme circumstances this may involve the use of reasonable force.

It should be emphasised that if used at all, restraint (referred to in this document as **Positive Physical Interventions (PPI)**) should be seen in the context of a further positive action of care and concern. In line with DfE “The Use of Reasonable Force July 2013”.it is used as a **last resort** option and in the most extreme cases, other strategies will always have been attempted first. As best practice regarding PPI this policy should be considered alongside other relevant school policies, especially those involving behaviour, health and safety and child protection.

## What is The Real Use of Reasonable Force to Control Pupils?

Teachers and other persons authorised by the Senior school leaders to have charge of pupils, may use reasonable force to prevent pupils:

- Causing injury to themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility
- Causing disruption by engaging in behaviour, which is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline.

Reasonable force has no legal definition but:

- Staff 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 force needed.
- Force could not 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 unreasonable force
- Corporal punishment is illegal.

## Objectives of this Policy

To provide all staff, governors, parents and pupils with an understanding of care and control and the use of force.

To emphasise that the use of PPI is:

- Part of a positive care and control approach to discipline and welfare.
- **Last resort** or a **necessary** expedient option to be used in extreme circumstances.

To ensure that all members of staff or authorised persons who may have to positively handle pupils clearly understand the options and strategies open to them.

To ensure that all members of staff or authorised persons who may have to positively handle pupils clearly understand the options and strategies open to them.

Strategies for avoiding incidents:

All staff, through regular Team-Teach training, possess the skills to adopt effective strategies to defuse potential instances of conflict or aggression. Addressing situations in their infancy can be invaluable in managing potentially extreme behaviours. In line with the DoH.DfES RPI Guidance, secondary preventative strategies are applied when 'primary prevention has not been effective'. These measures include:

- *Communication/verbal advice and support.* Early intervention needs to be assertive but non-confrontational. If students are spoken to in the mode of 'critical parent', a negative response is likely. Awareness of tone of voice, body posture and eye contact is important as communication needs to be non-threatening, calm and assured. Staff should attend to a student when they are showing signs of agitation/distress/anger and support/advise them according to the situation
- *Affection* - for the angry student whose behaviour is rooted in their insecurity, it is important that they feel accepted and respected as individuals. Reject the behaviour not the person by showing that you care despite the difficulties
- *distraction/redirection* – is the action of diverting the student's attention from a potentially inflammatory situation to something in which he has an interest
- *Reassurance* – is about supporting, comforting and encouraging a student in a situation in which they might be feeling helpless, vulnerable, possibly defenceless and exposed to a risky environment
- *Planned ignoring* – at times, highly provocative and attention seeking behaviour can be ignored to good effect. The skill is knowing when to ignore and when to intervene. Good practice is based upon *Risk Assessment*
- *Time out* – this is to allow a student 'space' on their own; to move to a different environment with time to calm down and consider their actions. The student is more likely to calm down without the attention of an audience
- *Withdrawal* – which involves removing the student from the situation which causes anxiety or distress to a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities. This could be in a Quiet Room; with a member of staff
- *Humour* – possibly the most effective and most commonly used strategy. Although self-explanatory, staff should make sure the humour is used in the right context for the particular student
- *Calm talking stance* – staff should endeavour to maintain a calm, confident and objective approach in conflict situations

- *Negotiation/being objective* – the ability to listen and talk to students and come to an agreement by setting limits and offering options. This will allow a ‘back door exit’ from the situation that will help keep their pride and dignity in tact as well as that of the staff member(s) involved
- *Transfer adult* – if there is an incident where the adult present is seen to be aggravating the situation, it should be assessed as to whether moving the adult out of sight might defuse the situation. This should be done, if possible, leaving enough staff to control the situation
- *Success reminder* – remind the student of a previous occasion when they successfully managed a volatile situation of a similar nature. If they are feeling particularly low, look to remind them of something they did in the past that made them happy/proud/feel good
- *support through daily routine* – a bored student is more likely to present with negative behaviours and therefore a strong daily routine of active engagement in the classroom and in social times, reduces their need to act out inappropriate behaviours
- *Physical intervention* – is an approved management strategy but should be used as a last resort when all of the above strategies have been exhausted.

### **Who Can Use Reasonable Force?**

We recognise that most of the time PPI will be used infrequently, that is, as a **last resort** to maintaining a safe environment. All teaching staff are by the nature of their roles authorised to use PPI as appropriate. Non-teaching staff require specific authorisation. This authorisation can only be given by the Head Teacher or someone deputising in his/her absence. Authorised staff will be notified formally. A list of authorised staff is available.

### **Circumstances when Reasonable Force Might be Appropriate?**

We recognise that some children may not be able to control their reaction to events as well as others and at times may place themselves or others at risk through their uncontrolled behaviour. Reasonable force might be appropriate when:

- Action is necessary in self-defence or because of imminent risk of injury.

Examples:

- Pupil attacks a member of staff, another pupil, attempts self-injury, pupils are fighting.
- Pupil running in the classroom or corridor in a way that is likely to cause injury to self or others.
- There is a serious and developing risk of damage to property, including the pupil’s own property.

Examples:

- Pupil is causing or about to cause deliberate damage or vandalism.
- Pupil is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, rough play, misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
- Where pupil’s behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline.

Examples:

- Pupil persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave the classroom.

- 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 the person intervening with the support of a colleague acting as a critical friend.

Strategies other than force will be considered.

Examples:

- Providing the disruptive pupil with a choice of locations to exit to
- Giving clear directions
- Allowing „take-up“ time thus allowing a „face-saving“ opportunity
- Removing the audience, ie requesting that other pupils leave the room
- Implementing Team Teach help protocols/script so that another member of staff takes over the strategic lead of the incident, if he/she feels it is appropriate to do so.

### **Procedures and Practical Considerations During Specific Incidents within the setting**

Wherever practicable staff are expected to:

- Use a calm and measured approach
- Give clear direction to the pupil
- Seek assistance from other colleagues at as early a stage as possible
- Staff who become 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 should this be required
- Try to defuse the situation orally and prevent escalation
- Try to remove the pupil from the peer audience
- Attempt to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident
- In as calm a manner as possible, explain that the reason for intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe
- Make it clear that PPI will stop as soon as the pupil calms 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.

### **Application of Force During Specific Incidents**

Methods that staff **may use** in appropriate circumstances where a risk assessment judgement supports this:

- Shepherding a pupil away by a light touch on the elbow or near the shoulder
- “Guiding” – remembering this is the positive application of force to control a pupil and would be used in rare circumstances, eg if the pupil is in extreme danger and no other alternative is available, or where reasonable force is used to assist a pupil’s movement.
- Holding – for security and to reduce anxiety where there is potential risk, even if the pupil is not yet out of control. The purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation.
- When intervening staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted as aggressive. All holds are devised to minimise the risk of injury. They should not cause pain.
- Where pupils are presenting with more challenging behaviour which may require more restrictive holds, it is important that these techniques have been delivered

by appropriately qualified Team Teach instructors in line with Team Teach protocols.

Staff **may not** carry out action that might reasonably be expected to injure by:

- 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 a pupil.
- Holding or pulling the pupil by the ears or hair.

Other considerations for **non-urgent situations** where the risk to the people or property is not imminent:

- Consider carefully whether positive handling is the right course of action
- Try to deal with the situation through other strategies before using force.
- Try to defuse and calm the situation to establish good order; the use of positive handling could lead to an escalation of the problem.
- Take into account the age, understanding, personal characteristics of the pupil.
- The use of positive handling to enforce compliance is likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older pupils.
- Never use force as a substitute for good behaviour management.
- In non-urgent situations force should only be used when all other methods have failed.

### **Reporting and Recording Incidents**

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 Government policy.

All incidents that result in restraint (where a child has to be held) will be recorded in detail using the Bound and numbered book (version 6) within 24 hours. A Risk Reduction Plan needs to be put in place or reviewed accordingly.

Restraint is **“the positive application of force with the intention of overpowering the client” (DOH 4/93 Section 5.2).**

The member of staff concerned will report the matter orally to the Head of Teacher or a senior member of staff as soon as possible. The incident will be recorded in the Bound Book by staff at the earliest opportunity.

A staff member will inform parents/carers about the incident by the end of the school day. However, if parents/carers cannot be reached a letter will be sent to inform them of the incident and offer them the opportunity to discuss the matter.

A log will be kept of any occasion when PPI is used.

When PPI has been used and pupils have been held using Team Teach techniques, reports will be completed in a Bound numbered book with a body map (if appropriate) and signed by authorised member of staff.

The bound and numbered book will be reviewed by the Head teacher or a person with responsibility termly to consider control measures and possible training or further training needs etc.

A copy of the Risk Reduction Plan will be placed in the pupils file.

The bound and numbered book will be audited by a Governor at least 3 times a year.

### **Debriefing Following Significant Incident**

Pupils and members of 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/observe him/her. When the pupil regains complete composure, a senior member of staff and staff involved in the PPI will discuss the incident with the pupil and try to ascertain the reason for it.

All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff will provide support to the member of staff involved.

### **Other Procedures Concerning Incidents**

If necessary and appropriate the Chair of the Governing body, will be informed/consulted. Help, support and reassurance will be given where appropriate to any persons involved.

Where possible an attempt will be made to help the pupil modify their behaviour.

Where possible, the pupil should apologise, this should be meaningful or appropriate. If this cannot be undertaken then other consequences/sanctions reparations and monitoring should take place.

### **Planning for Incidents and Meeting Training Needs**

If we are aware that a pupil is likely to require PPI on more than one occasion in a half term we will plan how to respond in line with Team Teach protocols and guidance. This can include involving the parents to ensure they are clear about what specific action we might need to take and obtaining medical advice if the child has any specific health needs. A risk assessment and a risk reduction plan will be drawn up, in consultation with all concerned and included. As part of the pupils' Personal Educational Plan (PEP) or Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) or Behaviour Support Plan (BSP). It will be regularly reviewed on a half termly basis.

Staff involved will, through risk assessment, have identified their training needs in this area. In cases where it is known that a pupil will require PPI appropriate training will be provided.

### **Arrangements for Informing Parents**

Thereafter, a section about the school's legal duty to maintain a safe environment and the possible use of positive handling (as a very last resort) with pupil will be included in the school Information Booklet.



For some children there may be the need to use specific techniques to routinely manage their challenging behaviour. This will be recorded in their PEP, risk reduction plan, BSP or PSP. Such arrangements will be fully discussed with parents/carers, on an individual basis, in advance of their implementation. All intervention will be routinely recorded and monitored.

All parents will be informed after an incident where positive handling is used with a pupil.

### **Physical Contact with Pupils in other Circumstances**

Staff must be sensitive to matters relating to culture and gender issues and any known individual characteristics or special circumstances relating to pupils.

Some physical contact may be necessary e.g. during PE lessons, sports coaching or CDT, or if a member of staff has to administer first aid or medication.

Young children and children with SEN may need staff to provide physical prompts to help. **Physical contact must always be age appropriate and done openly.**

### **Complaints**

This policy is in accordance with the DfE "The Use of Reasonable Force July 2013" as such, those acting in accordance with it, providing they act in good faith, working within the authority guidelines, will be positively supported in their actions. Involving parents when an incident occurs, and has our clear policy about physical contact with pupils that staffs adhere to will help avoid complaints from parents. Providing staff with approved training will also help.

All complaints will be recorded and followed up by the Head Teacher or their representative in the first instance. Where appropriate the Authority will be notified/kept informed. A complaint or dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation under disciplinary procedures or by the Policy under Child Protection procedures.

### **Review**

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Head Teacher and Inclusion Team - updated annually.

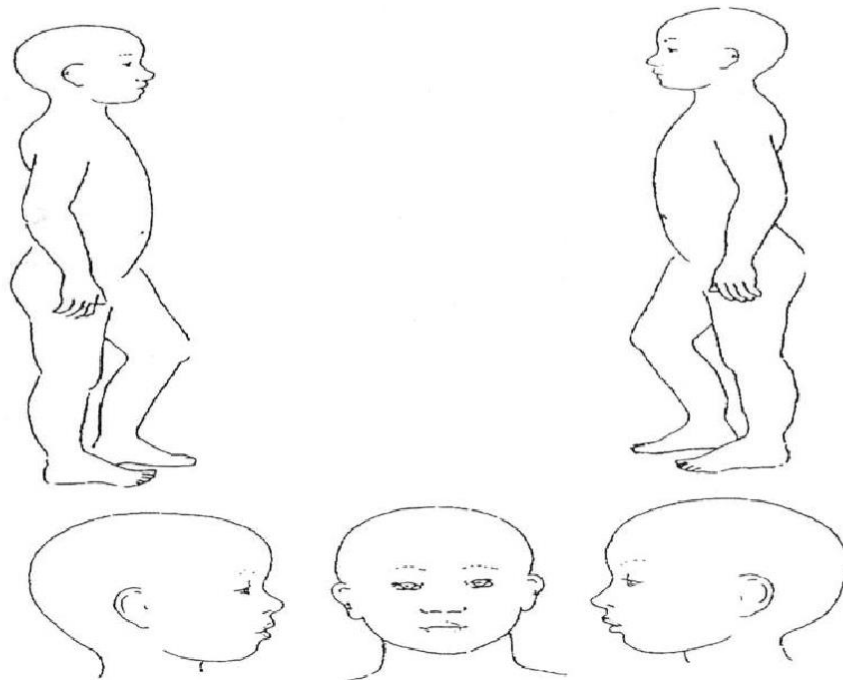
Positive Behaviour Team Ltd

[positivebehaviourteam@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:positivebehaviourteam@hotmail.co.uk)

SENDCo - JayneWinterbourn

Access and Inclusion Manager : Zoe Gilmour

Designated Safeguarding Lead : Sally Harris



**Details of injuries as marked on Body Map:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Body Map Completed by:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Head Teacher signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

# Risk Reduction Plan.



**Name of Pupil:.**

**Plan Number:.**

**Date:**

<b>Positives-</b> What is the pupil good at and what do they like doing?	<b>Triggers-</b> What situations have led to problems in the past?	<b>Successful approaches-</b> What proactive interventions have been effective in preventing the pupil's anxiety rising?

**Describe any modifications to the environment or pupil routines that can be implemented to prevent anxieties rising?**

**Expected Practice**

Strategy	What does the practice look like?
Firm clear directions	
C.A.L.M. talking/stance	
Summoning Assistance	
Verbal/Symbolic guidance	
Limited Choices	
Reminders of consequences	
Distraction	
Diversion	

Humour	
--------	--

**Describe any additional strategies that have worked in the past or should be avoided.**

Strategy	Try	Avoid	What does the practice look like?
Negotiation			
Reassurance			
Planned ignoring			
Contingent touch			
Take up time			
Withdrawal offered			
Withdrawal directed			
Change of face			
Success reminders			
Others			

From your risk assessment what is the likelihood of a pupil harming himself or herself, another pupil or adult in the event of an incident. Please Identify risk in each case.

	Self-Harm	Harm to other pupil	Harm from another Pupil	Harm to staff
Low				
Medium				
High				

Description of behaviour	Self Harm	Harm to other Pupil	Harm from another Pupil	Harm to Staff

**Prior to intervention all staff must make a dynamic risk assessment in relation to the incident and their confidence and competence in using physical intervention techniques.**

Has the pupil any medical issues that require the reconsideration of any Team Teach Holds?  
YES/NO

If YES, has there been any discussion with relevant health professionals and please outline any concerns that they had?

**Preferred physical intervention approach for dealing with above incidents**

Potential incident (see risk assessment)	Specific Location	Preferred Physical Intervention Strategy

Appropriate personal safety response,	Two Person Holds and Escorts
Arm Responses	Single Person Holds and Escorts
Neck Responses	Holds for smaller pupil,
Clothing, Hair and Bites	Seated hold required,
Steer Away	Separating Fights

<b>Advanced dedicated modules</b>	
Full Shield (adv. certificate required)	Everyday objects used as weapons
Front Ground Recovery, (adv. certificate required min 3 persons required, observer for pupil)	

**Follow up- Debrief and repair following the incident**

Are there any factors to consider when debriefing? E.g. Communication aids, staff etc.

Hear	
Explain	
Link	
Plan	

**Multi-agency Involvement (where the risk assessment indicates a high risk)**

Agency	School	Parent/ Guardian	Social Worker	Child Protection Officer	Local Authority Officer	Other
Name						
Signature						
Date						

Date	Evaluated	By	Action

**Name and signature of person completing this form**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_



