



Transform Trust

Positive Handling Guidance

Policy Number	Author	Publication Date	Review Cycle
206	Director of Inclusion	V5 September 2025	Bi-annually

Introduction

This guidance is based on best practice provided by Nottingham City RPI Solutions on de-escalation and positive handling. It should be referred to by all schools within Transform Trust. Staff should also refer to their own school behaviour policy.

Best Practice De-escalation Skills and Techniques

Underpinning the success of managing the diverse needs that will be present in each classroom is the skill of the teacher and support staff in intervening early to **de-escalate** situations calmly when they arise. Remaining calm and professionally detached is not natural and therefore it is a skill that will need to be practiced. Below are some examples of techniques that can be used:

- Stay calm
- Keep a neutral facial expression
- Be aware of personal space
- Distract/divert
- Reassure pupil
- Use a low voice
- Use non-judgemental language
- Give them a 'way out'
- Give them time to follow instructions

Things to avoid

- Do not make threats you cannot carry through, such as threatening to exclude the child.
- Do not be defensive or take it personally. What is being said may seem insulting and directed at you, but this level of aggression is not really about you.
- Do not use humour unless you are sure it will help and you have a very good relationship with the child.
- Do not use sarcasm or humiliate the child.

The Use of Positive Handling

The use of positive handling will be a planned response where possible, however there may be times it is used under a dynamic risk assessment. All other behaviour management strategies will be used before physical intervention.

At our school we believe that the use of positive handling is only necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence.
- Injuring themselves or others.
- Causing serious damage to property, including their own.
- Emergency situations that will prevent a child from harm.
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in the classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere on the school grounds or off-site on an educational visit.

It is good practice for all staff to receive Legal and Ethical training. However, named individuals are trained in de-escalation and positive handling techniques. This training will be refreshed annually and a record of their training will be kept in the school.

In the event of using positive handling then only the trained techniques will be used as part of a planned response. It should be used only to control or restrain and never with the intent to cause pain or harm or used as a punishment. Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered inappropriate.

In using Positive Handling, the level and duration of the physical intervention will always be the minimum necessary to restore safety. In any action, due regard has to be taken to the age, understanding and any SEND needs of the pupil. Knowledge of the pupil is a key factor in the professional judgements that will be made.

Most children who may require positive handling will have an Individual Handling Plan (IHP) in their file detailing strategies and techniques used. A risk assessment will have been first completed on the child. The IHP and outcomes of the risk assessment will be shared with parents/carers and other relevant parties.

Recording Incidents

Where there has been a positive handling incident, check both the child and adult are ok and no further assistance is needed; and where necessary report any injuries. The following process then needs to take place:

1. The incident must be reported immediately to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher. In the event of their absence, a member of the senior leadership team must be informed.
2. The handling log must be completed by the staff involved as soon as possible after the incident, in line with the processes and procedures that the school has in place. For example, inputting the data onto Scholarpack/Arbor.
3. Following the incident, the child's provision will need to be reviewed alongside their risk assessment.
4. In the event of an injury occurring, the appropriate accident/personal contact incident reporting procedures must be followed.

Parents/carers of the pupils involved will be advised of an incident as long as this will not put the child at any risk of serious harm. It may be necessary for it to be followed up by other action and/or pastoral support.

Monitoring and Review

This guidance may be amended at any time to take account of changes in legislation. The normal cycle of review for this guidance is bi-annual. It should be read in conjunction with the school's behaviour, safeguarding and health and safety policies.