



Positive Handling Policy

Date: May 2026

Review Date: May 2027

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This policy has been written with reference to the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 93A) and the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) Regulations 2025.

What is Positive Handling?

Positive Handling can be known as physical intervention and is the positive application of force for the purpose of overcoming a child's resistance. At Haylands Primary School we use the MAYBO technique.

MAYBO is a company at the forefront of positive handling and risk reduction training. Wherever there is a potential for behaviour of concern, MAYBO seeks to reduce the risk and promote positive and safer concerns.

When is Positive Handling used?

Positive Handling will only be used under the following circumstances:

- When preventing physical harm or threatened harm to self and others
- Preventing a child from running away or escaping
- Preventing damage to property
- Removing a child from the classroom if causing disruption and distress to other children

Positive Handling is used as a last resort after all other steps have been exhausted, using strategies laid out in the school's behaviour policy and through the use of the MAYBO's techniques as identified in the modules "Positive Approaches to Behaviour" and "De-escalation Skills".

Types of Positive Handling used

There are two types of Positive Handling.

Non-Restrictive Handling

Non-restrictive handling is concerned with assisting a child to walk away from a situation with the use of guiding. There are three levels of guiding - Shepherding, Cradle Guide and Hook and Cradle Guide.

Restrictive Handling

Restrictive handling is the use of physical contact to remove or control a child's behaviour if there is a real risk of harm to themselves, peers, adults or property.

Training

The school has one member of staff trained as a MAYBO instructor – Katrina Shaer (Positive Approaches to Behaviour, De-escalation Skills, Personal Safety and Guiding, Safer Holding)

Training to all staff in school will be completed at a level appropriate for the staff's role. Additional training may occur mid-year if the need arises. Termly updates and refreshers will ensure all staff maintain their working knowledge of the de-escalation skills.

Statutory Recording Requirements

Legal Duty and Timescales

In accordance with section 93A of the *Education and Inspections Act 2006* and the *Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025*, the governing body ensures that a strict procedure is in place to record each significant incident where a member of staff uses force, restraint, or seclusion on a pupil.

- **Timeline:** All incidents must be recorded in writing as soon as practicable after the event. The staff member(s) involved must complete the record, making every endeavour to do so **no later than the same day** as the incident.
- **Consent Limitations:** The legal requirement to record an incident applies universally. A formal record must be completed even if the use of restrictive interventions or seclusion was previously agreed upon with parents/carers as part of the pupil's individual Behaviour Support Plan.

Mandatory Minimum Data Fields

When logging an incident on CPOMS and EDUKEY, the online form—completed in collaboration with a MAYBO trainer—must fully detail and capture the following minimum statutory information:

- **Identities:** The names of the pupil(s) and staff members directly involved or witnessing the incident.
- **Pupil Needs:** Any relevant vulnerabilities, medical conditions, or circumstances of the pupil, explicitly including whether the pupil has an identified special educational need or disability, alongside their official **SEN status code**.
- **Logistical Details:** The exact date, time, specific location, and the **approximate duration** of the physical intervention or seclusion.
- **Pre-Incident Context:** A brief, factual account of the incident, detailing what happened immediately prior, any identified or potential behavioural triggers, and the specific preventative or de-escalation strategies utilized before physical contact was made.
- **Justification:** A brief account clearly outlining why the use of force or seclusion was assessed as strictly necessary and proportionate in that specific instance (e.g., to prevent physical harm, property damage, or serious disorder).
- **Intervention Details:** The exact type of reasonable force or restraint applied, the **degree of force** used, and a precise record of how the pupil responded.
- **Post-Incident Support and Injuries:** Details of any physical injuries sustained by pupils or staff, any immediate medical assessments or treatments administered, and a summary of post-incident well-being support provided.

Evaluative Data Capture

To aid continuous improvement, the school will also record additional qualitative data where possible. This includes separate accounts of the incident from the pupil and any witnesses, details

of exactly when and how parents were notified, and the outcomes of the follow-up debriefing processes.

The governing body and senior leadership team will regularly review and interrogate this aggregated data to identify repeat patterns, evaluate the effectiveness of school-wide behaviour policies, and pinpoint targeted training requirements for staff.

Reasonable Force

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.

This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Head Teacher has temporarily put in charge of children such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying children on a school organised visit.

When can reasonable force be used?

Reasonable force can be used to prevent children from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

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. When reasonable force should be used is covered in the MAYBO training sessions.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- To prevent a child from committing a violent or aggressive act
- To prevent a child from causing injury to themselves
- To prevent a child from causing injury to peers
- To prevent a child from causing injury to adults
- To prevent a child from causing damage to property
- To prevent a child from causing serious disruption
- To prevent a child from running away

Use of Reasonable Force to Search Pupils

The Headteacher and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item (in accordance with the *Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools* guidance). A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for **legally prohibited items** (e.g., weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs), but force **must never** be used to search for items banned under the school rules only.

Unacceptable Uses of Force

It is strictly illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment. Pupils must never be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing, or circulation (for example, by covering the mouth/nose or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen). Ground restraints carry a high risk of physical and psychological harm and must be avoided. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff must release their holds or re-position the pupil into a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible.

Seclusion

Definition of Seclusion

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary safety intervention. It involves keeping a pupil confined alone to a place away from others and preventing them from leaving. This prevention may be achieved through physical obstruction, blocking the exit, or making the pupil believe they will face disciplinary action or punishment if they attempt to leave.

Lawful and Appropriate Use

At Haylands Primary School, seclusion is **never** used as a disciplinary response, a sanction, or a punishment for deliberate or wilful misbehaviour.

Seclusion will only ever be implemented as an emergency safety measure to protect others from immediate harm when a pupil is experiencing extreme levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. In these circumstances, it is recognized that the pupil is experiencing a crisis and is not acting with malicious intent.

When temporary seclusion is deemed strictly necessary, the following safeguards **must** be observed:

- **Environment:** The room or space to which the pupil is confined must be safe, clean, well-ventilated, and must not feel threatening, intimidating, or punitive to the pupil.
- **Constant Supervision:** The pupil must be visually supervised by a member of staff at all times throughout the entire period of seclusion.
- **Duration:** Seclusion must be used for the shortest time possible. As soon as the immediate risk of physical harm has reduced and the pupil has de-escalated, they must be allowed to leave.

Recording and Reporting Duties

Every single incident involving the use of seclusion is subject to strict statutory recording and reporting protocols under the *Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025*.

- **Internal Recording:** The staff member(s) involved must record the incident in writing as soon as practicable, making every endeavour to log it on CPOMS/EDUKEY no later than the

same day. The record must detail the names of those involved, the exact time, location, duration, underlying triggers, alternative strategies attempted, and the pupil's SEN status code if applicable. This log must be completed even if seclusion was previously discussed with parents as part of a Behaviour Support Plan.

- **Reporting to Parents:** The school must provide information about the seclusion incident to the parents/carers in writing (via email or our online messaging system). This communication should be sent as soon as practicable and no later than the same day. Exceptions only apply if the pupil is over 20 or if reporting to a specific parent is highly likely to result in serious harm to the pupil.
- **Post-Incident Review:** Following an incident of seclusion, best practice dictates inviting parents to a follow-up discussion to evaluate behavioural triggers, review the effectiveness of de-escalation strategies, and amend or establish a Behaviour Support Plan as needed.

Reporting to Parents and Carers

Statutory Duty to Inform

Haylands Primary School recognizes its statutory obligation to inform parents and carers whenever a significant incident involving the use of reasonable force, restrictive intervention, or seclusion has occurred. Keeping families informed is crucial for maintaining transparency, supporting the pupil's well-being, and strengthening the home-school partnership.

Timescales and Methods of Communication

- **Same-Day Notification:** The school will ensure that parents/carers are notified of the incident as soon as is reasonably practicable, and **no later than the same day** the intervention took place.
- **Initial Contact:** Initial contact will typically be made via a phone call from the Duty Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure immediate personal communication.
- **Written Confirmation:** In addition to verbal contact, a formal summary of the incident must be shared with the parents/carers **in writing** (via email or the school's secure online messaging system) as soon as practicable. This written record provides a clear, transparent reference point for families.

Content of the Report

When reporting the incident to parents/carers, the school will sensitively but clearly communicate:

- The circumstances leading up to the intervention and the de-escalation strategies attempted.
- The justification for using physical force or seclusion (i.e., the immediate risk that was being managed).
- The specific nature and approximate duration of the intervention.

- The physical and emotional well-being of the pupil following the incident, including details of any injuries sustained or medical attention given.
- The immediate support provided to the pupil to help them regulate and recover.
- Any physical injuries sustained and medical attention given.

Exceptions to Reporting

In accordance with DfE guidance, an incident will be reported to parents/carers in all circumstances unless doing so would satisfy one of the following legal exceptions:

1. It is assessed that reporting the incident to a specific parent/carer is highly likely to result in serious harm to the pupil.
2. The pupil is aged 20 or older.

If an exception is made, the decision must be formally recorded on CPOMS alongside a clear rationale, and alternative safeguarding or local authority procedures must be initiated where appropriate.

Collaborative Follow-Up and Review

Reporting an incident is not viewed as a singular event. Following any significant incident, the school will actively invite parents/carers to a collaborative follow-up discussion.

The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Review the incident together transparently and listen to the pupil's and family's perspectives.
- Identify underlying behavioural or environmental triggers (such as sensory overstimulation).
- Co-produce, update, or refine the pupil's individual **Behaviour Support Plan** to improve preventative strategies and minimize the future need for restrictive interventions.

Post-Incident Support and Debriefing

Commitment to Well-Being and Recovery

Haylands Primary School recognizes that the use of restrictive interventions or seclusion can be highly distressing for everyone involved. The school is committed to providing immediate and ongoing emotional and physical support to both pupils and staff following any significant incident. The core purpose of our post-incident procedure is to ensure safety, promote emotional recovery, repair relationships, and learn from the event to prevent future occurrences.

Immediate Post-Incident Care

Immediately following an incident, the following actions must be taken:

- **Medical Assessment:** Both the pupil and the staff members involved must be checked immediately for any signs of physical injury or distress. First aid must be administered if necessary, and a formal medical evaluation sought if there are any concerns.
- **Emotional Regulation:** The pupil must be given a safe, quiet space to calm down and regain emotional regulation, supported by a trusted adult who can offer reassurance. Staff

involved must also be given time to de-escalate and be temporarily relieved from their duties if necessary.

The Debriefing Process (Staff and Pupils)

A formal debriefing process must occur as soon as practicable after the incident, ideally within 24 to 48 hours, once all parties are calm and capable of reflection.

- **Independent Facilitation:** In line with Department for Education best practice guidance, the debrief should, wherever possible, be **facilitated by a member of staff who was not directly involved in the incident** (e.g., a member of the Senior Leadership Team or an independent DSL). This ensures an objective, impartial, and supportive environment for everyone.
- **The Pupil Debrief (Restorative Conversation):** A supportive, non-punitive conversation will be held with the pupil. The aim is to:
 - Listen to the pupil's perspective and understand their feelings.
 - Identify what triggered the crisis (e.g., environmental factors, communication breakdowns, or sensory overload).
 - Explore alternative, safer choices or de-escalation strategies the pupil could use in the future.
 - Work constructively to rebuild and repair the relationship between the pupil and the staff involved.
- **The Staff Debrief:** The staff members involved will participate in a separate reflective debrief to:
 - Discuss the emotional impact of the incident and identify if further professional support or counseling (such as Occupational Health) is required.
 - Reflect on the effectiveness of the de-escalation strategies used.
 - Review whether the MAYBO techniques applied were necessary, proportionate, and safe.

The school will identify and provide appropriate well-being support to any peer or pupil who witnessed the incident and may have become distressed as a result.

Learning and Policy Review

The insights gained from pupil and staff debriefs must be used dynamically to update the pupil's individual **Behaviour Support Plan** and risk assessments. If a particular trigger or successful de-escalation method is identified during the debrief, it must be documented immediately to guide future practice.

Any systemic trends or training needs identified during these debriefs will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and shared anonymously with the governing body to inform future staff training and ensure continuous improvement in school-wide behaviour management.