



THE
**WALDESLADE
& GREENACRE**
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Positive Handling Policy

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Statement of Equality

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to make clear the position of the school with regards to necessary physical interventions and to safeguard the well-being of students and staff when a situation or incident requires the use of physical intervention. It is the objective of Chelmer Valley High School to maintain consistent and safe practices in the use of handling, reasonable force & restraint.

Physical Intervention and the Law

The law allows all adults who are authorised by the Headteacher to be responsible for students to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a student:

- Committing a criminal offence (or for younger children that which would be an offence).
- Causing personal injury, injury to others or damage to property.
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline.

Staff should not hesitate to act in these situations provided they follow this policy and the attached guidance; however, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of their professional colleagues.

Please see guidance on the use of Restrictive Physical Interventions: [5095 DfES Guidance](#). A copy is also available in the main office.

Definition of Terms

Handling

Refers to any physical intervention applied by a member of staff where it necessary to make physical contact with a student in order to manage their conduct or ensure their own or others safety. Handling strategies may be restrictive or non-restrictive and include shepherding, guiding, supporting, blocking, confining, holding and, in the most extreme cases, restraining.

Use of Reasonable Force

Is the application of appropriate and proportionate force required to achieve the required outcome from the handling strategy employed (see above) without further endangering the student, member of staff or others present at the time of physical intervention.

Restraint

Is the positive application of force in order to actively prevent a child from causing significant injury* to him/herself or others or seriously damaging property.

*Significant Injury would include: actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to, themselves or others by wilful or reckless behaviour, and self poisoning.

It must be shown that on any occasion where physical restraint is used there were strong indicators that if immediate action had not been taken, significant injury would have followed.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in the protection of student safety.
- Ensure all staff undertake annual training.
- Ensure relevant staff undertake specific training associated with their role this applies to staff working as part of the Senior Leadership Team or Pastoral Team.
- Ensure all students understand that positive handling will only take place as a last resort.
- Ensure all positive handling is logged in the bound and numbered book.

The Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Support the Headteacher in ensuring all staff training up updated.
- Use de-escalation strategies to ensure positive handling is used as a last resort.
- Ensure timely contact is made with parents/carers in the event of positive handling being used.
- Ensure all incidences are logged in the bound and numbered book.

Class Teachers / Support Staff

The Class Teachers / Support Staff will:

- Attend all CPD training opportunities for de-escalation strategies and positive handling.
- Ensure all incidents are logged in the bound and numbered book.
- Use de-escalation strategies to ensure positive handling is used as a last resort.

Implementation of Physical Intervention

All members of staff working with students at the school are authorised to handle, use reasonable force or restrain students if/when such physical intervention is necessary.

No member of staff is required to employ any physical intervention strategy if they are not comfortable or confident to do so effectively.

No member of staff should intervene physically if they have reason to believe that to do so would worsen the situation/incident that is taking place.

In all circumstances where physical intervention is or may become required, members of staff should ensure that adult assistance is requested before intervention, although it is understood that circumstances may lead to the need for intervention prior to the assistance arriving.

Staff considering handling, use of reasonable force or restraint must provide opportunity for the student to alter their behaviour/actions before employing a physical intervention strategy and should continue to make instructions to the student and details of their intended interventions clear.

The method of physical intervention employed must use the minimum reasonable force for the minimum length of time (additional guidance regarding what intervention is and is not appropriate is given in Appendix A).

Recording Physical Intervention

All incidents where staff feel that they have used force to modify behaviour or conduct should be recorded on CPOMS, in the bound numbered book and by completing an incident log and the Headteacher will be informed that intervention has taken place. It is not necessary to record every incident of contact with a child, but where a member of staff perceives that contact has been received at all negatively, they are advised to record the circumstances.

The circumstances and nature of the physical intervention will be held on the record of the student involved.

The DSL will inform any necessary agencies/authorities of the physical intervention in accordance with DFE and LA guidance. The Headteacher will ensure that parent/carers are appropriately informed.

For the safeguarding of both staff and student, any subsequent investigation of the situation/incident should be undertaken by a member of staff other than the one applying the physical intervention. With the exception of the Headteacher to Deputy Headteacher in the Headteachers absence.

Post Incident Support

Following any positive handling situations, staff will be given the opportunity to be taken to a quiet environment to record and discuss the incident. Any further support required e.g. supervision / counselling will be offered on a case by case basis.

Students will also be given the opportunity to write a statement post incident in a quiet space or in the event of a parental collection at home. Parent/carers will be informed within a timely manner of the positive restraint and the circumstances which lead to this action. All students will be offered first aid if required and on school grounds. Students will also be offered post incident supervision and counselling if requested.

Training for Staff

All school staff have undertaken the following training:

- National College; certificate in the use of Reasonable Force for Secondary Schools.

Key behavioural and senior staff will also complete a conflict management course on de-escalation and positive handling (bi-annually) as they may be at greater risk of being required to use positive handling within their role.

Links to Other Policies

- Behaviour Policy.
- Drugs and Alcohol Policy.
- Suspension & Exclusion Policy.

Appendix A

Guidance for Staff re: Handling, Use of Reasonable Force & Restraint

Purpose of this Document

- To provide for the safety and security of students in need of physical intervention.
- To clarify for staff the steps they are allowed to take if a situation requiring physical intervention arises.
- To enable staff to distinguish between what intervention is and is not acceptable.
- To ensure that staff have read the documentation from DfE and Essex County Council.
- To help ensure that any physical intervention is minimal, infrequent, recorded and that relevant authorities and parents are appropriately informed.

The Decision to Employ a Physical Intervention Strategy

You should be aware that all staff who have responsibility for a student or group of students are authorised to employ physical intervention strategies in the event they are necessary and that the law allows you to intervene in this manner.

You should however be aware that you have a choice whether or not to intervene physically in any given situation and that you should not do so if you are uncomfortable with the situation or not confident to deal with it effectively.

You should be aware that in the event that you employ a physical intervention strategy, the parents of the child will be informed of your actions, the record of the intervention will be kept on the student's file and where necessary relevant authorities (e.g. IRT) will be notified of the incident for your own future protection.

In What Way Can You Physically Intervene?

Any application of physical intervention must only use the **minimum force** for the **minimum amount of time**.

There are a number of ways in which you can physically intervene and you must choose the strategy appropriate to the situation and presenting least risk to yourself, the student and other persons.

Appropriate actions include;

- **Shepherding or Guiding;** using body positioning and positive gestures to move a student away from harm. This may include the placing of a hand on the back (between the shoulder blades) and using reasonable force to actively move them from one place to another.
- **Blocking or Interposing;** placing yourself between the student and their objective (e.g. exit, another student) thereby preventing the potential injury damage or prejudice to good order.

- **Holding and Leading;** leading the student (with open hand e.g by the upper arm) to prevent them from injury, damage, etc. In cases of resistance from a student, it may be necessary to employ holding to effectively achieve shepherding and, hence you are actively leading them away.
- **Restraining;** used only in the most extreme cases, restraining may require a significant amount of force in order to prevent significant injury (as described in the policy). Essentially, restraining is a more extreme version of holding, may require more than one adult and may last significantly longer than other strategies. However, the same care must be taken to restrain a student appropriately.

In What Ways Must You NOT Physically Intervene?

The purpose of physical intervention is essentially to maintain good order and ensure the safety of all individuals, therefore it is never appropriate to employ a physical intervention strategy if you are not in control of your own emotions. Physical interventions must never be employed in anger or frustration. If you find yourself angry or frustrated by the situation at hand you must step back and allow someone else to manage the issue.

It is never appropriate to use physical intervention strategies as a punishment.

Just as there are a number of acceptable intervention strategies, there are also a number of actions it is completely inappropriate to take.

Inappropriate actions include;

- **Hitting or Striking;** while it is entirely possible that in the course of an intervention (eg. breaking up a fight) you may be hit yourself, you must not strike a student.
- **Deliberately inflicting pain;** it is not okay to twist limbs or put pressure on joints (eg. arm up a student's back), pull or hold hair, pinch or hold a student in a pain inducing way (eg. by the ear).
- **Making contact with sexually sensitive areas of the body;** where at all possible contact should be restricted to arms, shoulders and the back as previously described.
- **Restricting breathing;** by holding round the throat or for a prolonged period around the chest. It is also never appropriate to sit on/straddle a student or hold them face down to the floor.

Guidance for Managing Your Intervention

- Always give a student an opportunity to resolve the situation without use of physical intervention first.
- Always send for assistance from colleagues or another authorised adult; other students should never be involved in physical intervention. You may have to intervene before help arrives, but not managing this entirely on your own is safer for all concerned.
- Be aware of your emotions. Are you comfortable and confident to deal with this scenario without anger? If not – do not intervene.
- Continue to communicate with the student (and witnesses) throughout the incident even if the student doesn't respond. Be clear about what you are doing and inform the student that the intervention will cease when it is no longer necessary.

- Apply only appropriate strategies and the minimum required force to achieve the required outcome (prevention of injury/harm, student/staff safety, restoration of good order). Release the student once this has been achieved.
- Manage the situation calmly – even if the student responds negatively.
- Complete a 'Physical Intervention Record Form' as soon as possible after the event.

Minimising the Need for Physical Intervention

In most circumstances Physical Intervention really should be a last resort or an emergency action. Therefore, all staff should:

- Endeavour to create a calm environment which will minimise the risk of incidents where the use of physical intervention may be required.
- Endeavour to teach students how to manage strong emotions and conflict through opportunities for SMSC and wider aspects of the school curriculum.
- Quickly seek to de-escalate incidents if they do arise.
- Only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.
- Be aware of risk assessments and positive handling plans for specific individual student.

A list of authorised personnel is available from the school but will include all teachers and staff who are contracted by the school.

All staff must read DfE Circular 10/98 a copy is available in the staff room. (Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 the use of force to control or restrain pupils) and the guidance from Medway Council which can be found here:

[Useful resources for professionals | What professionals can do | Medway Council](#)

Equality Impact Assessment

Who is the policy or process intended for?	Students	Employees	Govs/ Trustees	Volunteers	Visitors
	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
Status of the policy or process:	New policy or process			Existing policy or process	
	☒			☐	
Analysis					
Protected Characteristic	Impact analysis			Explanation of impact analysis	
	Positive	Neutral	Negative		
Age:	☐	☒	☐		
Disability:	☐	☒	☐		
Sex:	☐	☒	☐		
Gender reassignment:	☐	☒	☐		
Race:	☐	☒	☐		
Religion or belief:	☐	☒	☐		
Sexual orientation:	☐	☒	☐		
Marriage or civil partnership:	☐	☒	☐		
Pregnancy and maternity:	☐	☒	☐		
Student groups (PP/SEN/CLA):	☐	☒	☐		
Evaluation and decision making					
Summary of action taken:					
Final decision:					