



Positive handling: statement

Updated January 2022

This statement is to be read with regard to:

Education and Inspections Act 2006

DfE Use of Reasonable Force 2013

BFS' Behaviour Policy

BFS' Safeguarding Policy

'Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and young people in education settings' (May 2019)

Introduction

At Bright Futures school we have a well-established culture of nurturing our pupils and treating each other (whether pupils or staff) with respect.

We have a behaviour and support policy which is followed by all members of staff when pupils need support with any challenges they experience.

If used at all, the use of 'reasonable force' to support pupils will be used in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the child.

Definition of positive handling

Positive handling uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to ensure minimal risk of injury to children and staff. The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual who needs support and the nature of the harm they might cause to themselves or others.

Positive handling describes a broad spectrum of risk reduction strategies involving policy, guidance, management of the environment and deployment of staff. It also involves personal behaviour management, diversion, diffusion and de-escalation techniques.

It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the limit-setting practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff in school.

Everyone attending or working in this school has a right to

- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Learn and work in a safe environment
- Be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse
- Recognition of their unique identity

It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where use of reasonable, proportionate and necessary force may be required. This is a small part of our whole school setting approach to supporting our pupils.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following;

- self-injuring
- causing injury to others
- causing deliberate damage to property
- leaving the school, where this would entail serious risks to the pupil/s and their safety

Use of positive handling

At BFS we believe any kind of handling of a pupil should always be a last resort. As a general rule nobody has the right to touch, move, hold or contain another person.

However, people with a duty of care operate in exceptional circumstances where it is sometimes necessary to act outside the norm. Before using positive handling, staff should engage the pupil in a calm and measured tone, making their framework (expectations and boundaries) clear and giving the pupil as many options as possible to stay within the adult's boundaries.

Escorts used for transition times or dysregulation?

The use of positive handling must always be proportionate to the level of risk and should always be reduced at the earliest possible time.

Staff are expected to follow any agreements made as a team in relation to managing individual pupils distressed/challenging behaviour such as those agreed and minuted in daily team briefings or at staff meetings. All pupils have a personalised risk assessment where issues of safety may be highlighted and specific strategies for managing behaviour are identified. All staff are expected to be familiar with this and ensure that protocol is followed. There may be times when it is felt that a pupil requires a higher level of staff supervision, eg transition times or extreme dysregulation and this should be accounted for in planning activities.

The pupil must always be offered the option of time in the sensory room as a place to regulate, if the sensory room is accessible.

Only after trying all the above options should staff even consider using positive handling. The overriding consideration should still be the reasonableness and proportionality used.

BFS staff will record any use of positive handling in the pupil's home/school communication book as well as recording such details on the schools' CPOMS system.

Updated January 2022