

Mulbarton Primary School



Positive Handling Policy



At Mulbarton Primary School, we believe that children have the right to independence, choice and inclusion. We seek to provide opportunities for personal growth, emotional health and well-being. However, rights also involve responsibilities, such as not harming other people's rights. Children unable to control their actions or unable to appreciate danger have a right to be protected; and staff have a duty of care to exercise.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that actions such as positive handling and reasonable force are used in a correct and safe manner which is in accordance with the relevant legislation and current guidance.

DfE: 'Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention' June 2019

DfE: 'Behaviour and discipline in schools' January 2016

All staff need to be clearly aware of the procedures in this policy.

Signed by:

Bev Theobald                      Head Teacher

Date: May 2022

Kevin Holland                      Chair of Governors

Date: May 2022

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

## **Training:**

All staff at Mulbarton Primary School are trained using the Norfolk STEP ON programme. Training is refreshed every two years.

SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and other key members of staff are trained in the Norfolk STEP UP programme. It should not be assumed that only STEP UP trained members of staff should solely be responsible for dealing with all incidents where a physical intervention or a restrictive physical intervention is required.

Staff may use force as is reasonable in all circumstances in order to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do the following:

- Harm to self
- Harm to peers
- Harm to staff
- Harm to property
- Educational harm – serious disruption to the education of themselves and peers

The degree of force must be proportionate to the circumstances, incident and seriousness of the event (or the consequences it is intended to prevent).

It should always be the minimum amount of force needed to achieve the desired result and might also depend on the age and understanding of the pupil.

Use of force is only reasonable if particular circumstances warrant it, otherwise it is unlawful; it therefore follows that it should not be used for situations that can be resolved without it or for trivial misdemeanours.

Restraint must not be used to make a child comply with instructions unless it complies with the key points above.

## **For children with additional needs and/or SEND:**

If we are aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that might require a physical or restrictive intervention, a behaviour risk assessment and management plan will be put in place to ensure a consistent approach is maintained and all risks are identified.

Consideration should be given to:

- Manage the pupil using responsive strategies to de-escalate the event
- Involve parents so that they are fully aware of how the school may have to respond
- Brief staff- ensure that everyone knows what action should be taken
- Ensure that additional support can be summoned if appropriate
- The need to take specific advice about the safest way to manage pupils, specifically those with SEND or those with additional needs eg: School2School, Inclusion team.

### **Steps to take before positive handling:**

For all pupils whose behaviours are escalating, de-escalation strategies from STEP ON training will be employed and the following action should be taken before any physical intervention is used:

- All staff to use approved script:
  - Child's name
  - I can see that something has happened
  - I'm here to help
  - Talk and I will listen
  - Come with me and....
  
- Conversation, distraction, coaxing skills, gentle persuasion or redirection to other activities eg: touching the child's arm and leading them away from danger
- Put distance between the child and others – move other children to a safer place
- Calmly remove anything that could be used as a weapon
- To prevent a child from continuing to pose harm in a dangerous situation, advise others to leave but remain with the child
- Use the Calm Room if necessary
- Keep talking calmly to the child, explaining what is happening and why, how it can stop and what will happen next

Adults in charge should take a calm, measured approach to a situation and never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger, frustration or to punish a pupil. All staff should apply their STEP ON knowledge.

### **Physical intervention:**

If the behaviours continue to escalate, a physical intervention may take place. Physical intervention can take different forms eg:

- Physically interposing between pupil's or blocking a pupil's path
- Touching, holding, using 'mittens' – taking the STEPS approach
- Walking with child – offering an arm / compliant hand holding
- Offering a supportive hug

### **Restrictive physical intervention:**

Sometimes, when a child is in 'crisis', the risk of harm is so great that an adult needs to use reasonable force by way of a restrictive physical intervention in order to prevent harm or further harm. In these circumstances, all staff at Mulbarton Primary School have a duty of care to keep a child safe from harm or potential harm. However, staff who are STEP UP trained should take over as soon as is possible. Staff will use STEP UP approved holds for the minimum amount of time needed. Where possible, two members of staff will be present. Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent or creates a sense of violation. In exceptional circumstances, when there is

immediate risk of injury (eg: to prevent a pupil running onto a busy road) staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of reasonable force.

'Basket –type' holds and any hold which restricts or has the potential to restrict breathing will not be used.

### **Recording and reporting incidents:**

Following the incident, the member of staff should record the incident using CPOMS and inform the Head Teacher or SLT as soon as possible afterwards. This may help to prevent any misunderstanding, and will be helpful should there be any complaint.

Staff involved will receive a debrief following the incident, which will include the opportunity to reflect on possible 'triggers' so that steps can be taken to avoid a reoccurrence. A risk reduction plan may need to be considered.

Staff will ensure that the child is given time to emotionally recover from the incident before a restorative conversation takes place. This may take several hours or several days.

Parents will be informed of the incident and given the opportunity to discuss it.

If the pupil already has a risk reduction plan, there may be the need to evaluate and amend.