





## Gateway Primary School Policy Cover Sheet

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| <b>Policy Name:</b>                            | <b>Positive Handling Policy</b>  |
| <b>Adopted at / by:</b>                        | <b>FGB</b>   |
| <b>Signed on behalf of the Governing Board</b> |  |
| <b>Name:</b>                                   | <b>Kevin Moyes</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>                                   | <b>March 2025</b>  |
| <b>Signed on behalf of Headteacher:</b>        |  |
| <b>Name:</b>                                   | <b>Kayleigh Anstee</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>                                   | <b>March 2025</b>  |
| <b>Review period:</b>                          | <b>1 year</b>  |
| <b>Date of next Review</b>                     | <b>March 2026</b>  |

## **Positive Handling Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Gateway Primary School is committed to ensuring every pupil reaches their full potential in a safe and supportive learning environment. All children have the right to learn, and teachers have the right to teach without disruption. This policy outlines the school's approach to positive behaviour management and, in rare circumstances, the use of reasonable force as a last resort.

Staff are dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. While positive relationships and behaviour management strategies are the primary methods of intervention, there may be exceptional cases where Positive Physical Intervention (PPI) is necessary to protect pupils, staff, and property. PPI should always be considered within the context of care and concern, ensuring the minimum force necessary is used and only when other strategies have been exhausted.

This policy aligns with other school policies, including those related to behaviour, health and safety, and child protection.

### **Definition of Reasonable Force**

Teachers and authorized staff may use reasonable force to prevent pupils from:

- Causing injury to themselves or others.
- Committing a criminal offence.
- Seriously disrupting good order and discipline within the school.

Reasonable force:

- Should be proportionate to the circumstances, age, and development of the pupil.
- Must be the minimum necessary to prevent harm.
- Cannot be used for trivial infractions.
- Cannot involve corporal punishment, which is illegal.

### **Objectives**

This policy aims to:

- Provide staff, governors, parents, and pupils with a clear understanding of PPI.
- Emphasize that PPI is a last-resort measure in extreme circumstances.
- Outline the strategies available to staff to de-escalate situations and avoid physical intervention whenever possible.

### **Strategies for Preventing Incidents**

Staff are trained to employ various de-escalation strategies to prevent conflicts, including:

- **Verbal Communication:** Using calm, non-threatening language and tone.
- **Affection and Reassurance:** Demonstrating care while addressing behaviour.
- **Distraction and Redirection:** Steering attention away from potential conflicts.
- **Planned Ignoring:** Avoiding engagement in attention-seeking behaviour when appropriate.
- **Time Out and Withdrawal:** Providing space for pupils to regain composure in a controlled setting.
- **Humour:** Using appropriate humour to diffuse tension.
- **Negotiation and Positive Reinforcement:** Encouraging cooperation through constructive dialogue.
- **Physical Intervention:** As a last resort when all other methods fail.

### **Authorization for Use of Force**

All staff members are authorized to use PPI when necessary to maintain safety and order. Whenever possible, support from colleagues should be sought to reduce risk.

### **Situations Where Reasonable Force May Be Used**

Reasonable force may be appropriate in situations such as:

- Preventing injury (e.g., breaking up a fight, stopping self-harm).
- Preventing property damage (e.g., stopping vandalism or dangerous misuse of equipment).
- Managing serious disruptions (e.g., escorting a persistently defiant pupil from the classroom).

### **Procedures During an Incident**

During a physical intervention, staff should:

- Maintain a calm and measured approach.
- Give clear instructions to the pupil.
- Seek assistance from colleagues when necessary.
- Ensure PPI ceases as soon as the risk is mitigated.
- Use only approved techniques that minimize the risk of injury.

Prohibited actions include:

- Holding a pupil in a way that restricts breathing.
- Hitting, slapping, or kicking.
- Twisting limbs or using excessive force.
- Pulling hair or tripping a pupil.

### **Reporting and Recording**

All incidents involving PPI must be recorded in detail within 24 hours using the Bound and Numbered book and logged on the CPOMs safeguarding database.

Parents/carers will be informed by the end of the school day. The incident report will be reviewed by senior leadership and, if necessary, by the governing body each term.

### **Debriefing After an Incident**

- Pupils will be checked for injuries and given time to calm down.
- Staff will have an opportunity to reflect and debrief.
- A restorative discussion with the pupil will take place to prevent future incidents.

### **Planning for Pupils with Challenging Behaviour**

For pupils who may require repeated interventions, a Positive Handling Plan (PHP) will be developed and reviewed regularly. This plan will outline:

- Triggers and preventative strategies.
- Appropriate supportive responses.
- Guidelines for managing incidents safely.
- Methods for post-incident evaluation and follow-up.

### **Parental Communication**

Parents will be informed of this policy through the parent handbook. When an individual PHP is necessary, parents will be consulted in advance.

### **Complaints**

Any complaints regarding the use of force will be investigated in accordance with school policies and may involve external authorities where appropriate.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head Teacher and the Governing Board to ensure it remains effective and up to date.