


## Positive Handling and Positive Intervention Policy 2025-28

 <b>St George's CE First School and Nursery</b> Wonderfully made, inspired to shape the world	<b>Policy review Date</b>	September 2025
	<b>Date of next Review</b>	September 2028
	<b>Who reviewed this policy?</b>	Governing Body
	<b>Date approved by Governing body</b>	
	<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Martin

This policy has been reviewed; to the best of our knowledge, we do not feel it impacts negatively on any specific group or individual within our school community.



## Legal Framework

Positive handling should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and DFEE Circular 'Use of Reasonable Force' July 2013 allow teachers, and other members of staff at a school who are authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in circumstances where the pupil may need to be prevented from engaging in behaviours which are likely to cause injury to themselves, others or damage to property. The guidance extends this to maintaining good order and discipline, for both on-site and off-site activities.

## 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 positively handled. It should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils specifically the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy and Safe Touch Policy. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Only staff trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategy techniques of TEAM TEACH will use physical intervention techniques with children when necessary.

## School Expectations

In our school we create a calm environment to minimise incidents that may require any physical intervention. We de-escalate incidents when they do arise. We only use physical interventions when the risks involved of doing so are outweighed by the risks of not doing so.

## 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 behaviour policy practised by the staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in **exceptional** circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of positive handling may be required.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff at St George's C of E First School and Nursery:

1. 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 such situations should they occur.
2. 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. 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.

**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.

At St George's C of E First School and Nursery we endeavour to:

1. Create the right atmosphere for children to learn, grow and develop their individual potential, helping them to become competent and confident adults able to live their own lives and contribute to society.
2. Provide a climate where children learn to co-operate with others, care for their peers and environment and respect the fact that not everyone looks, feels or thinks the same.
3. High standards are set for behaviour where children are encouraged to be thoughtful, honest, fair and kind.

## What is physical intervention ('reasonable force')?

The use of force is illegal if the physical circumstances do not warrant it. The force used should always be the minimum needed to regain and ensure safety and control for everyone involved or present. The Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Child protection/Safeguarding Policy.

Restrictive physical interventions may include:

- Bodily contact - where the physical presence of one or more people is used to control a pupil, e.g physically interposing between pupils; blocking a pupil's path; holding or 'shepherding' a pupil; using agreed, approved restricted holds
- Environmental – where a change is applied within the environment, for example shutting a door or the use of locks or keypads to prevent access to a particular area.

## In what circumstances can physical intervention be used?

- To prevent a pupil causing, or being at risk of causing, injury or damage to themselves or others, whether by accident, rough behaviour or by misuse of materials or objects
- To prevent a pupil committing a criminal offence
- To prevent a pupil committing deliberate serious damage or vandalism
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil
- To prevent behaviour which is prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline

The decision to use physical intervention will be taken in the context of the level of risk presented by the behaviour, the seriousness of the incident and the relative risks of the use of physical intervention compared with any available alternative. The use of physical intervention will take into account the characteristics of the pupil, including their age, gender, SEN, physical needs or disability, developmental level or cultural issues.

## The Last Resort Principle

At St George's C of E First School and Nursery we pro-actively foster positive relationships and only use reasonable force when there is no realistic alternative. This means that we expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative.

We expect staff to think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective.

There might be some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are

no equal effective alternatives (a child is about to run in the road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives such as the use of assertiveness skills:

- Use a distracter such as a whistle or loud bell to interrupt the behaviour long enough for other methods of verbal control
- Withdrawal of attention (audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened
- Other techniques designed to defuse a situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour, in which case the incident could be dealt with later when emotions are regulated
- The employment of other sanctions consistent with St George's C of E First School and Nursery's policy on behaviour and relationships.

Where physical interventions are needed to prevent injury to the student, other students or staff, or to prevent serious damage, these should be for the minimum length of time possible and using the least possible force. All staff must consider whether they are using reasonable force. In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate and effective positive handling should be a last resort. When positive handling becomes necessary:

#### DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible, e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance
- Use simple and clear language

#### DON'T

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck, lying face down or pulling arms across the child's chest
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil

***Whenever positive handling is used, staff will keep talking to the pupil.***

#### Positive Handling Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Positive Handling Plan (see appendix 1). The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. If particular physical techniques have been found to be effective, they should be named, along with alerts to any which have proved ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Positive Handling Plans should be considered alongside any other planning documents which relate to the pupil. They should take account of age, gender, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special need and social context. Positive Handling Plans should result from multi-professional collaboration and be included in a Pastoral Support Plan or SEND support form.

#### Risk Assessment

Risk assessments (see Appendix 2) are required for pupils who exhibit extreme behaviour,

responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong.

When considering a pupil's behaviour, staff will think about the following questions:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this pupil's behaviour?
- Have we got all the information we need to conduct a risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan as a result?

### Staff Training

It is the policy of this school that staff working closely with pupils are trained in the pro-active and responsive positive handling strategies and, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the School Behaviour Policy and Practice. In cases where a Positive Handling Plan is in operation, selected staff will be trained in any physical interventions to be used. These staff will be trained by the accredited provider and will be the only staff authorised to use the intervention.

### General Advice for Staff

- Be sure that you are aware of and complying with the school policy for behaviour and discipline and positive handling procedures.
- It is better to defuse situations wherever possible, as this prevents them from escalating to a level where force is necessary
- Send for the assistance of another member of staff as soon as possible, using the agreed call-out protocol (room cards)
- All those involved should be de-briefed after incidents to explore more positive/effective responses to future difficult situations.

### Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality, and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. It is not enough to thoughtlessly apply rules without thinking through the likely consequences. The key principles are that any physical intervention should be:

- In the best interest of the child
- Reasonable and proportionate
- Intended to reduce risk
- The least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective.

Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning. Where possible, staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical interventions. They should only use the techniques and methods approved for use in this school.

### Recording

Where positive handling has been used a record of the incident always needs to be kept. This is in the form of a bound and numbered book kept by the Headteacher/Safeguarding Lead. All recording needs to be completed on the day of incident and needs to include the following:

- Name of pupil
- Date, time and place of incident

- A brief description of the incident and actions taken
- Attempts made to calm the situation
- Names of people who witnessed the situation
- Any damage/harm to persons or property
- Name of person informing parents
- After investigation a summary of action taken

After the review of any incident, a copy of the recording form will be placed on the pupil's file.

Staff should:

- Inform a member of SLT as soon as possible
- Complete the school recording form carefully
- Take time to think about what actually happened and try to explain it clearly
- Complete all names in full
- Sign and date all forms

### Post-Incident Support

Incidents that require the use of restrictive physical interventions can be upsetting to all concerned and could result in injuries to the child or staff. After incidents have subsided, it is important to ensure that staff and children are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should, of course, be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid. All injuries must be reported and recorded in accordance with school procedures.

We need to consider:

- thoughts, feeling, emotions,
- emotional 'first aid'

Stage 1 – Immediate 'Are you ok' This should occur before people leave to go home.

Stage 2 – De-briefing checking people have adjusted to an emotionally difficult event. This should occur within 48 hours.

Stage 3 – Counselling: formal support. Support is available when requested by a member of staff, however it is not imposed.

### Post Incident Review

Focus on actions and behaviours:

- Who did what, when, why, how?
- What was the outcome?
- What does it tell us about what we already know about the young person?
- What have we learnt and what or how does this inform our practice?

### Monitoring use of Restrictive Physical Interventions

Use of physical intervention in school is monitored in order to help staff learn from experience, promote the well-being of children in their care, and provide a basis for appropriate support. Monitoring can help the school to determine what specialist help is needed for children and to assess the appropriateness of the child's placement at the school. The use of physical intervention is monitored and evaluated regularly at Leadership Group meetings. Individual student risk

assessments are reviewed annually.

### Parents

Where there is concern about a child, parents will be invited to contribute to a risk assessment and Positive Handling Plan. Written parental agreement will form part of this. Parents will be informed of the school's policies and will be informed following serious incidents.

### Complaints and Allegations

The availability of a clear policy regarding Positive Handling and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them. Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's Complaints Procedure. The Chair of Governors will be informed of complaints, but other governors will not be involved as a complaint may require further action on their part.

### Policy Review and Evaluation

This policy has been developed in liaison with school staff and governors. It will be reviewed annually, or when relevant national or local guidance indicates additional need.

### Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour and relationships Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy and Practice
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff
- Staff Induction
- Volunteer Policy

Appendix 1: Positive Handling Plan

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Plan Number \_\_\_\_

Positives- What is the pupil good at and what do they like doing?	Triggers- What situations have led to problems in the past?	Successful approaches- What proactive interventions have been effective in preventing pupil's anxiety rising?
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.

Describe any modifications to the environment or pupil routines that can be implemented to prevent anxieties rising?

1.
2.
3.

De-escalation- Describe any strategies that have worked in the past or should be avoided?

Strategy	Description of Impact	Try	Avoid
Verbal advice and support			
Firm clear directions			
Negotiation			
Limited Choices			
Distraction			



Biting										
Punching										
Spitting										
Hair Grabbing										
Neck Grabbing										
Clothing Grabbing										
Arm Grabbing										
Body holds										
Weapons/Missiles being thrown										
Self Harm										

1= Ignoring, 2= Summoning assistance, 3= Summoning external assistance, 4= Cradle Hold, 5= Wrap, 6= Single Elbow, 7= Double Elbow, 8= Figure 4, 9. Separate fights, 10. Shield

Follow up-Debrief and repair following the incident

Where	Other Staff member with whom child has a good relationship

Notification

Parent/ Guardian	Social Worker	Local Authority	GP/ CAHMS	Psychologist	ISL	Child Protection	Other

Names

Signature

Date

Child

Parent

Social Worker

Health

## APPENDIX 2: Guidance on Risk Assessment for Headteachers on Child Violence and Aggression

### Introduction

This paper is designed to support Headteachers in the duty they already have in assessing risk. This is not a new duty. Headteachers have ultimate responsibility; the duties involved can be delegated to Heads of Year, SENCOs, etc. Involving more than one person is a useful way to avoid the views of one individual unduly influencing the outcome. The reason for assessing risk for children who may be displaying aggressive or violent behaviour is to allow schools to evaluate what training and other support may be required.

Aggression and violence must first be defined so that misunderstanding is minimised.

### Aggression

There are many ways of using the term Aggression, but the following definition is workable:

**Aggression is a deliberate intention to cause hurt or harm to someone against their will.**

This definition involves three elements:

1. Aggression is a **deliberate** act (though it may not always be fully understood, eg. in children with severe learning difficulties).
2. Aggression does not only involve physical injury (e.g. verbal abuse).
3. Aggression is negative when one of those involved is not a willing participant.

### **Violence**

As with aggression, the word is used in many ways, but we would suggest:

**Violence is a deliberate act of aggression intended to cause physical injury to another person against their will.**

This workable definition involves two elements:

1. Violence involves physical hurt.
2. Violence is impelled by an aggressive intent and has the qualities of an aggressive act.

### **How do you decide if someone's behaviour is aggressive or even violent?**

This is not straightforward, but to avoid long and detailed debate we have disregarded usage such as self-defence or the overcoming of an evil force and will settle for violence and aggression being unacceptable behaviour that we seek to minimise. Before deciding that someone has acted aggressively or violently we have to make the judgement that:

1. What they did was a bad thing.
2. The act was deliberate — not accidental and not outside the person's control.

### **Procedure for Risk Assessment**

To enable the LEA to support schools in discharging their responsibilities, all staff must ensure that detailed records are available for all children considered to constitute a 'risk'. It is essential that standard staff accident forms are completed for incidents in the mainstream (RIDDOR3). In special schools and PRUs an additional incident report form is required. In normal circumstances it would be expected that staff have considered the Code of Practice stages and have completed an IEP/PSP or other relevant documentation.

In assessing the risk posed by an individual in a given situation two factors need to be considered:

1. **Level of Hazard** (the potential for harm)
2. **Probability** (the likelihood of that harm being realised)

These can be combined to work out the "Risk Potential" for the child. Calculations used in this document are not scientific and should only be regarded as a useful **aid** to decision making.

**Step 1. Level of Hazard**

Decide on the level of hazard using a 3 point scale:

- 1 = **Low**                   Doubtful if there will be any effect or at the most a minimal effect.
- 2 = **Medium**                Could cause injuries or illness resulting in a few days absence or noticeable damage to equipment.
- 3 = **High**                    Could result in serious injury or illness resulting in hospitalisation or severe damage to equipment and/or premises.

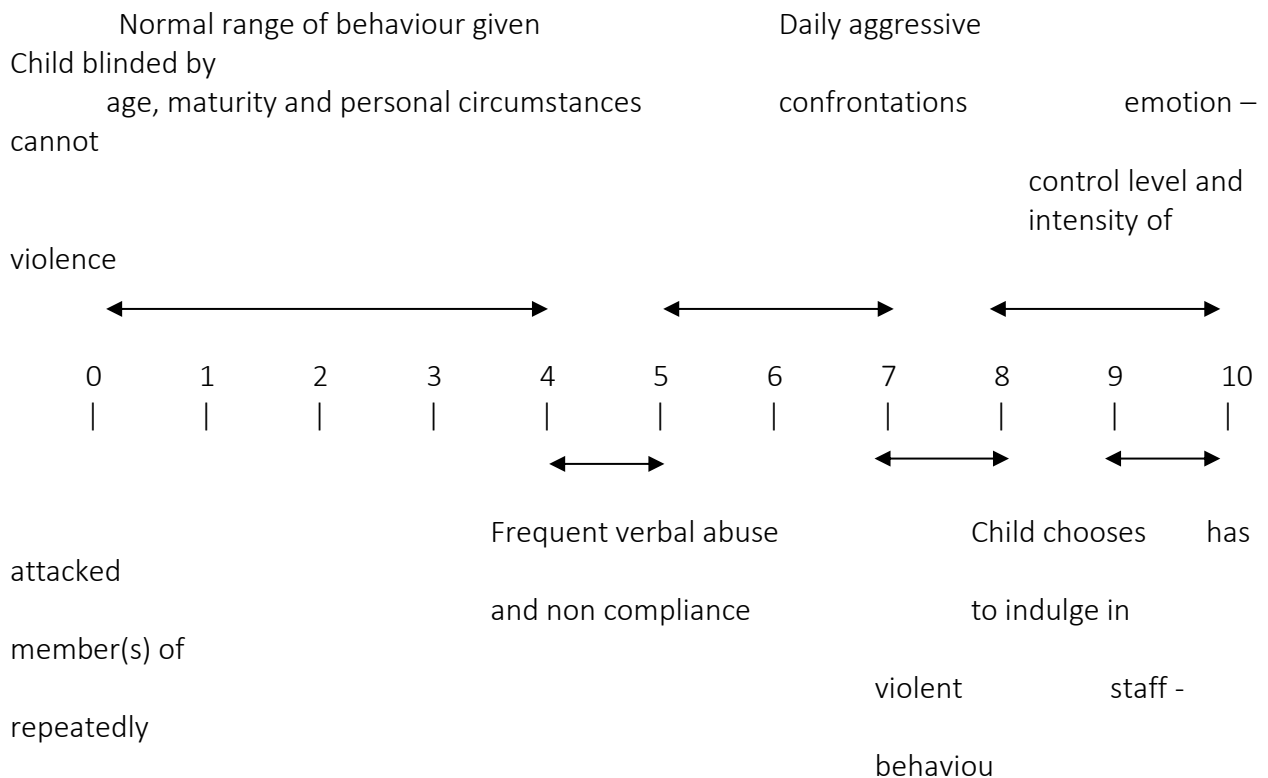
This scale may reflect size / age of child, extent to which child ‘blows’ when triggered, tendency to use weapons etc.

**Step 2. Probability**

Probability in this instance is a combination of

- a)the child’s predisposition to aggression and violence
- b)the pressures that the environment puts upon the child.

**Step 2a. To determine the child’s predisposition to aggression and violence**, rate the child from 0 to 10 on its history of violent incidents over the last 12 months, using this scale:



**Step 2b. To determine the effect of environmental pressures:**

This is too broad an area to be prescriptive. However, a range of possible pressures are noted below. These are in no hierarchical order and others that are known about for the individual can be included:

Home circumstances

Peer group

Teacher behaviour

Break-time supervision

Pressures from buildings

Recent training

Child's perception of school

Group size

Child's ability to cope with Curriculum

Cultural expectations

Curriculum pressures

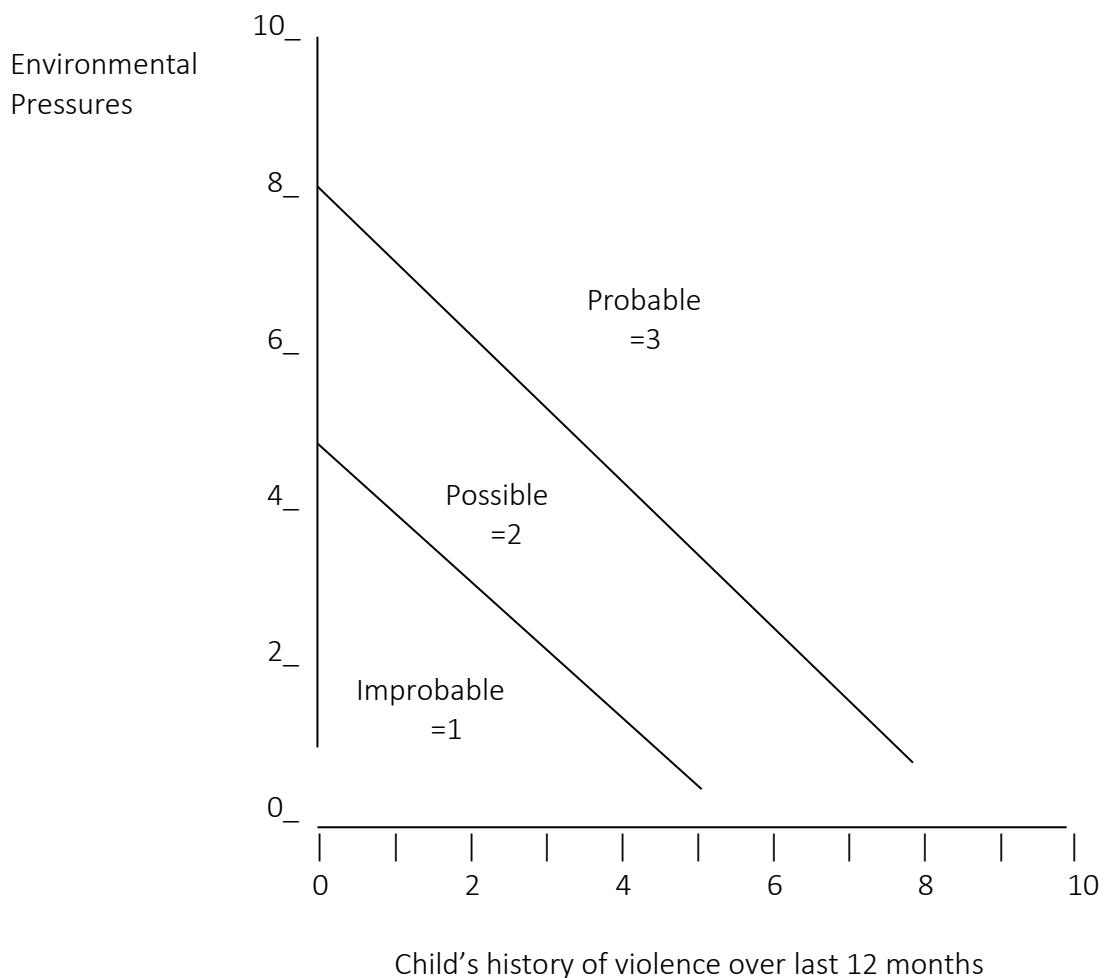
Bullying

Whole school ethos.

It is suggested that staff should select the 5 most pressing issues and rate each on a 3 point scale from 0 to 2.

**Add these figures together** to give an 'environmental pressure' weighting

**Step 2c.** Use the following diagram to assess the probability :



Probability can now be determined on a 3 point scale:

- 1 = Improbable (Unlikely to occur)
- 2 = Possible (Could happen)
- 3 = Probable (Likely to occur immediately or in a reasonably short time)

**Step 3 - Calculate Risk Potential**

Multiply the score for the Level of Hazard by the score for Probability

i.e. **Risk Potential = Level of Hazard x Probability.**

**Step 4 – Implementing Control Measures**

As with all risk assessments, it is not sufficient to determine the current potential for risk; we should also specify measures that will help to reduce the risk, if possible to an acceptable level.

The resulting Risk Potential score may indicate one of the following:

- 1-2 No additional support required.
- 3-5 Consideration of individual agreements with IBP.
- 6-9 Should not be expected to be taught without intervention.

These measures will include a variety of further strategies and actions within them. Analysis of the comparative weightings in the diagram may help to determine the type of remediation needed. If the pressures in the environment are high the expectation may be for the LEA to provide training for staff. If the child factor is high this would trigger intervention from the support services, though in some cases both may be appropriate.

**The measures to be taken should be outlined in the recorded assessment.**

Risk Assessment Form for Child Violence and Aggression

Name of Child ..... Date of Birth .....

Name of school .....

Date of admission to school ..... Class at time of assessment .....

Step 1	Step 2a	Step 2b	Step 2c	Step 3	Step 4
<b>Level of Hazard</b>  ( 1 to 3)  See p. 2	History of aggression / violence  ( 1 to 10)  See p. 2	Environmental Pressure Weighting  ( 1 to 10)  see p. 3	<b>Probability</b>  ( 1 to 3)  see p. 3	<b>Risk Potential</b>  ( 1 to 9)  see p. 4	<b>Control Measures (Overall)</b>  Specify detailed strategies in space below   see p. 4

Control Measures – specific strategies	Date implemented

Date of assessment .....

Signature of Person undertaking risk assessment .....

Name (please print) and Position .....

Review Date .....