



**Beaupré**  
COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

# **Positive Handling and Touch Policy**

This policy was approved  
**July 2023**

**This policy should be reviewed annually**

*"Together unlocking the potential of every child; inspiring children and changing lives"*

## **POSITIVE HANDLING AND TOUCH POLICY**

Staff have agreed to follow the principles of Cambridgeshire Steps regarding handling children in school. These are as follows:

### **Guiding and Escorting**

Sometimes it may be necessary to guide children. All staff who have completed the Step On training have been trained how to do this in a way that does not harm the child or put anyone else at risk.

The most risk free way is to form a 'mitten' shape with the fingers and thumb and place just above the child's elbow. The elbow should NOT be held, so that the child is free to move away; any force exerted can only be by the child pushing back.

This can be extended to a more assertive 'escorting' position by standing side by side with the child and placing the 'mittens' on both of the child's elbows. The adult's shoulder should be behind the child to guide them. This position will lessen the risk of the child turning and lashing out. Both guides and escorts should be performed only if absolutely necessary and should be recorded on the appropriate form, along with an explanation of the reasons for it and what other strategies had been tried first.

### **Calm Stance**

When a child is in a state where conflict is inevitable or already happening, adults must adopt an open body stance – 'side on' to the child and encourage the child to move by motioning with the hand which way to go.

Calm stance and escorting should usually be used in conjunction with the de-escalation script, in order to remove a child calmly and assertively from a conflict situation.

### **Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)**

Very occasionally, incidents may occur where a child needs to be positively handled to prevent themselves or others from serious harm. If a child presents a foreseeable risk, school should prepare a risk assessment for them and seek advice from the Cambridgeshire Steps Team. For staff who have not received this training, there may be occasions where they need to use restraint, e.g. to stop a child running in front of a car, or other situations that involve immediate risk of harm. In all cases staff must use their best judgement and ensure that all actions are reasonable, proportionate and necessary. Following an incident such as this, a risk assessment needs to be carried out/reviewed. Children that require RPI will have individual risk assessments and behaviour plans.

## TOUCH

Staff are able to physically guide, touch or prompt children in appropriate ways, if needed. It is extremely important that staff have read and understood this policy to appreciate the reasons why we may choose to hold/touch children and the appropriate ways in which we must do so.

### Why Do We Use Touch?

We may need to physically touch, guide or prompt children if they require personal care, assistance with writing, eating, dressing, etc. At other times, it may be appropriate to hug a child to offer comfort or praise.

### How Do We Use Touch?

#### Hugging

At this school, we encourage staff that are using touch for comfort or reward to use a 'school hug'. This is a sideways on hug, with the adult putting their hands on the child's shoulders. This discourages 'front on' hugging, and the adult's hands on the shoulders limits the ability of the child to turn themselves in to the member of staff. This can be done either standing or sitting.



Supportive Hug



Supportive Arm



Offering an arm

#### Hand Holding

We recognise that children sometimes enjoy being able to hold hands with adults around them especially in the younger children. This is perfectly acceptable when the handholding is compliant. However, if the handholding is being used by an adult as a method of control to move children, this can become a restraint. Therefore, we encourage the use of the 'school hand-hold'. Adults are encouraged to holding their arm out therefore a child may choose to take an adults hand and the child is encouraged to wrap their hand around the adult's lower arm. The adult's other hand can then be placed over the child's for a little extra security, if it is required.

In summary, it is generally deemed appropriate to touch others on the upper arm which would appear to be regarded as a neutral zone in most cultures.

## **Lap Sitting**

At our school, we actively discourage children from sitting on an adult's lap. Children should be taught to seek comfort/attention through other means, for example the school hand hold or hug. If a child attempts to sit on your lap, explain to them that this is not what we do here and ask them to sit next to you, if it is appropriate.

At times, children may be in such crisis or distress that they hold you in a way that is not described above (e.g. 'front on' hug/lap sitting). If this should happen please ensure that you have informed a senior member of staff. You may be asked to make a note of this, this will be in order to record and monitor the amount of times the child is doing this to staff to see whether this is a 'controlling behaviour' or whether the child is displaying distressed behaviour regularly.

Please note, that although we have a touch policy and believe that contingent touch can be a positive experience for the children that we care for, this does not mean that you have to touch children, and it should also be realised that some children will not want to be touched. Please respect this. Touching must be kept to a minimum.

## **Physical separation from a parent:**

On occasion children may demonstrate behaviours of heightened anxiety when leaving their parents at the start of the school day. In this instance, a familiar and/or trusted member of staff will be appointed to support the child whilst they transition into school. Firstly, protective factors such as scripts and prosocial conversations of encouragement will take place in the presence of the parent. If this approach proves ineffective, the member of staff will request permission from the parent for staff members to escort the child. If permission is granted, two trained members of staff will apply guides and escorts techniques (as pictured above) to encourage the child into school. Once inside the building reflective, repair and restorative strategies will be implemented to ensure the child is ready to learn. If the child repeatedly demonstrates anxieties when transitioning into school, discussions with parents, Class Teachers and the schools Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) shall take place to provide intervention, where necessary.

## **Reflect, Repair, Restore**

In most situations of medium level behaviour or above, it will probably be appropriate to support the child in the Reflect, Repair, Restore process. This can be on a piece of paper or done verbally with the child if that is deemed most appropriate.

- They need to reflect on their own behaviour, what caused them to act this way and contemplate why they chose this course of action:
  - What happened? Who was involved?
  - How were others impacted by it?
  - What may have contributed to my actions?
  
- How can they repair the damage that has been done following this particular action?
  - Physical damage to repair?
  - Damage to a relationship with a friend/peer? (Including where injury has been caused – they cannot fix the injury but they can try to fix the relationship)
  - Damage to a relationship with a member of staff?
  
- How can they ensure that it would not happen again? What changes need to occur to make sure it does not?
  - Go back to the first section, what contributed to their actions?
  - Is the same situation likely to arise again?
  - How can we ensure that the same reaction does not occur again?
  - Do we need to change anything in the classroom to make sure it does not?

This process should NOT be done when the child is still in a heightened emotional state. Ensure they have calmed down enough to engage with the process.

Children can do this process at a break time or lunchtime where it is felt that they need to stay in to complete some work that should have been completed during the lesson. Teacher judgement should be used in all cases. If a child is missing part of their break or lunchtime as part of an educational consequence, they **MUST** still get a break (whether it is a shortened break at the same time as their friends or an alternative break time where protective factors also need to be taken into account.)

**Reflect, Repair, Restore**

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What happened? How did I break the rules?

What do I need to do to make things better?

How can I make sure the same thing does not happen again?

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (member of staff)

## **Sending children out of class**

This is a **protective consequence** for persistent disruptive behaviours and should follow the procedures below:

- The child gets the opportunity to reflect on the behaviour that has led to this consequence;
- The other learners get a break from the disruption to their learning and the opportunity of more 'teacher time';
- The teacher can focus on the learning of the other children;
- The child must be accompanied to another area in the school and remain in the presence of a member of staff (this can be a member of staff working in the area with other children);
- This step should take place BEFORE senior leaders or parents need to get involved. The child should still feel that they have the opportunity to redeem themselves. At the end of the day, the class teacher should ensure parents are informed;
- Children can take work with them to complete, if it is appropriate. If the teacher feels that they need the time to regain their focus and just think, then this is also appropriate.

NB: This consequence should NOT be used if a child needs to leave the classroom due to behaviour that challenging or heightened. In this situation, they should be accompanied out of the classroom by a TA and supported by that TA, preferably where they are not disrupting the learning in other classrooms, if possible.

## **Reporting to SLT**

Children who are experiencing the highest-level behaviours may need closer supervision from SLT from time to time. This may include the following:

- Every day for at least one week, they need to report to a member of SLT just before the end of the day;
- They must be accompanied by a member of staff from their class who can discuss behaviour from that day (positives, areas to consider further on the following day);
- They can bring any work they are particularly proud of;
- At the end of the week, it can be decided whether they need to continue reporting to SLT for longer.



Negative -

Positive +

## Roots and Fruits

### Behaviours

- \* leaving the learning environment.
- \* refusing to engage in learning
- \* non-compliance with instructions.

- \* engaged in the learning process.
- \* remaining in the learning environment.
- \* co-operative with instructions.

### Feelings

Bored / confusion / enjoyment / need to control / isolated / lonely / insecure / frustrated / having fun / thrilled.

Calm / secure / comforted / happy / engaged / comforted / motivated / in control / important and valued / responsible.

### Experiences

- \* lack of ability to communicate needs to us through speech.
- \* recent separation of parents
- \* lack of boundaries at home
- \* past school experiences have, in the main part been negative ones.
- \* lack of positive relationships with peers / staff in school.
- \* staff unclear about likes and dislikes.

- \* positive relationships with others.
- \* ability to communicate needs to others.
- \* receives specific praise frequently.
- \* experiences consequences for actions.
- \* enjoys learning activities and experiences
- \* is part of a friendship group.