



Newbridge Primary School

Positive Handling Policy

Date of written: October 2025

Written by: Gill Kennaugh

Date ratified: January 2026

Review Date: January 2027

1. Introduction

This policy outlines Newbridge Primary School's approach to positive handling. It is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff while promoting a positive and supportive learning environment. This policy reflects the school's commitment and is informed by the Department for Education's guidance on behaviour in schools and other relevant legislation.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide clear guidance to all staff on the use of positive handling techniques.
- Ensure that positive handling is only used as a last resort when all other de-escalation strategies have failed.
- Protect pupils and staff from harm.
- Promote a consistent and fair approach to behaviour management.
- Meet the requirements of relevant legislation and guidance.
- Provide parents and carers with information about the school's approach to positive handling.

3. Legal and Ethical Framework

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DfE)
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Behaviour in Schools (DfE, 2022)
- Reasonable Force (DfE, 2013)

4. Definition of Positive Handling

Positive handling refers to the use of reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

- Injuring themselves or others.
- Causing significant damage to property.
- Committing a criminal offence.

Positive handling may involve physical intervention, but it should always be used as a last resort, and only when other strategies have failed. It is not a punishment.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Governing Body:** Responsible for approving and monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- **Headteacher:** Responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively and that all staff are trained appropriately.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Responsible for ensuring that all incidents of positive handling are reported and investigated appropriately.
- **All Staff:** Responsible for understanding and following this policy, using de-escalation strategies wherever possible, and reporting all incidents of positive handling.
- **Parents/Carers:** Responsible for working in partnership with the school to support their child's behaviour.
- **Pupils:** Responsible for following the school's behaviour policy and treating others with respect.

6. De-escalation Strategies

Before resorting to positive handling, staff must use a range of de-escalation strategies, including:

- **Verbal de-escalation:** Speaking calmly and clearly to the pupil, using a non-threatening tone of voice.
- **Non-verbal communication:** Using body language to convey calm and reassurance.
- **Distraction:** Diverting the pupil's attention to something else.
- **Offering choices:** Giving the pupil some control over the situation.
- **Removing triggers:** Identifying and removing any factors that may be contributing to the pupil's behaviour.
- **Seeking support:** Asking for assistance from other staff members.
- **Time Out:** Providing a safe space for the pupil to calm down.

Staff should apply any specific de-escalation strategies detailed in an individual child's EHCP or SEND plan.

7. Use of Positive Handling

Positive handling should only be used as a last resort, when all other de-escalation strategies have failed, and when there is an immediate risk of harm.

- **Principles:**
 - **Reasonable force:** The amount of force used must be proportionate to the risk.
 - **Minimum force:** Only the minimum amount of force necessary to prevent harm should be used and for the minimum amount of time.
 - **Last resort:** Positive handling should only be used when all other options have been exhausted.
 - **Safety:** The safety of the pupil and staff must be the primary consideration.
 - **Dignity:** Positive handling should be carried out with respect and sensitivity.

- **Permitted Situations:**

- To prevent a pupil from injuring themselves or others.
- To prevent a pupil from causing significant damage to property.
- To prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence.
- Untrained staff should be able to apply positive handling (in line with section 6 and 7) where they are protecting the child from immediate harm – but as a last resort where no trained staff are available. If this does happen the DSL should then debrief, review and give training for the member of staff to carry out their reporting duties

- **Prohibited Situations:**

- As a form of punishment.
- When a pupil is simply refusing to follow instructions.
- When there is no immediate risk of harm.

8. Training

Only staff who are Team Teach trained can use positive handling strategies. This training will cover:

- De-escalation strategies.
- The legal and ethical framework for positive handling.
- Safe and effective positive handling techniques.
- Reporting procedures.
- The importance of recording incidents accurately and objectively.
- Understanding underlying causes of behaviour.

9. Recording and Reporting

All incidents of positive handling must be recorded and reported as soon as possible. The record should include:

- The date, time and location of the incident.
- The names of the pupil(s) and staff involved.
- A description of the events leading up to the incident.
- The de-escalation strategies that were used.
- The type of positive handling that was used.
- The reasons why positive handling was necessary.
- Any injuries sustained by the pupil or staff.
- The names of any witnesses.
- Any follow-up actions taken.

The record should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Headteacher. Parents/carers should be informed of the incident as soon as possible, unless there are safeguarding concerns that prevent this. All reports will be reviewed by DSL against policy and recommendations/learning made

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body, in consultation with staff, parents and pupils. The review will consider:

- The effectiveness of the policy in promoting a positive and safe learning environment.
- The number of incidents of positive handling.
- The types of positive handling that were used.
- Any concerns raised by staff, parents or pupils.
- Any changes in legislation or guidance.

The policy will be updated as necessary.

11. Complaints

Any complaints about the use of positive handling will be investigated in accordance with the school's complaints policy.

12. Communication

This policy will be communicated to all staff and parents through:

- The school website.
- Staff training.

13. Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy
- Complaints Policy