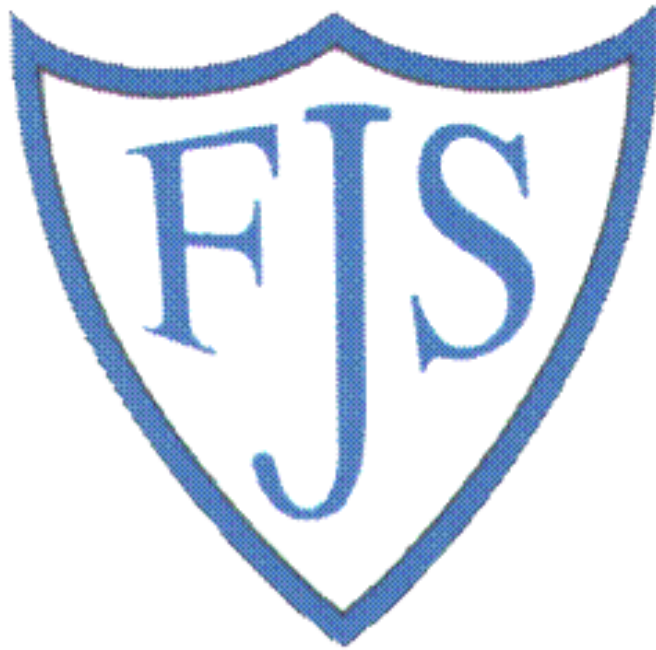


Forefield Junior School



Positive Handling Policy

January 2025
Review 2025

Mission Statement

*Forefield Junior School is a P.R.O.U.D. school built on **Passion and Respect**, where **Opportunities** can be seized by **Unique and Determined** learners.*

We are passionate about learning in an environment where everyone is empowered to be themselves and to flourish. We respect and value each and every individual and cherish their unique qualities to create a sense of belonging. We are determined to support personal, social and emotional development by encouraging self-belief and providing opportunities for everyone to express themselves and grow in confidence.

By celebrating their diverse contribution to the life of the school and the wider community, each person will be encouraged to build on their foundations, to instil a belief in everyone that they have limitless potential and are always capable of achieving their best - throughout their lives. As a family we share each other's successes and take pride in them.

We will consistently promote the highest of standards in every aspect of school life, provide a vibrant, stimulating curriculum in a safe and happy learning environment, to foster excellent attitudes and behaviour. The inspirational opportunities we provide will fuel a passion for learning and a sense of pride in all we do.

This is what makes us PROUD:

Passion, Respect, Opportunity, Unique, Determined.

Positive Handling Policy

'The use of Positive Handling to support the management of physically challenging behaviour.'

The policy has been updated after staff discussions and Team Teach training (January 2025). The responsible person for the implementation of the policy is Mr P. Swift. The policy will be reviewed by the Head teacher and the Governing Body with the next review date set as January 2028 or on the publication of updated guidance from the DfE.

The policy has been developed in response to DfE guidance, 'Use of Reasonable Force - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies' (July 2013). It also takes cognisance of DfES, DOH Guidance for Restrictive Physical Interventions, 'Guidance on the use of restrictive physical intervention for children who display Extreme Behaviour in association with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorder' (July 2002). Additionally, it follows the policies and guidance of Sefton Local Authority and will be drawn to the attention of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils and for volunteers working within the school to explain the school's arrangements for care and control. Its contents are available to parents and pupils. A statement about the School's Behaviour policy is made to parents in the School

prospectus and within each Home School Agreement. This statement includes information on the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. By signing Home School Agreements parents are acknowledging the school's power to use reasonable force in the circumstances described in this policy. Parental consent is not required to restrain a pupil.

At Forefield Junior School, we are 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. Our policy for physical intervention 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 Headteacher as soon as possible.
- Parents will be informed of each incident.

Rationale

Every child has a right to the best education which can be provided in partnership between school, parents/carers, the authority and the community. Staff have a right to teach in an environment which is not subject to disruption or aggression. Good pupil behaviour and skilled management by staff of pupils' behaviour are essential pre-requisites for an effective learning environment. Behaviour which challenges good order is a barrier to learning and teaching. Therefore this policy is linked closely to the school's behaviour policy.

However, there can sometimes be occasions in any school when pupils' behaviours challenge the ability of staff to maintain good order. A pupil's behaviour may disturb other pupils, may risk damaging property, or may place that pupil or others at risk of harm. Conflict and aggression can be minimised by using effective de-escalation techniques. All staff need to know the appropriate steps to take to de-escalate situations, to minimise their severity, and to avoid physical intervention or restraint becoming necessary.

Underpinning values:

Everyone attending or working in this school has a right to:

- recognition of their unique identity;
- be treated with respect and dignity;

- learn and work in a safe environment;
- be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse.

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

- individual consideration of pupil needs by the staff who have responsibility for their care and protection;
- expect staff to undertake their 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 school;
- be informed about the school's complaints procedure.

The school will ensure that parents/carers and pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits, which govern behaviour in the school. In turn parents/carers will have committed themselves through the 'Home School Agreement' to promote the good behaviour of their child and that efforts have been made by them to ensure that he/she understands and follows the school's Behaviour Policy.

Purpose of policy:

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in our school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the discipline and control practiced by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff at Forefield Junior School. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required. Forefield Junior School acknowledges that physical techniques are only part of a whole school approach to behaviour management.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school:

- (i) Clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary and
- (ii) Are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

Forefield Junior School makes a clear distinction in relation to the following: -

- 'Seclusion' where an adult or child is forced to spend time alone against their will.
- 'Time out' which involves restricting the service user's access to all positive reinforcements as part of the behavioral programme.
- 'Withdrawal' which involves removing the person from a 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.

At Forefield Junior School pupils will not be secluded.

Definitions of Positive Handling:

No legal definition of reasonable force within a schools context exists, however for the purpose of this policy and the implementation of it at Forefield Junior School.

‘Reasonable Force uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming himself, herself, others or property’.

The scale and nature of any physical intervention at Forefield Junior School ‘must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the nature of the harm they might cause’. (DfES/DOH Guidance for Restrictive Physical Interventions, July 2002).

This policy does more than simply outline the use of physical. It aims to provide a transparent overview of how we use physical contact to both care for and, where appropriate, control our pupils. Working within the philosophy of ‘Every Child Matters’ with a particular focus in relation to the strands of ‘staying safe’ and ‘enjoying and achieving’, our Positive Handling policy describes the acceptable physical interaction between staff and pupils on a daily basis. Based on the principles of moving from least intrusive to more restrictive holding we have divided interaction into three definable areas.

Physical Contact:

Situations in which physical interaction occurs between staff and pupils to either care for pupils who may be distressed or have severe and profound learning disabilities, or in subject areas such as physical education in order to promote inclusive learning opportunities and deliver the National Curriculum. In addition staff will also use positive touch to comfort pupils and as part of the PSHCE/social curriculum in order to teach them more appropriate ways of seeking attention.

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 arm or shoulder with little or no force. The important factor within these situations is that the child is compliant and “follows” the cue to be guided.

Physical Control and Restraint/Restrictive Physical Intervention:

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. It is important to note that the use of ‘reasonable force’ should be seen as a last resort. All such incidents are recorded and reported to parents and will be stored in an accessible way.

As indicated the level of compliance from the pupil determines whether or not the interaction is an intervention or a control/restraint. If in doubt, then staff should always record the incident using the school’s Record of Physical Intervention form.

Implications of the policy:

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility what would be an offence for an older pupil)¹;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself);
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise. (Section 93 of the *Education and Inspections Act 2006* makes it clear that force may be used to prevent behaviour that prejudices the maintenance of school discipline regardless of whether that behaviour would also constitute a criminal offence.)

The application of any form of physical control 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 this policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

Reasonable force 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.

Authorised staff:

At Forefield Junior School the power to use reasonable force applies to any member of staff, and any other person to whom the head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils. This can also include people to whom the head has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers.

The power may be used where the pupil (including a pupil from another school) is on the school premises or elsewhere in the lawful control or charge of the staff member (eg a trip or visit.)

The Headteacher is responsible for making clear to whom such authorisation has been given, in what circumstances and settings they may use force and for what duration of time this authorisation will last. Where appropriate, children will have Individual Positive Handling Plans which will outline the strategies to be used. The Headteacher will ensure that those authorised are aware of, and understand, what the authorisation entails. Those whom the Headteacher has not authorised will be told what steps to take in the case of an incident where control or restraint is needed.

Support Services will have their own policies for Care and Control of pupils. When working within school it is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that colleagues from Support Services are aware of school policy and practice. The head teacher in the school will be accountable for their actions while in the school.

¹ The age of criminal responsibility is currently 10 in England. For further information (and much else) provided by the National Youth Agency, see: <http://www.youthinformation.com> > Justice & Equality > Crime > Age of criminal responsibility.

Principles

Physical techniques are not used in isolation and Forefield Junior School is committed to ensuring that as a result of incidents learning opportunities are created for children that allow them to 'own' and take responsibility for their behaviour.

In addition, procedures will be put in place to ensure that appropriate support is provided for staff and that following an incident pupil/staff relationships are rebuilt and repaired to ensure that a positive learning environment is maintained.

When restrictive interventions are used we always take account of a young person's;

- age,
- gender,
- level of physical, emotional and intellectual development,
- special needs,
- social context.

Where appropriate, Positive Handling Plans are written for individual children and where possible, these will be designed through multi agency collaboration e.g. when devising Pastoral Support Plans.

Risk Assessments are completed against each child when physical restraint may need to be used in the context of the identified target behaviour(s) and environments in which they occur. The assessment should identify the benefits and the risks associated with the strategies being proposed.

Such planning will address:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure 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 school's duty of care to all pupils and staff

Training in this area includes a comprehensive review of the agreed standard incident monitoring forms and any school-specific pupil level recording that is being used for planning and evaluating behaviour modification strategies.

Teachers or other staff whose job includes responsibility for pupils cannot lawfully be prevented from using reasonable force. The absence of accredited training does not preclude a member of staff from using reasonable force when needed.

Strategies for dealing with challenging behaviour

What staff will do before and during any physical intervention:

As endorsed in the school's Behaviour Policy, staff utilise consistent positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order.

Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to pupils or staff, property, buildings or the environment. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches should be taken according to the circumstances of the incident.

- Verbal acknowledgement of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain; (this includes negotiation, care and concern)
- Further verbal strategies stating:
 - that this is a repeated request for compliance;
 - an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable;
 - an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues.
- Use a range of non-physical interventions aimed at calming or defusing the situation in order to prevent further escalation.

These might include:

- Continuing to speak and listen to the pupil
- Employing an appropriate level of eye contact during any dialogue
- Diverting, distracting, cajoling or humouring, where appropriate
- Reasoning with and offering appropriate choices to the pupil
- A reminder that physical intervention may well be used.
- Physical intervention. Reasonable force being used to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

Sometimes it might be more appropriate to remove other pupils from the classroom whilst waiting for help. The teacher should inform the pupil that he or she has sent for help. Until assistance arrives the teacher should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

When physical restraint becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he 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 e.g. 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 pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil 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 pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment

Actions After an Incident

Physical restraint 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 pupil.

- Where staff have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force they should have the opportunity for a brief period of rest and relaxation and in the case of more serious incidents, access to counseling and support.
- The Head teacher 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:
 - Review of the pupil's IEP/BSP/Positive Handling Plan.
 - School Behaviour Policy.
 - Exclusions Procedure.
 - Child Protection Procedure.
 - Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure.
- The member of staff will be kept informed of any action taken.
- In the case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.
- An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

- All incidents should be recorded immediately on the Record of Physical Intervention form (attached). 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 complaint or allegation 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 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.
- If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural IEP, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the SENCO. This may require additional support from, other services, for example the LA BST.
- In some circumstances an Early Help Plan may be appropriate to help identify an additional need for a particular child. It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

Types of Incident:

Examples of situations that may call for judgments of this kind include:-

- A pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil;
- Pupils are fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others.
- A pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate damage to property.
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, through rough play, or by misuse of dangerous material(s) object(s).
- A pupil absconds from a class or tried to leave school other than at an authorized time. Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place is not enough on its own to justify use of force. It would be justifiable where allowing a pupil to leave would:
 - Entail serious risks to the pupil's safety (taking account age and understanding), to the safety of other pupils or staff, or damage to property;
 - or
 - Lead to a behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline, such as disrupting other classes.
- A pupil persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave a classroom.
- A pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson.
- A pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school sporting event or school visit.

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

Positive Handling at Forefield Junior School is seen as a proactive response to meet individual pupil needs and any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way that staff exercise their responsibilities and the behaviour management strategies used.

Reasonable Force

Whilst there is no legal definition of reasonable force, DfES Circular 10/98 advises that the degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent.

- The use of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant it
- The use of force is lawful if doing nothing may be deemed as negligence
- The degree of force should take into account the age, understanding and sex of the child
- When force is necessary, it must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- In any situation, a person should be able to demonstrate that any action taken was not based on revenge, retaliation or punishment.
- Failure to comply with the above should be dealt with under disciplinary procedures.

Recording:

Where physical control or restraint has been used a record of the incident will be kept. This record should be made in the school Serious Incident Book. This is a hard-backed book, with numbered pages, retained by the Head teacher. In addition, a Record of Physical Intervention form, see Appendix 1, will also be completed.

Appropriate documentation will be completed as soon as possible after the incident, normally prior to staff going home and be signed by all staff involved and the Headteacher.

All adults involved in and/or observing the incident are required to complete the relevant recording form. The young person is also welcome to contribute their account in whatever way is appropriate.

The incident will be reported to each parent by telephone initially by the Headteacher. This will be followed up by letter. In this case "parent" has the meaning given by section 576 of the Education Act 1996, and so will include people having day-to-day care of the child and the local authority where the child is the subject of a care order. Section 576 also deems the local authority as a "parent" in the case of children who are looked after under section 20 of the Children Act 1989. If it is likely that reporting an incident to a parent will result in significant harm to the pupil, then the incident should be reported to the Local Authority.

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

A Health and Safety Accident/Incident Form will be completed and returned to the Authority in situations where injury has occurred to either members of staff or pupils.

Complaints:

The availability of a clear policy about reasonable force and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them.

Any complaints about staff will be investigated through the School's Complaints Policy. If necessary the complaint will be dealt with by the Staff Disciplinary Procedures and/or Child Protection Procedures.

Monitoring incidents:

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use reasonable force, this will always be recorded and documented following agreed procedures. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Head teacher to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour may require the use of reasonable force.

Monitoring of incidents will take place on a regular basis and the results used to inform planning to meet individual pupil and school needs. A Register of False Accusations made against staff will be maintained as an additional safeguard for staff working in this difficult area.

To support the Headteacher and school and ensure objectivity the School Improvement Partner to the school will be involved with the monitoring process. In addition, at Forefield Junior School, Mrs Victoria Ellis Jones is the named Governor who supports this process by undertaking termly audits of incidents and feeding back findings to the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Links to Other Policies

The policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils, including

Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
SEN Policy
Intimate Care Policy

APPENDIX 1 Record of Physical Intervention form



RECORD OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Lesson/Activity:	
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Positive Hold Report	
Date:	Time: Location:
Child's Name/Year Group/Class:	
Incident No:	Legal Status:
Lead staff involved:	Other Staff involved:
Ethnicity of Young Person:	
Witnesses:	
Reason for Physical Intervention:	Please tick box:- Injury to child/young person <input type="checkbox"/> Injury to another young person <input type="checkbox"/> Injury to staff member <input type="checkbox"/> Injury to others <input type="checkbox"/> Damage to property <input type="checkbox"/>

Antecedent/What happened just before the event/Dynamic Risk Assessment
Context.

Duration of Incident	Duration of Positive Hold	Time Resistance Applied

Action/de-escalation taken prior to physical intervention:
<p>Behaviours presented, Known triggers, Strategies/responses designed to de-escalate and support.</p>

Description of incident:
<p>A) Description of what happened during incident – Events and strategies used including RPI</p>
<p>B) Description of what happened during hold / description of positive hold Describe graded interventions, Named holds, People holding, positions of people holding:</p>

Description of any injuries received Young Person	Description of any injuries received Staff	Description of any injuries received Others

Medical attention offered/received Young Person	Medical attention offered/received Staff	Medical attention offered/received Others

Accident form for staff completed? (Yes/No)	Accident form for young person completed? (Yes/No)
Reference number:	Reference number:

Damage to property (Yes/No)	If yes, please state

Describe the effectiveness of the Positive Hold

**Consequences: Has a repair and share form been completed? (Yes/No)
Details of repair and share/points of learning.**

Signed: Date:/...../.....

Print name:

**De-brief with staff and collation of reports for individuals involved.
Points of learning and strategies to reduce use of intervention.**

Signed: Date:/...../.....

Print name:

Actions to be taken by Senior staff	Yes/No	Completed (with date)/Ongoing
Social Worker contacted		
Parents contacted		
LA officer(s) contacted		
Other Professionals contacted		
Body Map by Staff		
Body Map by Senior Staff		
Accident and Injury forms handed in		

Senior staff checking the form signature	Print Name	Date	Time

REVIEW PROCESS

Confirmation that a senior member of staff spoke to pupil (Y/N)	Signature	Date

Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher analysis of incident

Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher:

Sign

Print name.....

Date (Within 5 days)

APPENDIX 2

Register of staff – Participation in Team Teach Training January 2025

Name	
Helen	Barton
Emma	Berry
Laura	Cain
Lyndsey	Cheetham
Mark	Croot
Maxine	Dempsey
Sarah	Harding
Emma	Harper
Jane	Hill
Nicola	Kent
Kay	Mawdsley
Karen	Murray
Jan	Newell
Lesley	Rainford
Sarah	Russell
Su	Schwartz
Rob	Shannon
Jane	Sheils
Christine	Smith
Paul	Snowdon
Lisa	Summers
Paul	Swift
Bronwyn	Wilson
Dan	Wood
Karen	Wright

Register of staff – Participation in Team Teach Training June 2023

Name	
Helen	Barton
Emma	Berry
Laura	Cain
Mark	Croot
Lynda	Elston
Nicola	Gobin
Beth	Khan
Kay	Mawdsley
Karen	Murray
Luke	Parry
Louise	Peake
Lesley	Rainford
Sarah	Russell
Su	Schwartz
Rob	Shannon
Paul	Swift
Michelle	Thompson
Dan	Wood