All Saints' C. of E. Primary School

Policy Subject: Positive Handling Policy

Date: November 2026



The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Joanne Ghosh – Head Teacher

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (D-DSLs)

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Louisa Ball – Inclusion Manager

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Designated Member of Staff for Looked After Children

Louisa Ball – Inclusion Manager

Governors with Responsibility for Safeguarding

Dr James Burn

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Safeguarding Statement

The Governors and staff of All Saints' CofE Primary School fully recognise and are committed to the responsibilities and duties placed upon them with regard to arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. We expect all staff, including volunteers, to share this commitment, recognising that they have a full and active part to play in protecting pupils from harm.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Parents and carers expect a secure and caring environment in which the children can flourish. We believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment in which

pupils can learn and which promotes the social, physical and emotional wellbeing of each individual pupil, and which takes a child-centred approach.

To meet this expectation, the school adheres to a wide range of national and local policies and guidance, including Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and this policy is in line with the London Child Protection Procedures 2017 (5th edition amended October 2017, amended in 2025), as well as the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection policy, Online Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Health & Safety Policy. Parents and carers are welcome to read the policies on our website or on request from the School Office.

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will ensure that our concerns about pupils are discussed with his/her parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that such a move would be contrary to the child's welfare.

Part of our legal duty to safeguard children may also include the need to consult with and take advice from other agencies such as the Police or social services should the need arise.

Policy aims and objectives

The 1996 Education Act (section 550A), together with the most recent DfE non-statutory guidance entitled *Restrictive Interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)* permits the use of reasonable force to restrain a pupil in the event of extreme behaviour, which may result in harm to themselves or others, damage to property, a criminal offence being committed or the creation of disorder.

This policy sets out the powers of teachers and other staff to use reasonable force if required. At All Saints', we recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupil safety and well-being and to maintain good order and discipline. It is therefore set within the framework of our Behaviour, Health and Safety and Safeguarding policies.

This does not prohibit force to be used as a first resort where it is **necessary** and **proportionate** to the circumstances to prevent a greater harm or greater perceived harm from occurring.

The policy applies to the whole school, including the Early Years, and to all occasions when members of staff are in charge of children both on and off school premises.

- to protect every person in the school community from harm
- to protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful
- to provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations

Why Use Positive Handling?

Positive handling should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or by removing a physical object and/or property, which could be used to harm themselves or others and/or property. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of their emotions and behaviour.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which positive handling would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the school's Behaviour Policy, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour. Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.

Failure to positively handle a pupil who is subsequently injured or injures another, could, in certain circumstances, lead to an accusation of negligence. At the same time staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

Alternative Strategies

There are some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives, e.g. is a pupil is about to run across a road.

However, in many circumstances there are alternatives where de-escalation techniques and other strategies should be considered, e.g. the use of assertiveness skills such as:

- the 'broken record' in which an instruction is repeated until the pupil complies
- use of a distracter, such as a loud whistle, to interrupt the behaviour (such as a fight) long enough for other methods of verbal control to be effective
- withdrawal of attention (audience), e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened
- other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour (in these cases the incident can be dealt with later when emotions are no longer running high)
- the employment of other sanctions consistent with the Behaviour Policy

Use of Positive Handling

Positive handling should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.

Staff members are reminded that this is a "power" and not a duty; staff have a duty of care to themselves and others including the children in their care. Where a staff member feels that by exercising their power to intervene physically, they may put themselves or the child in physical danger or, they feel intervening may cause a greater harm or is likely to fail, then they are advised to seek a safer alternative option. In some circumstances it may be possible to remove the rest of the children from the area and allow the child concerned to calm down safely. Where this presents a lesser risk of

injury to all concerned this may be a more favourable option and indeed should be the first course of action. There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing themselves between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary.

Staff members try to avoid injuring pupils, however in extreme circumstances this may not always be possible. Force **cannot** be used for revenge, retaliation, retribution or to teach someone a lesson. To reduce the risk of serious injury, methods of intervention should **not** include the following:

- Holding a child around the neck, collar or other way that may restrict breathing
- Slapping, punching, kicking or tripping a child
- Holding or pulling a child by their hair or ear
- Twisting or forcing limbs against joints
- Indecently touching or holding
- Holding a child on the ground prone (face down) or supine (face up)
- Use of 'basket holds', i.e. holding a child's arms across their body from behind (also known as a wrap)
- Lifting a child off the floor in order to intimidate

The use of restraint requires skill, judgment and knowledge of a range of both non-harmful methods of control and restrictive methods of physical intervention. Staff at All Saints' receive regular training; both teachers and support staff are trained to ensure that incidents can be dealt with effectively, both in the classroom and in the playground. Where it is necessary, the degree of force employed must be in proportion to the perceived outcome of the incident taking into consideration the severity of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result with the highest degree of certainty (staff must use enough force for their intervention to be successful but not as to be excessive). The person (unless it is an instinctive intervention or emergency action then there should always be a minimum of two staff physically intervening with a pupil) exercising the restraint must be authorised by the Headteacher (see Appendix 1: List of Trained Staff).

Staff must take into account if the child is on a Behaviour Support Plan or has any specific medical or SEN needs.

In the event of restraint becoming necessary, where appropriate before touching the child, the member of staff should advise the child calmly and repeatedly about what they are going to do and why, and how the child might change their behaviour in order that the restraint would become unnecessary. If appropriate any other children and adults present should also be warned.

A second adult should always be present to assist with any holds to reduce the risk of the member of staff or child suffering bodily harm and as a witness if allegations of assault are made later by the child.

This would not take away from a person intervening in an emergency should they deem it to be absolutely necessary to prevent a greater harm occurring which couldn't be safely controlled with a non-physical alternative. A call for support should be made immediately.

While intervening, the member of staff must:

- Minimise the amount of time where the child is restrained
- Avoid prolonged struggling
- Wherever possible keep talking to the child and give choices as to how they could behave in a manner that would end the need for restraint
- Always look to use the least intrusive method of intervention
- Remain calm and manage any verbal abuse professionally

Pupils should not be restrained on the floor, where a pupil drops to the ground they are to be held until it is safe to release and then, where safe to do so, monitored as they get back onto their feet. If it is not necessary to hold them, then staff should not.

If restraint is required for an extended period (for example, more than five minutes), a senior member of staff must monitor the situation closely with a view to safeguarding the child and the staff concerned.

Actions after an Incident

Positive handling often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing and support after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. The headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) should be informed of any incident as soon as possible. Once the situation has been stabilised, they will contact parents as soon as possible, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

Following an incident where physical restraint is required, a full report must be completed by all concerned. This should be done in writing as soon as is practicable after the incident, and, ideally, no later than the same day (see Appendix 2: Incident Reporting and Recording Form) The agreed de-briefing procedures should be adhered to in order to support the child, the members of staff involved, any other children involved and the parents.

All staff and children involved will undertake a de-briefing meeting with the headteacher (or a member of the SLT if the headteacher is not on site), as soon as possible after the incident. The parents/guardians or carers should meet with the headteacher as soon after the incident as possible. Copies of the form will be kept in the office and in the appropriate Behaviour Records or SEN files, and sent to all concerned in the incident, including parents. If an injury has been incurred to anyone involved, the usual procedures regarding this will be followed.

If physical restraint is necessary to manage the behaviour of an individual, it would be appropriate to complete an Initial Concern Form during debriefing meetings if not already completed. If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern, it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of an Individual Behaviour Support Plan, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed with the Inclusion Manager and Deputy Head.

In the case of a child with an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan), there will be opportunities to address issues of challenging behaviour at annual review meetings and an interim review organised in

exceptional circumstances. Looked-After Children will have a Personal Education Plan which features planning and strategies to address challenging behaviour, where appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher, SLT and Governors need to ensure that all authorised teachers and other authorised staff are appropriately trained and that training is updated regularly and accept the responsibility of their role by being aware of the guidelines in this policy. Records are to be kept of any physical restraint or incident involving physical contact. These are to be clear, comprehensive and prompt. Parents must be informed and consulted each time a form is completed. These records will be part of an ongoing annual review procedure that examines practice and informs future practice.

Risk Assessments

Following an incident where physical restraint was required for the first time with a pupil, or if we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises and produce an Individual Risk Assessment. Such planning will address:

- Management of the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

Complaints

The Headteacher, SLT and Governors need to ensure that, as far as possible, preparation and planning has taken place to identify areas where physical restraint might be used. However, the school may also have to intervene in circumstances where preparation and planning have not been possible. When physical restraint takes place, the school will always endeavour to protect children and adults from physical harm, however, there may be cases in which some discomfort and/or bruising may occur, to both staff and children, as a result of the restraint taking place.

A clear positive handling policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and social services department under child protection procedures.

*This Policy should be read in conjunction with the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**, the **Behaviour Policy** and the **Anti-Bullying Policy**.*

The Positive Handling Policy was reviewed in: November 2026

It was formally adopted and approved by Governors:

Signed (Chair of Governors):

Date:

Date of Next review (Annually): November 2027

Appendix 1 – Training for Staff

These staff members have attended the Team Teach, Positive Behaviour Management Theory session (Level 1), on 2nd September 2025

- Joanne Ghosh (Headteacher)
- Louisa Ball (SENCO)
- Baraskevou Gashirahamwe (School Business Manager)
- Rebecca Buchanan (EY/KS1 Phase Leader and Nursery Teacher MAT Leave)
- Rebecca Wisso (Teaching Assistant)
- Milena Grantcharova (Reception Teacher)
- Rachid Ikhlef (Teaching Assistant)
- Bethany Machell (Year 1 Teacher)
- Esther Sharman (Teaching Assistant)
- Rosemary Hayes (Year 3 Teacher – MAT Leave)
- Nichola Chubb (Teaching Assistant)
- Suzanne Ritchie (Year 4 Teacher)
- Janet Sharp (Year 5 Teacher)
- Karry Hatley-Smith (HLTA)
- Joshua Dwyer (Teaching Assistant)
- Coleen McGrath (HLTA and Senior Midday Meals Supervisor)
- Dave Harris (Site Manager)

These staff members also attended the Team Teach, Positive Behaviour Management Practical session (Level 1), Level 1 on 17th September 2025:

- Joanne Ghosh (Headteacher)

Appendix 2 Incident Reporting and Recording Form

All Saints' C. of E. Primary School

Rooted in Faith, Growing Through Learning

Incident Report Form – Physical Restraint

Date of Incident:	
Time of Incident:	
Pupil Name:	
Relevant pupil details (eg, SEN/Medical status):	
Member(s) of staff involved:	
Other pupils involved:	
Adult witnesses to restraint:	
Pupil witnesses to restraint:	
Date and time parent informed of restraint:	
Member of staff who informed parent:	

Outline of Event Leading to Restraint:
Preventative or de-escalation strategies used (where relevant) prior to restraint:
Outline of incident of restraint (including location, restraint method used and approximate duration of the intervention):

Outcome of restraint:
Description of any injury sustained and any subsequent treatment:
Outline of Parent/Carer response:
Signatures of Staff completing report:
Name: …… **Signed:…….** **Name: ……** **Signed:…….** **Name: ……** **Signed:……..**
Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action: