ST KEYNA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Positive Handling Policy

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Statement of intent

St Keyna Primary School believes that it is important to establish a safe, secure and stable environment to enable pupils to grow, develop and learn. To achieve this, the school recognises that, in certain circumstances, managing violence through control and restraint may be necessary. This policy acknowledges that situations may arise in which staff members will be required to use positive handling, and in some cases reasonable force, in order to manage conflict when other measures have failed to do so. The aim of this policy is to ensure that actions such as positive handling and reasonable force are used in a correct and safe manner, which is in accordance with the relevant legislation and national guidance.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education Act 2011
- The Children Act 1989
- The Equality Act 2010

1.2. This policy has due regard to the following guidance:

- DfE (2013) 'Use of reasonable force in schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2020) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2026) 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools'

1.3. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Behavioural Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The **Governing Board** is responsible for:

- Monitoring the overall implementation of this policy.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Responding to any complaints, in liaison with the Headteacher, from pupils or parents regarding the use of reasonable force.

2.2. The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- Deciding whether members of staff require additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities, considering the needs of pupils.
- Ensuring all members of staff understand the correct conduct in terms of positive handling.
- Handling any allegations of abuse in line with the Whistleblowing Policy.
- Maintaining the Positive Handling Log (*Appendix B*)
- Ensuring that any member of staff who uses reasonable force completes the Positive Handling Report Form (*Appendix A*)
- Ensuring that the Behavioural Policy sets out the circumstances in which force might be used.
- Responding to any complaints, in liaison with the governing board, from pupils or parents regarding the use of reasonable force.

2.3. The **Inclusion Lead** is responsible for:

- Providing training to members of staff on how to handle pupils with SEND
- Ensuring staff understand how pupils with SEND may react differently to reasonable force
- Ensuring that staff understand the additional vulnerability of pupils with SEND or medical conditions
- Developing Individual Behaviour Plans for pupils - who present a low risk of requiring Personal Handling (Appendix C) and Risk Assessments - for pupils who present a high risk of requiring Personal Handling (*Appendix D*) for pupils with SEND or medical conditions that are agreed with the pupil's

parents, and ensuring the teaching staff are aware of these
- Ensuring that staff understand how reasonable force principles may need to be adapted for pupils with medical conditions.

2.4. The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** is responsible for:

- Providing staff with annual reasonable force training where the Headteacher deems it necessary.
- Ensuring all members of staff use reasonable force in accordance with this policy.
- Reviewing this policy in liaison with the Headteacher and Governing Board.

3. What is positive handling?

3.1. For the purpose of this policy, 'positive handling' is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting pupils and limiting damage to property.

3.2. Legal framework and national guidance often refer to the 'use of force' – this policy uses the term 'positive handling' whenever possible.

3.3. Positive handling is used in the school to:

- Restrain a pupil who has lost emotional self-control until the situation is diffused.
- Limit the amount of harm that the pupil involved can do to themselves or others.
- Demonstrate to pupils that they are within a safe environment in which adults can contain pupils' anger and other erratic emotions.
- Protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.

3.4. Positive handling will be limited to emergency situations and used only as a last resort.

3.5. Where positive handling is required, the school will abide to the following guidance:

- Initial intervention will always be without force.
- Any physical intervention will follow other appropriate actions.
- Staff will take a calm and measured approach in all situations.

3.6. Failure to positively handle a pupil who subsequently gets injured, or injures another pupil, could lead to an accusation of negligence.

3.7. Positive handling will never be invasive, humiliating, flirtatious in nature or take a form which could be seen as punishment.

3.8. Positive handling will 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.

4. What is reasonable force?

4.1. There is no statutory definition of reasonable force; it will always depend on what is considered necessary and proportionate, given the circumstance of the case.

4.2. The use of reasonable force is only acceptable to control pupils or restrain them, and involves using no more force than is needed in the circumstance.

4.3. ‘Control’ refers to either passive physical contact, such as blocking a pupil’s, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm.

4.4. ‘Restraint’ refers to physically bringing a pupil under control, such as holding them back. This is typically used in more extreme circumstances, such as to separate two pupils fighting.

4.5. The degree of force that is used will depend on the pupil’s circumstances, e.g. age.

4.6. Staff members will always use actions that are appropriate and in proportion to the circumstances of the incidents.

4.7. All incidents that involve the use of reasonable force will be reported to the Headteacher, recorded in writing and communicated to the pupil’s parents.

4.8. The following list is not exhaustive, but provides examples of situations where the school may decide to use reasonable force:

- Disruptive children must be removed from the classroom and are refusing instructions to leave
- Members of staff need to control disruptive pupils on school trips, or similar
- Members of staff must prevent a pupil from leaving a classroom where doing so would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- A pupil is attacking a member of staff or another pupil.
- A pupil is at serious risk of harming themselves and a member of staff must intervene to prevent this.
- The Headteacher or authorised staff are conducting a search for items prohibited under the Education Act 1996, e.g. knives and weapons, alcohol and illegal drugs.

4.9. Physical intervention will never be used as a substitute for good behavioural management in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

5. Use of positive handling and reasonable force

5.1. All members of staff will be permitted to use positive handling where they believe it to be appropriate, as long as all necessary precautions are taken.

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances, which includes preventing pupils from harming themselves or others, damaging property, or causing disorder.

Under the recent DfE policy, staff are not required to be trained to use positive handling, such as reasonable force, in all situations. However, they must have appropriate training if they are likely to use reasonable force or other restrictive interventions.

5.2. The power to positively handle pupils also applies to any individual whom the Headteacher has identified as temporarily in charge, such as volunteers.

5.3. The decision to physically intervene during a situation is down to the professional judgement of the member of staff and always depends on the circumstances.

5.4. Staff will always calmly communicate the reasons for their actions to the pupil and explain why it was necessary in a non-threatening manner.

5.5. Staff will never give the impression that they are acting out of anger or are punishing the child.

5.6. All staff members will develop strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and situations, which they will use to diffuse and calm a situation.

5.7. In non-urgent situations, staff will always try and deal with a situation through other strategies before using force.

5.8. Staff members will always avoid acting in a way that could cause injury; however, depending on the circumstances, this may not always be possible.

5.9. Where a member of staff believes that they are at risk, such as where an injury is likely to occur, they will not intervene in an incident without help and assistance of another staff member.

- Emergency intervention is necessary when there is a high risk of pupils being injured or property being damaged
- If emergency intervention is required, a member of staff will use other methods of defusing the situation, without physically intervening, until assistance arrives.

5.10. Following the event, the pupil involved may be subject to separate disciplinary procedures, in which strategies should be formed to help avoid reoccurrence of such incidents.

5.11. Where necessary, external agencies, such as the LA or the police if a crime has been committed, will be informed of the incident.

5.12. Positive handling techniques which present an **unacceptable** risk and will not be used include:

- The 'seated double embrace' where two staff members force a pupil into a sitting position and lean them forward whilst a third staff member monitors their breathing.
- The 'double basket-hold' in which a pupil's arms are held across their chest.
- The 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the pupil's nose.

6. SEND and medical conditions

6.1. The school will have due consideration to the risks posed by the additional vulnerability of pupils with SEND or medical conditions in terms of positive handling.

6.2. The Inclusion Lead will ensure that the stipulations of the Equality Act 2010 are adhered to in relation to reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

6.3. The school will adhere to its Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy at all times.

6.4. To reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour that can necessitate the use of reasonable force, the Inclusion Lead will establish individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable pupils, e.g. those with SEND, that are agreed with the pupil's parents.

6.5. The Inclusion Lead will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead regarding the use of positive handling on pupils with SEND and establish how training may need to be amended.

7. Reporting incidents

7.1. A detailed written report will be kept of any incidents where force is used.

The guidance now uses "restrictive intervention" as a wider umbrella term, encompassing actions that prevent, restrict, or subdue movement, including reasonable force, restraint, and seclusion. *(See Appendix E for individual definitions of terminology)*

7.2. Immediately following an incident, the member(s) of staff involved will verbally report the incident to the Headteacher and provide a comprehensive written record of the situation as soon as possible, using the Positive Handling Report Form (*Appendix B*)

7.3. The written report of the incident must be thorough, including as much detail as possible as to what had happened before, during and after the incident, and describing any injuries incurred due to the event.

7.4. The Headteacher will ensure that the parents of the pupil will be informed of the details of an incident. If it is appropriate, the following will be adhered to:

- Parents will be informed in writing and a copy of this report will be given to the member(s) of staff involved in the incident
- The report will inform parents of their right to complain about the use of positive handling and reasonable force, in line with the Complaints Procedures Policy.

7.5. If a member of staff witnesses or suspects the use of positive handling or reasonable force, where another member of staff is actively involved in physical intervention, they will report this to the Headteacher immediately.

7.6. Any allegations against staff will be dealt with as a matter of urgency, and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

7.7. The Headteacher will be responsible for conducting a thorough investigation to find out the correct details of what occurred; this may include talking to other pupils about the incident, for instance those who witnessed the event.

8. Complaints

8.1. All members of staff will be made fully aware of the consequences and legal retributions that can

occur following the incorrect use of positive handling and force.
8.2. All complaints regarding the use of positive handling or force will be investigated in a thorough and speedy manner.
8.3. The person making the complaint is responsible for proving that their allegations are true, and therefore, it is not for the member of staff to prove that their actions were made reasonably.

8.4. In extreme circumstances, parents may take civil action or pursue a criminal prosecution.

8.5. In the case where a member of staff has acted within the law, this will provide a defence to any civil or criminal prosecution.

8.6. Members of staff accused of using excessive force will not be automatically suspended as a response to the allegations. The following procedure will be adhered to:

- Careful consideration will be given to whether the case warrants a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved
- The Governing Board will always take into account whether a staff member has acted within the law when considering whether or not to take disciplinary action against a staff member involved in an incident
- Where a member of staff is suspended, the school will ensure that the staff member has access to a named contact that can provide support and guidance
- The school will provide pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation.

9. Staff training
9.1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will conduct regular safeguarding training for members of staff, which focuses on the most effective positive handling strategies and use of reasonable force techniques.

9.2. All staff will be regularly reminded of the positive handling techniques employed by the school, and will communicate these to the pupils they are in contact with.

9.3. Only techniques and strategies that have been previously discussed with the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead, and have been safely demonstrated, will be used.

9.4. Staff will be made aware of subsequent risks of their actions and fully understand when it is appropriate and necessary to use such actions.

10. Monitoring and review
10.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Governing Board, who will consider any necessary changes and communicate the findings of the review to all members of staff.

10.2. The Headteacher will review records of the use of positive handling and reasonable force on a termly basis, to analyse the frequency of occurrence and determine what further measures could be taken to

prevent these situations from reoccurring.

For clarity, this guidance will use the following definitions:

Restrictive intervention: a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This guidance uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

Reasonable force: a term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive interventions. All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.

Significant incident: any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff as described in 'Other physical contact with pupils' within this document. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

Seclusion: a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction, blocking, or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave.

Restraint: a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact. For example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches would both be considered forms of restraint.
The various restrictive interventions above have been defined for completeness and should not be construed as an endorsement or otherwise for their use in schools. Some will not be relevant to most schools.

Appendix A - Positive Handling Report Form

We believe that positive handling and reasonable force should only be used when absolutely necessary. With this in mind, this form has been created to ensure that all incidents of this type are recorded. Incidents must also be documented in the Positive Handling Log.

Name of staff member:	
Name of pupil:	
Date:	
Time:	
Location:	
Name(s) of staff member(s) who witnessed the incident:	
Informed parties (parents, social workers, police, etc.):	

Circumstances prior to the incident:
Details of the incident:

Details of any negative impact on other pupils:

Reason(s) for positive handling (please tick):
Danger to self Danger to others Significant damage to property
Details of the intervention:

Any disciplinary additional action taken:

Injuries (if any) to staff members, the pupil concerned or other pupils:
Damage (if any) to property:
Recommendation(s) to avoid future incidents:

Headteacher's signature:	**Date:**
Signature of staff member concerned:	**Date:**

Appendix B - Positive Handling Log - We believe that positive handling and force must only be used when absolutely necessary. Positive handling will always to be used in accordance with the Positive Handling Policy. All incidents of this nature must be recorded in this log. Details of the individual incident will be recorded using the Positive Handling Report Form.

Date and time	Name of pupil	Name of staff member	Name(s) of witnesses	Injuries (if any) to pupils or staff	Damage (if any) to property	Nature of Intervention	Was the Headteacher notified?	Signed by staff member
						○ Restrictive intervention ○ Reasonable force ○ Significant incident ○ Seclusion ○ Restraint		
						○ Restrictive intervention ○ Reasonable force ○ Significant incident ○ Seclusion ○ Restraint		
						○ Restrictive intervention ○ Reasonable force ○ Significant incident ○ Seclusion ○ Restraint		
						○ Restrictive intervention ○ Reasonable force ○ Significant incident ○ Seclusion ○ Restraint		

Appendix C

	Individual Behaviour Plan		
Name:	Year:	Teacher:	Support:
Behaviour and Level **1= Anxious / Low Level (Zone 2)** **2= Escalating / Medium Level (Zone 3)** **3 = Crisis (Zone 4)**	**1= Anxious / Low Level (Zone 2)** ○ Leaving the classroom	**2= Escalating / Medium Level (Zone 3)** ○ Shouting out / Screaming ○ Ripping up work / scribbling on work ○ Being unkind to peers	**3 = Crisis (Zone 4)** ○ Knocking over chairs ○ Damaging school equipment ○ Throwing items ○ Attempting to kick an adult
Helpful Staff Responses	○ Use WIN to wonder in to how ____ is feeling e.g. 'I wonder if you are feeling frustrated because…' ○ Reflection Chat (*when engaged*).	○ Reduce communication so as not to overwhelm _____. ○ Give _____ 'space' both physical and cognitive to reduce the load and see if he re-regulates. ○ Use WIN to wonder into how _____ is feeling eg 'I wonder if you are feeling frustrated because…' ○ Reflective Chat (*when engaged*).	○ If necessary, remove all other children from the area- this may be from the seats directly surrounding _____ or it may be necessary to evacuate the whole classroom ○ Call for back up from a member of SLT ○ Always try and implement the PACE approach first before any other strategy: ➢ P = Playful (Distract _____– make him smile, he responds well to banter and self-deprecating humour on the part of the adult); ➢ A = Accepting = (Validate / acknowledge how he feels); ➢ C = Curious (Establish what's making _____ angry);

			➢ E = Empathy (Understand why he is like the way he is).
Unhelpful Staff Responses	○ Being too firm or coming across as too 'authoritative'	○ Using too much language with _____.	○ Being too firm or coming across as too 'authoritative' ○ Using too much language with _____.
Recovery: **After a Level 3 behaviour**	➢ _____ refuses to speak.		
Depression: **This often follows the Recovery**	➢ Negative self-talk. ➢ Crying.		
Follow Up: **This needs to be before the end of the day but not necessary immediately**	➢ Reflective Conversation with trusted adult. ➢ Consequence to be carried out by way of completing a job with the adult who a repair needs to happen with. ➢ If Positive Handling was required, the relevant paperwork is to be completed. ➢ Parents contacted. ➢ Behaviour to be recorded on CPOMS.		

Appendix D

Risk Assessment

St Keyna Primary School / Little Gems Nursery	Risk Assessment	Name: Class:

Assessed by: **1.1.1.1.1** Date of initial RA:	
Photo	**PRINT:** **SIGNATURE:**
1.1.1.1.2 Other personnel involved with assessment	
Might be parents / carers / other staff within the setting / Ed Psychs etc etc	

Identification of those at risk:	· Staff working directly with the pupil. · The pupils peers.	**Staff member with responsibility for pupil**	*(eg) Mrs B C Other – Senior SENCO*

Historical context and current concerns	*Give a relevant but précised history of the individual if this risk assessment relates to that, so that it is helpful to new staff to understand the context and depth of risk.*

What hazards are present / are foreseeable?	Triggers	What level of risk do you judge this at?	Strategies to control those risks
List the nature of concerns in this column, individually as they will each have different controls		**Likelihood:** **Impossible;** **Possible;** **Probable.** **Severity:** **Trivial;** **Minor;** **Moderate;** **Intolerable.**	*Dependent on potential further controls available. Name individual responsible for carrying out further actions and dates of implementation.*
e.g. 1. Pupil X bites other pupils at every available opportunity – ten incidents in the last week		**Likelihood:** **Probable** **Severity:** **Moderate**	***e.g.:*** *We would need to ensure Pupil X is with three members of staff at all times to safeguard both Pupil X and the staff members. This is not possible due to recruitment problems, and budget deficiencies. This can be seen in our accounts.* ***OR*** *We have secured in the short term another member of staff who is fully qualified in this sphere and can work with Pupil X and their current mentors. They are arriving on ……..so until then we are still at risk from these behaviours – therefore we need to…… (etc etc) –* ***Responsible person:***

Who will this risk assessment be communicated to and when?	All staff involved with the pupil and ensure that they have read it **and** understand the implications. All new staff are shown RA and sign to say they have read and understood it, or whether they have needed some extra support to understand the implications.

Signed off by:	Headteacher	Inclusion Leader	Class Teacher	Parent / Carer	*Other*	*Other*
Date of assessment sign off:						

Review date: *Other* **Signed:** ***Changes:*** *Added in new staff member to section 2.2 – and dated* ***Communicated**: via team meeting 8 June 17*	**Review date:** **Signed:** **Changes:** **Communicated**:	**Review date:** **Signed:** **Changes:** **Communicated**:	**Review date:** **Signed:** **Changes:** **Communicated**:	**Review date:** **Signed:** **Changes:** **Communicated**:	**Review date:** **Signed:** **Changes:** **Communicated**:

An example of a risk assessment matrix

		SEVERITY

		TRIVIAL Little to no effect on event / activity or person involved, e.g., bumps / bruises	MINOR To include first aid being required, to one day lost time	MODERATE Sprains / strains / referral to clinician, 1 – 6 days lost time etc	INTOLERABLE Major injury including 7 days off work, and / or disastrous results to event or activity / life changing injury or death
	IMPROBABLE Unlikely to occur	**LOW**	**LOW**	**MEDIUM**	**HIGH**
	POSSIBLE Likely to occur	**LOW**	**MEDIUM**	**HIGH**	**HIGH**
	PROBABLE Risk will occur	**MEDIUM**	**MEDIUM**	**HIGH**	**HIGH**

Risk Rating Key and required actions:

LOW – Acceptable and OK to proceed	**MEDIUM –** Take further action to reduce risk if this can be done cost effectively, **and** the benefits will outweigh the risk(s). Otherwise risk can be tolerated **if** existing precautions are maintained and managed.	**HIGH –** Intolerable – do not proceed - requires further action to reduce risk to a tolerable level: seek support.