



BUGLAWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Be the Best We Can

Positive Handling Policy

Approved:
To be reviewed:

Summer 2026
Summer 2028

Policy Statement

At Buglawton Primary School we are committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment where positive relationships and proactive behaviour strategies minimise the need for physical intervention. Positive handling is used **only as a last resort**, in line with legislation, to prevent harm and maintain safety.

The school uses **Team Teach** as its approved framework for de-escalation and, where necessary, safe physical intervention.

Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

Primary Legislation

- **Education and Inspections Act 2006, Section 93** – gives staff the legal power to use *reasonable force* to prevent injury, damage to property, or serious disruption.
- **Children Act 1989 & 2004** – duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** – duty to ensure safe working conditions for staff and pupils.
- **Equality Act 2010** – ensures non-discriminatory practice in all interventions.

Statutory Guidance

- **Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force in Schools (DfE, April 2026)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**
- **Behaviour in Schools (DfE 2024)**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015)**

Underpinning Values

Everyone attending or working in this school has a right to:

- recognition of their unique identity;
- be treated with respect and dignity;
- learn and work in a safe environment;
- be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse.

Pupils attending this school and their parents have a right to:

- individual consideration of pupil needs by the staff who have responsibility for their care and protection;
- expect staff to undertake their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies;
- be informed about school rules, relevant policies and the expected conduct of all pupils and staff working in school;
- expect individual plans to be designed to achieve outcomes that reflect the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern and others affected by the behaviour requiring intervention;
- be informed about the school's complaints procedure.

The school will ensure that pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined rules, which govern behaviour in the school.

Definitions

Physical Contact

At Buglawton Primary School we may use appropriate physical contact as part of our everyday practice, for example:

- hugging (when comforting a distressed pupil or to praise and congratulate a pupils performance)
- holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of a line when going to assembly or when walking around the school or on school organised visit
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- to demonstrate exercises/techniques during PE lessons/sports coaching
- in circumstances where a child has injured themselves or application of first aid

Physical Intervention

Minimal contact to guide or redirect a pupil away from danger.

Positive Handling (Reasonable Force)

The *minimum* degree of force necessary, for the *shortest* time, to prevent a pupil from:

- injuring themselves or others
- causing serious damage to property
- seriously disrupting good order and discipline
- absconding in a way that places them at risk

Restrictive Physical Intervention

A form of positive handling that restricts movement.

Aims

- To ensure the safety of pupils, staff, and visitors.
- To reduce the need for physical intervention through proactive strategies.
- To ensure any use of force is **reasonable, proportionate, necessary, and lawful**.
- To ensure staff are trained and confident in using Team Teach approaches.
- To ensure all incidents are recorded, reported, and reviewed in line with statutory requirements.

Team Teach Approach

The school adopts **Team Teach** as its approved behaviour support and positive handling system.

Key Principles

- **95% de-escalation, 5% physical intervention**
- Emphasis on **communication, relationship building, and risk reduction**
- Physical techniques are **gradual and graded**, always using the **least intrusive** option
- Techniques are designed to be **non-harmful, age-appropriate, and respectful**

Training Requirements

- Best endeavours will be made to ensure all staff complete **Team Teach Level 1** training.
- Training is refreshed **every 2 years** (or sooner if required).
- Records of staff training are maintained by the school.

6. Minimising the Need for Positive Handling

Prevention of unsafe behaviour will be enabled through:

- the deployment of appropriate staffing numbers;
- the deployment of appropriately trained and competent staff;
- avoiding situations and triggers known to provoke challenging behaviour;
- creating opportunities for choice and achievement;
- exploring pupils' voice so that they are managed in the best way;

- staff employing de-escalation techniques to avert behaviour becoming violent or aggressive.

Staff will prioritise:

- Early intervention and emotional regulation support
- Calm, non-threatening communication
- Distraction, diversion, and negotiation
- Use of safe spaces or sensory breaks
- Individual RAMPs for pupils with identified needs
- Individual Risk assessments for pupils with identified needs
- Consistent routines and expectations

When Positive Handling May Be Used

Positive handling may be used **only when absolutely necessary**, including:

- A pupil is at immediate risk of harming themselves
- A pupil is at risk of harming another person
- A pupil is causing or is likely to cause significant damage to property
- A pupil's behaviour is seriously compromising safety or order
- A pupil attempts to abscond and is at risk of harm

Reasonable, Proportionate, and Necessary Force

Any intervention must:

- Use the **minimum force** for the **shortest time**
- Be **age-appropriate** and mindful of SEND needs
- Never involve pain-inducing techniques
- Never restrict breathing or circulation
- Never be used as punishment
- Cease immediately once the risk has passed

Authorised Staff

- All staff authorised by the Headteacher may use reasonable force.
- Best endeavours will be made to ensure only **Team Teach-trained** staff use physical interventions.
- Volunteers and students are **not** authorised to use physical intervention.

Reporting and Recording

The school follows government expectations for reporting and recording incidents involving reasonable force.

Immediate Actions

- The staff member involved must inform the Headteacher or senior leader **as soon as possible**.
- The pupil's welfare must be checked immediately after the incident.

Recording

A written record must be completed **on the same day**, including:

- Date, time, and location
- Names of staff and pupils involved
- Description of events leading to the incident
- De-escalation strategies attempted
- Type of physical intervention used (Team Teach terminology)
- Duration of intervention
- Injuries or damage (if any)
- Actions taken following the incident

Records are made through CPOMs and monitored for patterns.

Reporting to Parents

Parents/carers must be informed **on the same day** where possible.

Reporting to Safeguarding Lead

Any use of force is logged with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and considered within safeguarding procedures.

Post-Incident Support

The school will provide:

For Pupils

- Emotional support and reassurance
- Restorative conversation
- Opportunity to reflect and repair relationships
- Review of behaviour plans or triggers

For Staff

- Debriefing and emotional support
- Review of risk assessments
- Additional training if needed

12. Complaints Procedure

Complaints about the use of force are handled through the school's policy. Staff are protected when acting **within the law, within this policy, and in line with Team Teach training.**