

St Katherine's School & Nursery



Positive Handling Policy

Creating our future by learning together

Date of Policy: November 2025

Review Date: November 2026

Introduction

St Katherine's School & Nursery is committed to maintaining the safety of children and staff. Situations involving decisions about whether to use positive handling can occur in school. This policy seeks to establish clear guidelines on the use of positive handling by staff and acts as an important part in minimising risks associated with choosing to use or not use such actions.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use positive handling as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a child from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing any criminal offence.
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the child him/herself).
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any children receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Objectives

This policy seeks to:

- Ensure the safety of all children and staff.
- Prevent serious breaches of school discipline.
- Prevent serious injury to staff and/or child.
- Provide guidelines to staff when faced with situations that may require positive handling.
- Minimising the use of positive handling.

The following principles in our school help to minimise the need to use positive handling:

- Establishing a calm school environment.
- Ensuring appropriate levels of supervision at all times.
- PSHE and assemblies cover ways to manage conflict and strong feelings.
- Developing appropriate risk assessments and positive handling plans for individual children.
- Only using positive handling where the member of staff considers that the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using it.
- Training in de-escalation is given to teaching and support staff, including mid-day supervisors.

Staff Authorisation

Designated members of staff are trained by the Positive Handling Academy, so wherever possible these would be the first to be called upon if a child requires positive handling. However, all members of staff can use positive handling if following the rules and regulations set out by this policy.

Situations when positive handling may be used

This may be considered when:

- There is a need to prevent injury to another child or member of staff.
- Self-defence.
- A child fails to comply with a reasonable instruction to stop an action that is potentially dangerous to themselves or others.
- A child's behaviour seriously prejudices good order and discipline in the school.
- Children are fighting.
- A child is deliberately damaging property.
- A child causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, rough play, or by misuse of materials or object.
- A child behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson, school event or visit.
- A child placing themselves at risk.

Deciding if to use positive handling

Members of staff should use the following guidelines to decide whether or not positive handling should be used in particular circumstances:

- The situation could not realistically be dealt with by another means – it was deemed necessary.
- The potential consequences of not intervening were sufficiently serious to justify considering using positive handling.
- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means were judged to be low.
- The risk associated with not using positive handling outweighs those of using it.
- There was identifiable risk to other child and/or members of staff and/or school property.
- Consideration of the child's age and needs must be taken into consideration.

Using positive handling

- It is important to note that decisions often need to be made quickly and that the professional judgement of the member of staff involved is key.
- Where possible call a member of staff trained in positive handling or if necessary the police.
- A clear verbal warning should be given to the **child** before using positive handling.
- Wherever possible positive handling should not be used unless there is another responsible adult present to support, observe and call for assistance.
- It is important to use the minimum positive handling technique to achieve the desired result.

Types of positive handling

Passive positive handling:

- Standing between child.
- Blocking a child's path.
- Shepherding a child away.
- Escorting a child.
- Comforting a child.

Active positive handling:

- Leading a child by the hand or arm.
- Ushering a child away by placing a hand in the centre of the back.
- More extreme cases using appropriate physical restraint.
- Members of staff are justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with seeking to use the minimum handling required to achieve the desired result).
- Staff should make every effort to avoid acting in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. However, in rare circumstances to ensure the safety for all it may not always be possible to avoid injuring a child.
- In all forms of positive handling staff should avoid touching or restraining a child in a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct.

Recording incidents: Appendix A should be used to record details of any incidents requiring the use of positive handling. This should be completed as soon as is practically possible after the incident and handed to the Head Teacher.

Complaints: All complaints made relating to the use of positive handling will be dealt with according to the school's complaints procedure. Allegations about a member of staff will follow Kent guidelines.

Equal Opportunities: The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all children, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background.

Use of positive handling record (To be completed by member of staff who used positive handling)

St. Katherine's School Positive Handling Report

Name: _____ DOB: _____ Date: _____

Self: 1 Peer: 2 Staff: 3 Other: 4

Incident:							
Pinching peers/staff		Punching peers/staff		Kicking peers/staff		Damage property	Other:
Shouting		Threatening		Stripping		Screaming	
Hair pulling		Sexual		Theft		Slapping	
Head butting		Hitting		Biting		Bullying	
Spitting		Swearing		Absconding		Racial abuse	
Persistent disruption		Throwing: What:					

Strategies that were used before Physical Intervention:							
Give time		Distraction		Give space		Talk calmly	Other:
Reassure		Remind		Give choices		Give a count	
Praise partial compliance		State alternatives		State consequences		Repeat request	
Other staff intervene		Instruct other childs		Remove stimulus		Remove audience	
Visual support							

Positive Handling Strategies Used:							
Guided Escorted		Holding technique		Elbow tuck/ Guided		Cupped fist/ Guided	Other:
Straight arm		Elbow tuck/ knees		Elbow tuck/ seated		Elbow tuck/ Seated/legs	
Position used:							
Walking		Standing		Chairs		Floor	

Reflection – Date and time:
Who involved:
Where reflection took place:
Ask child: what happened to you?
What did the adult do to you to keep you and others safe?
What could you have done differently?
Did the child show any remorse or emotion related to incident?