



# Snettisham Primary School Positive Handling Policy

(The use of force by staff  
to control or restrain pupils)

FGB: 24.11.17  
Review: Autumn 2019

## Objectives

This school endeavours to ensure that all members of the school community are safe. The main objective of this policy is to ensure all staff, parents and pupils are aware of the procedures and practice that will be carried out to ensure that this is the case at the school. This policy has direct links with the schools behaviour policy and the non bullying policy. It is intended to ensure that it will prevent serious breaches of school discipline and prevent injury to individuals or serious damage to property.

In order to minimise the need to use force or restrain pupils at Snettisham Primary School staff will strive to:-

- create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents that might require using force and apply school rules consistently and fairly.
- develop an effective relationship between staff and pupils that is central to good order.
- ensure all supervision of children is carried out in a consistent manner so children and staff are comfortable within the setting.
- use relevant materials to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings.
- ensure all incidents where emotions have run high are de-escalated using talk and discussion strategies and removing the child/children from a place of potential conflict to an area of calm where pupils concerns can be heard away from bystanders.
- ensure all staff have appropriate instructions and training to enable them to be effective in their varied roles in and out of the classroom. (Norfolk Steps Training)
- ensure that handling plans/risk assessments are put in place and training given to ensure staff are equipped to deal with individual pupils who have been identified.
- Ensure that a pupil is warned that force may have to be used before using it.

It is the head teacher's duty to ensure all staff are aware of their statutory powers to use force and or restrain a pupil. As part of the induction process into school the head teacher will inform staff if they have the powers to restrain and who they can turn to if they are in a situation that a child may be causing concern. The head teacher will inform the governors through the heads report those people that have been trained to use force or restrain a pupil in school. All staff at Snettisham Primary School have the statutory powers to use force to restrain pupils or remove them from a classroom. With staff performing a variety of roles it is not appropriate in this setting to select staff for this role.

The judgement on whether to use force and what force to use should always depend on the circumstances that staff find themselves in. Time in these circumstances is often short, with little time for reflection, and may require staff to make a dynamic risk assessment. Nevertheless, staff need to make the clearest possible judgements. Staff will need to assess the seriousness of the incident and the injury, disorder or damage that could occur if force is not used, the chances of achieving a desired outcome by other means and the risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. Staff will have been made aware of any significant pupils i.e. those on SEN/Child Protection Registers and in any extreme cases where there is a need to engage the police to avoid danger to themselves and others.

If a member of staff decides that the use of force is appropriate then they should always:-

- warn the pupil that force may have to be used.
- ensuring that no form of restraint is used that could constrict breathing. Appropriate methods may be using hands in a 'mitten' to guide or escort the child or using a supportive hug. In circumstances where the child is causing harm staff may use more restrictive methods in which they have been trained.
- try to avoid if possible the use of force unless another responsible adult is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

Examples of situations that particularly call for judgements of this kind include:-

- a child attacks a member of staff or other child
- children are fighting, causing risk or injury to themselves or others
- a child is causing or is on the verge of committing deliberate damage to property
- a child is causing or is at risk of causing injury or damage by rough play or use of an object.
- a child absconds from a class or leaves school at an un- authorised time. this would be if the child would be putting themselves in danger or that of other children and staff.
- a child is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson, a school event or school visit.

In these examples use of force would be reasonable (and therefore lawful) if it is clear the behaviour is dangerous and the situation could not be resolved in any other way. Account must be taken of the nature of the child and its age and understanding of the situation. Staff must ensure that any action taken is necessary, reasonable and proportionate and in the best interests of the child.

Although all possible precautions will be taken to prevent injury or harm to children, it should be recognised that there is always a risk of injury to both staff and students when using any physical intervention. Any injuries must be reported immediately and recorded on the appropriate documentation.

A record sheet will be completed by all staff engaged in any incident where handling has taken place even if they did not handle the child. The record sheets will be kept centrally in the school office. Once completed they must be passed to the Head teacher. They must be completed once the situation has been dealt with to ensure accuracy and it is a true and honest report. The head teacher will inform the parents of the child by phone followed by a letter and if necessary arrange to meet them. The report will then be filed in the child's records in the school office.

Any injuries to staff or children must be recorded at the time in the schools Accident Book, copies of which are sent to the West Norfolk Academy Trust.

Following any incidents where force has been appropriate the Head teacher will make arrangements to support the staff and children as these can be upsetting times.

First aid will be administered by a trained first aider and emotional support will be provided as required.

Staff will discuss the situation within 2 days with the Head teacher to see if all procedures were followed and how we could try to avoid further repercussions, learning from the experience.

The school has a clear complaints procedure and any complaints would be received in the first instance by the Head teacher. If matters were not resolved then the complainant would take the matter to the Governing Body. Parents wishing to make a complaint will be issued with the guidance booklet detailing the procedures.

If the parent wishes to complain along the lines of abuse then the school will follow the guidance set out in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education resources- and practice/ IG00175).

There may be circumstances when physical contact is appropriate and recovery other than that covered by Section 93 of the Education Inspection Act of 2006 i.e.:-

- contact in PE demonstrating technique or exercises.
- administering first aid.
- congratulating a pupil or where a child is in distress and needs comforting
- young children and those with SEN may need staff to provide physical prompts or help.

In all these cases teachers must use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support.

This policy will be monitored by the school and governors and will be reviewed on a regular basis. The Head teacher and staff will review the schools use of force strategy following any incidents and make any relevant changes to the policy.