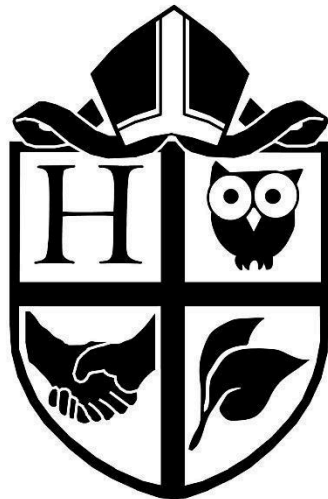




Safe Handling Policy

Hayward's Primary School



Written by:

School Policy

Signed:

Approved by Governors:

10th December 2025

Next review due by:

October 2026

SAFE HANDLING POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

It is important that we have a policy about the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. All members of staff who may have to intervene physically with pupils must clearly understand the options and strategies open to them. Where possible, safe handling is avoided and instead proactive, preventative, non-restrictive approaches will be adopted in respect of behaviour that challenges. This policy clarifies what is acceptable and what is not. Corporal punishment is in no way authorised through the following policy. School policy and the law forbids a teacher to use any degree of physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a pupil, or which is intended to cause pain or injury or humiliation.

At Hayward's we undertake a lot of work to understand the needs of the child. We believe strongly that every child or young person deserves to be understood and supported as an individual. We recognise the behaviour is a means of communication and has a cause and a purpose. We understand that it may signal a need for support and we do our utmost to identify this and put in place appropriate guidance, support and provision for the child. Our Individual Behaviour and Care Plans and Individual Pupil Summaries, detailed in our Behaviour Policy, help ensure that we are consistent in the approaches that work well for our children.

POLICY STATEMENT

Section 93 of the Education Act 2011 enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility (10 years old), what would be an offence for an older pupil)
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself), or
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

The staff to which this power applies are defined in section 95 of the act. They are:

- i. any teacher who works at the school, and
- ii. any other person who, with the authority of the head teacher, has lawful control or charge of pupils for whom education is being provided at the school. This includes:
 - i. All support staff (TAs, administrative staff, MTAs)

The policy is only applicable when an authorised person is on the school premises, or has lawful control or charge of the student concerned on an authorised out of school activity.

Our Policy reflects the guidance in:

- Use of reasonable force (July 2013)
- Behaviour and Discipline in School (2014)
- Behaviour and Discipline in School (2016)
- Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention (2019)

A culture at Hayward's

At Hayward's we work as a team to create:

- A calm, secure atmosphere throughout school and use consistent approaches
- Opportunities for pupils to earn praise/rewards. It is important to praise good behaviour as often as possible especially from a pupil who finds this challenging. It is especially important to notice and reward behaviour that matches the targets of any relational plans developed for pupils.
- Opportunities to identify problem behaviour or triggers in order to avoid creating further difficulties i.e. by anticipating behaviour before it occurs.

Awareness of pupil behaviour so that attention seeking behaviour is seen but ignored where it is safe to do so.

- Opportunities for discussion with the pupil where discussion can take place in order to set targets designed to deal with the difficult or attention seeking behaviour. One behaviour at a time can be moderated through this process alongside support in situations, which s/he is likely to find difficult.
- Opportunities for explanation of the actions/boundaries to the pupil.
- Ensuring, where possible, staff share responsibility for a pupil's needs, rather than them sitting with one person for their full-time contract in school. Senior Leaders will monitor timetables to ensure that this is the case.
- Opportunities for regular contact with families to share plans and discuss the strategies that are in place. Relational support plan must be shared with families, indicating the strategies that school are using and that restraint may be needed. When physical intervention of their child has taken place, families will be informed.
- Liaise with outside agencies for support and involvement in the programme to ensure that joined up approaches are in place.
- Consistent application of the school behaviour policy, in particular the traffic light system, and any amendments made through the relational support plan.

Practical Guidance which can be applied before positive handling

At Hayward's we use a range of strategies before we decide to use positive handling.

Prior to the incident developing into a situation requiring handling, the adult should consider the following strategies/techniques:

- Has the school behaviour policy (or the Relational Plan for the Pupil) been followed through?
- Has the child been clearly asked to stop?
- Is the 'right' key adult present?
- Can the situation be dealt with using other strategies?
- Age level and understanding of the child taken into account?
- Has another adult been called? Is there someone else present?
- Attune and Validate the emotional responses of the child.
- Attempt to communicate verbally or through other means e.g. Makaton (if appropriate)
- Ignore behaviour (if safe to do so)
- Humour
- Distraction
- Remind the child about expected behaviour and the consequences of their actions
- Self-Withdrawal suggested
- Consider removing the class, other children, from the situation instead.
- Withdrawal by adult from the situation without positive handling being offered to the child

Whenever practical, a reminder should be given to the child that continued inappropriate behaviour will lead to positive handling.

When we handle

Positive handling is when any member of staff has to hold or move a child who is potentially endangering him/herself or other people, causing major and sustained disruption to class activities or significant damage to resources. It may also be used when two students are in danger of hurting each other. Decisions to employ positive handling should be taken in the best interests of the child and will be considered by staff as a last resort. Any intervention must be reasonable and proportionate and minimum force must be used for the desired result. Such incidents will differ in nature and we expect all staff to assess potential risk before physically intervening.

To support the staff in making the correct decision in these situations the school has historically received training in PIPS (Passive Intervention and Prevention Strategies Training).

The aim of Passive Intervention and Prevention (PIPS) training is to:

- enable schools and other settings to develop a consistent, acceptable team approach to managing behaviour in a manner that maintains positive relationships and continues to care for pupils/clients at times of crisis
- provide a process of repair and reflection for staff and children
- increase staff awareness concerning the importance of recording and reporting, monitoring and evaluating, all incidents involving positive handling

Expected Outcomes:

- experience and practice the skills of guiding, safe touch and holding
- explore how these acts of care combine with calming, diffusing and problem-solving strategies
- experience passive intervention strategies designed to follow rather than force movement
- identify key elements for developing a consistent team approach to managing challenge
- increase awareness of the importance of recording and reporting, monitoring and evaluating
- develop an increased sense of confidence at times of crisis

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure the safety of **all** children.

When staff are new to the school and might be required to use safe handling, the school SENDCo will arrange bespoke training through Devon County Council.

The school SENDCo will ensure that all staff are aware of the needs of individuals who are at risk of exhibiting dysregulated behaviour and strategies to avoid or deal with the behaviour linked to their additional needs. This is communicated through Individual Pupil summaries.

Where it is likely that planned physical intervention may be required for a pupil. The following will occur:

- Planned physical intervention will arise from risk assessments that the school will carry out on all pupils.
- Such assessments will be written. Risk Assessments should be signed by school, parents/ guardians and (where appropriate) pupil wherever possible.
- Planned physical intervention will be agreed in advance (school, parents, other agencies, child. This occurs during the initial interview stage).
- Implemented only by named staff
- Must be a written and signed plan. Those who sign the plan should be those normally present at an Annual Review in the case of Statemented pupils and by parents/ guardian and child in other cases
- Be part of a holistic care/ individual plan
- Shortest time/ minimum force

Reasonable Force

Although there is no legal definition of reasonable force, the degree of force must:

- Be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident;
- Always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result;
- Take into account the individual

The degree and reasonability of force will depend upon circumstances.

‘Members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom.’ Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (January 2016)

Physical force is not justified for:

- Trivial misdemeanours;
- A situation that can be resolved without force

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

Examples of situations that may require restraint are when:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils fighting
- a pupil is self-injuring or placing himself or herself at risk
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- A pupil is causing damage to property, including that belonging to a pupil.
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others
- a pupil absconding from a class or trying to leave school (n.b. this will only apply if a pupil would be at greater risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an instruction to leave an area (n.b. this will only apply if deemed there would be at greater risk if the child stayed in the area).
- A pupil is committing a criminal offence.
- a pupil behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson. (n.b. This will only be when help has been called for and is deemed absolutely necessary in the best interests of the child).

Application of Force

Physical intervention can involve:

- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm;
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
- And in extreme circumstances, using more restrictive holds. **Only handling strategies covered in the PIPS training should be applied.**

On no account can a member of staff act in a way that might cause injury:

- Holding a pupil around the neck, by the collar or way that might restrict breathing.
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;
- Tripping up a pupil;
- Holding or pulling by the hair or ear;
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground.

Self-Defence

All Staff have the right to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so.

Recording Incidents

A detailed, written report of any occasion where force is used is required. This will help prevent misunderstanding and would be helpful should there be a complaint. This procedure would not be applicable in a minor or trivial incident.

- It is recommended that a First Aider should make a report immediately after there has been a need for restraint to be used if any injury is reported.

Immediately following an incident the member of staff concerned should tell the Headteacher and provide a written report using Restraint Incident Form (Appendix 1) and this should include:

- The name of the pupil or pupils involved;
- Where the incident took place;
- Names of witnesses, staff or pupils;

- How the incident began and progressed. Include details of pupil's behaviour, what was said, steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, degree of force used and how applied;
- Pupil's response and outcome;
- Details of any injuries or damage to property;

It is important for the following to be considered:

- Staff may consider informing their professional association.
- Complaints from a Parent could lead to an investigation either under the school's disciplinary procedures, by the Police or Social Services under child protection procedures. It is therefore vital that the policy is carefully followed and all incidents accurately recorded.
- This document may also form part of a pupil exclusion process.
- Recorded documentation needs to be uploaded to and recorded on the electronic behaviour log/CPOMS. A paper copy of the documentation will be kept in the child's school file.

What happens after positive handling

- Ensure appropriate time is taken with the child to calm down before returning to class.
- Check the emotional and physical well-being of the child's class and reassure.
- Contact parents if individual children have been particularly affected by the incident.
- Follow up incident in order to minimise the risk of a repeated episode.
- Discuss incident with the Headteacher, assistant heads or SENCo in order to explore what could be done differently next time. Where relevant next steps are identified and Individual Pupil Plans set up or reviewed if required.
- A debrief will be conducted with staff to ensure that they are emotionally well and a follow up phone call in the evening may occur.
- Ensure contact is made with the child's family and brief them on the situation.
- Individual parents/volunteers/visitors spoken to and reassured that handling is done in accordance with training and policy.
- When relevant, positive handling guidance will be shown to witnesses (parent volunteers, visitors etc) in order to de-brief them and reassure them that the school has good procedures in place for positive handling.

Complaints

The availability of a clear policy about reasonable force and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them.

Any complaints received by the Headteacher from parents, staff or any other persons regarding alleged ill treatment of pupils or injuries received by a pupil during the course of physical intervention must be investigated fully by the Headteacher using the complaints procedure laid down by the local authority.

The Chair of Governors will be informed of complaints.

Recording incidents involving positive handling (Template Example)

Positive handling is when any member of staff has to hold or move a child who is potentially endangering him/herself, other people, causing major and sustained disruption to class activities or significant damage to resources. Decisions to employ positive handling should be taken in the best interests of the child.

Child's name:		Name of person completing the form:	
Date:	Time of incident:	Location of incident:	
Names of all adults involved in the incident:			
Describe the behaviour that was being exhibited before positive handling was necessary; ie: what led up to the incident (try to include details about the danger that the child was in or the danger that other children/adults might have been in)			
Why was it in the best interest of the child to use positive handling?			
Describe the positive handling (brief factual account, including the role of others in the positive handling). What was done to avoid the incident?			
What strategies were employed before positive handling? (please tick)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attunement/validation <input type="checkbox"/> ● Attempts to communicate verbally <input type="checkbox"/> ● Ignoring behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> ● Humour <input type="checkbox"/> ● Distraction <input type="checkbox"/> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Warning to child that behaviour could lead to positive handling <input type="checkbox"/> ● Withdrawal from situation by adult and monitoring at a distance <input type="checkbox"/> ● Class removed from situation <input type="checkbox"/> ● Other (please state): 	
Reasons for intervention (please tick)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Actual Injury to self <input type="checkbox"/> ● Actual injury to staff/pupil <input type="checkbox"/> ● Actual damage to property <input type="checkbox"/> ● Potential injury to self <input type="checkbox"/> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential injury to staff/pupil <input type="checkbox"/> ● Potential damage to property <input type="checkbox"/> ● Attempting to leave the school site <input type="checkbox"/> ● Other (Please specify): 	
Was the child warned prior to positive handling? (please tick)		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Was the positive handling (please tick)		Mild <input type="checkbox"/>	Firm <input type="checkbox"/> Restrictive <input type="checkbox"/>
What positive handling technique was used?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lap over <input type="checkbox"/> ● Safe wrist hold <input type="checkbox"/> ● Safe double-wrist hold ● Caring-Cs <input type="checkbox"/> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● T-wrap <input type="checkbox"/> ● Kneeling <input type="checkbox"/> ● Standing (static) <input type="checkbox"/> ● Moving <input type="checkbox"/> 	
Length of time the positive handling was required	3-5 minutes		
Describe how the incident was resolved (Please Tick):			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pupil Calmed Down <input type="checkbox"/> ● Returned to Class <input type="checkbox"/> ● Work completed at a later date <input type="checkbox"/> ● Talked through Incident <input type="checkbox"/> ● Loss of Privileges <input type="checkbox"/> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pupil Apologises <input type="checkbox"/> ● Time Out <input type="checkbox"/> ● Individual Behaviour Plan established <input type="checkbox"/> ● Home Contacted <input type="checkbox"/> ● Fixed Period Exclusion <input type="checkbox"/> 	

How were other children/bystanders de-briefed following the incident? Please use check boxes and add text if necessary.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Check the emotional and physical well-being of the class and reassure. <input type="checkbox"/>● Contact parents if individual children have been particularly affected. <input type="checkbox"/>● Individual parents/volunteers/visitors spoken to and reassured that handling is done in accordance with training and policy. <input type="checkbox"/>● Positive Handling guidance shown to witnesses. <input type="checkbox"/>	Any additional information:
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Discuss incident with Headteacher or assistant Head in order to explore what could be done differently next time (include details of any suggestions on how to avoid the situation arising again).

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Description of any injury sustained and any subsequent treatment:

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Was the parent carer informed about the incident?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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When did this happen and who was it done by?	
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Who was the incident reported to?	
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Next steps (please write down any appropriate information that needs to be followed up or action that needs to be taken)

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Any Additional Comments:

Signed: _____ (Main Person Involved)

Signed _____ (Other adults involved)

Date form Completed:

Signed: _____ Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher