



# Positive Handling Policy

June 2021

## Rationale

It is recognised that challenging behaviour is part of the developmental profile of some students. It is important that in such cases, interventions are in place to support and manage behaviour. This includes procedures for pre-empting and managing dysregulation as well as relevant curriculum interventions to address developmental behaviours. However, there are times when a student's dysregulation can be the basis for behaviour that put the students, others and/or property at risk. In such situations, it is important that any necessary physical intervention is carried out safely, legally and with appropriate follow up.

## Definition

'Force' is used to control or physically restrain someone.

'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than that necessary.

'Restraint' is physically holding someone back and is used in extreme circumstances.

## Circumstances for Use of Reasonable Force

'Reasonable force' or 'Positive Handling' to control or restrain students may be used in the following circumstances:

- When a student is at risk of hurting themselves or others
- When a student is at risk of causing significant damage to property
- When a student is causing significant disorder

## Principles

- Physical intervention is a last resort and should not be used in isolation
- Good practice including the consideration of the environment and a total communication approach;
- Early intervention and de-escalation is better than physical intervention;
- Where necessary, physical intervention is in the best interests of the student and others at risk of serious disruption or harm
- Physical intervention should never be used as a punishment;
- Physical intervention is always followed up with appropriate support for students and staff involved.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the school's Behaviour Policy.

## Providing a Positive Environment

The most effective way to prevent the need for physical intervention is to provide a clear, calm, motivating and structured environment. This is particularly the case for students who are developmentally delayed and have severe Autism. Every effort should be made to adhere to good Autism Practice. While this will not eliminate

incidents of severe dysregulation and harmful behaviours, it will minimise the risk and unpredictability.

## **Situations Requiring Intervention**

### *Emergency Intervention*

An emergency intervention will occur in response to an incident where either:

- All other strategies have been exhausted, for example, a persistently disruptive student refuses to leave a room (when asked by more than one member of staff) or
- An immediate response is required to prevent serious harm or damage, for example, a student attempting to scratch or bite someone.

In an emergency situation, the adult involved will make a dynamic risk assessment comparing the risks of carrying out the intervention to the likely outcome of not carrying out the intervention.

### *Planned Intervention*

A planned intervention is a response to an identified behaviour. In these situations, a positive handling plan (EHCP) will be in place which states strategies that are successful and acceptable if the identified behaviours occur. Parent or carer permission will be sought when positive handling plans are put in place.

In addition, successful strategies for regulation and pre-emptive diffusing of dysregulation will be stated in a pupil profile, behaviour plan and/or a positive handling plan. A risk assessment will be carried out in conjunction with a positive handling plan.

If an Autism Provision student has been restrained by a member of staff; the student needs to be handed over to an Autism Provision staff member for regulation as soon as it is possible in order to support the student.

A student who has been subject to reasonable force in an unforeseen situation must subsequently have a behaviour plan. This should be reviewed termly and only removed if no incident has occurred in at least twenty school weeks.

All incidences of restraint will be logged on Safeguard, notifying all relevant staff.

## **Guidance**

While reasonable force is necessary on occasion, it is only to be used as a last resort in the following circumstances:

- The student is a danger to themselves or others
- The student is causing significant damage to property

Physical intervention should be:

- Proportional to the circumstances
- Used with a minimum amount of force
- Not intended to cause pain, fear or injury

- Intended to maintain the safety and dignity of the student
- Used for a minimum length of time
- Considerate of student's physical needs including sensory sensitivities for students with Autism

When reasonable force is required, the following may be used:

- A safe holding tactic, until the student is sufficiently regulated to ensure that they are no longer a danger to themselves, others or property
- A safe physical escort, away from an aggravating situation and/or to a quiet room to allow for self- or mutual-regulation
- A safe tactic to remove a weapon or object from a student where significant harm to themselves, others or property is highly likely to occur

The following actions and manoeuvres are not permitted:

- Holding a student around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the student's ability to breathe
- Slapping, punching or kicking a student
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping up a student
- Holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground
- Touching or holding a student in any way that might be considered indecent
- The seated double embrace
- The double basket hold
- The nose distraction technique

Except in an emergency, physical intervention should only be carried out by a staff member who has been trained in Positive Handling. In such cases, force must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary.

### **Training**

Adults regularly working with students who have identified potentially harmful behaviours will have access to positive handling training, including Autism Provision staff. Training will ensure that staff know how to physically intervene safely, legally and within acceptable practice.

While every effort must be made to avoid injury, on occasion, accidental bruising or scratching may occur. Minor injuries such as scratching must be recorded on the incident form and on Safeguard, notifying all relevant staff.

Significant injuries such as bleeding, scratches or black eyes must be recorded on a Local Authority Incident Form and given to the School Business Manager. These must also be reported on Safeguard, notifying all relevant staff, for example, CTL of the Autism Provision for a review of behaviour management strategies.

It is the responsibility of all adults working with students at risk of harmful behaviours to be familiar with Pupil Profiles, Behaviour Plans and Positive Handling Plans including strategies for de-escalating and diffusing incidents and dysregulation.

### **Reporting and Recording of an Incident Involving Physical Intervention**

- Where physical intervention has occurred, this must be recorded as soon as possible in the 'Bound and Numbered Book' which is kept in the Autism Provision office and on Safeguard, notifying all relevant staff.
- If an injury has been sustained either due to the incident or the intervention, a Local Authority Incident Form must be filled out and given to the School Business Manager by the end of the day of the incident
- Parents or Carers will be informed on the same day and this will be recorded on the incident form
- Immediate first aid will be administered if any injuries are sustained. This will be recorded by the first aider.

### **Involvement of Parents or Carers**

When a behaviour is identified and a positive handling plan is implemented, parents or carers will be involved in the process and in deciding on effective, preventative strategies. Parents will receive a copy of the plan.

Parents will be informed as soon as possible on the day of an incident. This may be in person, by phone or in writing. A record of conversations will be made on the incident form.

### **Post Incident Support for Staff**

Where staff have been involved in an incident involving physical intervention, the relevant CTL or nominee should check the welfare of the staff member involved and provide an opportunity for a debrief, including time out if needed. The outcome of this post incident support should be recorded by the HR Officer.

### **Use of Positive Handling Plans**

A positive handling plan should be part of an overall positive behaviour support strategy and should be put in place following the identification of behaviours that may require physical intervention.

These should be:

- Accessible to staff
- Reviewed and signed by parents and carers
- Reviewed termly
- Designed to provide information about positive and pre-emptive strategies for behaviour management

### **References**

*Guidance on Use of Reasonable Force in Schools, DfE, 2013*

*Guidance on Restrictive Physical Interventions for People with Learning Disability and Autistic Spectrum Disorder, in Health, Education and Social Care Settings, DoH and DfES, 2002 DfE Circular No. 10/98*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/444051/Use\\_of\\_reasonable\\_force\\_advice\\_Reviewed\\_July\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf)

**Review May 2020**

## **LIS Positive Handling Plan**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Class:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>SEN Information:</b>		
<b>Medical Information:</b>		
<b>Other Background Information:</b>		
<b>Identified Behaviours and Triggers:</b>		
<b>Positive Behaviour Support Strategies:</b>		
<b>Preferred Positive Handling Strategies:</b>		
<b>Post Incident Strategies and Actions:</b>		
<b>Other Relevant Information:</b>		

Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CTL: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: June 2022