

SHEFFORD LOWER SCHOOL

Use of Reasonable Force Policy



Written by	Reviewed and Ratified by Governors	Shared with Staff		Last Updated	Next Review due
Headteacher - Polly Ross	February 24	Staff meeting and briefing Feb 24		Nov 20	Feb 27

1. Statement of intent

1.1 At Shefford Lower School we strive to create an environment in which both children and adults feel happy, safe, secure and valued. We have a responsibility for the pastoral care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we aim to ensure a whole school approach to positive behaviour known and understood by all staff, children, parents and outside agencies. To achieve this, the school recognises that, in certain circumstances, physical intervention, including safe touch and the use of reasonable force, is necessary.

1.2 The school understands that behaviour is often a means of communication which may signal that a pupil needs support but does not know how to express this; therefore, the school takes a proactive approach to anticipating, managing and minimising potential triggers of distressed behaviour that may cause harm.

1.3 This policy acknowledges that situations may arise in which staff members will be required to use physical intervention, and in some cases reasonable force, in order to handle pupils' emotions or aggressive behaviour when other measures have failed to do so.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that physical intervention is used in a correct and safe manner, which is in accordance with the relevant legislation and national guidance.

1.4 The use of reasonable force upon any pupil by a member of staff is a serious matter and should only be considered as a last resort. However, the law is clear and the Governing Body has a responsibility to all concerned, to support any member of staff who as a last resort uses reasonable force in accordance with the law, and with this policy. All school staff adhere to the ethical framework and act selflessly and with objectivity in preserving the happy and safe environment within the school.

1.5 Purposes of the policy:

- To provide clarification on the use of reasonable force in our school
- To enable staff to feel more informed and confident about the use of reasonable force when they believe it to be necessary.
- To make clear the responsibilities of the Head teacher, senior staff and governing body in respect of this power following government advice.
- To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention, which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.

- To develop and implement training and guidance for staff (teaching and non-teaching) so that they are clear about the circumstances in which they might use reasonable force to restrain pupils and how such force might be applied .
- To ensure school staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of this power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- To outline that suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force and senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

2. Legal framework:

2.1 School staff are enabled to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a pupil from doing/ continuing to do any of the following:

- Committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, which would be considered an offence for an older pupil);
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

2.2 This power applies to the following staff:

- *Permanent authorisation:*
All qualified teachers and support staff are authorised to use force or restraint, in an emergency situation to prevent a child causing physical injury to themselves or to another person.
- *Temporary authorisation:*
Any member of support staff deemed to be responsible for the children at the time, any adult employee, or volunteer, in an emergency situation to prevent a child causing physical injury to themselves or to another person can use reasonable force. Any staff other than the class teacher, who are given temporary responsibility for a pupil who presents a particular risk to themselves or others, will be informed by the class teacher prior to taking that responsibility. They will be made aware of the child's ISP/ Consistent Behaviour Plan and Risk Assessment.

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

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

2.4 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 (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'

- HM Government (2019) 'Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention'

2.5 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy and Information Report
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

3. Roles and responsibilities (Annually)

3.1 The governing board is responsible for:

- Monitoring the overall implementation of this policy.
- Notifying the headteacher that the Behaviour Policy should include the power to use reasonable force.
- Evaluating, on an annual basis, instances of physical intervention to analyse how and when reasonable force is used and identify any trends.
- 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.

3.2 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.
- Maintaining the records of the use of reasonable force and evaluating on a termly basis how reasonable force and physical intervention is used.
- Ensuring that any member of staff who uses reasonable force completes a report.
- Ensuring that the Behaviour 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.

3.3 The SENCO is responsible for:

- Providing training to members of staff on how to handle the needs of 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 risk assessments for pupils with SEND or medical conditions that are agreed with the pupil's parents, and ensuring teaching staff are aware of these.
- Ensuring that staff understand how reasonable force principles may need to be adapted for pupils with medical conditions.

- Evaluating on a termly basis how reasonable force and physical intervention is used with regard to pupils with SEND, in collaboration with the headteacher.

3.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) 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.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training, at Shefford Lower School this is Team Teach.

4. Definitions

4.1 For the purposes of this policy, '**physical intervention**' is used to refer to any situation in which physical contact with a pupil is necessary – this includes reasonable force, e.g. to defuse a situation in which a pupil is at risk of harming themselves or others, and safe touch, e.g. comforting a pupil in emotional distress.

4.2 For the purposes of this policy, '**positive handling**' is defined as the overall, graduated approach of responding to pupils' behaviour and emotions with the intention of protecting pupils and staff, and limiting damage to others and property. Positive handling adapts the least intrusive intervention techniques in response to situations, before using gentle physical intervention and reasonable force as a last resort.

4.3 For the purposes of this policy, '**reasonable force**' is considered to refer to a broad range of actions that may be used to control or restrain a pupil to prevent that pupil from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. Reasonable force covers force that is necessary and proportionate to the circumstances.

4.4 There are two key types of reasonable force:

- '**Control**' – actions used in an attempt to direct a pupil's movements; this includes passive physical contact, e.g. standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact, e.g. leading a pupil out of a classroom by their arm.
- '**Restraint**' – actions used in an attempt to physically bring a pupil under control. This type of force is typically used in more extreme circumstances, e.g. where two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate, causing staff to intervene to hold them back from one another physically.

4.5 For the purposes of this policy, '**safe touch**' is defined as physical contact which, if avoided, would be inhumane, unkind or cause distress to a pupil, e.g. where a pupil is significantly distressed and in need of physical comfort.

5. When can reasonable force be used?

5.1 Force is only used when the risks in doing so are outweighed by the risk involved in not using force. The power to use reasonable force may be applied where the pupil (including a pupil from another school) is on the premises or elsewhere in the care of the staff member (e.g. on a school visit). There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force. That will always depend on the precise circumstances of individual cases. To be judged lawful, the force used would have to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent. The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. The potential consequences of not intervening are

serious enough to justify using force. The use of force is the only likely way of achieving the desired result i.e a safe environment. Force is only used when the risks in doing so are outweighed by the risk involved in not using force.

5.2 School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but the law recognises that in extreme cases, it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil. The kinds of situation include:

- removing disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to leave;
- preventing a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- preventing a pupil leaving the classroom to keep them safe;
- preventing a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil;
- restraining a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts;

5.3 Those exercising the power to use force must also take account of any particular special educational need and/ or disability the pupil might have. Under the Equality Act schools have two key duties:

- Not to treat a disabled pupil less favourably, for a reason relating to his or her disability, than someone to whom that reason does not apply, without justification; and
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage to pupils who are not disabled (known as the reasonable adjustments duty)

6. Deciding whether to use force:

6.1 Force should only be used when:

The potential consequences of not intervening are serious enough to justify using force. The use of force is the only likely way of achieving the desired result i.e a safe environment. Force is only used when the risks in doing so are outweighed by the risk involved in not using force.

7. Minimising the use of force:

7.1 A supportive and purposeful learning environment is created by enabling the children to feel safe, secure and happy in their learning. This is achieved by whole school expectations, made explicit to pupils so boundaries are understood.

7.2 Poor behaviour is escalated when children perceive the adult is inconsistent or losing control. This is conveyed by tone of voice, shouting, emotive language. At Shefford Lower School, staff conduct themselves in a controlled and calm manner at all times, distancing themselves from the behaviour and managing it objectively and selflessly. There is a no shouting policy, but it is understood that shouting may be necessary to draw a child's attention to a risk or danger in an emergency situation.

7.3 Shefford Lower is a 'Values School'. Staff role model the values in their interactions with each other, with children and through their own conduct. The PHSE curriculum is delivered to all pupils and additional PHSE resources are used with specific pupils/ groups to meet specific needs. Positive behaviour is elicited through praise, trusting relationships, positivity and encouragement.

7.4 De-escalation strategies are used to reduce or avoid the need to use force and pupils who have an identified behavioural need have a Consistent Behaviour Plan and Risk Assessment (reviewed

termly with staff and parents) in place to support staff in de-escalating behaviour before the need for reasonable force. Children with an identified behavioural need also have a risk assessment reviewed termly. Where the use of force is anticipated to be a possibility (when low level signs are evident in the child's behaviour), advice and strategies within the consistent behaviour plan are applied. Advice may also be sought from external agencies such as Jigsaw which informs the plans. It is not always possible to anticipate that reasonable force will be necessary, for example when there is a very sudden change or deterioration in behaviour. Staff should minimise the highest risks, for example calling the emergency services if a child has placed themselves out of reach.

7.5 Only the minimum amount of force needed to ensure a safe situation should be used. Prior to any physical contact in a situation requiring the use of force, a verbal warning should be given that force may have to be used, and the type of restraint. e.gI may have to take it from you, I may have to hold your arms, I may have to put my arms around you to hold you still so that I can keep you safe. Be aware that any hold that may restrict breathing must be avoided e.g around the neck/ chest/ major body organs. As far as possible, force should only be used when there is another responsible adult present to support, observe and call for assistance.

8.Positive handling

8.1 The principle of positive handling means that the school expects staff to assess whether the incident requiring a response can be resolved without physical intervention.

8.2 Where possible, the school implements an approach of prevention, where staff will be trained in recognising warning signs of severe pain or distress and/or aggressive behaviour, communicating empathetically with pupils displaying such signs to aid them in regulating their emotions, and altering their environment to minimise distressing stimuli.

8.3 Teaching staff will be aware of the behavioural patterns, medical conditions and levels of need of pupils in their class, and will ensure that incidents of disruptive or aggressive behaviour in the classroom are handled in line with individual pupils' needs.

8.4 Staff will not generally resort to physical contact or reasonable force immediately without first questioning whether there is a need to use physical intervention. Staff will question whether:

- Verbal de-escalation can be attempted.
- There are actions that can be taken to remove triggers from pupils, e.g. dimming the lights and encouraging quiet where a pupil is having a meltdown in response to sensory overstimulation.
- The pupil can be removed from the situation without physical intervention, e.g. if they will follow a member of teaching staff out of the classroom.
- The pupil has a condition or support needs that mean physical intervention would be inherently more dangerous, e.g. asthma which may be made worse by restrictive holds or sensory issues where physical touch would contribute to sensory overload and may provoke aggressive behaviour.
- They have the ability, training and adequate support to physically intervene safely without causing unnecessary harm to the pupil or themselves.

8.5 Where there is no immediate risk of harm to themselves or others, destruction of property or serious disruption, reasonable force will not be used on the pupil. Any reasonable force used in

situations that are non-urgent will only be used once all alternative options have been exhausted and where the staff member in charge deems that the situation is escalating.

8.6 The school understands that, in some cases, action may be required very quickly, e.g. in the event that a pupil attempts to run out into a busy road, or where pupils begin a violent fight with one another and staff are forced to pull the pupils apart. Staff will not be penalised for resorting to the use of physical intervention or reasonable force in such situations where it is justified and perceived necessary to prevent harm to others or property in the circumstances.

8.7 Positive handling will be applied with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. Reasonable force is not used as a method of behaviour management or discipline – only as a last resort in situations that require de-escalation to prevent harm.

9. Reasonable force

9.1 Staff members will use actions that are appropriate and in proportion to the circumstances. Physical restraint will never be used routinely. Where reasonable force is required, the degree and type of force that is used will depend on the pupil's circumstances, e.g. their age or SEND. The following list is not exhaustive, but provides examples of situations where the school may decide to use reasonable force where other methods of defusing a situation have been exhausted or are not appropriate:

- Members of staff need to control pupils risking the safety of themselves or others outside of school premises where the same range of support options are not available, e.g. on school trips.
- Members of staff must prevent a pupil from leaving an area, e.g. the classroom or school grounds, where doing so would risk their safety or the safety 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.
- Disruptive children must be removed from the classroom and are refusing instructions to leave.
- 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.

9.2 All members of staff will be permitted to use reasonable force where they believe it to be appropriate in line with their training, as long as all necessary precautions are taken. 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 and the pupil's individual needs.

9.3 In many cases where physical intervention or reasonable force is required, minimal and non-restrictive force will be appropriate, e.g. holding a pupil's arm to escort them from a classroom.

9.4 Reasonable force techniques that involve restraint will only be used where the staff member in charge feels it is necessary to prevent serious harm. In general, restraint will only be used briefly and

prolonged restraint will not be used, i.e. restraint beyond that which is necessary to remove the immediate threat a pupil is posing to themselves or others.

9.5 Where staff determine physical intervention is necessary, they will calmly communicate the reasons for their actions to the pupil and explain why it is necessary in a non-threatening manner. In most cases, staff will communicate this to pupils before making physical contact to minimise distress and/or further aggressive behaviour from the pupil; however, the school recognises that this is not possible in some emergency situations.

9.6 Staff will never give the impression that they are acting out of anger or are punishing the pupil. Staff members will always avoid acting in a way that could cause injury; however, the school understands that accidental injury may occur in emergency situations where there is not sufficient time for a considered response, e.g. bruising on a child's wrist where a staff member has grabbed them to prevent them running onto a busy road.

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

9.8 Staff will also be aware that, in some instances, it will cause more distress to a pupil, and may increase the risk of harm to their peers, if they are prevented from leaving an area, e.g. their classroom, using physical intervention. Where it is not dangerous to allow them to leave, the staff member in charge of the situation should use their judgement in allowing a pupil to remove themselves from the area, as environmental factors in the area specifically may be provoking their behaviour.

9.9 Following the incidents where reasonable force is used, the pupil involved may be subject to separate disciplinary procedures, in which strategies should be formed to help avoid reoccurrence of such incidents.

10. Pupils with SEND

10.1 The school will have due consideration to the risks posed by the additional vulnerability of pupils with SEND in terms of physical intervention and reasonable force.

10.2 The SENCO 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, and will ensure that staff that come into regular contact with pupils with SEND are aware of the ways in which their needs can be met without reasonable force.

10.3 The school is aware that pupils with SEND may sometimes experience meltdowns, which can sometimes manifest in behaviour which may be aggressive or seem uncontrollable. Where it is known that a pupil is prone to meltdowns, the SENCO and headteacher will draft a risk assessment and Consistent Approach Plan to determine planned strategies for managing the pupil's meltdowns that are tailored to the pupil's specific needs, to avoid the use of reasonable force. These risk assessments will be conducted in collaboration with the pupil and their parents.

10.4 Some pupils with SEND may require physical intervention when they feel overwhelmed or stressed, e.g. a tight hug; however, this will be discussed as part of relevant Consistent Approach Plans and risk assessments. Staff members will not assume that a technique employed for one pupil with SEND will be applicable to other pupils with SEND.

10.5 Staff will also be aware that pupils with SEND may engage in frequent, repetitive self-stimulatory behaviour, known as 'stimming', and that some pupils may engage in self-injurious stimming, e.g. repeatedly hitting or scratching themselves. While this can be alarming, staff will be aware that stimming is often carried out as a means of emotional regulation or self-soothing in response to stressful or overwhelming stimuli. Staff members will aim to remove distressing stimuli from the environment, where possible, or will support pupils to engage in less harmful stimming methods, e.g. by providing them with something to play with or demonstrating a less harmful stim, such as hand flapping.

10.6 Staff will be aware that restraining a pupil in a way that prevents them from stimming entirely can cause extreme distress and lead to further aggressive behaviour. Self-injurious stimming and tactics to support a pupil to engage in safer stims will be included as part of the pupil's Consistent Approach Plan and risk assessment.

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

11. Post-incident support

11.1 Following an incident of reasonable force, all pupils and staff members involved will be given any necessary first aid to treat injuries as soon as possible, and emotional support will be given.

11.2 Wherever reasonable force is used, staff members and pupils involved in incidents will be given separate opportunities to reflect on what happened. Incidents are followed-up by the Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher in conversation with the member of staff, pupil and parent. Within this conversation the situation will be reviewed, adjustments agreed and support offered (with possible adjustments to the child's Consistent Approach Plan and risk assessment). It may be appropriate for the member of staff to have a break following an incident. Staff are aware of the Employee Support Service and support may be sought from the Behaviour Support Service.

11.3 It will be explained to the pupil involved the reason that such intervention was used, and reassured that the use of the intervention was not a punishment for their behaviour, but rather a method of defusing the situation and preventing them from harming themselves or others. The pupil will be asked about the reasons for their behaviour, including:

- Why their environment was causing such distress for them, e.g. in an instance of sensory overstimulation leading to a meltdown.
- Whether they feel there was anything that could have been done to meet their needs before the situation escalated.
- Whether, and how, staff actions were helpful or unhelpful.

11.4 Staff will be encouraged to reflect on their actions and how they handled the situation, and will be reassured, where appropriate, that they have done nothing wrong and acted in what they perceived to be the best interests of pupils.

11.5 Where a member of staff has used physical restraint a member of Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will check on their wellbeing and supervision will be offered by either a trained member of staff or outside agency.

12. Parents

12.1 Parents will be informed as soon as possible if their child has been physically restrained or handled, on the same day as the incident and before the child returns home. The conversation will be documented on CPoms and the parents will be invited to come and discuss the incident. The Consistent Behaviour Plan will be written (or a new one drawn up) with the parents and signed by them. (Refer to the School's Behaviour Policy).

13. Staff training:

13.1 Whole staff training on the guidance about the use of force is delivered every 2 years. All staff are issued with a copy of the document 'Physical Intervention Guidance' and a copy of this policy. A number of staff across the school are 'Team Teach' qualified and trained in the appropriate de-escalation strategies and physical holds which can be use with children when implementing reasonable force. Termly training in de-escalation is offered by the behaviour lead. The induction process includes training on de-escalation and UPR (Unconditional Positive Regard) to support development of strong staff / pupil relationships.

13.2 TEAM TEACH trained staff:

A list of TEAM TEACH trained staff is displayed in the staffroom and office. A TEAM TEACH trained member of staff should be called for at the earliest signs that a situation may be escalating. This is ideally before the need for the use of force or restraint so that there is the best opportunity to de-escalate the behaviour. The CPD lead will plan a rolling programme of Team Teach training annually.

14. Recording incidents:

14.1 Any incidents requiring physical intervention/ the use of force should be reported to the Headteacher immediately. Such incidents should be recorded in detail on CPoms on the same day. 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, the reasons why specific interventions were employed, and any injuries incurred due to the incident. The behaviour lead will distinguish between planned interventions, i.e. those in line with approved strategies for the behaviour of specific pupils, and unplanned or emergency interventions.

14.2 Records should be retained and analysed by the headteacher, and SENCO where physical intervention was used on a pupil with SEND, on a termly basis to ensure that such interventions are being used appropriately, and to identify patterns of behaviour and responses to that behaviour that may require changes to school practice, e.g. increased staff training or further behavioural or emotional support. Records should also be sent to the governing board annually for evaluation.

14.3 Parents should be notified (by telephone) by a member of SLT the same day (preferably before then end of the day) that reasonable force has been used.

15. Equality statement

15.1 The governors and staff are committed to ensuring that everyone is treated fairly in accordance with the school's values. We are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all individuals, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background, and to overcoming any barriers to that access. We believe all individuals have the right to an environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping, in which to learn and develop.

16. Complaints and Allegations:

16.1 All staff are made aware of the Safer Working Practices Document on their induction, and on the first inset day of each school year thereafter. In the case of any complaints or allegations, the Local Authority's guidance will be followed, as written within the Personnel Handbook. Staff are made aware of this guidance (First inset day each year, staff hand-book, during staff induction). This includes the role of the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and the duty to report any allegations and follow advice. Any concern or complaint made to a member of staff, in respect of physical handling or the use of force, must be reported to the Headteacher on the same day.

16.2 All complaints regarding the use of physical intervention or force will be investigated in a thorough and speedy manner. The person making the complaint is responsible for providing evidence for their allegations, e.g. testimony of events or evidence of injury – it is not for the member of staff to prove that their actions were made reasonably. In extreme circumstances, parents may take civil action or pursue a criminal prosecution. In the case where a member of staff has acted within the law, this will provide a defence to any civil or criminal prosecutions.

16.3 Members of staff accused of using excessive force will not be automatically suspended as a response to the allegations. 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.

16.4 Where a safeguarding allegation is made against a member of staff that involves physical contact, e.g. restraint, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the LADO will take into account that teachers and other school staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour.

17.Safe touch

17.1 The school understands that the following examples are instances of safe touch which may occur between staff and pupils:

- Comforting an upset or distressed pupil
- Congratulating or praising a pupil
- Holding the hand of a pupil to guide them, such as when crossing a road or walking to assembly
- Giving first aid to a pupil
- Demonstrating exercises or techniques during PE lessons
- Administering medicine
- Using musical instruments

17.2 The school understands that certain types of physical contact between staff and pupils are inappropriate, e.g. cuddling, lap-sitting and some instances of holding hands, and that safe touch should never be invasive, humiliating or flirtatious.

17.3 The school designates that the only appropriate places on a pupil's body to touch them are their shoulders, arms and upper back.

17.4 Staff employing touch for reward or comfort will use the 'school hug', rather than an embrace. The school hug is a sideways hug whereby the member of staff places their hands on the pupil's

shoulders. This type of hug prevents the pupil from turning themselves towards the member of staff and thus engaging in a 'front' embrace, which the school deems inappropriate.

17.5 The school recognises that staff will sometimes need to hold a pupil's hand, e.g. to guide them or prevent them from physical harm. The school understands that pupils are not always aware of the boundaries between staff and pupils and thus may try to engage in physical contact, such as lap-sitting or inappropriate hugging. Should a pupil try to engage in any inappropriate physical contact, the member of staff will explain to the pupil why it is unacceptable and encourage them to engage in the school-hug instead.

17.6 If a member of staff attempts to use one of the safe methods of touch and a pupil is unhappy or uncomfortable with this, the member of staff will retract immediately in order to respect the pupil's wishes.

17.7 Appropriate touch involving pupils with SEND will be in line with their EHC plan or IHP.

17.8 Where it is reported that a staff member has engaged, or is suspected to have engaged, in touch that is not appropriate in line with this policy and the Staff Code of Conduct, this will be handled in line with the Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Discipline Policy.

18. Monitoring

18.1 The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and SENCo monitor the implementation of this policy.

18.2 The Governing body ensures the policy is fit for purpose through visits to the school and regular meetings between the named governors for SEND and the Inclusion manager.

18.3 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years when new guidance is issued.

The senior management team will review incidents, risks involved and actions taken at least termly.