



Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School **Positive Handling Policy**

Status	Date
Reviewed:	September 2025
Reviewed by	Meg Wilson
Approved by Full Governing Body on:	23 rd September 2025
Revision Due	September 2027

Any response to children's behaviour should be based upon consideration of what is in the child's and others' best interests.

Rationale

There may be occasions when staff have to use physical contact to reassure, manage or contain children. Adults must be clear of their responsibility and act in a professional manner. They need assurance that if they follow the correct procedure their actions will stand close scrutiny. At Our Lady of Lourdes, we believe that there is a place for physical contact. We need to ensure that children understand what is 'safe and appropriate touch' as well as utilise contact to support both emotional and physical containment.

Purposes

To set out the sequence of considerations which must be taken immediately before, during and after physical contact.

Guidelines

- This policy applies to all adults (including helpers) who have charge of children,
- Acceptable physical contact can be identified in 6 categories as follows:

1.Comfort Touching

Used to comfort a child for reassurance in a distressed or dysregulated state.

It is clear the child is in need of direct physical contact, either from previous knowledge of the child or the child's own actions. To fail to respond to a child in this situation could be seen to constitute emotional neglect.

For example; a child fallen over, is hurt & crying - a member of staff puts arm round child's shoulder – this is appropriate and proportionate.

Advice:

- Where possible this should be done in public place
- Where possible keep doors open
- Try to avoid physical contact if staff & child alone – this is not always possible, you need to assess the risk and situation.

2. Approval / Reassurance Touching

Signifies reassurance, approval or encouragement. Often this type of touch can support children to stay regulated and prevent unwanted behaviours or children making poor choices.

For example; a teacher gives encouraging touch on shoulder to child who has tried very hard with some work.

Advice:

- Where possible in public place
- Where possible doors open
- Try to avoid physical contact if staff & child alone – this is not always possible, you need to assess the risk and situation.

3.Touch with Intimate Care

Necessary in caring for developmentally immature or disabled children.

For example; a child with physical disability may need help changing for swimming or P.E.

Advice:

- I.E.P. and care plan sets out agreed situations and signed by parents and professionals where necessary.

For children with illness such as stomach upset leading to wet or soiled underwear, physical contact may be necessary.

Procedure:

- older children remove wet or soiled clothes themselves, place in bag, then clean themselves
- younger children need assistance to remove clothes and clean themselves
- change of clothes provided by the school, and parents asked to wash and return.

4. Physical Contact in P.E.

It is recognised that in some P.E. activities some physical contact for support is necessary.

5. Holding or Guiding

Adult helps child bring him/herself back to a regulated state.

Child responds without resistance - no force used to overpower child.

For example; a distracted child is out of his/her place, & not responded to verbal request to sit down - staff gently but firmly guides the child back by using caring Cs or puts arm on shoulder - child does not resist.

6. Positive Handling (Teach Teach)

We only use positive handling **when there is no other realistic alternative and to keep a child or other/s safe**. Wherever possible seek ways to remove other child(ren) who may be harmed. When positive handling is being considered staff should think about the answers to key questions.

- Is this in the best interests of the pupil?
- Is a less intrusive intervention not preferable?
- Do we have to act now?
- Am I the best person to be doing this?
- Is this absolutely necessary?

Aim to continue discussion leading to peaceful de-escalation, allowing child to return to a regulated state in complete safety and security.

Examples of when we would consider using positive handling:

- pupils are fighting
- a pupil is engaged in, or about to commit, deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury to peers or adults by accident.
- a pupil is running in the corridor in a way which might cause an accident or injury
- a pupil absconds from the class or tries to leave the school and could be at risk if not kept there.
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, deliberate injury to peers or adults of the school.

Advice:

- *verbal warning should precede the use of positive handling*
- *use assertive language*
- *explain consequences if failure to comply*
- *minimum amount of force must be used – positive but gentle contact*
- *send for assistance from another adult*
- *give clear message to child that positive handling is not arising from anger, frustration, insecurity or desire to punish (i.e. do not show anger) – ensure you are letting the child know you are trying to keep them and others safe.*
- *record all incidents of physical restraint, see below.*

WRITTEN RECORDS:

- * A positive handling plan (PHP) is written for a child for whom a major incident is possible that may require positive handling to support the child - staff should be made aware of these plans.
- * Acts of positive handling must be recorded on C-POMS in the Positive Handling Section and reported to the headteacher. These will note the date of the positive handling and a description of the reasons. You must alert the member of SLT who is noted as the SLT member informed. The member of SLT who has been 'informed' of the positive handling incident will respond to the C-POMS in the following way. 1st click 'read'. 2nd comment in the 'Actions' what the following up steps are, e.g. No further action, updated PHP, meeting with parent etc.
- * At the end of the year, the Positive Handling reports will all be printed off, put in order of occurrence based on date, and binded into a book for record keeping.
- * Injuries to staff are recorded in one or more of the following:
 - Accident/Injury file (staff –kept in office)
 - Incident Report Record (staff/headteacher – kept by headteacher)More serious injuries to staff and children are also recorded on an LA accident record sheet

See also:

DFE Guidance on 'Use of Reasonable Force'. [DfE advice template](#)

This policy to be read in conjunction with:

- *Child protection and safeguarding policy*
- *Behaviour Policy*
- *Exclusion policy*