



# RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND POSITIVE TOUCH POLICY



**CORNWALL EDUCATION**  
LEARNING TRUST

Adopted:  
Reviewed:  
Next Review:

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## Rationale

It is fundamental that pupils are supported to feel their emotions are accepted, validated, contained and soothed by a significant adult in order to promote healthy brain development. For some pupils, it can be challenging to contain, channel and communicate emotional reactions safely and some children are likely to need the intervention of an adult to support their ability to manage their feelings, emotions and behaviours. Research suggests that for a frightened, sad or angry child who is struggling to contain emotions, safe and positive touch may be appropriately used to enable healthy pro-social brain development as a result of facilitating and providing opportunity to be calmed, soothed and contained through positive touch.

## The purpose of this policy

Positive relationships with significant adults is key to healthy development and emotional health and wellbeing. The purpose of this policy is to give clear guidelines on a code of conduct for all staff working with pupils to feel safe and secure. This policy applies to members of staff working with pupils who may need adult intervention in order to become emotionally regulated as a result of their behaviours.

The following purposes underpin our school's policy and practices:

- To create a learning environment in which young people and adults feel safe.
- To protect every person in the school community from harm.
- To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention, which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.
- To develop and implement guidance for staff (teaching and non-teaching) so that they are clear about the circumstances in which they might use safe touch or physical intervention to restrain pupils and how such strategies may be applied.

The physical intervention or restraint of pupils is fraught with difficulties. This policy provides a framework and guidance for staff which is designed to ensure the safety of both pupils and adults in such circumstances.

This policy is based on guidance from online publications, Department for Education Advice (Feb 2014) and Cornwall County Council guidance. Staff should also refer to the school's policies on behaviour for learning, safeguarding & child protection, health and safety and special educational needs.

References to 'staff' in this policy applies to all **employed** adults on site, both paid and

voluntary. All **teachers** are empowered to physically intervene. This does not, however, include students or peer tutors.

### **Safe, Positive Touch**

All staff working with pupils likely to require the application of safe touch should understand and apply a range of strategies for positively de-escalating behaviours and emotional reactions. Before safe touch is applied, it is important to ensure that the below strategies have been considered or applied.

These strategies may include:

- The use of emotion coaching strategies.
- Facilitating the use of calming techniques such as breathing.
- Providing clear, consistent boundaries.
- Providing opportunities for de-escalation through distraction.
- Removing objects from the proximity of the child should they cause risk or damage to others.
- Encouraging nearby pupils and adults to distance themselves from the child distressed to reduce the risk to others.
- Following the child's individual learning plan/school's behaviour policy consistently.
- Considering the preventative measures outlined on the child's individual risk assessment. Risk assessments will be considered from two perspectives; environmental risk assessment and individual risk assessment.
- Providing the child with a different significant adult to promote de-escalation.

Under agreed and supervised conditions, staff will consider using safe touch as one of the means available to them for:

- Calming a distressed/angry child.
- Containing a child who is incensed and out of control despite verbal attempts of de-escalation.
- Containing a child within a safe space which will allow them to de-escalate their destructive behaviour e.g. damaging property.
- Affirming or encouraging an anxious child with low-self-esteem.
- Containing a child at risk to themselves.
- Containing a child at risk to others.

This policy rests on the belief that each staff member will recognise and identify the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch, carefully considering using positive touch as one of the last means of supporting the child to become emotionally calm and regulated. Staff should not, however, put themselves in personal danger merely to safeguard property

Staff should recognise that inappropriate or unnecessary use of touch can be damaging and traumatising and may not effectively follow our safeguarding and code of conduct policies. Positive touch is not to be used as a means of achieving compliance from pupils or as an impulsive, unplanned act. Staff using positive touch should have considered the impact applying touch will have on the child with their best interests at the heart of their decision.

Staff using positive touch should not be applying touch when working alone. Staff members choosing to apply positive touch should ensure they are under the supervision of at least one other member of staff to ensure that both children and adults are safeguarded.

Every staff member applying positive touch should ensure that it is used in a way that preserves the dignity and respect of all concerned. When using restrictive physical intervention the pupil's health and safety must always be considered. Physical interventions should involve the minimum

amount of force necessary to resolve the situation and calm the pupil. A calm and measured approach should be taken at all times. It should be appropriate to the particular pupil and be in accordance with the school's agreed strategies and the following procedure which must be adhered to at all times:

- Encouraging the pupil to stop the unsafe behaviour.
- Ask the pupil to behave in a safe way, clearly stating the desired behaviour and using positive calming strategies as outlined on their plan.
- Tell the pupil that physical intervention will take place if inappropriate behaviour continues, if appropriate.
- Intervene in a measured way.

### **Restrictive Physical Intervention**

Staff who have received specific training called "Team Teach" are:

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These staff will be alerted to an incident as a priority as they receive training every 2 years.

At Newquay Junior Academy, we believe that the use of restrictive physical intervention is only necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence or becoming a victim to an offence
- Injuring themselves or others

Such intervention would only occur if normal positive behaviour strategies have not worked.

Circumstances which potentially justify the use of restrictive physical intervention with pupils:

- A pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil.
- Pupils are fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others.
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
- A pupil absconds or tries to leave school other than at the authorised time and this entails serious risk to the pupil's safety, the safety of other pupils or staff.

The use of restrictive physical intervention should always be a **last resort**. If practical before intervention, a calm warning or instruction to stop should be given using non-threatening verbal and non-verbal body language. Every effort should be made to achieve a satisfactory outcome without physical intervention. **In all circumstances help must be sent for, even when immediate intervention is necessary.**

Try to seek the support of another adult before intervening. Restrictive physical intervention can take a variety of forms and staff should observe the following points:-

- Staff should **NOT** act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.
- Staff should **NOT** slap, punch, kick or trip a pupil.
- Limbs should **NOT** be twisted or forced against joints.
- Staff should avoid touching/holding a pupil in a way that might be considered inappropriate.
- Pupils should **NOT** be held or pulled by the hair or ear.
- Any incident involving a significant level of force must be reported directly to The Senior Safeguarding Manager, County Hall, after consulting with the Head of School.
- Staff should not ignore an incident. If you do not feel able to intervene you should seek help immediately.

**'Reasonable Force'** should not be used for trivial misdemeanors and should always be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident. It should never be used for compliance or with the intent to cause pain or harm. **It must, therefore, be the minimum needed to keep**

## **the child safe from harm and from harming others.**

In any action, due regard has to be taken to the age, understanding, gender and special needs/disability of the pupil. Specific individual pupils may have risk assessments and positive handling plans which offer specific advice and guidance.

Examples of the types of force which could be used include:

- Leading a pupil by the hand (but not pulling or dragging);
- Guiding or escorting a pupil;
- The use of restrictive holds known as Team Teach. These will require specific expertise and training.

**The academy accepts and understands that in accordance with the law corporal punishment is forbidden.**

### **Carrying pupils**

It should not be necessary to carry pupils of school age at any time. This is to preserve children's dignity but is also to safeguard the physical wellbeing of staff as to carry children of school age could cause physical injury such as back strain.

### **Documentation**

Individual risk assessments and plans will be carried out on specific pupils who are more likely to require physical intervention.

Where physical intervention has been necessary, the incident must be reported to the member of the SLT with responsibility for safeguarding children. This is currently Karen Dickens. A report should be written quoting all Team Teach information on CPOMs, within 24 hours. This serves as a log of reported incidents. Parents of the pupils involved will always be advised of an incident and it may be necessary for it to be followed up by other disciplinary action or pastoral support. This is overseen by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

All members of staff and part time staff will be familiarised with this policy on at least an annual basis.

### **Physical contact in other circumstances**

There are occasions when physical contact is proper or necessary:

- PE lessons, sports coaching
- Technology and Music
- Administering first aid
- Specific SEND needs
- Touching may also be appropriate when comforting a pupil or when being congratulated or praised

This policy recognises the legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs.

### **Telling parents that restrictive physical intervention has been used against their child**

If an incident occurs which requires the use of restrictive physical intervention, parents/carers will always be informed. This should be overseen by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Complaints**

When a complaint is made the academy will refer to the Department for Education guidance relating to

"Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff".

“Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent “side-effect” of ensuring that the service user remains safe”. George Matthews - Founder of Team Teach.

The use of restrictive physical intervention is distressing to all involved and can lead to concerns, allegations or complaints of inappropriate or excessive use. In particular, a pupil might complain about the use of restrictive physical intervention in the heat of the moment but on further reflection might better understand why it happened. In other situations, further reflection might lead the pupil to feel strongly that the use of restrictive physical intervention was inappropriate. This is why we are careful to ensure all pupils have a chance to review the incident after they have calmed down.

It is important to note that during a restraint a child could be injured. Any injuries should be reported to the DSL, parents and LADO. Injuries do not necessarily indicate malpractice and should be investigated and recorded within 24 hours.

If a pupil or parent has a concern about the way restrictive physical intervention has been used, our academy's complaints procedure explains how to take the matter further and how long we will take to respond to these concerns.

Where there is an allegation of assault, abusive behaviour or injury to the child, we ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead – Karen Dickens - is immediately informed. We would also follow our child protection procedures.

If parents/carers are not satisfied with the way the complaint has been handled, they have the right to take the matter further as set out in our complaints procedure.

**Team Teach Trained Staff:**

Mr Doble – HOY 5 and 6

Mr Male – Y6 Teacher

Mrs Dickens – SENDco

Mrs Rose-Lean – Operational SENDco

Mrs Mackay – Pastoral Support Advisor

Mr Murphy - Y3 Teacher

Ms Spry – Y3 Key Worker