**Safeguarding: Positive Handling Policy**

**Blakehill Primary School**



**Together We Can**







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| Headteacher | Chair of Governors | Last Review: March 2025 |
| Lisa Keighley  | Philip Cavalier-Lumley | Next Review: March 2027 |

**1. Policy**

Blakehill Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every pupil both inside and outside of the school premises.

This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

**2. Purpose**

To make school personnel aware that they can use reasonable force to restrain a pupil only in extreme circumstances.

**3. Scope**

All children and staff at Blakehill Primary School.

**4. Principles**

Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children.

**5. Responsibilities**

**Role of the Governing Body**

* decide policy
* give strategic guidance
* will monitor and review issues
* delegate powers and responsibilities to the Executive Head/Head of School to ensure all school personnel are aware that they can use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances
* delegate powers and responsibilities to the Executive Head/Head of School to ensure all school personnel and visitors to the school are aware of and comply with this policy
* be responsible for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy
* be responsible for ensuring policies are made available to parents
* nominate a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the coordinator and to report back to the Governing Body
* be responsible for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

**Role of the Headteacher:**

* ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy
* provide guidance and support to all staff
* provide ‘Team Teach’ or equivalent training for all staff on induction and/or when the need arises
* keep up to date with new developments and resources
* monitor the effectiveness of this policy
* annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

**Role of Staff:**

* ensure that they have read the Policy
* fully support all positive handling arrangements
* comply with all aspects of this policy
* take part in Team Teach training every 3 years\*
* be aware of their responsibility in assessing risks in particular circumstances
* make judgements when the use of force is necessary and how much force is to be used
* report to the Headteacher all incidents of restraint and record all incidents on the appropriate report form.

*\*Training may be provided for nominated members of staff only.*

**6. Procedures**

Blakehill Primary School is committed to the safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. This will be achieved by:

* Educating pupils on how to keep safe and to recognise behaviour that is unacceptable
* Identifying and making provision for any pupil that has been subject to abuse
* Ensuring that members of the governing body, the Headteacher and staff members understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, and are alert to the signs of child abuse and know to refer concerns to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
* Ensuring that the Headteacher and any new staff members and volunteers are only appointed when all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

We acknowledge that Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows school personnel to use reasonable force to restrain a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

* committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
* causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
* prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Blakehill Primary School follows the Department for Education Guidance*: Use of reasonable force in schools (2013 updated January 2025)*

We understand that there is no legal definition when reasonable force can be used.

To Quote: ‘That will always depend on the precise circumstances of individual circumstances of individual cases. To be judged lawful, the force used would need to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent. The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Use of force could not be justified to prevent trivial misbehaviour’. *(Department for Education – The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils)*

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

NO OPT OUT – A parent cannot opt out their child from being physically restrained in school. Reasonable use of restraint is for the protection/safety of the child/other children/adults/staff.

**Arrangements: Minimising the need to use force**

We have the following in place in order to reduce the likelihood of any member of staff using force:

* a calm, orderly and supportive school climate
* strong and effective relationships between pupils and staff
* a whole school approach to developing social and emotional skills
* an effective staff development program that develops the skills of positive behaviour management
* identifying when an incident is going to happen
* using effective strategies to manage all incidents that occur
* informing a disruptive pupil that force may be used before using it.

**School Personnel authorised to use force**

All school personnel whose job involves supervising pupils may use reasonable force to restrain a pupil but only in extreme circumstances.

**Deciding whether to use force**

We believe that the use of force and what force to use must always depend on the circumstances of each incident. The decision to intervene physically is made using the professional judgement of staff.

We acknowledge that when faced with an incident there is very little time for school personnel to think before making a quick but effective decision.

However, school personnel must be aware of and consider the following (consistent with training):

* assessing the seriousness of the incident that if force is not used then it could result in injury, damage or disorder – consistent with training
* after considering alternatives for dealing with the situation, force is the only justifiable way of achieving a positive result
* assessing the number of risks connected with using force compared with using other strategies.

The above list is not exhaustive.

**Types of Incidents**

School personnel will have to make decisions when dealing with regard to any of the following example incidents:

* Fighting – pupils fighting
* Attack – a pupil attacks an adult or another pupil
* Damage to property – a pupil deliberately damages property or is about to
* Injury or damage – a pupil causes or is about to cause injury or damage
* Absconding – when a pupil tries to leave school which could put his/her own safety at risk
* the safety of others or the damage to property
* Defying an instruction – when a pupil persistently refuses to leave a classroom
* Disruption of lessons – when a pupil’s behaviour seriously disrupts a lesson
* Disrupting a school event – when a pupil’s behaviour seriously disrupts a school event.

The above list is not exhaustive.

**Using Force**

When faced with an incident and before force is used, school personnel must:

* act in a calm and measured manner
* show no anger or frustration
* tell the pupil to stop misbehaving or restraint will be used but will stop when the pupil behaves.

School personnel may use the following types of force:

* passive physical contact by standing between pupils or by blocking a pupil’s path
* active physical contact by using restrictive holds, leading a pupil by the arm or hand or ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
* School personnel must make every effort not to harm a pupil or restrain a pupil that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct.

**Recording Incidents**

Records will be kept of all incidents on the Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS).

**Reporting Incidents**

All incidents will be reported to the Headteacher who will inform parents by telephone and then by letter of the incident.

**Post-incident Support**

After an incident has occurred the following procedure will take place:

* First aid if necessary
* Medical help if necessary
* Emotional support to pupils and school personnel
* Discussions with parents.

**Risk**

Assessment – the Senior Leadership Team will assess what resources and training are sufficient and/or necessary to support implementation of the Policy.

**7. Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed every two years to ensure that it stays relevant and reflects the needs of the both staff and children.

**8. Distribution**

This policy will be available on the school website and from the School Business Manager.

**9. Contacts**

Please contact a member of the Governing body or the Headteacher if you require support or guidance on this policy.

**10. Cross Referencing**

This policy refers to the following other school policies:

*Behaviour Policy*

*SEND Policy*

And current DfE Guidance: Department for Education Guidance*: Use of reasonable force in schools (2013 updated January 2025)*