



**Rotherfield**  
Primary School

# **Positive Handling Policy**

**May 2022**

## Introduction

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils who may need to be positively handled.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils specifically the school's Behaviour Policy.

The policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body.

## Purpose of the policy

Good professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the discipline practised by the staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in **exceptional** circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of positive handling may be required.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff at Rotherfield:

- clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary and
- are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

The application of any form of positive handling places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and **to seek alternative strategies wherever possible** in order to prevent the need for positive handling.

**Positive Handling will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk. We are privileged in primary schools to be the introduction children have to their formal education.**

## At Rotherfield we endeavour to:

- Create the right atmosphere for children to work, grow and develop their individual potential, helping them to become competent and confident adults able to live their own lives and contribute to society.
- Provide a climate where children learn to co-operate with others, care for their peers and environment and respect the fact that not everyone looks, feels or thinks the same.

High standards are set for behaviour where children are encouraged to be behave in accordance with the Rights Respecting School's agenda (RRS).

## 3. Definitions

### (a) Physical Contact

Situations in which proper physical contact takes place between staff and pupils, e.g. in games/PE or to comfort pupils with awareness of their rights under the RRS's agenda

### **(b) Physical Intervention**

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

### **(c) Positive Handling**

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or property or if good order is being seriously prejudiced. All such incidents will be recorded.

### **Underpinning Values**

Everyone attending or working at Rotherfield Primary School has the right to:

- a recognition of their unique identity
- be treated with respect and dignity
- learn and work in a safe environment
- be protected from harm

Pupils attending this school and their parents have a right to:

- individual consideration of pupils needs by staff that has responsibility for their care and protection
- expect staff to undertake duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies
- be informed about school rules, relevant policies and the expected conduct of all pupils and staff working in the school
- be informed about the school's complaint procedure

The school will ensure that all pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits which govern behaviour in the school.

Parents should have committed themselves through the Home-School Agreement to ensure the good behaviour of their child and that the child understands and follows the School's Behaviour Policy.

### **Training**

Positive Handling training has been made available to designated staff and will be the responsibility of the Head of School. No member of staff will be expected to undertake positive handling without appropriate training.

Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken.

### **Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour**

Staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches will be taken according to the circumstances of the incident:

**a)** Verbal acknowledgment of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain; this includes negotiation, care and concern.

**b)** Further verbal reprimand stating:  
this is the second request for compliance

an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable  
an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues.

**c)** Warning of potential need to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies. If possible summon assistance.

**d)** Physical intervention. Reasonable physical intervention using the minimum degree of contact to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

### **Escalating Situations**

The 1996 Education Act (Section 550A) stipulates that reasonable physical intervention may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils; whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom, during a teaching session or elsewhere (this includes authorised out-of-school activities)
- self-injuring or placing himself or herself at risk
- injuring others
- causing damage to property, including that of the pupil himself or herself
- committing a criminal offence (even if the pupil is below the age of criminal responsibility)

### **Types of Incidents**

Incidents described above fall into 3 broad categories:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property
- Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order or discipline

### **Examples of situations which fall within one of the first two categories are:**

- a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil pupils are fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury, damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of materials or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or in a way which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave the school

### **Examples of behaviour which fall into the third category are:**

- a pupil persistently refusing to do as requested.
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

### **Acceptable measures of Physical Intervention.**

Positive handling can only be deemed reasonable if:

- it is warranted by the particular circumstances of the incident
- it is delivered in accordance with the seriousness of the incident and the consequences which it is desired to prevent
- it is carried out as the minimum to achieve the desired result
- the age, understanding and the gender of the pupil are taken into account
- it is likely to achieve the desired result

**Wherever possible, assistance will be sought from another member of staff before intervention.**

The form of physical intervention may involve staff doing the following:

- physically interposing themselves between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- escorting a pupil
- shepherding a pupil away

Any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way in which staff exercise their responsibilities and the behaviour management strategies used.

**Whenever positive handling is used, staff will keep talking to the pupil.**

**Recording (see Appendix 1 below)**

Where positive handling has been used, a record of the incident always needs to be kept. All recording needs to be completed on the day of incident and needs to include the following:

- name of pupil
- date, time and place of incident
- a brief description of the incident and actions taken
- attempts made to calm the situation
- names of people who witnessed the situation
- any damage/harm to persons or property
- name of person informing parents
- after investigation a summary of action taken

Staff completing recording forms will keep a copy for themselves for future reference and a copy will be given to the Head of School.

After the review of any incident, a copy of the recording form will be placed on the pupil's file.

**Action after an Incident**

The Head of School will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Child Protection Procedure
- Staff Facing Allegations of Abuse Procedure
- Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure
- School Behaviour Policy
- Exclusions Procedure

Members of staff will be kept informed of any action taken.

In case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

**Complaints**

The availability of a clear policy regarding Positive Handling and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them. Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's Complaints about Staff Procedure Policy. The Chair of Governors will be informed of complaints but other governors will not be involved as a complaint may require further action on their part.

**Monitoring of Incidents**

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use positive handling, this will always be recorded and documented. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Headteacher to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour can only be contained using positive handling. This process will address patterns of incidents and evaluate trends which may be emerging.

## Appendix 1 – Positive Handling Record

### Rotherfield Primary School

Rotherfield Street, London, N1 3EE

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Email: [admin@rotherfield.islington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@rotherfield.islington.sch.uk)

[www.rotherfieldprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.rotherfieldprimaryschool.co.uk)

Executive Headteacher: Abi Misselbrook-Lovejoy

Head of School: Joanna Jones



# Rotherfield

Primary School

Name of pupil:		Class:	
Date:		Time:	
Where incident took place:			
Description of incident:		Actions taken:	
Attempts made to calm the situation down:		Witnesses to the situation:	
Any damage/harm to persons or property:		Name of person/s informing parent:  Date:  Time:	
After investigation, a summary of actions taken:			
Form filled in by:		Signature:	
Date:			

