



## Positive Handling Policy and Procedures

Date of issue	Next review	Version	Signed: Chair of Governors	Signed: Headteacher
May 2020	May 2021	2		

### Single Equality Statement

This Single Equality Scheme for schools in Mundella Primary School provides a format for addressing the statutory duties of the Equality Act 2010 and The Children and Families Act 2014. This supersedes and brings together all previous statutory duties in relation to race, gender and disability and also addresses the duty to promote community cohesion, thus meeting the school's statutory duties in these areas.

Our Access and Single Equality Scheme is available to view and download on our website.

### Governor Statement

The Governing Body of Mundella Primary School works as a 'whole team', meeting 6 times per year; spread evenly across the year, without any separate committees excepting finance. In addition to these meetings, we have termly Governor Monitoring Visits (GMV); usually lasting around four hours and organised to effectively observe, scrutinise, challenge and support a range of school activities and personnel.

An agenda for each meeting and GMV will include all the tasks which the governing body is required to consider, and the governing body will plan assignments or activities; arising from the business of the meeting or that fall into the annual monitoring schedule, which will be recorded in the minutes and then undertaken as directed.

In addition to 'commissioning' activities or actions on their behalf, the governing body may wish to delegate monitoring activities to 'monitoring pairs' or 'individuals'. This could apply to statutory functions, and/or the priorities of the School Plan. They may also arrange to visit the school, or attend school activities, at any time; at the discretion of the Headteacher, to undertake monitoring activities as and when they are available to do so.

In each case, where a function has been delegated there is a statutory duty to report any action or decision to the governing body at the next meeting.

Mundella Primary School recognises that there are occasions when the use of reasonable force to intervene or restrain pupils is necessary. This policy is intended to raise staff awareness of the possibility of such occasions and assist staff in preparing and planning a response if such action is required.

### **Definitions**

- **Control** means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as guiding a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
- **Restraint** means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- **Reasonable** means using no more force than is required.

When using physical intervention and restraint, professions should have consideration for what is reasonable, proportionate and necessary and in the best interests of the child.

### **Objectives of using reasonable force**

- The key objective in using any form of force or restraint is to maintain the safety of pupils and staff
- Secondly, the use of force or restraint may be used to prevent serious breaches of school discipline.
- Thirdly the use of force or restraint may be used to prevent serious damage to property.

### **Minimising the need to use reasonable force**

All staff should work together to:

- Create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents that might require using force.
- Use Restorative Approaches and Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning approaches to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings.
- De-escalate incidents as they arise.
- Only use force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.

### **Staff authorised to use reasonable force**

Normally, only those staff who have been trained in 'Safe Handling Techniques' will restrain pupils. However, all employees at Mundella Primary School are authorised by the Headteacher to use reasonable force to physically intervene or restrain pupils should the need arise and a fully trained staff member is unavailable. This will be in extreme circumstances where death or dismemberment could arise from lack of intervention.

### **When reasonable force can be used**

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils:

- from hurting themselves or others
- from damaging property
- from causing disorder
- but must always be reasonable, proportionate and necessary.

The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances. The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force may be used.

- To remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- To prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- To prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
- To restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

**Force will never be used as a punishment - this is always unlawful.**

### **Application of force**

Only the minimum force necessary should be used. Listed below are examples of force that may be used but no form of restraint should be used that is likely to injure the pupil (particularly anything that could constrict breathing), other than in extreme emergencies and where there is no viable alternative.

**As far as possible, staff should not use force unless, or until, another responsible adult is present to support, observe and call for assistance.**

The following are examples of 'force' that may be used in exceptional circumstances:

- Physical interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- In more extreme circumstances using restrictive holds ('Positive Handling')

### **Practical Considerations**

Before intervening physically the member of staff will, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if he/she does not.

The member of staff should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish a pupil.

The member of staff should not intervene in an incident without help if he/she believes that there is the risk of personal injury. The age and level of understanding of the pupil and the severity of the incident are important factors to consider. Staff must always bear in mind their legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with SEN, as described in more detail in the Behaviour Policy.

## **Recording Incidents**

All incidents which necessitate the use of force to control pupils must be recorded by the staff member/s involved as soon as possible and the SMT must always be given a copy. Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a senior colleague or a representative when compiling a report.

**Parents will always be informed of such incidents;** preferably on the same day.

## **Post-incident support**

Serious incidents that require the use of force can be upsetting for all concerned and may result in injuries to the pupil or staff. Immediate action will be taken to ensure first aid or medical support is administered. It is also important that staff and pupils are given emotional support. This includes children who may have witnessed the incident. Class teachers will use their professional judgement in deciding how to respond, eg through Circle Time or individual support.

The parents of the pupil involved will be included in discussions about further actions and support. An Individual Behaviour Plan will be set up if the child does not already have one. The plan will include strategies to prevent and deal with the recurrence of incidents requiring the use of force.

The Headteacher will decide in consultation with the Pupil Support Service, SENCO and senior teachers whether multi-agency partners need to be involved, eg CAMHS or Children's Services.

The pupil will be required to recognise and repair the damage caused, whether emotional or physical, including to relationships with staff and pupils affected by the incident, and to develop their social and emotional skills. Restorative approaches will be used to support all pupils. In some cases the decision may be taken to exclude the pupil.

## **Support and Training**

Staff will be kept informed about pupils who may be at risk to themselves or others through the SEN records, Pupil Support Service and through discussion with relevant staff members. Those children seen as presenting particular risk will have individual programmes drawn up which will include targets and strategies. They may include input from external services together with further suggested strategies.

Parents will be kept informed of the pupil's needs and how we are trying to support the pupil. A Pastoral Support Programme may also have been drawn up, especially if the pupil is in danger of exclusion.

## **Dealing with complaints and allegations**

We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with children. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in Part 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (September 2016) are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO can be contacted on \*\*\*.

Other complaints will be dealt with under the school's Complaints Procedure.

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. The school Safeguarding Policy outlines circumstances when it is deemed proper and necessary to have physical contact with children e.g., during PE lessons, giving First Aid, dealing with young distressed children and children with Special Educational Needs.

**Teachers will use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support.**