

**Positive Handling Policy**

# Original - July 2023

# Updated - September 2024

**Reviewed Annually**

This statement is to be read with regard to:

Education and Inspections Act 2006 DfE Use of Reasonable Force 2013 BFS’ Behaviour Policy

BFS’ Safeguarding Policy

‘Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and young people in education settings’ (February 2022)

# Introduction

At Tree of Life Educational and Holistic Services CIC we have a well-established culture of nurturing our pupils and treating each other (whether pupils or staff) with respect. We have a behaviour and support policy which is followed by all members of staff when pupils need support with any challenges they experience. If used at all, the use of ‘reasonable force’ to support pupils will be used in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the child.

# Definition of positive handling

Positive handling uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to ensure minimal risk of injury to children and staff. The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual who needs support and the nature of the harm they might cause to themselves or others. Positive handling describes a broad spectrum of risk reduction strategies involving policy, guidance, management of the environment and deployment of staff. It also involves personal behaviour management, diversion, diffusion and de-escalation techniques. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our provision respond positively to the limit- setting practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff at Tree of Life Educational and Holistic Services CIC. Everyone attending or working at Tree of Life Educational and Holistic Services has a right to:

* Be treated with respect and dignity
* Learn and work in a safe environment
* Be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse

• Recognition of their unique identity

It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where use of reasonable, proportionate and necessary force may be required. This is a small part of our whole setting approach to supporting our pupils. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following;

* self-injuring
* causing injury to others
* causing deliberate damage to property
* leaving the premises, where this would entail serious risks to the pupil/s and their safety

# Use of positive handling

At Tree of Life Educational and Holistic Services we believe any kind of handling of a pupil should always be a last resort. As a general rule nobody has the right to touch, move, hold or contain another person. However, people with a duty of care operate in exceptional circumstances where it is sometimes necessary to act outside the norm. Before using positive handling, staff should engage the pupil in a calm and measured tone, making their framework (expectations and boundaries) clear and giving the pupil as many options as possible to stay within the adult’s boundaries. The use of positive handling must always be proportionate to the level of risk and should always be reduced at the earliest possible time. Staff are expected to follow any agreements made as a team in relation to managing individual pupils’ distressed/challenging behaviour such as those agreed and including in the minutes in daily team briefings or at staff meetings. The pupil must always be offered an alternative place or activity or if possible a change of staff, as a place to regulate. Only after trying all the above options should staff even consider using positive handling. The overriding consideration should still be the reasonableness and proportionality used. Staff will report any use of positive handling to the pupils parent/career as well as recording such details on the provisions logging system. (CPOMS)