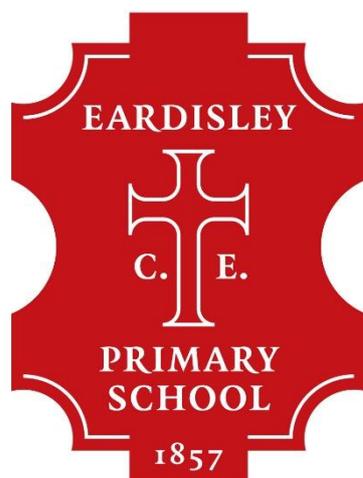


Eardisley CE Primary School

Positive Handling Policy



Positive Handling Policy

In all that we do our values shine through

Policy agreed: February 2026

Review date: February 2027

Nothing is more important at Eardisley, than ensuring our children are safe and that they feel safe.

Objectives

At Eardisley CE Primary School, we are committed to maintaining the safety and wellbeing of students and staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the latest DfE guidance: [‘Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance’](#) (April 2026), which describes reasonable force as, “*using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time.*”

Included in this policy are a small number of responses which may involve the use of force to control or restrain a pupil. This is permissible as described under section 93 and 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It enables trained staff in the school, authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

1. causing injury to themselves or others
2. committing a criminal offence
3. damaging property
4. causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

The term “Positive Handling” includes a wide range of supportive strategies to manage challenging behaviour, with restrictive interventions representing only a small part of a broader behaviour-supportive approach.

Definitions

Restrictive Intervention

Any action restricting a pupil’s movement or freedom, including both physical and non-physical actions taken to keep pupils safe.

Reasonable Force

The legal power enabling staff to use *no more force than necessary* to prevent injury, criminal behaviour, property damage or disorder.

Restraint

A type of restrictive intervention using direct physical contact to prevent harm.

Seclusion

A non-disciplinary safety measure where a pupil is placed alone in a room or area from which they cannot freely leave, used only during acute emotional or behavioural dysregulation to prevent harm. It must never be used as punishment or threatened as a consequence.

General Policy Aims

At Eardisley CE Primary School we aim to provide a caring, welcoming ethos which establishes a safe, secure and stable environment to enable pupils to grow, develop and learn. Whilst the majority of children do not behave in an aggressive or violent way, we use redirection, diffusion and prevention as our primary tools. Physical intervention is only one of the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupil safety / well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the schools:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Positive Behaviour Management

All physical interventions at Eardisley Primary are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. In line with our behaviour policy, staff use restorative practice, relationship-based approaches, and early identification of triggers to reduce risk.

Staff work with parents and professionals to:

- understand underlying causes of behaviour
- identify environmental or sensory influences
- recognise early warning signs

This reduces the likelihood of restrictive interventions being needed.

Alternatives to Physical Intervention

Before using physical intervention, staff will:

- use negotiation, reasoning and distraction
- maintain a calm, non-confrontational manner
- give clear directions to pupils
- whenever possible, remove audiences or take vulnerable pupils to a safe, calm space
- make the environment safe by moving furniture or removing objects
- use positive touch to guide pupils to a safer space
- seek help from colleagues
- withdraw if their presence escalates behaviour

What Constitutes Physical Intervention?

Restrictive physical interventions include:

- **Bodily contact:** blocking paths, interposing, guiding or holding
- **Environmental restrictions:** closing doors and restricting access

Physical intervention must always:

- be a last resort
- be for safety, never punishment
- be proportionate
- aim to reduce or stop as soon as the risk decreases.

Use of Positive Handling

Positive handling should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.

All staff receive behaviour training and there are a number of staff who have received specific positive handling training (Team Teach). Further details of the Team Teach approach can be found on the Team Teach website [Home - Team Teach](#)

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary.

According to DfE guidelines control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control.

In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective positive handling should be a last resort. When positive handling becomes necessary:

At Eardisley CE Primary School we only use physical restraint when there is no realistic alternative. This does not mean that we always expect people to methodically work their way through a series of failing strategies, before attempting an intervention in which they have some confidence. Nor does it mean always waiting until the danger is imminent, by which time the prospect of safely managing it may be significantly reduced. National guidance is clear on this point.

Use of Reasonable Force to Search Pupils

Staff may use reasonable force when conducting a lawful search for prohibited items if a pupil is resisting and there is a risk of harm. Any force used must be proportionate and only used when non-physical alternatives are unsafe or ineffective.

All such incidents must be recorded and reported in line with statutory requirements.

Unacceptable Uses of Force

Restrictive interventions must **never** be used:

- as punishment
- in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example, by covering the mouth and/or nose, or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen
- If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff must release or reposition to a safer alternative as quickly as possible.
- as routine practice

Seclusion

- seclusion is a *non-disciplinary* measure
- used *only* when a pupil is in acute dysregulation
- must be supervised
- is time-limited
- must be recorded and reported
- the environment must be safe and not feel threatening

Considerations for Pupils with SEND

Staff must consider how SEND needs, communication differences, trauma profiles or sensory sensitivities may affect behaviour. Interventions must avoid discriminatory practice and should follow individual risk assessments.

Risk assessments for pupils with SEND will identify:

- known triggers
- tailored de-escalation strategies
- adjustments required before considering restrictive intervention

Recording and Reporting

Recording

A written report should be completed as soon as practicable and same-day where possible.

Every incident involving force must include:

- date, time and location
- duration
- reason it was necessary
- type and degree of force used
- injuries to staff or pupils
- any follow-up medical treatment
- names of staff directly involved
- pupil's SEND status code (if applicable)

Reporting to Parents

A report must be provided to parents/carers as soon as practicable, and staff should endeavour to do this no later than the same day.

This includes:

- reasonable force
- restraint
- seclusion

Actions After an Incident

Positive handling often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations, and therefore there is a clear need for structured debriefing for both the staff involved and the pupil. The Headteacher must be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for ensuring that appropriate debriefing takes place once the situation has stabilised. Parents should also be informed promptly.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern, it may be necessary to implement or review a pupil's risk assessment. It is essential to consider the circumstances preceding the incident to identify triggers, evaluate interventions used, and plan strategies to prevent future occurrences.

All incidents should be recorded immediately (see Appendix 1). All sections of this report should be completed so that in the event of any future complaint a full record is available. The Headteacher will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the

same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it. It is important that parents/carers respond promptly to any incident.

Risk Assessments

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Management of the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. It is not enough to thoughtlessly apply rules without thinking through the likely consequences. The key principals are that any physical intervention should be:

- in the best interest of the child
- reasonable and proportionate
- intended to reduce risk
- the least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective



Eardisley CE Primary School



Positive Handling Restraint Record

Date of incident and time of incident:
Name of pupil(s) involved:
Pupil's SEND status code / relevant needs (EHCP / SEN Support / No SEN):
Members of staff involved:
Name of person writing this report:
Description of incident <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reason for intervention (injury / damage to property / disruption etc.)• events leading up to incident• behaviours that occurred (hitting / kicking / spitting / weapons etc.)• who was at risk• how risk was reduced• physical interventions used and duration of restraint
Description of any injury sustained by incident and actions taken
Details of conversation with parent / carer – date/time/names/discussion
Actions following the incident
Signature of Headteacher