



# Crosslee Community Primary School

## Positive Handling

**Changing Lives in Collaboration – Together We Make the Difference**

Last amended: December 2023

Last reviewed: December 2023

Document Control
Status: Active
Date adopted: 02.02.24
Review: December 2024
Author: Jane Traore
Approved by: Anne-Marie Crew Head Teacher
Date approved: 01.02.24
Supersedes: Positive handling 2022
Amendments: Recording of positive handling on CPOMs

### Contents Page

1. Introduction
2. Policy Purpose
3. Authorised Persons
4. Definitions of Positive Handling
5. Communication Plans
6. Appropriate use of Physical Intervention
7. Behaviour Management
8. Mental Health
9. Positive Handling Training
10. Recording Incidents of Positive Handling
11. Health and Safety of Staff

As part of our commitment to be a nurturing school we will offer a range of opportunities within our curriculum for children to build self-esteem, resilience and aspirations, as well as a positive view towards health and self-respect to support their mental health.

We actively promote Fundamental British Values in our school to ensure young people leave school prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils are taught to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance. They are taught to understand that while different people may hold different views about what is 'right' and 'wrong', all people living in England are subject to its law.

As a Rights Respecting School we uphold the articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children's rights are at the heart of our ethos and culture, to improve well-being and to develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential.

### **We are a Rights Respecting School:**

**Article 3 The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children**

## **Introduction**

The role of the whole organisation is to create a consistent and calm approach that will help prevent the need for reactive measures to be taken.

This policy describes the school's approach to the use of positive handling. It is informed by the non-statutory guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (Use of reasonable force) and the Team Teach training values which are:

- Reducing risk, restraint and restriction
- Positive behavioural support approaches
- No pain
- Honesty
- Confidence building
- Improved communication
- Minimum force for the shortest time

All employed staff are trained in skills to help them to defuse situations before behaviour becomes challenging and how to de-escalate incidents should they arise. Reasonable force will only be used when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force. Decisions will be driven by what is in the best interests of the child and the action should be reasonable, proportionate and necessary (RPN). Whilst the physical techniques are intended to reduce risk, there is always risk when two or more people engage to use force to protect, release or hold. The physical intervention techniques used seek to avoid injury to the pupil, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of ensuring that the pupil remains safe.

## **Policy Purpose**

Whilst it is not a common occurrence at Crosslee Primary School, occasionally, situations arise when it proves necessary for an adult in the school to physically intervene or use positive handling techniques to protect children, adults or property.

## **Authorised Persons**

All members of staff are authorised to physically intervene but it is expected that this will be exercised sparingly and only under the circumstances described in this policy.

## **Definitions of positive handling**

Positive Handling describes a broad spectrum of risk reduction strategies. Positive handling is a holistic approach involving policy, guidance, management of the environment, and deployment of staff. It also involves personal behaviour, diversion, diffusion, and de-escalation. Communication Charts (positive handling plans) are a tool for the 'positive management of pupils' behaviours which challenge. They are based on assessment of risk and identify positive prevention strategies and how a pupil may need to be supported in a crisis.

## **Communication Plans (positive handling plans)**

Where behavioural records and/or risk assessment identifies a need for a planned approach, a positive handling plan will be written for individual children and where possible, this will be designed through multi agency collaboration and, with parental consent, shared with other agencies/services supporting the child to facilitate consistency of approach so far as is possible. All

physical interventions at this school are conducted within a framework of Positive Behaviour Management.

Staff can minimise the likelihood of any incidents by:

- ❖ Creating a calm, orderly and supportive school climate that minimises the risk of harm of any kind;
- ❖ Providing an active approach to teaching children how to manage strong emotions through Zones of Regulation and emotion coaching
- ❖ Understanding and confidently using de-escalation strategies

Before using physical controls, we take effective action to reduce risk by:

- ❖ Showing care and concern by acknowledging emotions.
- ❖ Giving clear directions
- ❖ Having a solution focused approach
- ❖ Using emotion coaching techniques
- ❖ Reminding children about school values
- ❖ Where possible, removing an audience or taking vulnerable pupils to a safe place
- ❖ Making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could pose a risk
- ❖ Using positive guidance to escort pupils to somewhere less pressured.
- ❖ Use of planned scripts
- ❖ Ensuring that colleagues know what is happening and calling upon our colleagues and/or senior leaders for assistance.

### **Appropriate use of physical intervention**

Physical intervention may be needed where de-escalation strategies have not been effective or in an emergency situation where a dynamic risk assessment is required to protect children, adults or school property.

These situations may include:

A child assaulting another child or member of staff

Children are physically fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others

A child is causing significant damage to school property

A child is seriously disrupting the education of others

A child is compromising their own safety or that of others

A child is harming themselves

### **Behaviour management**

We are committed to improving standards of behaviour at all times and it is recognised that we have high expectations. If expectations of children's behaviour are high, then there are fewer problems. Some children have additional social and emotional needs and it is the responsibility of every member of staff to be mindful of those children who experience greater challenges. The inclusion team in school will work together and with parents to plan suitable interventions to address these challenges.

### **Mental Health**

The mental health of children and adults in school, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and experiences. All children have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. All adults have the right to work in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody.

Crosslee offers a learning environment and curriculum that promotes and enhances positive mental health for the whole school community. It is felt that in doing so we reduce the likelihood of physical intervention by supporting each other and reflecting upon situations in an honest and transparent way.

### **Positive handling training**

Staff are advised not to use positive handling unless all other de-escalation techniques have not been effective in reducing risk or there is an emergency situation which needs immediate action in order to safeguard the child, other children or adults and property.

There are several members of staff who are trained in Team Teach across the school. This means that they are able to use safe holding techniques to support pupils in crisis, however all staff have a duty of care to ensure the safety of pupils and themselves. Therefore, this may mean the use of some physical intervention during an emergency situation in order to protect themselves or pupils when significant harm or damage appears inevitable. Risk assessments are required to minimise any foreseen events.

### **Recording Incidents of Positive Handling**

Where positive handling has been used, staff should complete a record of the incident which is then reviewed by the safeguarding and inclusion staff in school. Any actions arising from incidents should also be recorded and parents informed as soon as possible. Where necessary individual communication plans (positive handling plans) are also reviewed in light of any findings. A record of the incident will be made using CPOMs.

### **Health and Safety of Staff**

Health and Safety of Staff Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, employees have a responsibility to report any circumstances which give rise to an increased risk to their Health and Safety. Staff who have, or acquire, permanently or temporarily, any medical condition that may impact on their ability to carry out pupils' Communication Charts, have a duty to report these to the Headteacher immediately as there may be an impact on their own safety and that of colleagues and/or pupils. The School Business Manager will be informed in order to complete a risk assessment for identified staff.