



Positive Handling Policy

July 2025

Review July 2026

Introduction:

This policy is based on guidance outlined in the DfE Guidance - '**Use of Reasonable Force – Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies**'. The guidance refers to the Education Act 1996 and Education and Inspections Act 2006 which clarifies the position regarding teachers and other staff working in schools, to control or restrain pupils. Staff should also refer to the school's Behaviour Policy and Intimate Care policy.

Rationale:

At Veryan we believe that the use of reasonable force is only necessary to prevent pupils from:

- Injuring themselves or others;
- Leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to significantly risky behaviours that would, in turn, disrupts the behaviour of others;
- Causing significant damage to property including their own;
- Engaging in behaviour at school or on school activities / visits which is prejudicial to the welfare of the pupils or staff.

School procedure:

Definition: positive handling is the use of force to control or restrain pupils.

The use of restraint should always be used as the last resort. If practical, before physical intervention, every effort should be made to achieve a satisfactory outcome following the school's behaviour policy or child's individual behaviour plan. **In all circumstances help must be sent for at the earliest opportunity, even when immediate intervention is necessary.** Restraint can take a variety of forms – many of which are outlined in the DfE guidelines outlined above. Staff should always avoid touching / holding a pupil in a way that might be considered inappropriate.

Reasonable force should not be used for trivial misdemeanours and should always be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident. It must therefore be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. In any action, due regard has to be taken to the age, understanding and sex of the pupil. Wherever possible any form of restraint will be undertaken by staff trained in 'positive handling techniques' in line with the local authority's guidance for staff.

The school accepts and understands that in accordance with the law, corporal punishment is forbidden.

Where restraint has been necessary, the incident must be reported to the Head teacher and be logged against the child's record. Parents of all pupils involved will always be

advised of the incident and it may be necessary for it to be followed up by disciplinary or pastoral support.

If a child requires positive handling on a more regular basis, a positive handling plan, individual to the child's needs, must be drawn up with the parents and SENCO. This must be reviewed with parents as part of the annual SEN review process. More serious incidents that are not covered in the child's handling plan require an immediate review of procedures and adaptations made if required.

Children with SEN:

As a school, we recognise that some children require physical intervention or support on a daily basis to ensure their safety needs are met. In these cases, the child will have a handling plan in place.

Staff training:

All staff receive guidance on the safe handling of children. Some staff (those working with children with identified needs that require physical handling often) undergo more detailed training on an annual basis. We also ensure that these staff receive training from Pryce trainers.

Reminder to staff do's and don'ts.

Do...

- Know the procedures within the schools guidelines for the use of physical restraint.
- Discuss these with a senior member of staff if you are unsure of any point.
- Be aware of pupils who have had physical intervention before and what happened.
- Make another adult aware early if things begin to get out of hand and positive handling seems likely.
- Assess the situation before acting.
- Stay calm – do not over react.
- Use minimal force, for minimal time.
- Report the incident to the Headteacher or a senior member of staff as soon as possible and complete a report form (stored in the Head Teachers office).
- Consult your Professional Association or Trade Union if you have any concerns.

- Remember your professional obligations to all pupils in your care.

Do not...

- Place yourself at risk: do not attempt to restrain a pupil who obviously carries a weapon.
- Attempt to restrain a pupil when you have lost your temper.
- Allow the situation to get out of control.
- Use excessive force.
- Place yourself at risk of allegations by being alone with a pupil without the knowledge of another member of staff – refer to guidance in the Safeguarding Handbook and ‘Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults Working in Education Settings’.