

# Positive Handling and Searching and Screening Policy

Amended: September 2023

Approved by Governors: December 2023

Review date: September 2024

This section refers to the positive handling/ restraint policy, which closely follows the **Essex Local Authority guidance on the use of physical intervention, including other physical contact 2018** for all Education establishments and should be read in conjunction with all other policies and not as a standalone. ***“In the context of challenging behaviour, physical intervention with pupils is the positive use of “reasonable” force (no more than is needed) in order to avert danger by preventing or deflecting a pupils’ action, or by removing the physical object which could be used to harm themselves or others. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. Control means either passive physical contact (standing between pupils) or restraint (physically holding in order to bring pupil under control.)”***

It will only be in very rare circumstances that positive handling will ever be necessary, for example if a pupil is likely to serious harm themselves or likely to seriously harm another pupil.

**The Education Act 1996** forbids corporal punishment, but allows all teachers to use reasonable force in order to prevent a pupil from:

- Harming him/herself or others
- Seriously damaging property
- Committing a criminal offence
- Acting in a way that is counter to maintaining good order and discipline at the school

**Injury** (or harm to self or others) as actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of or injury to self or others by wilful or reckless behaviour and self-poisoning.

### **Designated Staff and Procedure**

The legal framework states that **any member** of the teaching staff can use positive handling to restrain pupils, when the situation warrants such an action.

### **Positive Handling**

The school recognises that this may be necessary. However, where possible, **designated** members of staff should be called upon in the event of an incident, as soon as possible.

The **‘Designated Staff’** list will be reviewed at the beginning of each academic year, with staff being given the opportunity to remove themselves from the list if they so wish. This list and copies of certificated training is to be held contractually with HR Department.

### **Procedure**

Where positive handling may be required the reception or office manager should be alerted immediately.

The personnel should notify the SLT team and request at least two designated members of staff to attend the incident.

Where designated members of staff are teaching, other SLT members should provide supervision of classes.

Whenever possible positive handling should only occur when witnesses are present. Once a pupil is positively handled they should be taken to a quiet room so the pupil can be calmed.

Staff accompanying the pupil must have a walkie-talkie or another means of communication. Two designated members of staff must remain with the pupil at all times, until the pupil’s parents/carers have been contacted.

### **Principles Relating to the Use of Positive Handling**

Positive Handling must only be used as a last resort when other strategies have failed. It must serve to defuse or prevent a violent, or potentially violent, situation. It must not be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate risk to people or property.

At Woodlands School, staff should have good grounds for believing that immediate action (Positive Handling) is necessary in order to prevent a pupil from injuring him/herself or others, or causing serious damage to property.

Where possible staff should take steps in advance to avoid the need for positive handling, for example, through dialogue and diversion. The pupil should be warned orally that positive handling will be used unless s/he desists.

Positive handling must not be used in anger. When it becomes apparent that the pupil is not responding to verbal instructions and a violent incident is imminent, the member of staff, wherever possible, should call for assistance before engaging in positive handling.

Where possible designated female staff should be summoned as assistance in the instance of female pupils requiring restraint, and male staff should be summoned as assistance in the instance of male pupils requiring restraint. Calling for support and assistance provides support and witnesses. When it becomes necessary to positively handle a pupil, the member of staff must, if possible, continue to talk to the pupil in a calm manner, offering choices and time for the pupil to become calm.

The age and competence of the pupil must be taken into account in deciding what degree of intervention is necessary.

Only the minimum force necessary, to prevent physical injury or damage, should be applied. Particular care must be taken to avoid inflicting any unnecessary pain or injury.

Positive handling must not involve deliberately painful or dangerous procedures. It must:

- Never interfere with breathing, blood supply or genital areas;
- Whenever possible avoid holding the head, throat or fingers.
- Be discontinued as soon as the situation is deemed safe.
- As soon as it is safe, restraint must be gradually relaxed as the pupil regains self-control.

A pupil must never be asked to restrain another pupil.

### **Operational/Procedural Points Relating to the Use of Positive Handling.**

The circumstances and reason for using positive handling must be recorded immediately, or as soon as possible, but ideally no later than the next working day.

Positive handling incident form that is attached to this policy must be completed and given to Deputy Head Pastoral.

The member of staff must inform the Head Teacher or Teacher-in-charge as soon as possible of the incident.

The pupil's views by completion of the Pupil View proforma (pg7) should also be recorded as soon as possible, preferably on the same day.

The Headteacher will discuss the incident with the teacher within 24 hours.

Where possible CCTV must be collated and shared with the Head Teacher

Counselling may be needed for staff who, following the incident, are distressed. (For example, counselling services are offered who can be contacted via the Education Personnel Department). Following the incident, the pupil should be counselled on the reasons why it was necessary to restrain him/her.

Pupils will be interviewed about the reasons that led to the incident and the circumstances that followed. The interviewer must be a senior member of staff who was not directly involved in the incident.

At Woodlands School our staff will always try to consider any wider audience. Some of our students may have difficulty processing the use of positive handling and therefore, should have the opportunity to talk to a senior member of staff as to why the situation required positive handling, particularly if this pupil has witnessed domestic violence within the home. In these circumstances if further concerns present then these should be recorded by safeguarding team and parents/carers informed.

All of our staff will be provided with opportunities to discuss incidents involving positive handling and their subsequent feelings. Where it is clear that the teachers may need further advice or training, the Headteacher will always take prompt action to see that this support is provided.

Our parents/carers will always be promptly informed when positive handling has been used and will be welcomed in the opportunity to discuss the matter with our Senior Leaders at Woodlands School.

**POSITIVE HANDLING  
INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

Fill in this form immediately after the occurrence of any incident.  
Forward this report to Mr. S Amran, Deputy Head Teacher or Mr. D Wright, Head Teacher.

**1. BASIC INFORMATION**

Name of school: **Woodlands School**

Name of pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. EVENTS LEADING TO THIS INCIDENT**

Where did the incident occur? \_\_\_\_\_

When did the incident occur? Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

How did the incident begin? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT**

What was happening at the time?

Was anyone else involved? (If yes, who?) \_\_\_\_\_

Did anyone else see what happened? (Give details)

What behaviour was the pupil presenting that warranted restraint?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Was there damage to property or an assault on a pupil or staff during the incident? **YES/NO** (If yes, give details) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What did you do to try to defuse the situation before using restraint?

\_\_\_\_\_

How was the pupil restrained? (Describe – e.g. two people escort, one person wrap)

\_\_\_\_\_

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_ By how many staff? \_\_\_\_\_

Were they authorised? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. INJURIES SUSTAINED

Was anyone injured? **YES/NO** (If yes, give details) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Was this recorded in the accident book? **YES/NO**

Was the pupil checked for injuries by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident?  
**YES/NO** (If yes, by whom?) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING

What do you think this behaviour was about? (e.g. attention, emotional release, task escape mechanism, other)

#### 6. FOLLOW UP ACTION

The incident was reported by: \_\_\_\_\_ (designation)

Parent/Carer was informed by? Check box

Telephone & letter (with pupil) ☐ Letter (post) ☐ Personally ☐

When were they informed? Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Incident form completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Held: \_\_\_\_\_

## POSITIVE HANDLING

### PUPIL VIEW FORM

Fill in this form at an appropriate time after the incident.

Give the completed form to:

Mr. D Wright, Head Teacher

☐

Mr. S Amran, Deputy Head Teacher

☐

Mr D Riste, Assistant Headteacher

☐

## 2. BASIC INFORMATION

Name of school: **Woodlands School**

Your Name:

Year Group:

## 2. EVENTS LEADING TO THIS INCIDENT

Where did the incident occur?

When did the incident occur?

Date		Time	
How did the incident begin?			

## 3. DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT

What was happening at the time?

What did the member/s of staff do?

Why do you think members of staff felt the need to use some physical restraint?

(Tell you stop or talk to you)

Yes	No
-----	----

How were you restrained? (for example; two teachers holding my arms)

--

Was anyone injured? **YES/NO** (if Yes, who was injured and describe the injuries below who )

--

Was the reason for the use of physical restraint explained to you after the incident?

Yes	No
-----	----

**4. Do you have any further comments you would like to add?**

--

Pupil View form completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Group \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_



## Searching, Screening and Confiscation

This section refers to the **Search, Screening and Confiscation in Schools guidance (DFE 2022)** which closely follows the statutory guidance **Working together to safeguard children**. Keeping children safe in education makes clear that all school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn ensuring school staff and pupils feel safe and secure is vital to establishing calm and supportive environments conducive to learning.

Using searching, screening and confiscation powers appropriately is an important way to ensure pupil and staff welfare is protected and helps schools establish an environment where everyone is safe. This advice is intended to explain screening, searching and confiscation powers so that headteachers and other staff have the confidence to use them if necessary. Schools and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children.

Keeping children safe in education makes clear that all school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn.

Through the school's ethos of respect, it is usual for pupils to volunteer any items deemed illegal or dangerous if reported to staff. In rare occasions it may be necessary to conduct a search with consent.

School staff, (Member of school staff means any teacher who works at the school and any other person who, with the authority of the head teacher, has lawful control or charge of pupils for whom education is being provided at the school) can search pupils **with their consent** for any item.

### Searching Without Consent

The law outlines what can be searched for:

#### Prohibited Items

The following list of items (whilst not exhaustive) are banned from being brought into school. The school does not need parental or student consent to search a student if they think a student has prohibited items:

- Weapons, for example, knives or blades
- Tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco for example, cigarettes including E-cigarettes/vapes/nicotine based Snuz/SNOOSS and any other associated smoking equipment.
- Lighters and matches.
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Legal High or stimulant substances (caffeine based Snuz/SNOOSS)
- Paint thinners or other solvents
- Stolen goods
- Pornographic images (of any kind, including images on phones or tablets)
- Fireworks
- Anything that has been, or is likely to be, used to cause injury or commit an offence.
- **Anything else which the Headteacher deems inappropriate or dangerous**

At Woodlands School it is expected that a staff conducting a search:

- a) Would be the same sex as the pupil being searched; and there must be a witness (also a staff member) and, if possible, they should be the same sex as the pupil being searched.
- b) There is a limited exception to this rule. You can carry out a search of a pupil of the opposite sex to you and without a witness present, but **only** where you reasonably

believe that there is a risk that **serious harm** will be caused to a person if you do not conduct the search immediately and where it is **not reasonably practicable** to summon another member of staff.

- c) Our staff conducting a search or screening process may use an electronic handheld metal detector device to assist them (**WAND**)

#### **Extent of any search clothes, possessions, and lockers.**

- **‘Outer clothing’** means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear, but ‘outer clothing’ includes hats; shoes; boots; gloves and scarves.
- **‘Possessions’** means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control – this includes desks, lockers, and bags.
- A pupil’s possessions can only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that **serious harm** will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is **not reasonably practicable** to summon another member of staff.
- Where they find **stolen items**, these must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable – but may be returned to the owner (or may be retained or disposed of if returning them to their owner is not practicable) if the person thinks that there is a good reason to do so.
- Where a member of staff finds **tobacco or cigarette papers** they may retain or dispose of them. As with alcohol, this means that schools can dispose of tobacco or cigarette papers as they think appropriate, but this should not include returning them to the pupil.
- Fireworks found as a result of a search may be retained or disposed of but should **not** be returned to the pupil.
- If a member of staff finds an adult pornography image, on paper or on an electronic device, they may dispose of/delete the image. If pornography is found that constitutes a specified offence (i.e., it is extreme pornography and/or an indecent image of a child) it must be seized, and the police contacted as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- Where an article that has been (or could be) used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury or damage to property is found it may be delivered to the police or returned to the owner. It may also be retained or disposed of.
- Where a member of staff finds an item which is banned under the school rules, they should consider all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to decide whether to return it to its owner, retain it or dispose of it.
- Any weapons or items which are evidence of an offence must be passed to the police as soon as possible.

#### **Use of Handheld Metal Detector Device (Wand)**

##### **Handheld Metal Detector Scanning Technique**

When using the handheld metal detector, it’s important to understand that it is a motion detector, which means that they will not raise an alarm if held stationary.

**The operator must be moving the scanner over the metal object for it to be detected.**

It is important to remember that screening people using a handheld metal detector requires **no body contact**.

The operator doesn’t need to touch the subject in any way as the metal detector is passed over the outside of a student’s clothing, close to their body, but not touching them.

##### **People Scanning Guidelines**

Here are some guidelines for those responsible for scanning students using the handheld metal detector.

1. Be always courteous and polite.
2. Carry out the scan in a location that allows discretion. (Office or unoccupied room)
3. It is considered good practice that **the adult performing the scan be of the same gender as the being student scanned** and with **another adult present during this process**.
4. Always make certain a student is aware that they are being scanned.
5. Make certain that the student is standing in an area where you can approach them from all sides.
6. Scan the student's front, focusing on the torso and legs. Pay thorough attention to pockets and the belt line.
7. Scan the student's back, from the back of the head down to the heel of the one leg and then in reverse up the other leg, back up to the head, including the arms.
8. **Never attempt to scan between the legs.**
9. **Never place the metal detector in front of a student's face.**
10. Always inspect any metal objects which may have triggered an alarm (such as belt buckles).
11. If you get an alarm from a student's pocket, **ask them to empty the contents of their pocket into a tray and then rescan the pocket.**
12. Remember that there is no need to come into contact with the student's body. Simply move the scanner slowly over the surface of their clothing, close to them but not touching

### **Electronic devices**

Where the member of staff conducting the search finds **an electronic device** they may examine any data or files on the device if they think there is a good reason to do so. Following an examination, the member of staff may decide to return the device to the owner, or to retain or dispose of it, they may also choose to erase any data or files, if they think there is a good reason to do so.


***In determining a 'good reason' to examine or erase the data or files the staff member must reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules.***

### **Record keeping**

After a member of staff has conducted a search there is a statutory requirement for schools to record the details of search centrally. The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or Deputy DSL should be notified immediately no matter if prohibited articles are found or not

### **Informing parents and dealing with complaints**

- 1) Schools are not required to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child.
- 2) There is a **statutory requirement to make or keep a record of a search (DFE 2022)**. At Woodlands School **the central database must be updated promptly by staff** no matter if prohibited articles are found or not
- 3) Schools should inform the individual pupil's parents or guardians where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found, though there is no legal requirement to do so.
- 4) Complaints about screening or searching should be dealt with through the normal school complaints procedure.

Signed:   
Head Teacher

Dated: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Signed:   
Chair of Governors

Dated: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023