



**CHENDERIT  
SCHOOL POLICY  
FOR THE  
RESTRICTIVE  
INTERVENTION AND  
POSITIVE HANDLING**

**REVIEWED BY GOVERNING BODY – November 2022**

**ADOPTED BY GOVERNING BODY – November 2022**

Rationale

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## Rationale

1. Chenderit School is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for students' safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and use physical intervention only as a last resort. If used at all it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the student, and be reasonable and proportional to the circumstances of the incident. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to students and staff.
2. It is recognised in both statute<sup>1</sup> and Common Law that there is a need to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to students, staff and property.
3. This policy is based on The Department for Education guidance Use of Reasonable Force Advice for Head Teachers, staff and Governing Bodies 2013 updated July 2015.

The use of reasonable force is outlined in the school's Behaviour and Child Protection and Safeguarding policies: which are referenced to: the DfE's guidance: "Behaviour in Schools", advice for headteachers and school staff, July 2022; the DfE's guidance: "Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement in England", July 2022; the DfE's guidance: "Searching, Screening and Confiscation" advice for schools, July 2022 and the DfE's latest statutory guidance "Keeping children safe in education" Sept 2022.

## Power to use reasonable force and other physical contact

Members of Chenderit School staff are legally allowed to use reasonable force where it may prevent students from committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property and to maintain good order and discipline.

Staff are also legally allowed to use force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search without consent for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, pornographic images or articles that have been or could have been used to commit an offence or to cause harm. Please see the school's Physical Intervention and Child protection and Safeguarding policies. School policies can be found on the website – <http://www.chenderit.northants.sch.uk/school-policies.asp>.

## Objectives

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Maintain the safety of students, staff and visitors.
- Prevent serious damage to property.
- Prevent serious breaches of school discipline.

## Deciding if the use of restrictive physical intervention is appropriate

In a school setting, reasonable force is used for two main purposes:

- To control students.
- To restrain students.

(Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a students' pathway, or active control meaning leading a student by the arm. Restraint means to hold back

physically or bring under control, i.e. when students refuse to separate whilst fighting.)

- Staff will view physical intervention of students as a last resort. If students are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to;
- prevent the need for restrictive physical intervention.
- 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed.
- In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate either as control or restraint.
  - Risk to the safety of staff, students, or visitors.
  - Where there is a risk of serious damage to property.
  - Where a student's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline.
  - Where a student is committing a criminal offence.
  
- Who can use reasonable force?  
All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
  
- Any member of staff who undertakes a restrictive physical intervention should be clear as to why it is necessary and be able to show that it was in the student's best interest and that it was reasonable and proportionate. For those students assessed as being at risk of restrictive physical intervention Positive Handling Plans will be developed. These plans outline what techniques should, at best be used in association to the perceived threat, along with previously determined de-escalation strategies based on a sound knowledge of the identified student.
  
- The judgement on whether to use physical intervention and what physical intervention should be used should always depend on the circumstances of each case and in the case of students with Special Educational Needs information about the individual concerned.
  
- Staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about:
  - The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified. The chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
  - The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
  - Particular relevance to the use of physical intervention with regard to one's own personal safety and the impact of contracting contagious diseases such as COVID 19.
  
- Staff should also be aware of guidance which states:
  - Reasonable force can be used to prevent students from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder.
  - If used at all, it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the student.
  - Schools cannot use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.
  - Schools do not require parental consent to use reasonable force on a student.

### **Using physical interventions**

- Before using restrictive physical intervention staff should, wherever practicable, tell the student to stop misbehaving and communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout the incident.

Should a restrictive physical restraint be absolutely necessary then staff should make it clear to the student that physical contact or restraint will be for the minimal amount of time and will stop, as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

- Chenderit School wish to model best practice by considering physical intervention in consideration with other relevant policies in school, specifically those policies involving behaviour, bullying and health and safety.
- The following approaches are regarded as reasonable in appropriate circumstances. In determining which approach or combination of approaches from those listed should be followed, staff are expected to apply professional judgement to determine the level of risk to the student or to others, including themselves.
  - Holding for security and to reduce anxiety where there is potential risk, even if the student is not yet out of control. This is best used when the student is anxious or confused. *Its purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation.* Staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted by the student as aggression.
  - Physically interposing between students.
  - Blocking a student's path (where this is considered unlikely to escalate the situation. Where this may be the case, staff should allow the student to pass.)
  - Calm measured pushing if restricted to situations where reasonable force is used to resist a student's movement, rather than a forceful push that might cause the student to fall over.
  - Leading a student by the hand or arm.
  - Shepherding a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back.
  - In extreme cases using restrictive holds (see below).
- The restrictive physical interventions authorised by the school are those techniques in which members of staff have received the appropriate guidance in the core principles of physical restraint in schools to include:
  - Minimum of two staff involved (where possible).
  - Last resort minimum force and time.
  - Techniques that do not rely on pain or locks and allow for verbal communication.
  - Staff safety and protection addressed.
  - Planned responses and techniques are written out and included in positive handling plans for individual students.
- Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff is justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum intervention required to achieve the desired result.)



### **Alternatives to physical intervention - first steps to de-escalation**

- A member of staff who chooses not to make a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk. They can:
  - Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason.
  - Give clear directions to the students to stop.
  - Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.
  - Remove an audience or take vulnerable students to a safer place.
  - Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons.
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help.
- Staff will understand the importance of listening to and respecting children to create an environment that is calm and supportive especially when dealing with students who may

have emotional and behavioural needs which may increase their aggression. All staff will understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the student which lie beneath the behaviour as well as to the behaviour itself.

### **Reducing the likelihood of situations arising where physical intervention may be required**

- All physical interventions at the school are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. The Behaviour Policy rewards effort and application, and encourages students to take responsibility for their own behaviour. It also outlines the steps the school undertakes to ensure a calm, orderly and supportive school climate which minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind, thereby reducing the need for physical intervention.
- A structured approach to staff development is adopted through continued professional development (CPD) which allows staff to develop the skills of positive behaviour management and de-escalating incidents.
- Staff should recognise the need to effectively manage individual incidents. It is important to communicate calmly with the student, using non-threatening verbal communication and body language which is likely to reduce the risk of escalation. Staff should offer positive choices to ensure that the student can see a way out of the situation. Strategies might include, for example, going with the staff member to a quiet room, away from bystanders or other students, so that the staff member can listen to concerns; or being joined by a particular member of staff well known to the student.
- Wherever practicable a student should be warned that physical intervention may have to be used before applying it.

### **Authorisation of staff to use physical intervention and staff development**

- As stated in The Department for Education guidance Use of Reasonable Force Advice for Head Teachers, staff and Governing Bodies July 2015. "All members of school staff have a School believes in ensuring that staff are trained in specific physical interventions and de-escalation strategies through staff briefings (SIM) and whole school training sessions. Once staff have received their training, refresher training will take place 2-3 years following initial training.

### **Positive Handling Plans**

- Individual students assessed at being at greatest risk of requiring restrictive physical intervention will be identified through the member of staff with responsibility for Positive Behaviour. These students will be placed on Positive Handling Plans developed in consultation with the school, Parents/ Carers, and the student.
- Positive Handling Plans set out the situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and the de-escalation strategies that are most effective. Specific strategies and techniques that have been agreed by staff when physical intervention is required are also included.

### **Recording and reporting incidents**

- All incidents that result in non-routine interventions will be recorded in detail. Contemporaneous notes (i.e., written within 24 hours of the incident's occurrence) will be made by the staff member involved in the original incident. The school keeps a record of all physical interventions. 'The Bound and Numbered' incident book is located in the Child Protection secure store. All records

will be kept for 25 years after the last dated incident recorded in the book.

- The purpose of recording is to ensure that policy guidelines are followed, to inform parents/carers, to inform future planning as part of the school improvement process, to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the incident and to provide a record for any future enquiry.
- Accounts of the incident should be taken from the member of staff who undertook the physical intervention, the student/s involved and any third-party witnesses.
- Parents will be informed of the school's policy regarding physical intervention through the school's Behaviour Policy:
  - All parents/carers are informed annually through the Headteacher's September newsletter regarding how to access the school's behaviour policy.
  - The school's Behaviour Policy is on the school website which in turn makes reference to the school's physical intervention policy.
  - Staff who work with particular children who have learning or physical disabilities (and who have Individual Education Plans, Individual Behaviour Plans and/or Pastoral Support Plans) may need to use specific techniques routinely to manage challenging behaviour. Such arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers in advance on an individual basis. All interventions will be routinely recorded as specified in 'The Bound and Numbered Book'.
  - All parents will be informed after a non-routine incident where physical intervention is used with a child as soon as possible after any recordable incident. Parents/carers will be informed of when and where the incident took place, which members of staff were directly involved (anonymised where necessary), why they decided physical intervention had to be used, what physical intervention was used, whether there were any injuries and what follow up action was being taken in relation to their child. Parents/carers will also be given a copy of the 'Policy for the Restrictive intervention and Positive Handling of Students.'
- The Headteacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity that a physical intervention has taken place. The Headteacher will initiate the recording process and review each incident.
- Governors will be informed of the number of physical interventions on an annual basis.

### **Post-incident support**

- The school recognises the need to ensure that staff and students have appropriate emotional support.
- The student and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. Immediate action will be taken to provide first aid for any injuries requiring attention.
- The school will record any physical abrasion or more severe injury with a photograph taken by the DSL or their appointed deputy. The photograph will be electronically held as a soft copy in the digitally secure child protection section of the admin drive and or on 'My Concern' safeguarding software platform. The image may be passed to the police or other authorised agency if formally instructed to do so.
- The student will be given time to become calm whilst staff continue to supervise. When it is deemed that the student is composed, a senior member of staff will discuss the incident with the student and ascertain the reason for its occurrence. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish a positive relationship between the student and the member of staff involved in the incident.
- All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident.

This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff (or his/her nominee) will provide support to the member of staff involved.

- Parents/carers will be engaged in discussing the incident and for setting out subsequent actions and support.
- In deciding the seriousness of incidents, staff will use their professional judgement and consider the following:
  - Student behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident.
  - Degree of force used.
  - Effect on the student and / or member of staff.
  - The child's age.

### **Complaint procedure**

- If a parent/carer or student is concerned about any aspect of the management of an incident requiring physical intervention, the Headteacher should be informed of their concern. The Headteacher will respond to the complaint in accordance with school policy and procedure. If concern relates to action by the Headteacher, the parent/carer should contact the Chair of Governors.

### **Other physical contact**

- It is not illegal to touch a student. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.
- Examples of where touching a student might be proper or necessary:
  - When comforting a distressed student.
  - When a student is being congratulated or praised.
  - To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument.
  - To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching.
  - To give First Aid.