

# Rushwick C of E Primary School

## *Ask, Seek, Knock*

*Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7:7.*

## Use of Positive Handling/Restraint Policy

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Last reviewed on: September 2023

Next review due by: September 2025

## Our Christian Vision

### **'Ask, Seek, Knock'**

*Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7 Verse 7.*

Inspired by the teachings of Jesus and recognising each person as a unique child of God, we work for the common good of everyone, ensuring our door is open for all to flourish. We encourage all to thoughtfully ask, graciously seek and courageously knock, so that together we can make a difference to our Rushwick School family and the wider world.

## Our School Values

<b>Respect</b>	We treat all others with respect. Being respectful is reflected in the courtesy with which we speak, act and treat one another. Acting respectfully gives people the dignity they deserve. Respect is behaving in a way which makes life more peaceful and orderly for everyone.
<b>Kindness</b>	We look for ways to help each other, kindness is showing you care about everyone, knowing that everything is part of God's creation. Kindness is being concerned about the welfare of others. Kindness is showing love to someone who is sad or needs your help.
<b>Trust</b>	We tell the truth and can be trusted. Trust is having faith, hope and a positive outlook. It is relying on and believing in someone or something. It is having confidence that the right thing will come about, without trying to control it or make it happen. We know we are never alone, and that God is always with us.
<b>Compassion</b>	We understand and care for someone who is in trouble or has made a mistake. It is being kind and forgiving even when others may not be sorry for what they have done. It is caring deeply and wanting to help. It is being considerate and having regard for other people and their feelings. It is also important to show compassion to others and yourself. Compassion is one of the most meaningful ways to show love; it is the outworking of genuine love.
<b>Gratitude</b>	We are thankful for all we are given and all of God's creation. Gratitude is to be thankful for what you have. It is an attitude of gratitude for learning, loving and being. It is also being thankful for the little things which happen around you and within you every day. It is an openness and willingness to receive each of God's bounties. To be grateful is to have a sense of wonder about the beauty of this world and to welcome all of life as a gift. Gratitude is a path to contentment.
<b>Courage</b>	We understand that showing courage is doing what needs to be done even when it is really hard and scary. Courage is personal bravery in the face of fear. Courage is going ahead even when you feel like giving up or quitting. Courage is needed in trying new things, in facing the truth and in picking yourself up after a mistake ready to try again. It comes from knowing deep down what is right for you and believing in yourself to do it. Courage can come from prayer and the trust that God will help.

Our vision and values are rooted in scripture, particularly Jesus' teaching on Kingdom principles in the Sermon on the Mount. This is a practical lesson on how to live our lives, rooted in Christian Values. At Rushwick, working with and for others, we endeavour for all our community to know how much they are valued by one another and God.

Jesus teaches us to ask, seek and knock and in response, God will open our hearts and minds to receive, to find and the door will be opened to a world of opportunities.

## **USE OF RESTRAINT AND POSITIVE HANDLING**

It is important for our school to maintain a caring, welcoming ethos which establishes a safe, secure and stable environment to enable pupils to grow, develop and learn. Accordingly, employees must take reasonable steps, through their pupil management and participation in our staff training programme, to minimise the likelihood of positive handling becoming necessary. Our Behaviour policy supports positive behaviour strategies and sets out clear rules, rewards and consequences.

The majority of children do not behave in an aggressive or violent way. They attend school in an environment which is conducive to learning. For children who present challenging behaviours, redirection, diffusion, prevention and avoidance are the first tools in managing violence and will tend to make control and restraint unnecessary in many situations. However, there may be occasions when the use of force or positive handling is appropriate and necessary.

Staff have the opportunity to examine issues of behaviour, care and control, and methods of dealing with difficulties - **All staff are asked to discuss specific concerns with the head of school immediately.**

In addition all staff discuss issues at our weekly staff meeting (teacher) under 'Child Concern'.

This guidance acknowledges that situations will arise for school staff in which the use of force may be required in dealing with conflict when other measures have failed or children are at risk in school or on a trip. Although the legal framework and national guidance often refers to the "use of force", for the purposes of this document, we shall use the term "positive handling" whenever possible. This document draws extensively on the national guidance, 'Use of reasonable force' (DfE July 2013) and local practice.

The safety of staff and students is the prime, underpinning aim of the use of force and positive handling. Reducing the need for positive handling is in line with training in behaviour management and prevention strategies employed at our school:

- Positive handling should, wherever possible, be avoided.
- There are rare occasions when positive handling is appropriate and is in line with the duty of care members of staff have to pupils and colleagues.

When positive handling is necessary, it must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned. **Reasonable and proportionate** force must be used to ensure safety of pupils.

### **Under What Conditions Can Staff Use Positive Handling?**

- A pupil absconding can only be restrained from leaving the premises if they would place themselves at risk if they were not to be kept within the school.
- If a child is at risk and needs immediate restraint.
- If a child is about to harm another child or staff member.

Positive handling must never become a substitute for good behaviour management.

Whilst a situation may warrant positive handling, it may be inappropriate for you to intervene without support. In these circumstances, you should do your best to remove pupils at risk and summon assistance. (This may warrant Police involvement if the pupil has a weapon).

Any physical intervention must be:

- **REASONABLE:** Did the incident warrant a physical intervention?
- **NECESSARY:** Will someone be hurt if no intervention occurs?
- **PROPORTIONATE:** Was minimum force used?
- And in the **BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD**

Staff who do not have current training in Team Teach are still required to positively handle a child if a situation becomes necessary. All positive handling should be carried out in pairs or with a staff member observing unless the situation needs to be carried out immediately and there is only one person available.

### **Alternatives to Positive Handling**

It is important to remember that the manner in which a difficult situation is approached is very significant and might make the use of positive handling unnecessary. The following are techniques which can have a positive effect on pupils' behaviour and may prevent the escalation of a difficult situation. Staff should be aware of such techniques as they are likely to be used as part of the school's management of pupils' behaviour.

It may help to:

- Move calmly
- Make simple, clear statements to the pupil
- Keep your voice quiet, firm and assured
- Lessen the threat of your presence by sitting down or allowing the pupils space
- Talk to the pupil – You must be feeling...
- Offer comfort, reassurance and security
- Maintain eye contact
- When possible, have help at hand
- Find a way to allow the pupil to 'save face'
- Don't trap the pupil unless they or others are at risk

It is usually unhelpful to:

- Give complex advice or instructions
- Speak quickly and loudly
- Corner a child or stand too close
- Attempt to reason by asking questions

### **Using Positive Handling**

It is essential that the physical management of pupils:

- Is seen as a rare occurrence and as a last resort
- Seeks to ensure the safety of other children and staff
- Is not used to discipline or punish children

- Any physical management is reported to the Head Teacher immediately, parents informed and The incident is recorded in the Bound and Numbered book (Headteachers cupboard)

The purpose of positive handling is:

- To restrain the pupil until the emotional response passes, self-control is regained and the situation is diffused;
- To limit the harm that the pupil can do to self and others;
- To demonstrate to the pupil that he/she is within safe physical boundaries and that adults can contain his/her anger.
- Keep the child or other child away from harm (stepping out in front of a bus etc).

It is helpful to distinguish between:

- 1) **Planned intervention** in which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods which are based upon a risk assessment and recorded in a handling plan which is signed by the head of school and parent;
- 2) **Emergency or unplanned positive handling** which occurs in response to unforeseen event

## I. PLANNED INTERVENTION

In most circumstances, positive handling will be used reactively. Occasionally, however, pupils who have very challenging behaviour may require a behaviour management plan or a positive handling plan which should identify the most appropriate interventions to be used. Such a plan would involve both parents and pupils and be reviewed regularly. It must be part of an agreed strategy to help a pupil to learn to control their aggressive behaviour. If this is deemed necessary all staff involved will have Team Teach training at the next available opportunity.

Specific strategies and techniques for specific pupils should be outlined in that pupil's behaviour management plan or positive handling plan. Plans include:

- Strategies for preventing and 'de-escalating' behaviours that precipitate the use of positive handling
- Descriptions of strategies that staff are allowed to use when managing extreme behaviour
- Procedures for post-incident support
- How the concept of positive handling will be determined
- The approach to risk assessment and risk management employed
- Distinctions between seclusion, time out and withdrawal
- Distinctions between planned and emergency positive handling
- Descriptions of practices which carry elevated levels of risk

## 2. EMERGENCY INTERVENTION

In most circumstances, physical interventions will occur in response to an unforeseen event. Following an emergency physical intervention, a Risk Assessment should be carried out and a Positive Handling Plan created in consultation with the child and those with parental responsibility. The plan would include agreed de-escalation strategies and positive handling methods that may be used by named staff as a last resort.

- Identified staff should know exactly what action they can take.
- It is beneficial for all school staff to receive training in positive handling to ensure staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities and to reduce the risk of injury to both staff and students.
- Ideally two members of staff should be present during any physical intervention.
- All incidents should be recorded.

Emergency use of positive handling may be required when pupils behave in ways that have not been foreseen by a risk assessment. Research evidence shows that injuries to staff are more likely to occur when positive handling is used to manage unforeseen events and, for this reason, great care should be taken to avoid situations where unplanned interventions might be needed.

An effective risk assessment procedure, together with well-planned preventative strategies, will help to keep emergency use of positive handling to an absolute minimum.

Even in an emergency, the positive handling used must be reasonable and proportional to the severity of the situation. It should be commensurate with the desired outcome and the specific circumstances in terms of intensity and duration. Before using positive handling in an emergency, the person concerned should be confident that the possible adverse outcomes associated with the intervention (e.g. injury or distress) will be less severe than the adverse consequences which might have occurred without the use of positive handling.

**All incidents must be reported by staff to the head of school immediately and recorded in the Bound and Numbered book**

## STAFF PROTOCOL

## **Before Any Physical Intervention Occurs:**

- Monitor changes in body language & possible triggers for the student to ensure early intervention & de-escalation occurs.
- Use distractions.
- Move to a quieter, less public space.
- Remove the audience.
- Lower the voice and soften voice tone.
- Soften body language.
- Have help at hand - a change of face can diffuse a situation.
- Communicate reassurance: *'I can see something has happened John. Let's go and talk about it.'*
- Listen to the child's point of view.
- Repeat a key word or phrase. E.g. *'Keep your hands down.'*
- De-personalise the confrontation. E.g. *'Breathe ..try and get control of your anger'* rather than, *'Get control of yourself!'*
- Offer help rather than criticism. E.g. *'What do you need me to do?', 'Do you need to be left alone?' 'Would you like to sit down?' 'Is there someone you need to speak to?'*
- Where possible, the pupil should be advised in advance that physical intervention will be used unless he/she desists.

## **During Physical Intervention:**

- Maintain communication: talk to the pupil, encouraging calm and offering positive reassurances.
- The purpose of the physical intervention is to restrain the student until anger passes, self-control is regained and the situation is diffused.
- Demonstrate to the pupil that he/she is within safe physical boundaries and that adults can support containment of his/her anger.
- Consider a change of face to calm the situation.
- Be aware that there will be some level of discomfort for the student but this is kept to a minimum and not used as a means of control.

## **After A Physical Intervention:**

- Member of staff reports incident to head of school (administrator if the head of school is not available)
- Parents/carers should be informed by telephone as soon as is practicable after the incident and then in writing.
- The incident must not be reported to a parent if it appears doing so is likely to result in significant harm to the pupil. If that is the case the incident must be reported to the local authority where the pupil normally lives.
- Incident reports (Bound and Numbered book) should include:
  - Time and date of restraint
  - Action taken to try and defuse the current situation
  - Why restraint was necessary & description of restraint used
  - How long the incident lasted
  - Action taken by whom
  - Others present
  - Any marks or injuries occurring
  - Any medical treatment required
  - Report signed and dated by author
  - Countersigned and dated by person monitoring incident
- A follow up session should be arranged with the pupil and possibly, but not necessarily, the member of staff who carried out the physical intervention. It may be useful to involve parents/carers too. This meeting should occur once all involved have had the opportunity to reflect on the incident.
- The meeting is to:
  - Review events leading up to the use of physical intervention.
  - Identify appropriate support arrangements and strategies to prevent and deal with any recurrence of behaviour that could lead to the use of force.
  - To maintain positive relationships between students, staff and parents.

## **What Staff Can and Cannot Do When Using Positive Handling**

Many staff are rightly concerned about the dangers of what they believe to be justified and legal use of positive handling developing into disciplinary or legal action. The purpose of this guidance is to define in detail the standards to be met in deciding upon and implementing positive handling, so that staff can be confident that, if they follow the policy and guidance, they will have the support of the head of school, Local Authority and DoVMAT. To assist in this purpose, the following is a list of actions, which may be presented as part of justified restraint, which are considered acceptable and unacceptable.

### **Those which are acceptable are:**

- The issuing of one or more verbal warnings or instructions to the pupil prior to positive handling (where feasible).

- The removal, as far as is possible, of onlookers and observers who are not critical to the process.
- Attempts to maintain the dignity and self-respect of the child during and after the restraining process.
- The holding of the body, where essential, by arms being held against the side of the body ensuring breathing is not restricted (pressure should not restrict breathing). A sideways approach is safer and less open to misinterpretation. Joints of a child should not be held and a caring c approach should be used.
- The consistent reminding to the child that reinstatement of self-control will begin the process of release.
- If the child needs to be moved, an additional staff member should help and the child lowered onto a chair.
- Children handled on the floor or chair should be lowered gently to minimise the risk to the child and staff, and should be constantly informed about what is happening to them.
- Restraining holds on the shoulders, and arms below the shoulders, are to be encouraged whilst the child is on the floor. Staff should be aware children will possibly attempt to bite, kick and thump.
- The use of soft surfaces and finishes (e.g. carpets, sofas, etc.) and the avoidance or removal of potential weapons, such as ashtrays, knives, crockery, etc.

#### **Those which are unacceptable are:**

- Use of actions prohibited by law.
- Intentionally or maliciously inflicting pain on a child (except where essential for medical purposes). The Department is aware that positive handling may not be possible without the child or young person feeling some discomfort, and that the risk of this increases as the sizes and ages of children become closer to those of the staff. The point is that feeling uncomfortable is incidental to the process of restraint, kept to a minimum and not used as a means of control.
- Deliberately encouraging conflict which is not necessary.
- Using positive handling as a punishment.
- Hitting a child.
- Forcing a pupil's arm behind their back.
- Twisting limbs.
- Pinning pupils against walls or furniture.
- Sitting on a pupil.
- Techniques which restrict circulation or breathing.
- Any holding which may be interpreted as being of a sexual nature; keep hands away from the upper thigh or breast region.

**The welfare of the child should be the paramount consideration in deciding which intervention to use. Legally staff have an obligation to keep children safe and therefore must use positive handling if this is deemed appropriate and necessary.**

#### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

When the use of positive handling is appropriate, it is important that suitable steps are taken to minimise the risk to both staff and children.

#### **MONITORING AND RECORDING**

Incidents involving the use of positive handling must be clearly recorded and reported to the designated senior member of staff i.e. head of school.

The following will be considered when recording such incidents:

- The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved
- When and where the incident took place
- Why the use of force was deemed necessary
- Details of the incident, including all steps taken to diffuse the situation and resolve it without force and the nature of the force used
- Description of restraint used
- The pupil's response
- The outcome of the incident
- A description of any injuries suffered by the pupil or others and/or any property damaged during the incident.
- Action taken by whom
- Others present
- Any medical treatment required
- Report signed and dated by author
- Countersigned and dated by person monitoring incident

## FOLLOW-UP AFTER POSITIVE HANDLING HAS BEEN USED

Immediately after the incident the staff member should have time to reflect and debrief with the head of school. Within 48 hours it is recommended that a follow-up session is arranged. This would involve the child and probably, but not necessarily, the member of staff who carried out the use of positive handling. It may well be useful to involve parents also. This session should be conducted after a period of time when all parties have had the opportunity to reflect on the incident. It is not recommended that this session happens the same day, but perhaps the following day or so would be appropriate.

The purpose of the session would be to:

- Review events leading up to the use of positive handling.
- Discuss whether the child's behaviour could have been managed differently.
- To maintain good relationships between pupils, staff and parents.
- To learn any lessons for future practice which can inform reviews of the pupil's behaviour management plan.

In situations where staff require help and support following the use of positive handling, the Education Support should be called 08000 562 561.

## STAFF TRAINING

An essential part of a successful strategy for achieving effective control and avoiding the need for restraint is the need for a comprehensive staff training programme in positive handling. Staff who may be expected to use restrictive positive handling will require additional, more specialised training. The nature and extent of the training will depend upon the characteristics of the young persons who may require positive handling, the behaviours they present, and the responsibilities of the individual members of staff. Training is arranged when deemed necessary by the head of school.

### POSITIVE HANDLING PLAN

Name of student:	DofB:	Year:
Triggers: Describe situations that have led to Positive Handling being used:		
Behaviour signals: Describe the early warning signs / changes in body language / signs of distress that occur:		
<b>Preferred de-escalation strategies:</b>		
Verbal advice	Planned ignoring	Success reminder
Reassurance	Humour	
Distraction	Time out	
Choice	Change of adult	
Advising of consequences	Observed withdrawal	
Positive areas to focus on: (strengths, interests etc)		
Medical conditions to be aware of:		
•		
Handling strategies to be used (as last resort & in best interest of student):		
•		
Debriefing process to occur after an incident:		
•		
Staff to be informed of this plan:		
•		
<b>Agreed by:</b>		
Parent/Carer:		
Student:		
Member of staff:		