



# HARBINGER PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Positive Handling Policy

**Last reviewed on:** December 2023

**Next review date:** December 2024

## 1. Our aims and values

At Harbinger Primary School, we set and encourage high expectations of behaviour for all our children and communicate this clearly to parents. We work closely with families and are relentlessly positive in our approach.

Our agreed **school values** are:

- **Learning:** An entitlement to relevant and purposeful learning, high expectations and outcomes, widening horizons and raising aspirations
- **Well-being:** An ethos of personal development and emotional intelligence, excellent care and guidance, intrinsic motivation to discover routes to happiness and success
- **Togetherness:** An environment founded on equality and inclusion, rights and responsibilities, an awareness of belonging to our immediate and global communities

## 2. Expectations

Our values of **learning**, **well-being** and **togetherness** underpin everything we do in order that children thrive in Harbinger primary school and beyond. Each of our values encompass characteristics of effective learning and these principles are reinforced in our practice.

In conjunction with our values, we aim to encourage and develop a growth mindset in all the adults and children who are part of our school community.

## 3. Managing Behaviour

We understand that throughout a child's school life there may be occasions when they display challenging behaviour that can impact on themselves or on those around them, we always try to understand why they behave in the way they do and deal with children in ways that are sensitive to the individual.

**When managing challenging or unsafe behaviour, we:**

- Always remain calm and objective
- Anticipate inappropriate behaviour and try to prevent it from occurring
- Use 'rights respecting language' to encourage children to think about the rights of others
- Use Restorative Approaches to help the pupil understand their impact on others

- Make the distinction between the behaviour and the pupil
- Identify the root cause of the problem and talk to pupils individually without an audience
- Demonstrate empathy by reflecting back their viewpoint and defuse the situation
- Discuss the consequences of their actions and give pupils choices
- Help them to realise that they are in control and can bring about a change
- Always focus upon the positive

*For further information about our approach to behaviour management please see our Behaviour & Relationship Policy.*

At Harbinger school, we also recognise that there may be occasions when a child's behaviour is unsafe and a more specific and direct approach will need to be implemented such as positive handling to ensure the child and those around them are safe. We are a trauma informed school and we understand that behaviour is communication. We are fully committed to using de-escalation strategies and other agreed strategies such as distraction and diversion.

We use Positive handling as a last resort after all other possible strategies have been used and therefore this policy should be read in conjunction with our Child Protection Safeguarding and Behaviour policies.

## **4.The Legal Framework**

Positive handling should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Under the Children Order 1995, it is only permissible as described under the heading "Physical Control". Article 4 of the Education Order 1998 clarifies powers that already exist in common law. It enables trained staff in the school, authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself)
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

## **5.Definition of Positive Handling**

At Harbinger Primary School Positive handling is the positive application of reasonable force with the intention of protecting the child from harming themselves or others or seriously damaging property.

No legal definition of "reasonable force" exists; however, for the purpose of this policy and the implementation of it in Harbinger primary School, the clarification provided in the DfE guidance document 'use of reasonable force', 2013 is used:

### **5.1 What is reasonable force?**

- a) The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- b) Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances, such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- c) Reasonable in the circumstances means using no more force than is needed.
- d) As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
- e) Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- f) School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury.

g) It is acknowledged that in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injury as an accidental consequence of the intervention.

## **5:2 General Policy Aims**

Staff at Harbinger Primary School 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.

## **5.3 Specific Aims of the Positive Handling Policy**

- 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.

## **6. Why Use Positive Handling?**

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

### **6.1 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 e.g. use of assertiveness skills such as:

- an instruction being 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 School's policy on behaviour.

## **6.2 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.

Named and trained staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying positive handling, although there is no absolute definition of this, as what constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied.

Wherever possible Physical Restraint should only be used by those with appropriate training. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible and physical restraint may be used as an emergency measure by someone without appropriate training to ensure the safety of children in their care. Any physical intervention should be conducted making reasonable adjustment for students with SEN or disabilities. The child's Plan will take this into account. In this instance, someone with appropriate training should be called for immediately.

However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below. 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 him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary. In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective positive handling should be a last resort.

When positive handling becomes necessary:

### **DO**

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language

- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

## **DON'T**

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck

## **7. Actions After An Incident**

- School keeps a record of all incidents where physical intervention involving the use of force against resistance from a child has been necessary (see Appendix 1).
- The record should be completed by the end of the working day on which the Incident took place.
- A member of the Leadership Team will be told at the earliest possible time after an incident.
- Parent/carers will be informed.
- The adult involved may seek guidance from a senior colleague and/or their trade union representative before filling in their report.
- A member of the Leadership Team will discuss the incident with any children or staff who were present using the Serious Behaviour Incident Form.
- In line with our commitment to working with parents, we aim to maintain an open discussion during any relevant procedure which may follow an incident.
- School will regularly review the number and type of incidents in which physical intervention and/or restraint has been necessary. This will be used to ensure that there is adherence to this policy and to identify improvement needed in other policies and procedures of the school.

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 (see Appendix 2), this may also include regular pastoral support meetings, or other strategies agreed by the SENCO.

It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided. All incidents should be recorded immediately. All sections of this report should be completed so that in the event of any future complaint a full record is available.

## **8. Risk Assessments**

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. 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 (Behaviour support plan, see appendix 2)
- 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
- Children in our specialist class have their own Positive handling plan (see appendix 3)

## **9. Complaints**

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, 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. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

We will review this policy on a yearly basis.

## **10. Trained Staff**

- Jubeda Ahmed
- Abider Ali
- Nimesha Nagahawatte
- Asma Begum
- Edmund Miller
- Jackie Garner
- Rabia Begum
- Jackie Hoey
- Rukshana Begum



## Appendix 1 Record of Restraint proforma

### Record of Restraint

Date/time of Incident:

Pupil Name:

Members of staff involved:

Adult witnesses:

Child witnesses:

Outline the event leading up to the restraint

Outline the incident of restraint including the restraint method used

Outline immediately what happened after the restraint

First aider that looked over pupil and their observations

Parents

Date and time the parents were informed:

Who informed the parents?

Outline of parents response

Signatures of staff completing the report:

1. Name: ..... Role: ..... Signature: .....
2. Name: ..... Role: ..... Signature: .....
3. Name: ..... Role: ..... Signature: .....

## Appendix 2- Example of a Behaviour Support plan

**\*\*\*'s Support Plan for**

Triggers

- Unfamiliar adults
- Altercations / arguments with another child
- Maths lessons

Prevention / Proactive

- Working in a group of 3 with an adult supporting
- If there is a supply having consistent support
- Maths – working alongside, guided practise first and then independent. Ilhan will ask for help.
- Brain break before lunch (work completed)

Behaviour	Reactive strategy
Low-level disruptive behaviour Fidgeting, walking around back of classroom, making sounds during lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gentle reminder</li> <li>• Allow fidgeting if not disruptive</li> <li>• Teacher asks to stop</li> </ul>
Continue behaviours from above Refusal to follow instructions Leaving classroom Defiance – refusing to work or work with someone Climbing on apparatus Offensive Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time out of classroom</li> <li>• Follow removal strategy</li> <li>• Phone call home to inform mum</li> </ul>
Repeated stage 3 behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone call home to inform mum</li> <li>• Work outside of classroom (session/ day) internal exclusion</li> </ul>
Stage 4 behaviours (purposefully hurting someone else, damage to school property, bullying, homophobic/racist name calling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite mum in for a meeting and other services to help</li> <li>• Fixed term exclusion</li> </ul>

Distraction/Diversion

- 1) Having something to hold / fidget (appropriate)
- 2) Brain breaks
- 3) Walk around in the Hall with an adult
- 4) An opportunity to ICT suite – work on computer

Removal Strategy:

1. Asked by a member of the **class team** to leave the classroom with them.
2. Restorative conversation to take place.
3. Settled back in class.
4. Incident logged on CPOMs.
5. If he will not comply with removal **strategy** then call SLT (Rebecca/Nimesha/Matthew/Jubeda).

Things to note:

\*\* can earn up to 20 mins free time each day. 1 minute per tick earned. 10 possible ticks earned for completing work. 10 possible ticks earned for good attitude/behaviour.

## Appendix 3: Individual Positive Handling Plan

### Positive Handling Plan



#### Individual child or young person risk assessment

A plan for assessing and managing foreseeable risks for children or young people who are likely to need Positive handling.

Name of Child:

Identification and Assessment of Risk

Risk (potential/ actual)	Who might be harmed? How?	Situation where this risk is more likely	Likelihood/ Severity
Spitting	Adults working with child and proximal/ targeted children - high risk of infection	Adults working in <u>close proximity</u> (e.g. during TACPAC)  During meltdown  During RPI where head support is not applied appropriately	Medium
Throwing objects during meltdown	Adults working with child - risk of injury, concussion, <u>bruising</u>  Children in class - risk of injury, concussion, bruising	Classroom and other teaching spaces - during meltdown	Low
Scratches, pulls hair	Adults working with child - graze, <u>bruising</u>  Children in class - falling, slipping, bruising	Classroom/ teaching spaces - meltdown  During independent play with other children - snatching, grabbing provoking <u>response</u>	Medium

## Positive Handling Plan



		<p><u>Close proximity</u> to other children/ adults</p> <p>During social skills intervention focused on sharing (e.g. turn taking, cooking)</p>	
<p>Abducting within school (running out of classroom, away from adults)</p>	<p>Child - lack of supervision and associated risks noted on plan (e.g. climbing on furniture)</p> <p>Other children - disruption to learning</p>	<p>During meltdown</p> <p>During transitions between spaces</p> <p>Beginning/ end of the school day</p>	<p>Low</p>
<p>Abducting on school trip</p>	<p>Child - getting lost, proximity to roads, proximity to open water, strangers, lack of supervision</p>	<p>During meltdown</p> <p>During transitions between school and destination</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Throwing self to floor during meltdown</p>	<p>Child - risk of injury, falling, slipping, risk of head injury</p>	<p>During meltdown</p> <p>When he is tired, if does not want to walk</p>	<p>Low</p>

### Agreed Risk Management Plan and School Risk Management Strategy

#### Focus of Measures

- Prevention of injury to all involved parties (adults, child, proximal people)
- De-escalation of behaviours

## Positive Handling Plan



### Positive handling measure to be employed

- Prompt and escort
- Upper arm control
- Seated holding
- Overarm wrap
- 

### Proactive interventions to prevent risks

- Offer distraction / diversion
- 

### Early interventions to manage risks

- Sensory snack breaks
- 

### Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes

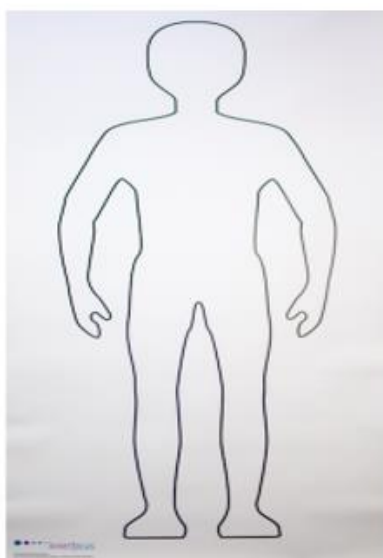
- Child is taken to another space away from peers
- Offer low sensory / stimulation activity and space

## Positive Handling Plan

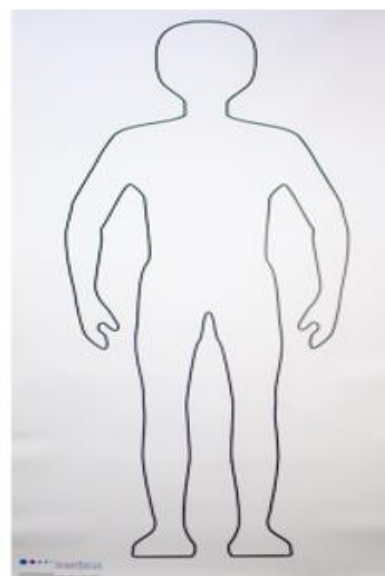


Body Map with sensory intervention consent:

Front



Back



Green = Consent given  
Red = Not agreed

Agreed by: .....  
(Parent/carer) .....

## Positive Handling Plan



(Child - if appropriate) .....

(Headteacher) .....

(Class teacher) .....

Date: .....

### Communication of Plan and School Risk Management Strategy

Plans and strategies shared with: Class team, SLT, regular cover teachers (e.g. PPA)

Communication method: Email, printed copy in medical box

Date actioned:

Date for review: