Derwent and Southill Federation

We are a Values-led Federation
We respect ourselves; We respect others; We respect the environment.

Positive handling and Physical Intervention Policy

Principle

An effective behaviour and discipline policy should secure an orderly and purposeful atmosphere in which activities and learning can take place. There may, however, be rare occasions when staff will need to use 'reasonable force' and the use of restraint or physical interventions in order to prevent injury, damage to property, the breakdown of discipline, or control children or young people for safety reasons.

The term 'Positive Handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. Included in this framework are a small number of responses which may involve the use of reasonable force to control or restrain a pupil. The terms 'physical intervention' or 'restraint' are used when reasonable force is used to overcome active resistance. Restraint is a safeguard, not a sanction. The purpose of any physical contact, including restraint, is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the person being held, along with anybody else whose welfare is being threatened.

Pupils with severe behavioural difficulties sometimes present a risk to themselves and others. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 (with no amendments in the Education Act 2011) describes the circumstances in which teachers and others authorised by the Headteacher may use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. Such action may be reasonable in order to prevent injury to people or damage to property. A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports pupils who have social emotional and behavioural difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety, and where positive relationships are pro-actively fostered.

The Governors and staff of Derwent and Southill Federation take seriously their duty of care towards pupils, employees and visitors to the school. At Derwent and Southill Federation, situations requiring positive handling are very unusual. Staff protection is an important part of child protection and safeguarding; both depend on confident and competent staff (that are trained in Team Teach) who feel supported by the management. This policy has a clear focus.

· The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care.

· The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

It is created to ensure that, should the situation arise, staff and parents are aware of the correct procedures. It is designed to help staff to ensure that any actions they take are reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary and how we implement the guidance across Derwent and Southill Federation. It should be considered alongside the most recent national guidance in positive handling as well as alongside the following relevant policies:

· Behaviour Policy and Sanction Flow Chart

· Staff/Pupil Disciplinary Policy
· All relevant safeguarding policies
· Managing allegations against staff guidance
· Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy has been written with reference to the following documents:
· The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils. – Non-statutory guidance for schools in England DfEE Circular 10/98 Section 550A · DfCSF, The Use of force to control or restrain pupils – Guidance for schools in England
· Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Pupils with Severe Behavioural Difficulties
· DfE Use of Reasonable Force, Advice for Headteachers, staff and Governing Bodies
· Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff Working with Children and Adults who display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorders 2002.
· Policy guidance from CPI nonviolent crisis intervention training programme.
· Policy guidance from Victoria Drive Pupil Referral Unit.
This policy does not authorise the use of corporal punishment.

Positive Behaviour Management
All physical interventions at this school are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. The school behaviour policy is intended to reward and encourage pupils to take responsibility for improving their own behaviour. Part of our preventative approach to reducing risk involves looking for early warning signs, recognising and communicating any factors which may influence poor behaviour and
taking steps to divert behaviours leading towards foreseeable risk.

Alternatives to Physical Controls
A member of staff who chooses not to make a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk. They will:
· Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason.
· Give clear directions for pupils to stop.
· Remind them about the school's approach – please reference the Behaviour Policy
· Remove an audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place.
· Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons that may hurt self or others
· Guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressured.
· Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help.

Well chosen words

A well chosen word can sometimes avert an escalating crisis. When pupils are becoming angry there is no benefit in arguing. Telling people to calm down can actually escalate feelings. Pointing out what they have done wrong can make things worse. The only purpose in communicating with an angry person is to prevent further escalation. It is better to say nothing and take time to choose your words carefully than to say the wrong thing and provoke a further escalation.

Proactive Physical Interventions

It is sometimes reasonable to use physical controls to prevent extreme behaviour from becoming dangerous. Examples of this are where a pupil has shown ritual patterns of behaviour, which in the past have led to the child becoming more distressed and violent. In such circumstances it may be reasonable to withdraw the child to a safer place when the pattern of behaviour begins, rather than wait until the child is distressed and out of control. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the best interest of the child and that it reduces, rather than increases risk.

The legal context

Restraint should only be used as a last resort.

The 'Last Resort' Principle

Holding should only be used when all the other reasonable methods of managing the above situations have been tried. 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.

"if necessary staff have the authority to take immediate action to prevent harm occurring even if the harm is expected to happen sometime in the predicted future"

Para 10 page 4 Department of Health – 1997- "The Control of Children in the Public care: Interpretation Of the Children Act 1989 – London HMSO

It does mean that we expect staff to conduct a dynamic risk assessment and choose the safest alternative. It also means that we expect staff to think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective.

In what circumstances can physical intervention be used

School staff are able to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a child from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

· Committing any criminal offence (or for a child under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);

· Causing personal injury to, or damage or vandalism to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself)

· 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.

In school this translates as:

· To protect people or property
· To move children to a safer place
· To prevent children from behaving in such a way that seriously disrupts school activities
· To require a child to comply with a reasonable instruction
Examples of situations that fall within these categories are:
· A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
· Pupils are fighting;
· A pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate significant damage or vandalism to property;
· Misuse of equipment or dangerous materials;
· Carrying and/or using weapons;
· A pupil is running in such a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others;
· A pupil absconds from class or tries to leave school (N.B. this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).
· A pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom;
· Pupil is in danger of being a flight risk and leaving the school in a distressed condition and putting themselves in danger.
· A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.
· Behaviour which causes significant concern for the health and safety of a group or class.

The decision to use physical intervention will be taken in the context of the level of risk presented by the behaviour, the seriousness of the incident and the relative risks of the use of physical intervention compared with any available alternative. Force will not be used in situations which are trivial, e.g. minor property damage or ignoring low level instructions where other de-escalation strategies would be more appropriate. The use of physical intervention will take into account the characteristics of the pupil, including their age, gender, SEN, physical needs or disability, developmental level or cultural issues.

Reasonable and Proportionate
Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. 'Reasonable' is the minimum force needed to avert injury or damage to property or to prevent a breakdown of discipline, applied for the shortest period of time. The use of force is illegal if the physical circumstances do not warrant it. The force used should always be the minimum needed to regain and ensure safety and control for everyone involved or present.
Staff must not react in anger. If they feel they are becoming angry they should consider withdrawing to allow someone else to deal with the situation. Where staff act in good faith, and their actions are reasonable and proportionate they will be supported.

When physical controls are considered staff should think about the answers to the following questions:

· How is this in the best interest of the pupil?
· Why is a less intrusive intervention not preferable?
· Why do we have to act now?
· Why am I the best person to be doing this?
· Why is this absolutely necessary?

If staff can answer these questions it is more likely that a physical intervention will be judged to be reasonable and proportionate.

Reasonable physical interventions

Restrictive physical interventions may include:

· Bodily contact- where the physical presence of one or more people is used to control a pupil, e.g. physically interposing between pupils; blocking a pupil's path; holding or 'shepherding' a pupil; using agreed, approved restricted holds.
· Environmental- where a change is applied within the environment for example shutting a door or the use of locks or key pads to prevent access to a particular area.

Unreasonable use of force/Prohibited forms of Restraint or Holding

It is not reasonable to use force simply to enforce compliance in circumstances where there is no risk. Nor is it reasonable to use any more force than is necessary to achieve a reduction in risk. Under no circumstances should pain be deliberately inflicted or should pupils be deliberately subjected to undignified or humiliating treatment (this should not be confused with the unavoidable discomfort associated with some approved techniques for disengaging from assaults such as bites and grabs.)

Reasonable force DOES NOT include the following actions, or any others that may reasonably be expected to cause injury or be considered indecent. For example:

· Holding around the neck or collar
· Restricting a young person's ability to breathe
· Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
· Holding or pulling by hair or ear
· Locking a young person in a room
· Corporal punishment (or the threat of it),
· Any act or threat of an act, such as hitting, kicking, slapping, punching, prodding, poking, throwing an object, rough handling etc. which causes or threatens harm or the expectation of harm to a pupil

· Holding a child face down (supine holds should only be used for specifically identified children, if it is the only safe way to hold the child. A dynamic risk assessment will need to be made).
The above actions are forbidden and could lead to disciplinary action against staff.

Seclusion
· Other than as a one-off emergency measure to protect health and safety, force should not be used to keep a pupil secluded (locked in a room on their own). Seclusion is only lawful by specific court order and will not be part of a planned strategy at this school. · Children are not allowed to be put in a room with an adult on the outside. Whenever children need time away from class they will always be supervised by adults in the same room.

Who can restrain?
At Derwent and Southill Federation, any person whom the Head teachers have authorised are able to have control or charge of pupils. At Derwent and Southill Federation this includes teachers and support staff such as teaching assistants.

· An up to date record of all staff that have completed Team Teach training is held by the Miss Faulkner the SBM
· This power may be used where the pupil is on school premises or elsewhere in the lawful control or charge of the staff member (for example on a school visit).
· At Derwent and Southill the following staff are not authorised to hold children: catering staff, premises staff, unpaid volunteers and students.
All staff will have the Positive Handling and Behaviour Policy explained to them as part of their induction.

Training
The level of training recommended is related to the level of risk faced by a member of staff. In cases where a Positive Handling Plan is in operation, teachers and anyone authorised by the Head Teacher who are expected to have additional planned physical techniques will be trained further in any specific physical interventions to be used. These staff will be trained by an accredited provider and will be the only staff authorised to use those interventions.
This school has adopted elements of the Team Teach Method for Restrictive Physical Interventions. All training courses have been led by trainers fully accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) in accordance with the DfES and Department for Health guidance, and within rigorous guidelines.
In emergency situations people without full training may need to restrain- see below.

General advice for staff
· Be sure that you are aware of and complying with the school policy for behaviour and discipline.
· It is better to defuse situations wherever possible, as this prevents them from escalating to a level where force is necessary.
· Send for the assistance of another member of staff as soon as possible, using the agreed help protocol (see below)
· All those involved should be de-briefed after incidents to explore more positive/effective responses to future difficult situations.

Getting Help (Help Protocol)

The expectation at Derwent and Southill Federation is that all staff will support each other. This means that staff always offer help and always accept it. Help does not always mean taking over. It may mean just staying around in case you are needed, seeking help from a colleague, or looking after somebody else's group or class. Supporting a colleague does not only mean agreeing with their suggestions and offering sympathy when things go wrong. Real support sometimes means acting as a critical friend to help colleagues become aware of possible alternative strategies. Good communication is necessary so that colleagues avoid confusion when help is offered and accepted. All staff need to understand what manner of assistance may be required and what is available

When offering support the following scripts may be used :

"Is help needed?" "Help is coming"

Or "More help is available" (when they feel that a change of adult is necessary. The member of staff will then take over and explain their actions later away from the child).

Support Structures

At Derwent and Southill Federation the following support structures are in place.

· SEN Support Provision maps and behaviour support plans are kept in the SEN Folders in each classroom to ensure all relevant information about each pupil is available to all members of staff working with them.

· Current issues and relevant information are shared with relevant people as required via face-to-face meetings, emails or in staff meetings.

· Use of protocols, sharing of timetables, and discussion to remind all staff of the availability of colleagues to offer help including change-overs of staff during a crisis situation with a pupil.

· Debrief sessions after a crisis with the pupil (s) involved will occur reflecting on how the crisis was managed by all involved and identifying any points for review or learning. This will take into account a child's age and special needs where necessary.

Health and Safety

If dangerous behaviour presents a significant risk of injury to people, there is a legal Health and Safety issue to be addressed. Dangerous occurrences should be reported to the EHT (as the person responsible for H&S in the school). We all have a shared responsibility to identify risk, communicate potential risks and take active steps to reduce risk wherever possible. We recognise that it is not possible to entirely remove risk. Sometimes things go wrong even when we make our best efforts to do the right thing. Sometimes we are faced with challenging choices. In these circumstances we have to try and think through the outcomes of the options available, balance the risks and choose whatever course of action which seems to involve the least risk.

As a minimum requirement, in order to comply with Health and Safety legislation, each employee has a responsibility to ensure that they are conversant with school policy and guidance, and to cooperate to make the school safer. It is also a requirement that they participate in training if they are directed to do so.

Risk assessment

Informal risk assessment should be a routine part of life for staff working with pupils who may exhibit extreme behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. If a proposed activity or course of action involves unacceptable risk the correct decision is to do something else.
Factors which might influence a more immediate risk assessment, and therefore a decision about how to intervene, might include the state of health and fitness of the staff member, their physical stature, competence, confidence and relationships with the pupils concerned. Other than in an emergency, staff should only attempt physical controls when they are confident that such action will result in a reduction of risk.
Where children require strategies beyond the usual scope of the school a separate risk assessment will be devised and this will be sent to the Local Authority. E.g. if a child requires ground holds or holds not taught in the school. Any special needs pertaining to a child will be taken into account when compiling risk assessments and physical handling plans.

Physical Handling Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk (i.e. have been restrained in the past) should have a Physical Intervention Plan or Risk assessment (see Appendix A). The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any responses which are not recommended. If particular physical techniques have been found to be effective they should be named, along with alerts to any which have not proved effective or which caused problems in the past. The plans should be considered alongside any other documents which relate to the pupil, e.g. the Statement or Provision Map. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special needs and social context. Positive Handling Plans should result from multi-professional collaboration including with parents.
It is important to take account of developmental changes. Gradual changes, such as the child getting bigger, can happen so slowly that staff fail to notice that long standing practices are becoming inappropriate. These changes should be noted on the Positive Handling Plans.

Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

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 principles 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.

Where possible staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical interventions. Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning if appropriate.

The Post Incident Support structure for Pupils and Staff

Following a serious incident, it is the policy of this school to offer support for all involved. People take time to recover from a serious incident. Until the incident has subsided the only priority is to reduce risk and calm the situation down. Staff should avoid saying or doing anything which could inflame the situation during the recovery phase. The federation has a Care First welfare and wellbeing package to which all staff will be directed post any situation which might need emotional or wellbeing support for staff.

Immediate action should be taken to ensure medical help is sought if there are any injuries which require more than basic first aid. Any injuries should be reported. It is important to note that injury in itself is not evidence of malpractice. Even when staff attempt to do everything right, things can go wrong. Part of the post incident support staff may involve a reminder of this, as people tend to blame themselves when things go wrong.

Time needs to be taken to repair relationships. When careful steps are taken to repair relationships a serious incident does not necessarily result in long term damage. Time needs to be given to following up incidents so that children have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective. This is an opportunity for learning for all concerned. Both adults and children may need time to recover and rest or regain composure before returning to class.

Recording

Whenever restraint is used the incident must be recorded on CPOMS. All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the record which should be completed within 24 hours. These records will be retained and the EHT or SLT team will review these for completeness of record. They will be kept for 30 years. These records are kept digitally in both schools in the federation.

Staff Should:

· Ensure they are conversant with CPOMS recording – tagging behaviour and other agencies involved and including any restraint used.
· Ensure they have assigned the Head teacher or SENCO to the incident as appropriate
· Make sure they have written all the evidence in non-emotive language

The report should contain the following:

· The name(s) and personal details (gender, ethnicity, age etc) of the young person(s) involved.
· The time and location.
· Names of witnesses.
· Details of how the incident was triggered and progresses with details of observed behaviour.
· Details and outcomes of the steps taken to diffuse the situation.
· A description of the degree of the force used, how applied and for how long.
· Suggested strategies for assessing risk in the future.

Parents/carers must always be notified if their child has been held or restrained . If a member of staff feels that a child's welfare will be compromised they should seek advice from the Head teachers.

Monitoring and evaluation of incidents

The school incident log is open to external monitoring and evaluation of school records on CPOMs.

SLT will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required. The records of incidents are scrutinised on a regular basis, at least half-termly. The monitoring process will consider:

· The level of incidents across the school

· Patterns of incidents: are they occurring disproportionately with particular pupils, particular teachers, in particular year groups

· The accuracy of recording

· The extent to which approved interventions are being used

· The extent to which all aspects of this policy have been followed.

All the information on restraint will be collated, providing clear data on the amount of restraints for each child and any trends. This data may be used to decide on whole school issues, to provide an indication of individual improvement or deterioration in behaviour and to provide evidence when involving outside agencies.

Following an incident, consideration may be given to conducting a further risk assessment, reviewing the Positive Handling Plan, Behaviour policy or this Positive Handling policy. Any further action in relation to a member of staff, or an individual pupil, will follow the appropriate procedures (see staff and pupil disciplinary policy).

Complaints

It is not uncommon for pupils to make allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force following an incident. Any such allegations should be noted in the debrief.

The school has a formal complaints procedure. Pupils and parents should be reminded of the procedure and encouraged to use the appropriate channels. The complaints procedure applies equally to staff. We are an open school and promote transparent policy and practice in order to protect the interests of pupils and staff alike. Any staff concerns regarding the welfare of children should be taken to the designated person for Child Protection. At Derwent and Southill Federation this is Tenille Rimmer, Sonya Read, Chloe Bell SENCO, Hayley Kell and Callum Masterson. Any safety concerns should be reported to the designated person for Health and Safety. At Derwent and Southill Federation this is Jenna Faulkner at Southill School it is via Mrs Michaella Lattimore in the School Office in the first instance.

If there is a concern about a staff member using restraint unnecessarily and there is an allegation against the member of staff, the Management of Allegations against Staff Procedures will be followed. The designated officer within the Local Authority (LADO) will be notified of any allegation against a member of staff and s/he will decide if a Strategy meeting needs to be held.

Parents / Carers

The policy on restraint will be shared with parents / carers, who have the right to raise any questions or concerns directly with the Head teacher. Every time a child is held the parents/carers will be informed. Where there are concerns raised by either school or home a meeting will be held to discuss further.

Communication

To be the most effective at dealing with the children's behaviour we have strategies in place for communicating with everybody concerned with the child. Only then can we provide a consistent approach that meets the individual's needs. Please refer to our Behaviour Policy for details. We place great importance on sharing equal and joint responsibility with parents for their children's education and behaviour. We therefore welcome the support and involvement we get from our parents and seek to build on this to help us with our work. There are various ways in which we communicate with parents:

Parents evening held every term

Home / communication diaries for selected pupils

Informal meetings before or after school

Formal meetings organised by concerns raised by the school or by parents/carers.

Date policy updated: September 2026



Signed Neil Parsons (Chair of Governors)

Date of Review: September 2027

Appendix 1

Derwent and Southill Federation– Positive Handling Plan				
Name:	DOB:	Class	Plan Date:	Medical Information:
Triggers/Behaviours/Situations likely to result in unwanted behaviour What is the behaviour like? When does it occur? Where does it occur?				

Possible de-escalation strategies:- please highlight				
Chill out time e.g. sensory room	Distraction	State alternatives or choices	State consequences	Take up time
Give space	Reassure or success reminders	Other staff involvement (change of face)	Repeat request	Classroom organisation
Talk calmly	Give a count	Planned ignoring	Remove stimulus	Environment factors
Verbal advice and support	negotiation	Contingent touch	Humour	Time out OR time in
Staff withdrawal	Peers withdrawal			
Preferred Handling Strategies to be used:				
De-briefing process following incident:				
Signatures: Head teacher: …….. Date: …….. Parent/Carer: …….. Date: …… Other: ……. Date: …….				