



**Luston and Shobdon Community Primary Schools Federation
including Luston Nursery**

Positive Handling Policy

Last reviewed	22 Sept 2025
Renewal due	Sep 2026

This policy was ratified by our Governors and disseminated to all staff.

The Federation is committed to a positive behaviour policy which encourages children to make positive behaviour choices. On rare occasions circumstances may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff. Members of staff are trained and receive refresher training in positive handling using the Team Teach qualification. Our policy for positive handling is based upon the following principles:

- Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Incidents must be recorded and reported to the head teacher as soon as possible
- Parents will be informed of each incident

The Legal Framework

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows, “teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Head teacher who have control or charge of pupils to use such forces as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Causing injury to his/herself or others
- Committing an offence
- Damaging property

- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline”

Our Approach

The Federation aims to avoid the need for physical intervention and regards this as a last resort in a minority of situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the Federation’s policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in *loco parentis* and have a “Duty of Care” to all children they are in charge of. They must, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure all children’s safety and wellbeing.

Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

Use of Positive Handling

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allows the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this. What constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. Teachers should apply the training they received in Team Teach to de-escalate where possible, then use the appropriate holds as practised in the training. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

In all circumstances, alternative methods should be used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint, a last resort.

When positive handling becomes necessary:

Do

- Tell the child what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible

- Tell the child what he/she must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible eg. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

Don't

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the child
- Involve other children in the restraint
- Touch or hold the child in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the child in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing eg. around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the child
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment

Actions after an incident

Positive handling often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the child. The Executive Headteacher or Head of School should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the child involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents/carers informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural plan, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the Inclusion Lead. This may require additional support from other services, for example the Local Authority Behaviour Support Team.

It is always helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided. All incidents should be recorded immediately on the Pupil Positive Handling Report Form. All sections of this report should be completed so that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed. In the event of any future complaints or allegations this record will provide essential and accurate information.

A copy should be filed in the child's appropriate file and in a central school file in order to inform individual and school risk assessments.

A member of the Leadership Team will contact parents/carers as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

Risk Assessments

If one becomes aware that a child is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of positive handling, a plan is required how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention
- Ways of avoiding "triggers" if these are known
- Involvement of parents/carers to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure that they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate
- The Federation's duty of care to all children and staff

Complaints and Allegations

A clear positive handling policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents/carers. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under the complaints disciplinary or allegation management procedures.

It is our intention to inform all staff, children, parents/carers and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis in the autumn term.

References:

Use of Reasonable Force in Schools DfE 2013

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

Promoting Positive Relationships and Supporting Behaviour Regulations Policy

SEND Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Appendix One:

Record of Positive Handling

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Pupil Name:

DoB:

Member(s) of staff involved:

Adult witnesses to restraint:

Pupil witnesses to restraint:

Outline of event leading to restraint:

Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used):

Outcome of restraint:

Description of any injury(ies) sustained by injured pupil and any subsequent treatment:

Date parent/carer informed of incident:

Time:

By whom informed:

Outline of parent/carer response:

