

**Emneth Nursery School**  
and Day-Care Provision



**Behaviour and the use of Force to**  
**Control or Restrain Children**

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## **Objectives**

At Emneth Nursery School, we are committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment where all children feel valued, respected, and supported. Central to this commitment is our therapeutic and supportive approach to managing children's behaviour, using the Norfolk Steps approach. This approach promotes safety, wellbeing and inclusion for all children, with a particular emphasis on understanding the underlying causes of behaviour and responding with calm, consistent, and supportive strategies.

The Norfolk Steps approach focuses on creating supporting environments that reduce anxiety, promote positive behaviour, and help children develop self-regulation skills, empathy, and positive social and emotional behaviours. We view behaviour as a form of communication, and all responses are tailored to the individual needs of each child, including those with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

## **Key Principles of Norfolk Steps**

### **1. Proactive Strategies**

We create environments, routines, and interactions that reduce anxiety and promote positive behaviour. Staff are trained to recognise early signs of stress or discomfort in children, using these insights to intervene early and prevent escalation.

### **2. Clear Expectations**

We maintain consistency in staff responses using shared language and predictable boundaries, ensuring children feel secure and safe.

### **3. De-escalation**

We use strategies to help children manage their emotions and reduce stress without confrontation. This is achieved through calm responses, maintaining dignity, and restoring calm where necessary.

### **4. Restorative practice**

Following incidents of challenging behaviour, children are encouraged to reflect on their actions. This process helps rebuild relationships, repair harm, and teach alternative strategies for the future.

### **5. Inclusion**

We aim to maintain the child's place within the learning community, understanding that behaviour is a form of communication. Support is tailored to the needs of each child, including those with SEND.

## **Bullying and Discrimination**

Bullying will not be tolerated at Emneth Nursery School. We take a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in any form, including:

- Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia
- Bullying based on learning abilities, sensory or physical impairments, social class, faith or non-faith, lifestyle, or other factors

Any reports of bullying by children or adults will be taken seriously, investigated, and acted upon as necessary.

## Use of Force

The use of force is considered a last resort. The objective of any use of force is:

- To maintain the safety of children and staff
- To prevent serious breaches of Nursery discipline
- To prevent serious damage of property

Force will only be used where there is no alternative, and the risk associated with not intervening outweighs the risks of using force. The use of force will be proportionate, reasonable, and appropriate to the situation.

Under the Education and Inspections Act (2006) and the Violent Crime Reduction Act (2006), staff at Emneth Nursery have the legal power to use reasonable force in certain situations, including but not limited to:

- Preventing harm to others (e.g. stopping a child from attacking another child or staff member)
- Preventing significant damage to property
- Maintaining good order and discipline

Use of Force is never permitted as a punishment. It is explicitly prohibited to use force as a form of discipline. Force must only be used to prevent harm, maintain safety, or stop disruptive behaviour.

Force may be used in the following circumstances:

- To remove a disruptive child
- To prevent disruptive behaviour
- To prevent harm to others
- To restrain a child who is at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

Any incident in which force is used must be recorded in the designated "bound and numbered book", which is kept in the Headteacher's office. The following details must be recorded:

- Date, time, and location of the incident
- Nature of the incident
- The force used and the reason for using it
- Whether there were any injuries to children or staff
- Follow-up actions, including support and disciplinary measures taken

Parents will be informed as soon as practicable following any incident involving the use of force, with full details provided (e.g., what force was used, the reason, any injuries and follow-up actions).

Following any incident where force is used, immediate support will be provided to both the children and staff involved. This includes:

- Medical care (if required)
- Emotional support for the child and staff
- Rebuilding relationships between the child and those affected by the incident
- Reflecting on the incident with the child to help them learn alternative ways of managing behaviour

Parents will be involved in post-incident support, as necessary, to ensure restorative practices are followed and to prevent future incidents.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)**

Children with SEND may require additional support, and the nursery ensures that appropriate risk assessments are in place for children whose behaviour presents a higher risk of requiring physical intervention. These risk assessments are reviewed regularly in collaboration with the child’s key person, parents, and external agencies where necessary.

### **Monitoring and Reviewing Behaviour Management**

The Nursery will regularly review the effectiveness of this policy by:

- Monitoring and analysing incident reports to identify any patterns related to ethnicity, gender, SEND, etc.
- Discussing incidents and strategies for improvement in staff meetings and with external experts as necessary.
- Using feedback from parents, staff, and children to adapt and improve practice.

### **Safeguarding and complaints**

Any complaints or allegations involving the use of force will be managed through the Nursery’s Complaints Procedure and in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Allegations involving safeguarding concerns will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for investigation.

### **Conclusion**

This policy outlines our commitment to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where all children are able to thrive. Our use of force policy is designed to ensure that force is used only in extreme cases where there is a clear, proportionate reason, and that all staff are trained to manage challenging behaviours in a way that prioritises the child’s safety, dignity, and long-term wellbeing.

This policy is subject to regular review by the governing body to ensure its continued relevance and compliance with current legislation.

Next review Autumn 2026

### **Appendix 1 – Table of changes**

<b>Date of change</b>	<b>Paragraphs affected</b>	<b>Summary of update</b>
08.11.2025	Page 1	Including the key principles of the Norfolk Steps approach
10.12.2025	Page 1	Included a contents list and page numbers