

POSITIVE HANDLING (RESTRAINING) POLICY

**COVERING BOTH SCHOOLS
INCLUDING EYFS AND BOARDING**

Committee normally reviewing:	Senior Leadership Team
Date last formally approved by the Committee:	Summer Term 2024
Date policy became effective:	Summer Term 2021

Period of Review:	Three Years
Next Review Date :	Summer Term 2027

Person responsible for implementation and monitoring :	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Other relevant policies :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy • Staff Behaviour Policy • Anti-Bullying Policy • Medical Policy • Crisis Management Policy • Health and Safety Policy

The following Policy encompasses the Aims and Ethos of the Preparatory School and the Senior School

Aims and Ethos

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Felsted is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils and a 'culture of vigilance' to safeguard and protect all in its care, and to all aspects of its 'Safeguarding (Child Protection and Staff Behaviour) Policy'.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

The aims of the School and the principles of excellent pastoral care will be applied to all children irrespective of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity; equally these characteristics will be recognised and respected, and the School will aim to provide a positive culture of tolerance, equality and mutual respect.

POSITIVE HANDLING (RESTRAINING) POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out to support all the Aims of the School by taking its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the pupils in its care very seriously.

This document seeks to clarify the circumstances in which teachers and other staff may use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. The legislation states that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing any of the following:

- a) committing a criminal offence
- b) injuring themselves or others
- c) causing damage to property
- d) engaging in behaviour that is prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or amongst any of its pupils.

2. CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is prohibited.

3. “REASONABLE FORCE”

There is no legal definition of ‘**reasonable force**’; it depends on the circumstances of the case. The degree of force used must be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour it is intended to prevent. It must also be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result and will be dependent on the age and sex of the child.

4. THE USE OF “REASONABLE FORCE”

The following are examples of situations in which the use of reasonable force might be appropriate:

- when a teacher is obliged to act in self defence
- when pupils are fighting
- when a pupil is likely to cause harm to him/herself or another
- when a pupil is causing or is likely to cause deliberate damage or vandalism that is or is likely to cause them or others harm
- when a pupil persistently fails to follow an instruction that is likely to lead to them or others being unsafe

When there is an immediate risk of injury or of serious damage to property, the staff member may have to intervene physically immediately. However, in a non-urgent situation, force should only be used as a last resort, when all other strategies have failed. Force should never be used out of anger or frustration, or in order to punish a pupil.

Staff should not intervene if they think that by doing so they will be at risk of injury. In these circumstances, they should remove other pupils from danger and summon assistance from colleagues (or, ultimately, from the police).

The application of force can legitimately involve physical intervention between pupils or blocking a pupil’s path. It may involve touching, holding, pulling, leading a pupil by the arm or herding a pupil away by placing a hand in the middle of the back.

It must not, save in the most exceptional cases and where there is no alternative, involve treatment that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

Any restraint that might be considered indecent should always be avoided.

5. REPORTING

- a) Any **incident** must be reported **immediately** (and at least within 24 hours of occurrence) to the Head or Senior or Prep School Deputy Head
- b) A detailed written report must be composed straightaway. It should include:
 - i) the names of those involved
 - ii) the names of witnesses
 - iii) the reason for force being necessary
 - iv) how the incident began and developed
 - v) the degree and duration of force applied
 - vi) the pupil's response
 - vii) the outcome of the incident
 - viii) details of injuries sustained by those involved
- c) The teacher should keep a copy of the report.
- d) A copy of the report and details of further action will be held by the Senior or Prep School Deputy Head.

In all cases the parents/guardians of all those involved should be informed. It is possible that a complaint about the use of force might lead to an investigation by police and social services.

It may also be advisable that the Head should inform the Chair of Governors.

6. A PROFESSIONAL APPROACH IN OTHER SITUATIONS WHICH MIGHT INVOLVE PHYSICAL CONTACT

It is accepted that some **physical contact** may be necessary to demonstrate exercises or techniques in the course of some lessons or extra-curricular activities. In this case, the permission of the pupil should be sought first. The same is true if first aid has to be administered, or if a pupil is distressed and needs comforting. However, a professional stance should always be taken and physical contact should be kept to a minimum and be of an appropriate degree (ie a comforting pat on the shoulder). In this case the member of staff should always seek to ensure that this does not take place if they are not visible to anybody else.

It should be mentioned that pupils from some minority groups may be particularly **sensitive to physical contact** by members of staff, and where this is the case, staff should take all options to avoid physical contact where possible.