

William Austin Infant School
POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

March 2026

Rationale

This policy outlines how staff at William Austin Infant School create and maintain good order and relationships through positive approaches. These approaches are successful for the vast majority of the time. This policy on the use of restrictive physical interventions supplements the main behaviour policy. Both should be read in conjunction with the school SEND policy, the Health & Safety policy, and the Safeguarding policy. This policy has been reviewed in line with the recommendations of the DfE guidance 'Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2013' and under Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act (2006) and subsequent guidance published by the DfE In January 2016 entitled Behaviour and Discipline in Schools for Headteachers and Staff' . This can be accessed using the link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools-guidance-for-governing-bodies>

Purpose

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any physical intervention undertaken is carried out in a way that supports the values and principles described above. In particular, it aims to describe the circumstances in which restrictive physical intervention is an appropriate response and how staff at the school will fulfil their responsibilities in those circumstances.

The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that staff, Governors and parents are aware of the policy. The Headteacher will ensure that any necessary training/awareness-raising takes place to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities in this respect.

William Austin Infant School believes that physical touch is an essential part of human relationships. In our school adults may well use touch to prompt, to give reassurance or to provide support in PE and the aim of this policy is to make staff aware of and confident in their approach.

The Principles

To use touch/physical support successfully, staff will adhere to the following principles:

Touch/physical contact must:

- be non-abusive, with no intention to cause pain or injury
- be in the best interests of the child and others
- have a clear educational purpose (e.g., to access the curriculum or to improve social relationships)
- take account of gender issues.

Staff must be aware of sensitivities associated with any form of physical contact with pupils.

More guidance and advice on physical contact other than the exercise of the power to use force is provided by the Education and Inspections act 2006.

What do we mean by 'physical intervention'?

Definition	Example	
Non-restrictive physical interventions. (As already stated touch/physical contact is a small but important and natural part of teacher-pupil relationships in our school).	Either where the child's movement is not restricted or where the child is held supportively but such that they will be released immediately should they so wish.	For example: escorts and guides
Restrictive physical interventions	Prevent, impede or restrict movement or mobility. Restraint. To use force to direct.	For example: more restrictive hold and restraints by trained members of staff and in line with training received (L2 Team Teach training)
Emergency/unplanned interventions	Occur in response to unforeseen events	
Planned interventions	In which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods which are based on a risk assessment and recorded in an individual plan for the management of a pupil	

What the law says on when is restrictive physical intervention permissible

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:

- a) Committing any offence (or for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- b) Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil themselves); or
- c) 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.

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force (DfE Use of reasonable force Page 4.) Selected members of staff have received in depth 'Team Teach' training which enables them to use positive handling techniques. However, all members of permanent school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force if it is deemed necessary and urgent and a member of Team Teach staff is not immediately available.

Risk assessment

The use of a restrictive physical intervention will be the outcome of a professional judgement made by staff on the basis of this school policy. It is avoided whenever possible and will not be used for staff convenience.

Restrictive physical intervention will only be considered if other behaviour management options have proved ineffective or are judged to be inappropriate (or in an emergency situation). Before deciding to intervene in this way, staff will consider whether the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk of intervening.

Any actions will be carried out with the child's best interests at heart. Physical intervention will never be used to punish a pupil or cause pain, injury or humiliation. As defined in the DfE guidance 'Use of reasonable force' schools cannot use force as a punishment' (Page 5)

Staff are not expected to intervene physically against their better judgement nor are they expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk. In such circumstances, they must take steps to minimise risks. For example, by removing other pupils and calling for assistance.

Supply staff at William Austin Infant School will not be authorised to use restrictive physical interventions. Parents and volunteers in the school are not given authorisation. Staff from the local education authority may have their own policies about the care and control of pupils but, whilst on the premises, they will be expected to be aware of, and operate within, the policy of William Austin Infant School.

How staff might intervene

When a restrictive physical intervention is justified, staff will use 'reasonable force'. This is the degree of force 'warranted by the situation'. It will 'be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident and the consequences it is intended to prevent'. Any force used will always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result and for the shortest amount of time.

During an incident the member of staff involved will tell the pupil that his or her behaviour may be leading to restraint. This will not be used as a threat or said in a way that could inflame the situation.

Staff will not act out of anger or frustration. They will try to adopt a calm, measured approach and maintain communication with the pupil at all times.

The place of restrictive physical intervention within broader behavioural planning

If, through the school's special needs assessment procedures, it is determined that a restrictive physical intervention is likely to be appropriate to help a pupil make progress, a risk assessment will be carried out following the school's guidelines (see Appendix B).

If appropriate, an individual positive handling plan will then be drawn up for that pupil (see Appendix C).

This plan will aim to reduce the likelihood of the need for restrictive physical intervention as well as describing how such intervention will be carried out and will be discussed with parents/carers.

Before the risk assessment is implemented, any necessary training or guidance will be provided for the staff involved. The Inclusion Manager will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training.

What to do after the use of a restrictive physical intervention

After the use of an unplanned restrictive physical intervention, the following steps will be taken:

- Details of the significant incident will be recorded by all adults involved in the "Bound and Numbered Book" stored in the office locked drawers.
- Recording will be completed within 24 hours whenever possible. Staff will be offered the opportunity to seek advice from a senior colleague or professional representative when compiling their report.
- Any injuries suffered by those involved will be recorded following normal school procedures and given the same reference number as the serious incident as a link to the supporting document.
- The Headteacher will check that there is no cause for concern regarding the actions of adults involved. If it is felt that an action has 'caused or put a child at risk of significant harm' the

Headteacher will follow the school's child protection procedures and also inform parents/carers.

- Parents/carers will be informed by an appropriate member of school staff on the day of the incident.
- Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding an incident.
- Support/debriefing/supervision will be available for adults and pupils who have been involved in any incident involving restrictive physical interventions.

Arrangements for recording and informing parents in the case of a planned restrictive intervention will be followed as agreed beforehand but broadly will follow the same pattern as above.

The Senior Leadership Team will use the records kept to analyse patterns of behaviour and so decide whether responses are being effective. The Headteacher/SENCO will report this information to the SEN Governor at their termly meetings.

Complaints procedure

Any complaint will first be considered in the light of the school's child protection procedures.

If child protection procedures are not appropriate, the school's complaint procedures will be followed.

Reviewed March 2026

Next Review March 2027

RISK ASSESSMENT

Types of behaviour causing concern:

FREQUENCY	Behaviour	Brief Description	INTENTION	Hazard (H)	Probability (P)	Level of Risk H & P
	Medical					
	Self harm					
	Substance/Alcohol Abuse					
	Absconding					
	Damage to Property/resources					
	Theft					
	Defiance/refusal to co-					

	operate					
	Impulsive/dangerous behaviour					
	Verbal abuse / Threatening language					
	Discriminatory abuse: Racist Gender Learning disability					
	Violent/aggressive					
	Sexually inappropriate					
	Possession/use of weapons					
Frequency: Hourly = H Daily = D Weekly = W			Intention: Deliberately = D Accidental = A Involuntary = I			

People to whom behaviour is most likely to be exhibited (Please ✓ tick)

	Any staff/adults		Supply staff (male/female/ethnic minority)
	Newly recruited staff		All women / some women (younger/older/ethnic minority)
	Ethnic minority staff		All men / some men (younger/older/ethnic minority)
	Visitors		Some ethnic minority staff (younger/older/men/women)
	Other (e.g. disabled)		Members of the public
	Any pupils		
	All female / Some female (younger/older/ethnic minority/emotionally vulnerable) pupils		All male / some male (younger/older/ethnic minority/ Emotionally vulnerable) pupils

POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN

Complete this form in liaison with the Inclusion Manager/SEAL Team Manager, parent/carer and any other outside agencies as appropriate.

TEAM TEACH AND RESTRAINT POLICY	
Positive Handling Plan	
Name:	Class:
Date:	
TRIGGER BEHAVIOURS: Describe common behaviours/situations which are known to have led to Positive Handling being required. When is such behaviour likely to occur?	
TOPOGRAPHY OF BEHAVIOUR: Describe what the behaviour looks/sounds like.	

PREFERRED SUPPORTIVE AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES: Describe strategies that, where and when possible, should be attempted before positive techniques are used.

- Reassurance
- Negotiation
- Choices/limits
- Humour
- Verbal advice and support
- Consequences
- Planned ignoring
- Distraction (known key words, objects etc)
- Withdrawal
- Success reminder
- Transfer adult (help protocol)
- Time out offered/time out directed - observed/unobserved (delete as appropriate)
- Others?

Please state at least three praise points/strengths: areas that can be developed and built upon

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS: Anything which should be taken into account before physically intervening i.e. Asthma, brittle bones etc

PREFERRED HANDLING STRATEGIES: Describe the preferred holds: standing, sitting, ground, stating numbers of staff, what 'get outs' that can be used when holding etc.

