Positive Handling Policy

September 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with Ludworth Primary School's Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy. It details how we will implement guidance provided by DfE, Team Teach and other relevant advice.

1.2 The term 'positive handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports all students, including those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

1.3 Staff have a duty to intervene to prevent students from hurting themselves or others, damaging property, or to maintain good order and discipline. Furthermore, the school takes seriously its duty of care to students, employees and visitors to the school. The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care. The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

1.4 Staff will be trained to look after students in their care and aim to focus on de-escalation techniques wherever possible. If a member of staff ever needs to intervene due to challenging behaviour, they will follow the school's behaviour policy.

1.5 The DfE non-statutory guidance document 'Use of reasonable force in schools' (dated July 2013- reviewed 2015) provides advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf

1.6 Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (the Act) enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force.

1.7 DfE guidance on the use of reasonable force in schools (2013) also states that in addition to the general power to use reasonable force, Headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for "prohibited items". Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

1.8 DfE guidance and the Act make it clear that school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. However, wherever possible, only staff trained in the pre-emotive and responsive positive handling strategy techniques of Team Teach will use physical intervention techniques with children, and only when necessary.

1.9 Although any member of staff may be required to physically intervene with a student who is endangering themselves or others, damaging property or to maintain good order and discipline, we would expect accredited staff to take over as soon as possible.

1.10 In March 2019, the Equality and Human Rights Commission published the guidance document, 'Human rights framework for restraint'. This guidance sets out key principles of articles

3, 8 and 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), incorporated into domestic law by the Human Rights Act 1998, which govern the use of restraint across all settings: https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/human-rightsframework-restraint

2. Team Teach

2.1 Team Teach is accredited through ICM (Institute of Conflict Management). Staff undergo a 6hour or 12-hour course (depending upon the needs of the children they are working with) led by two qualified trainers with a refresher course undertaken every two years.

2.2 Further details of the Team Teach approach can be found on the Team Teach website. The website address is https://www.teamteach.co.uk/

2.3 School staff trained in Team Teach techniques meet 3 times a year to share their experiences and practice their techniques, to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

2.4 The school will keep a list of staff qualified to use Team Teach.

3. Before using physical interventions

3.1 We take effective action to de-escalate and reduce risk by:

- showing care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiating and reasoning;
- giving clear directions for students to stop;
- reminding the student about rules and likely outcomes;
- removing an audience or taking vulnerable students to a safe place;
- making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons;
- using positive guidance to escort students to somewhere less pressured;
- ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and call for help.

3.2 Whilst or before intervention, staff should speak calmly as a way of reassurance e.g. “I am doing this to keep you safe.”.

4. Use of Intervention

4.1 The term ‘physical intervention’ is used when force is used to overcome active resistance.

4.2 Physical intervention should only be used when there is no realistic alternative and for the shortest amount of time possible. Staff may use a dynamic risk assessment or use the written risk assessment. Staff will think creatively about alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the child and that it reduces rather than increases risk. Any response to challenging behaviour should be reasonable, proportionate and necessary. Physical intervention must only be in accordance with the following:

- The member of staff should have good grounds for believing the child is in immediate danger of harming themself or another person, in danger of seriously damaging property or not maintaining good order or discipline.

- Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied.

- Every effort should be made to secure a minimum of two Team Teach trained members of staff present before applying the intervention. Other staff can act as assistants or witnesses.

- Once safe, the intervention should be relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control.

- Intervention should be an act of care and control, NOT punishment.

- Physical intervention should not be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate danger to people and property.

- After the event, the intervention should be discussed with the child, if appropriate, and the parents at the earliest opportunity
-

4.3 The definition of reasonable, proportionate and safe practice can change and evolve and that this will be kept under review.

5. Dynamic Risk Assessment - Responding to unforeseen emergencies

5.1 Even the best planning system cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff must think on their feet.

5.2 An unforeseen event may require an emergency response with a dynamic risk assessment. After that event, staff have a duty to plan and prepare a risk assessment detailed in an individual student plan.

6. Positive Handling Plan (including risk assessment process)

6.1 Risk assessments are required for students who exhibit challenging behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. Parents will be involved with the writing of the risk assessment.

6.2 When considering a student's behaviour, staff and parents will think about the following:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this student's behaviour? - Have we got all the information we need to conduct the risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan?
- What further steps can we take to prevent dangerous behaviour from reoccurring?

6.3 Staff may also need to make an individual risk assessment where it is known that force is more likely to be necessary to restrain a particular student, such as a student who is considered to be at greatest risk of needing positive handling interventions due to their special educational need (SEN) or disability. Plans should be compatible with a student's EHCP and properly documented in the school records.

6.4 An individual risk assessment is essential for students whose SEND are associated with:

- Communication impairments that make them less responsive to verbal communication
- Physical disabilities and/or sensory impairments
- Conditions that make them fragile, such as haemophillia, brittle bone syndrome or epilepsy - Dependence on equipment such as wheelchairs, breathing or feeding tubes.

6.5 Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All students who have been identified as presenting a risk, should have a Personal/Positive Handling plan or Behaviour Plan. The plan details strategies which have been to be found effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are to be avoided. Any particular physical techniques which have been found to be effective should be named, along with any alerts to any which have proved to be ineffective, or which have caused problems in the past. Personal/Positive Handling plans or Behaviour Plans should be considered along with the child's EHCP or any other planning document relevant to the student such as an Individual Health Care Plan or Pupil Passport. The Personal/Positive Handling plan or Behaviour Plan should take account of the age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special needs and social context. Parents will be involved in the writing of each Personal/Positive Handling plan or Behaviour Plan and review.

7. Post Incident Debrief

7.1 After any incident a full debrief should take place so that learning can inform practice.

7.2 Following an incident, it is the policy of the school to offer support to all involved. This is an opportunity for learning, and time needs to be given for following up incidents so that students and

staff have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate another person's perspective.
7.3 It is difficult to devise a framework of support that meets the needs of all. As individuals we all vary in how much support we need after an unpleasant incident. Generally, a member of senior staff would expect to talk to staff and children involved in any incidents involving any intervention. If the staff or students need time to rest or compose themselves, then the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will make arrangements for this to happen.

7.4 Following an incident, consideration may be given to conducting a further risk assessment, reviewing the current risk assessment. Any further action in relation to a member of staff or student will follow the appropriate procedures.

8. Recording

8.1 Good practice requires that all incidents where friendly guides and escorts are used are to be recorded as a Safeguarding event following school policy

8.2 Within these recording strategies, all details must be recorded within 24 hours of the incident and signed by the teacher involved and the DSL. Parents will receive a full account of the incident and a copy of the report. All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the record which should be completed before the colleague leaves site that day or, if that is not physically possible, at the latest within 24 hours of the event occurring.

8.3 All records will be kept for 25 years from the Date of Birth of the student with their student record.

8.4 Any injury/harm to staff or children involved in an incident must be reported on CPOMs.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

9.1 The Headteacher and DSL will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further actions as required. This information will be shared with the safeguarding governor.

9.2 Paragraph F2 of the Human rights framework for restraint states 'To know whether discrimination is occurring, public bodies should collect and analyse data on their use of restraint, to identify if restraint is being used disproportionately against people with particular protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, or who share other identifiable group characteristics, for example, women, ethnic minorities, or people with particular impairments such as learning disabilities.' The Headteacher will regularly review the use of intervention to avoid unintended discrimination.

10. Complaints and Allegations

10.1 Any complaints will follow the school's Complaint Procedure.

11. Other physical contact with students (DfE Use of reasonable force 2013)

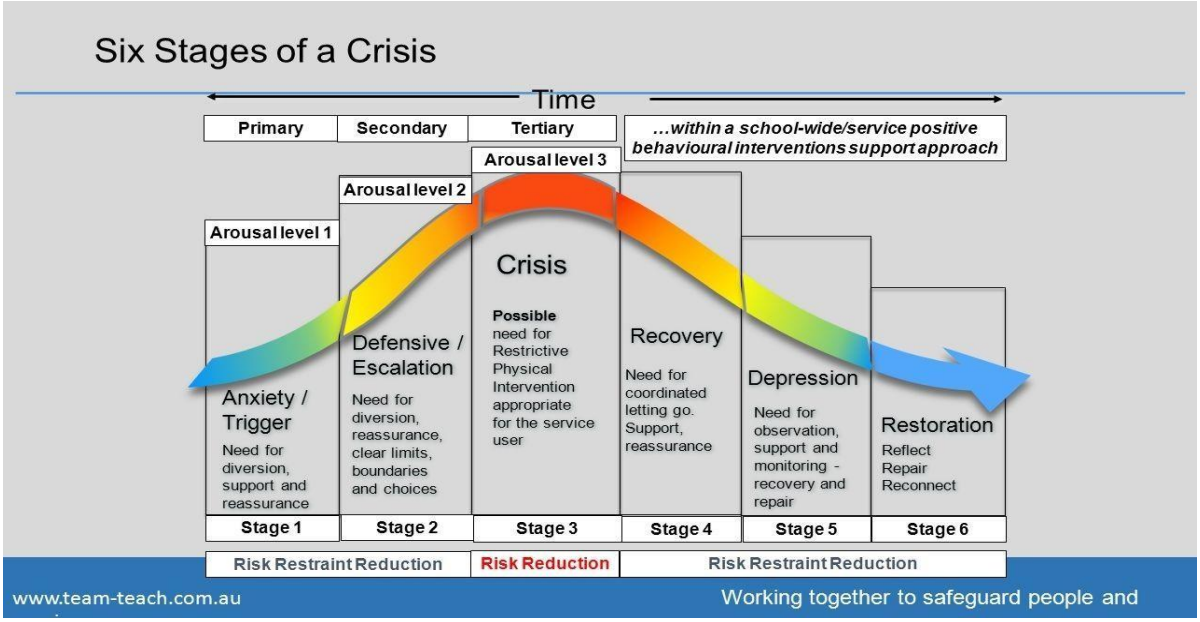
11.1 It is not illegal to touch a student. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a student is proper and necessary.

11.2 Examples of where touching a student might be proper and necessary:

- When comforting a distressed student
- When a student is being congratulated or praised
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching - To give first aid

11.3 This list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where physical contact is proper and necessary.

Appendix 1 – Personal / Positive Handling Plan Template



Personal/Positive Handling Plan and Strategies

Pupil Name:	
Base/Class:	

Risk Assessment Level		
Low – 1 to 2	Medium – 3 to 4	High – 5 to 6

Triggers and Behaviours Common behaviours/situations which is known to lead to positive handling, intervention or restraint being required		
Preferred Supportive Strategies Describe which strategies work best for the young person		
Verbal advice and support	Distraction	Positive touch
Reassurance	Planned ignoring	Time out
CALM talk	Negotiation	Change of face/key person
Choices/limit consequences	Humour	Success reminders

Preferred Handling Strategies Describe the best staff response if a guide or restraint is needed or used		
Number of staff required	Guide used	Elbow guide

Key person	Caring C's	Single elbow two person
Standing restraint	Help Hug	Figure of four
Sitting restraint	Single person elbow	Double elbow

Refection and Restorative Action/Approach What care is provided after incident
Example – Restorative chat taken place 10mins after incident between Child, staff and staff Restorative Chat after every incident with staff and child Primary Incident Reflection Sheet completed with child.
Recording MIR and Incident number
Example – 3.12.19 – MIR number 3

Signatures Please sign and date when updated Log	

The six stages are a guide, however a child can quickly move from stage 1 to stage 3 without warning.

Children reacted in different circumstances and this information can help you deal with a situation when a child goes into crisis. Remember every child is different.

It is also important to do a restorative chat when the child and you are ready. This is when you may be able to get some vital information that will help to prevent or de-escalate quickly.

Please add any relevant information that may help when a child goes into crisis that will help to de-escalate the situation.

Appendix 2 – Behaviour Plan Example

Name of Child:
Behaviour Plan (Version No.)

Possible behaviours:	• e.g. Shouting • Calling peers and adults names
Possible causes of behaviour:	• e.g. Disagreements in games e.g. someone not sharing, rough play, losing a game • Unstructured activities
Signs to look out for:	• e.g. Stopping what they are doing suddenly • Scrunching/ ripping paper up
Subject area concerns:	e.g. Mathematics
Possible approaches to support positive behaviour:	1. e.g. Speak calmly and get down to the child's level. 2. Use of the 'help script' (see below) 3. Give a countdown before asking them to do something and state that you expect it to happen at the end of the countdown. 4. Choices – give two choices. 5. Provide a job / responsibility 6. Regulation time/activities 7. Distraction – change the subject

Help Script (calm voice and stance) "I can see something has happened.
I'm here to help.
You talk and I will listen.
Come with me and we can talk about it."

Rewards to be used:

- e.g. Verbal praise
- Dojos/stickers/certificates
- Reward chart

Signed:	Date:	Name and Role:
		Class Teacher(s)

		Parent/Carer
		Pupil