



West Byfleet Infant School
We Belong, Inspire, Succeed

Positive Touch Handling Policy



Our school vision is 'We Belong, Inspire, Succeed'. This reminds us daily that children need to feel safe and secure within the school community, have opportunities to inspire their interests and an enthusiasm for learning, as well as achieving success at all levels.

At West Byfleet Infant School we believe that pupils need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. For a very small minority of pupils the use of 'positive' physical intervention may be needed, and, on such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention will be used.

All teachers employed at the school are authorised by the Headteacher to have control of pupils, and must be aware of this policy and its implications. We take the view that staff should not be expected to put themselves in danger, and that removing pupils and themselves is the right thing to do. We value staff efforts to rectify what can be very difficult situations and in which they exercise their duty of care for the pupils.

Member of staff responsible	Headteacher
Date Policy Produced	December 2021
Policy agreed/last reviewed	Summer 2025
Next review date	Summer 2027
Other Related Policies	Behaviour Policy
Is it a Statutory Policy?	No
Does it need Governor approval?	No

West Byfleet Infant School believes that it is important to establish a safe, secure and stable environment to enable pupils to grow, develop and learn. To achieve this, the school recognises that, in certain circumstances, physical intervention, including safe touch and the use of reasonable force, is necessary.

The school understands that behaviour is often a means of communication which may signal that a pupil is in need of support but does not know how to express this; therefore, the school takes a proactive approach to anticipating, managing and minimising potential triggers of distressed behaviour that may cause harm.

This policy acknowledges that situations may arise in which staff members will be required to use physical intervention, and in some cases reasonable force, in order to handle pupils' emotions or aggressive behaviour when other measures have failed to do so.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that physical intervention is used in a correct and safe manner, which is in accordance with the relevant legislation and national guidance.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2011
- Children Act 1989
- Equality Act 2010

This policy has due regard to the following guidance:

- DfE (2013) 'Use of reasonable force in schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- [Updated] DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- HM Government (2019) 'Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Acceptable Forms of Touch/Physical Intervention at West Byfleet Infant School

There are many occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with children or young persons for a variety of reasons, for example:

- Communication;
- First Aid;
- to comfort a child in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age);
- to gently direct a child (holding hands, hand on shoulder etc);
- for curricular reasons (for example in PE or Drama etc)
- during intimate care procedures (changing for PE, toileting etc - please refer to intimate care policy);
- in an emergency to avert danger to a child or children;
- in rare circumstances when 'positive touch' physical intervention from training is warranted.

In an emergency incident staff may take into account the use of positive touch training approaches and their responsibilities under duty of care. In all situations where physical contact between staff and children or young persons takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the child or young person's age and level of understanding;
- the child or young person's individual characteristics and history;
- the location where the contact takes place (it should not take place in private without others present).

If a child or young person requires physical support on a regular basis this information will be documented on an individual plan such as a toileting care plan or behaviour support plan.

The Principles relating to the Physical Intervention

- 'Positive Touch' physical intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment. It is never used to force compliance with staff instructions.
- Staff will only use it when there are good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary and in the pupil's and /or other pupils' best interest.
- Staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for 'positive touch' physical intervention through dialogue and diversion, and at the level of understanding of the child or young person.
- Only the minimum 'positive touch' necessary will be used to prevent severe distress, injury or damage to self, property or others.
- Staff will be able to show that the intervention used was in keeping with the incident and safeguarding/safety risk posed.
- Every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff, and these staff may act as assistants and/or witnesses.
- As soon as it is safe, the 'positive touch' physical intervention will be relaxed to allow the pupil to regain self-control.
- A distinction will be maintained between the use of a one-off intervention which is appropriate to a particular circumstance, and the using of it repeatedly as a regular feature of school policy.
- Escalation will be avoided at all costs, especially if it would make the overall situation more destructive and unmanageable.
- The age, understanding and competence of the individual pupil will always be taken into account.

Procedures are in place, through the pastoral system of the school, for supporting and debriefing pupils and staff after every incident of 'positive touch' physical intervention as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times.