



Positive Handling Policy

'SAFE, RESPECTED AND READY TO STEP OUT INTO THE WORLD'

Belong

Creative

Sustainability

Curious

Empowered

Positive Handling Policy

Mission Statement

Buckfastleigh Primary School holds a deep-seated belief in education and lifelong learning. Effective collaboration, mutual support and professional challenge will underpin our quest to ensure that all of the students and adults we serve are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential and succeed in life.

Person(s) responsible for updating the policy:	Eddie Brown - Headteacher
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Status:	Guidance

Buckfastleigh Core Values

Buckfastleigh holds five core values which underpin the engagement, motivation and retention of employees, no matter what their role in the school.

- **Belong** – *Good relationships are key for all children, staff and families so that they feel they are safe, trusted and connected to their community. They are able to engage socially and with learning, both collaboratively and independently.*
- **Curiosity** – *To be motivated learners, we must have a drive to be inquisitive about the world. To develop a sense of wonder and the desire to know more about something.*
- **Sustainability** – *In a world with a changing environment, we must educate ourselves to meet our own needs without compromising on the needs of future generations to meet theirs.*
- **Creativity** – *Children and adults use their imaginations to be inventive. They go outside of what they already know to explore ideas and use different ways to perceive the world and solve problems.*
- **Empowerment** – *Children and adults must have the confidence and resilience to face challenges with a positive attitude, knowing they have control over themselves and what they can achieve.*

Providing Accessible Formats

If you are unable to use this document and require it in a different format, please contact the school.

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Rationale

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 and other guidance. Specifically:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- DfE Guidance "[Use of Reasonable Force in Schools](#)"

Responsibilities

The Headteacher/Principal will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy.

This policy will be reviewed every three years

Policy Statement

Good professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils at Buckfastleigh Primary School respond positively to the school's Behaviour and Relationships Policy followed by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of positive handling may be required. Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff at Buckfastleigh:

- 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;
- 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; when pupils or staff are at risk, or there is a risk of significant damage to property.

Definitions:

- **Physical Contact Situations:** in which appropriate physical contact takes place between staff and pupils, e.g. in games/PE or to comfort pupils.
- **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.
- **Positive Handling:** this will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or of significant damage to property. All such incidents will be recorded on the CPOMs system using the category, "Behaviour: Restraint Used"

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Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working at Buckfastleigh 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 Buckfastleigh Primary School and their parents have a right to:

- individual consideration of pupils needs by staff that has 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 working in the school
- be informed about the school's complaint procedure

Buckfastleigh Primary 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 to ensure the good behaviour of their child and that the child understands and follows the school's Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

Training

All school staff who are authorised to be in charge of pupils are automatically authorised to use reasonable force where necessary, as described in [DfE Guidance](#). No member of staff will be expected to undertake positive handling, although we recognise that adults have a duty of care to act in the best interests of the children. Staff should use their own judgement and assess the risks before acting. Positive Handling training will be made available to designated staff and will be the responsibility of the Headteacher. Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken.

Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Staff should consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order that are in line with the Buckfastleigh Behaviour and Relationships Policy. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively and use of positive handling or restraint is a last resort. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches will be taken according to the circumstances of the incident:

- Verbal acknowledgment of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain and, if appropriate, move to a designated safe space; this involves negotiation, care and concern.
- Further verbal warning stating:
 - this is the second request for compliance
 - an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable

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- an explanation of the consequences and what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues

- Warning of potential need to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies.
- If possible summon assistance. It must be remembered that the restraint is a safeguard, not a sanction and the child should be told that the reason for positive handling is to protect them not to punish them. At this point, it may be necessary to remove other children from the scene for their own protection.
- Physical intervention. Reasonable physical intervention using the minimum degree of contact to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Buckfastleigh Primary School recognises that children in a state of dysregulation, especially those who have suffered trauma, may not be able to process the verbal and non-verbal cues from adults during periods of distress. Staff should always act in a calm and consistent manner and verbalise their intentions anyway as this indicates to other staff and pupils what is happening.

Use of Reasonable Force

This section should be read alongside "[Use of Reasonable Force; Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies](#)" (DfE, 2013)

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit. Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

It should be; Proportionate, Legal, Accountable, Necessary, Reasonable.

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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

If the use of positive handling can be anticipated (e.g. a child refusing to come into school) then a response team should be on standby. Wherever possible, assistance should 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

This is not a definitive list and other strategies may be employed. Any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school.

Staff should take care to avoid injury to themselves and should guide a child to a restraining position on the ground, if they become a "dead weight" or drop to their knees. In a situation where positive handling is used, pupils should be removed from the hazard and isolated where possible. Whenever positive handling is used, staff will keep talking to the pupil.

Following the incident, the child (if possible) will be debriefed, once calm, and encouraged to reflect on their actions.

Recording

Where positive handling has been used a record of the incident always needs to be kept. All recording needs to be completed on the day of incident and needs to include the following:

- name of pupil
- date, time and place of incident
- a brief description of the incident and actions taken
- attempts made to calm the situation
- names of staff using restraint
- nature of physical intervention technique used
- how incident was resolved and any consequences
- effectiveness of the intervention

This should be recorded on the school's CPOMS system using the category, "Behaviour: Restraint Used"

Incidents will also be recorded in the 'Red Bound Book' in the school office.

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Informing Parents

Parents will always be informed following an incident where positive handling has been used. If appropriate, a discussion will take place involving parents and relevant members of staff (e.g. SLT, SENCO, class teacher) to put measures in place to address the behaviour concern.

Action after an Incident

The Headteacher (or SLT in their absence) 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:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy
- Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure
- School Behaviour Policy

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.

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 WeST Complaints Procedure.

Monitoring of Incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use positive handling, this will always be recorded on the schools CPOMS system using the category, "Behaviour: Restraint Used". The Headteacher/Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead should review the number of incidents requiring positive handling on a termly basis. This will be reported to governors and Trustees through the termly safeguarding report.

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.

Incidents will also be recorded in the '*Red Bound Book*' in the school office.

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