

Positive Handling Policy

Freemantle Church of England Community Academy Trust



This policy should be read in conjunction with the following where further information may be found:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy

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1. Introduction

At Freemantle CE Community Academy we are committed to creating a safe, nurturing environment where children can learn, achieve, and develop positive relationships. Our approach to behaviour management prioritises de-escalation, restorative practice, and preventative strategies. Positive handling is only used as a *last resort* to safeguard pupils, staff, and the wider school community.

2. Policy objectives

- To ensure the safety and well-being of pupils, staff, and visitors.
- To protect the rights of all members of the school community to learn and work free from harm.
- To provide clarity for staff, pupils, and parents on when and how positive handling may be used.
- To support pupils to manage their behaviour and learn alternative strategies.

3. Legal Framework

Positive Handling for primary schools in September 2025 is governed by the DfE's [Behaviour in Schools guidance](#) (Feb 2024), which emphasizes a whole-school approach to behaviour, [risk reduction](#), and preventing incidents. Staff must use physical intervention (including reasonable force) only as a last resort, when an immediate risk of danger to pupils or staff exists. This requires comprehensive risk assessments, comprehensive staff training on de-escalation and appropriate physical techniques, and thorough record-keeping.

Key changes for 2025 include a more substantively updated Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) document and potential revisions to the Reasonable Force Guidance.

This policy is also informed by:

- *Education and Inspections Act 2006*
- *Children Act 1989 and 2004*
- *Equality Act 2010*

4. Definition of Positive Handling

Positive handling refers to the *reasonable, proportionate, and necessary use of physical intervention* to prevent:

- A pupil from causing harm to themselves or others.

- Serious damage to property.
- Significant disruption to the good order of the school.

Positive handling is not a behaviour management tool in itself; it is part of a broader strategy of support and intervention.

5. Principles of Positive Handling

- **Last Resort:** Physical intervention will only be used when all other strategies have failed or where immediate risk makes it unavoidable.
- **Proportionality:** The degree of force used must be the minimum necessary and in proportion to the circumstances.
- **Safety First:** The welfare of pupils and staff is paramount. Any intervention should reduce, not increase, overall risk.
- **Respect and Dignity:** Children will be treated with dignity, and staff will avoid any action that could be considered humiliating or degrading.
- **Accountability:** All incidents must be recorded, reported, and reviewed.

6. Preventative Approaches

At Freemantle we actively work to reduce the need for physical intervention through:

- High-quality teaching and engaging curriculum.
- Positive behaviour support and clear routines.
- Early identification of triggers and personalised strategies.
- Restorative conversations and emotional literacy development.
- Staff training in de-escalation techniques and conflict resolution.

7. Authorised Staff

All staff have a legal right to use reasonable force under Section 93 of the *Education and Inspections Act 2006*.

However, at Freemantle, positive handling should normally be undertaken only by staff who have received appropriate training (e.g. School Staff Safety Training <https://schoolstafftraining.co.uk/> /Team Teach or equivalent).

8. Reporting Incidents of Positive Handling

All incidents involving positive handling must be reported to the Headteacher as soon as possible.

A written record must be completed on the school's CPOMS system within 24 hours. Guidance for reporting a positive handling incident is included within the CPOMS protocols.

Parents/carers will be informed by the Head Teacher on the same day where possible.

Serious incidents will be reported to the Board of Directors and, where appropriate, external agencies.

9. Post Incident Support

Pupils involved will be given the appropriate time to calm down and will be supported to reflect on the incident in a restorative manner.

Staff will have access to debrief and support where needed.

Individual behaviour risk assessment plans may be updated to reduce the risk of recurrence.

10. Staff Training

All staff will receive training in behaviour management, de-escalation, and the principles of positive handling.

Identified staff will receive accredited training in safe physical intervention techniques.

Training will be refreshed regularly and recorded as part of the professional development process.

11. Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

The Headteacher, SENCO and DDSLs will monitor records of incidents to identify patterns and inform preventative strategies.

Directors will receive termly reports on the use of positive handling from the Head Teacher.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if guidance or circumstances change.

12. Useful links and supporting organisations

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

<https://positivehandling.events/train-the-trainer/>

<https://schoolstafftraining.co.uk/>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65ce3721e1bdec001a3221fe/Behaviour_in_schools_-_advice_for_headteachers_and_school_staff_Feb_2024.pdf