




# Campsbourne School Positive Handling Policy

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## **Campsbourne Primary School: Positive Handling Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils who may need to be handled. This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils specifically the school's Behaviour Policy.

### **2. Legal framework**

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 "enables school staff to use force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- (a) Committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil):
- (b) Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself), or
- (c) Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise."

The definition of 'school staff' applies to (as defined in section 95 of the Act):

- 1. Any teacher who works at the school, and
- 2. Any other person whom the head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils.  
This includes;
  - a. support staff whose job normally includes supervising pupils such as teaching assistants, learning support assistants, learning mentors and lunchtime supervisors
  - b. can also include people to whom the head has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils such as paid members of staff whose job does not normally involve supervising pupils (for example catering or premises-related staff) and unpaid volunteers (for example parents accompanying pupils on school-organised visits)

### 3. Definitions

#### (a) Physical contact

Situations in which proper physical contact takes place between staff and pupils; e.g. in games/ PE or to comfort pupils.

#### (b) Physical intervention

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

#### (c) Positive handling

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is a risk to pupils, staff or property or if good order is being seriously prejudiced.

#### (d) Reasonable force

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.

Force is usually used either to **control or restrain**. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.

**Control** means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.

**Restraint** means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.

School staff will always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

### 4. Purpose of the policy

Good professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the discipline practised by the staff via the behaviour policy. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in **exceptional** circumstances staff may be in a situation where the use of positive handling may be required.

Examples of circumstances when positive handling may be required include:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils fighting and refusing to separate

- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects and is not responding to verbal instructions
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others;
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).
- a pupil is exhibiting at risk behaviour such as climbing to a height and not responding to requests to come down.
- a child attempts to cross a busy road in front of oncoming traffic.

Overall, schools owe a duty of care to their pupils. These examples are appropriate to employ restrictive physical intervention to prevent significant risk of harm.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in Campsbourne School:

- Clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary and
- Are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

The application of any form of positive handling places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy (see appendix 1 for examples). Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and **to seek alternative strategies wherever possible** in order to prevent the need for positive handling. (See appendix 2)

The staff in Campsbourne Primary recognise that the use of Positive Handling is only one of the strategies, **and the last strategy**, available to secure pupil safety/well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline (see Behaviour Policy). Planned physical interventions should only be used as part of a holistic strategy when the risks of employing an intervention are judged to be lower than the risk of not doing so.

**Positive Handling will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk.**

#### **5. Strategies for Preventing and “de-escalating” behaviour that precipitate the use of physical interventions**

It is in everyone’s interest to avoid behaviour incidents that may require using physical intervention. We therefore use the following strategies to prevent situations occurring:

Primary prevention is achieved by:

- ensuring that the number of staff deployed and their level of competence corresponds to the needs of children and service users and the likelihood that physical interventions will be needed. Staff should not be left in vulnerable positions
- helping children and service users to avoid situations which are known to provoke violent or aggressive behaviour, for example, settings where there are few options for individualised activities
- creating opportunities for children and service users to engage in meaningful activities which include opportunities for choice and a sense of achievement
- developing staff expertise in working with children and service users who present challenging behaviours
- talking to children, service users, their families and advocates about the way in which they prefer to be managed when they pose a significant risk to themselves or others. Some children or service users prefer withdrawal to a quiet area to an intervention which involves bodily contact
- care plans or, for school pupils, Positive Handling Plans, which are responsive to individual needs and include current information on risk assessment.

Written protocol for those risk assessed as “likely” include:

- Description of behaviour , sequences and settings which may require physical intervention
- Risk assessment which balances the risk of using a restrictive physical intervention against the risk of not using a physical intervention
- Record of views of parents
- System of recording behaviours and use of physical restraint
- Previous methods which have been tried without success
- Description of the physical intervention techniques which are being used and the dates on which they’ll be reviewed
- If appropriate to the individual, this should also list any specific techniques which would not normally be appropriate to use.
- Description of staff who are judged as competent to use these methods with this person, with reference to the levels of training required, the frequency of that training and its suitability for the child in question
- The ways in which the approach will be reviewed, the frequency of review meetings and members of the review team
- Up to date copies of this protocol should be included (alongside) in this person’s individual education plan followed by record of restrain post incident

When faced with a situation that may escalate and require physical intervention we use the following strategies to de-escalate situations:

## **6. Training**

Positive handling is 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 pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit. Positive Handling training will be made available to designated staff. Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken and the system of communication and call for assistance if required.

## **7. Risk Assessment**

Although most young people in Campsbourne Primary will never require any form of Positive handling, staff may have to deal with some young people who exhibit disturbed, distressed, seriously disruptive or highly aroused behaviour. If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that may require the use of reasonable force, it is our intention to plan how to respond if the situation arises.

Such planning needs to address:

- Calming / de-escalation strategies for that child
- Triggers for that child
- Managing the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary, as taught through training)
- Involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Description of staff who are judged as competent to use these methods with this person, with reference to the levels of training required, the frequency of that training and its suitability for the child in question.
- Briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for refresher training or guidance)
- The individual child should only be exposed to restrictive physical intervention techniques which are described in their written protocol following a risk assessment
- If appropriate to the individual, this should also list any specific techniques which it would not normally be appropriate to use.
- Ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate.

More detailed examples of risk assessment and preventative steps can be found in appendix 2 and 3)

However, there may be occasions when emergency physical intervention is required because a child acts out of character. This could be due to events outside of school affecting their behavior or because of unknown events within school e.g. bullying.

In these situations, staff have to assess the risk of not using physical intervention against the risk of using it. The priority in these situations must be the safety of the children and staff. Where a child or staff member's immediate safety is at risk because of the behavior of another child e.g. physically attacking another child or a child is putting themselves in immediate danger e.g. scaling a high wall, then proportionate physical intervention should be used.

#### **8. Action Steps whenever a child is likely to be / is being handled or restrained**

- Tell the pupil who is angry/distressed/not co-operating to stop and state possible consequences of failure to do so (attempt to use verbal influence and tell them to stop)
- Call for assistance/summon another adult;
- Continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident;
- Make it clear that any restraint will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary (least force necessary at that moment in time)

Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include:

- Providing medical support
- Providing respite for those involved
- Providing a time for reflection with the child on what happened and the consequences
- Informing parents /carers
- Recording the physical intervention and reviewing the risk assessment and written protocol techniques and preventative strategies with members involved

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem.

#### **9. Strategies with trained staff may use to restrain a child.**

Examples of physical intervention that are generally considered low risk include:



- Members of staff taking reasonable measures to hold a child to prevent him or her from hitting a member of staff, another child or themselves.
- Accompanying or prompting a person who dislikes physical contact to a separate room where they can be alone for a few minutes while being continuously observed and supported e.g. time out.
- Children may choose to withdrawal themselves from a space so as to regulate their behaviour. This procedure is self-initiated and led by the child.
- Taking reasonable measures to hold a child from attempting to run away from their classroom, their school building or service location entirely (and as a result this would pose a greater risk of harm to the child or another person).
- Members of staff taking reasonable measures which may require more restrictive physical intervention to prevent 'risky behaviour' which is unacceptable because of its risk of injury (for example, climbing high wall or using some implements of the environment).
- Members of staff taking reasonable measures to prompt or escort hold when a child's resists requests to comply with demands in the learning environment and becomes seriously disruptive in behaviour which interferes with the learning activities.

Elevated levels of risk are associated with the following practices and must not be used by staff under any circumstances:

- The use of clothing or belts to restrict movement
- Holding someone who is lying on the floor or forcing them onto the floor
- Any procedure which restricts breathing or impedes the airways
- Seclusion, where an adult or child is forced to spend time alone in a room against their will
- Extending or flexing the joints or putting pressure on the joints
- Pressure on the neck chest abdomen or groin areas.
- Don't attempt to hold a child up if they begin to fall and disengage if a child is lied down on the floor.

## **10. Recording**

In the event of Positive Handling having to be used to restrain a pupil, members of staff involved must report the incident. The recording procedures must be followed. Staff should record all incidents of Positive Handling as soon as is practically possible and no later than 24 hours and report these to the Deputy or Headteacher (appendix 4)

- Details should include:
- Name of pupil(s)

- The age, cultural background, gender, stature and medical history of the child concerned.
- Staff member(s) involved
- Factors necessitating physical intervention i.e. what was the risk of not using physical intervention?
- The strategies which were employed prior to using physical intervention
- How physical intervention was effected
- Outcome of restraint
- Whether the service user or anyone else experienced injury or distress and, if they did, what action was taken.
- Any other action taken in the management of the incident
- Parents/carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This action should also be recorded.
- The report of incident must transferred to Restraint Log – bound book.

Positive Handling Records are reviewed on a half termly basis to ensure

- compliance with statutory requirements
- monitoring of service users' welfare
- monitoring staff performance and identifying training needs or outcomes
- contributing to service audit and evaluation
- updating medical records

### **11. Post Incident Support**

The use of physical restraint can be a challenging experience for all those involved. We provide the following support for staff and children after an incident:

Following an incident in which restrictive physical interventions are employed, both staff and children should be given separate opportunities to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment. Interviews should only take place when those involved have recovered their composure. Post incident interviews should be designed to discover exactly what happened and the effects on the participants. They should not be used to apportion blame or to punish those involved.

If there is any reason to suspect that a child or a member of staff has experienced injury or severe distress following the use of a physical intervention, they should receive prompt medical attention. Member of staff is asked and if any reason to suspect they are they are sent to First Aid and recorded in staff medical

Child is recorded on restraint/positive handling record sheet, parent informed and first aid attention given, recorded

Where an injury occurs as a result of using physical restraint then the child or member of staff must be seen by a Paediatric Trained member of staff and the incident logged according to school policy.

## **12. Children with Special Educational Needs**

Children with special educational needs may be more likely to require physical intervention. The Inclusion Manager regularly review children's provision and where a child is identified as potentially being more likely to require physical intervention then a risk assessment and written protocol is included alongside their IEP which should contain the following information

- A description of behaviour sequences and settings which may require a
- physical intervention response
- The results of an assessment to determine any contradictions for use of physical interventions
- A risk assessment which balances the risk of using a restrictive physical intervention against the risk of not using a physical intervention
- A record of the views of those with parental responsibility in the case of children and family members in the case of adults
- A system of recording behaviours and the use of restrictive physical interventions using an incident book with numbered and dated pages
- Previous methods which have been tried without success
- A description of the specific physical intervention techniques which are sanctioned, the dates on which they will be reviewed
- Where appropriate to the individual, a list of the specific techniques not to be used with this individual
- A description of staff who are judged competent to use these methods with this person with reference to the level of training required, the frequency of that training and its suitability for the child in question
- The ways in which this approach will be reviewed, the frequency of review meetings and members of the review team.
- An up-to-date copy of this protocol is attached to the individual's education plan

## **13. Staff Training**

The Inclusion Manager is fully trained in positive handling and is trained to provide training to members of staff. Staff working closely with children who may require positive handling are training in the strategies identified in the Behaviour Plan.

#### **14. Power to search pupils without consent**

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following “prohibited items” (Education Act 1996)

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force **cannot** be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

#### **15. Complaints**

Involving parents when an incident occurs with their child, together with a clear policy adhered to by the staff, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It will not prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the police and social services department under child protection procedures.

Staff, subjected to physical violence or assault, have the right to be supported in making a formal complaint to the police and, if necessary, taking private action against an assailant.

It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Remember that adhering to the principles and procedures referred to in this policy statement, is part of effective practice and should minimise risk to young people in our care and enhance our own self-protection.

#### **16. Statement for Parents**

In keeping with our home/school agreement, we will inform all parents/carers of our policy on Positive Handling via website.

The statement will highlight:

- Our emphasis on care and protection for everyone within our school community
- Our belief that restraint will be needed on very rare occasions.
- Our endeavor to handle situations with care and responsibility.
- Our intent to apply follow-up and repair strategies.

The statement will outline:

- When staff are authorised to use reasonable physical intervention.
- What steps will be taken after an incident has been dealt with.
- The responsibilities of staff, pupils and parents/carers in resolving situations.
- How parents will be informed if their child has had to be restrained

### **17. Further Guidance Documents**

- Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff Working with Children and Adults who display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorders (2002)
- Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Pupils with Severe Behavioural Difficulties (2003)
- Screening, searching and confiscation – advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies.
- Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff – guidance for local authorities, headteachers, school staff, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools

## Appendix 1

### When might it be appropriate to use Positive Handling/Reasonable Force?

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils fighting and refusing to separate
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects and is not responding to verbal instructions
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others;
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).
- a pupil is exhibiting at risk behaviour such as climbing to a height and not responding to requests to come down.

If a pupil resists the reasonable requests of staff to collaborate, co-operate or comply with demands in the learning environment and if a child resists those requests, it can sometimes be seriously disruptive behaviour which interferes with the learning activities. In these circumstances. Some intervention may be required in order to allow the learning to proceed for those children who are engaged in the learning environment.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Action Steps whenever a child is likely to be / is being handled or restrained**

All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and steps, which they can take to defuse and calm a situation before Positive Handling is required.

Move calmly and confidently.

Intervene verbally as early as possible and tell child to stop.

Call for assistance/summon another staff member.

Use the least force possible at that given time.

Remove audience from the immediate location.

### **In those circumstances where the member of staff has decided that it is not appropriate to restrain the pupil without help they should:**

- remove other pupils who might be at risk,
- summon assistance from colleagues,
- where necessary, telephone the police,
- inform the pupil(s) that help will be arriving,
- until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating

Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include:

- Providing medical support
- Providing respite for those involved
- Providing a time for reflection with the child on what happened and the consequences
- Informing parents /carers
- Recording the physical intervention and reviewing the risk assessment and written protocol techniques and preventative strategies with members involved

## Appendix 3

### Positive Behaviour Support Plan

Name:

Date:

Behaviour(s) of concern / topography / frequency/ intensity / impact

Triggers / when behaviour is most likely to occur

What are these behaviours communicating to us? (*why might they be happening?*)

- *I feel...* bored, angry, distressed, frustrated, upset, anxious, embarrassed, shame
- *I need...* consistency, predictable boundaries, support, unconditional positive regard

How you know I am in the green zone:

(e.g. - observable behaviours, tone of voice, level of focus...)

Proactive / Preventative Strategies

(capable environments, child's development, targeted support)



**How do you know I am in Amber Zone:**

**Early Warning signs**

*(e.g. - observable behaviours, tone of voice, level of focus...)*

**Response to early warning signs:**

**How do you know I am in Red Zone:**

**Crisis Behaviours**

*(e.g. - observable behaviours, tone of voice, level of focus...)*

**Planned response to crisis (in order given):**

**Immediate post incident support**

**Question - What does X need to make his/her arousal level come down to the baseline level if situation able to be managed in school?**

**Planned resolution once child is calm**

**Name of person (s) completing form:**

**Seen by senior leadership:**

**Shared with Parent(s)/Carers:**

**Date to be reviewed:**

**Once a support plan has been agreed please ensure it is shared with all staff that work with the pupil**

#### Appendix 4

RECORD OF RESTRAINT	
Date of incident:	Time of incident:
Pupil Name:	D.o.B:
Member(s) of staff involved:	
Adult witnesses to restraint:	
Pupil witnesses to restraint:	
Outline of event leading to restraint:	
Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used):	
Outcome of restraint:	
Description of any injury(ies) sustained by injured pupil and any subsequent treatment:	
Date parent/carer informed of incident: Time:	
By whom informed:	
Outline of parent/carer response:	
Signature of staff completing report:	Date:
Signature of Teacher-in-charge:	Date:
Signature of Head :	Date:
Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action:	

## **Physical Contact**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, however, it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the pupil's individual needs and any agreed care plan.

Not all children feel comfortable about certain types of physical contact; this should be recognised and, wherever possible, adults should seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact and be sensitive to any signs that they may be uncomfortable or embarrassed. Staff should acknowledge that some pupils are more comfortable with touch than others and/or may be more comfortable with touch from some adults than others. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the pupil.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil, in one set of circumstances, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child.

Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the manager and recorded. Where appropriate, the manager should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (the DO).

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. Staff need to be aware that the child may associate physical contact with such experiences. They also should recognise that these pupils may seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child sensitively and help them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

A general culture of 'safe touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

This means that staff should:

- be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or any person to whom this action is described
- never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent
- always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- never indulge in horseplay or fun fights ▪ always allow/encourage pupils, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate
- always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil
- establish the preferences of pupils
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret or be uncomfortable with physical contact
- always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- report and record situations which may give rise to concern
- be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender

This means that education settings should:

- ensure they have a system in place for recording incidents and the means by which information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior management
- provide staff, on a 'need to know' basis, with relevant information about vulnerable children in their care

Other activities that require physical contact

In certain curriculum areas, such as PE, drama or music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children, for example, to demonstrate technique in the use of a piece of equipment, adjust posture, or support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury.

Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e., one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. The extent of the contact should be made clear and undertaken with the permission of the pupil. Contact should be relevant to their age / understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.

Guidance and protocols around safe and appropriate physical contact may be provided, for example, by sports governing bodies and should be understood and applied

consistently. Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern or fall outside of these protocols and guidance should be reported to the senior manager and parent or carer.

It is good practice that all parties clearly understand at the outset, what physical contact is necessary and appropriate in undertaking specific activities. Keeping parents/carers and pupils informed of the extent and nature of any physical contact may also prevent allegations of misconduct or abuse arising.

This means that staff should:

- treat pupils with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body
- always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- seek consent of parents where a pupil is unable to give this; e.g., because of age or disability
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact
- be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols
- conduct activities where they can be seen by others
- be aware of gender, cultural and religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact

This means that schools/settings should:

- have in place up to date guidance and protocols on appropriate physical contact, that promote safe practice and include clear expectations of behaviour and conduct.
- ensure that staff are made aware of this guidance and that it is continually promoted