



HONLEY HIGH SCHOOL

SAFER HANDLING (CARE AND CONTROL POLICY)

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1. Scope of this Policy

Under [section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), all members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force on and off school premises where the member of staff has lawful control, or is in charge, of the student concerned. Reasonable force should be used as a last resort and should be proportionate to the age, gender, special educational needs, medical conditions, and state of physical, emotional and intellectual development of the young person. The scale and nature of any positive handling at school must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual and the nature of the harm they might cause; it cannot be used to respond to misbehaviour unless there is a risk of harm or the breakdown of good order.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School Behaviour Policy. Staff who are called upon to use physical intervention receive appropriate training.

The use of physical intervention will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have been exhausted or it is part of a planned strategy when students, staff or property are at risk. It is unlawful for schools to use physical restraint as a form of punishment.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary.

2. Overarching Principles

Honley High School provides a positive, happy, and safe environments for children to live and learn. We:

- Promote positive interaction with children building trusting and understanding relationships
- Respect children's rights, protect their dignity and do not restrict their liberty unnecessarily
- Use a restorative approach to dealing with behaviour to ensure reflection and positive outcomes for all parties where possible
- Seek to understand triggers for challenging behaviours and find solutions, actively planning to use strategies to avoid behaviour escalating
- Seek to diffuse confrontation (where it occurs) between children with their peers or adults in order to prevent escalation
- Only intervene physically with a child to keep the child or a member of staff safe or to prevent serious disorder
- Record and report all incidents of physical restraint including to parents
- Ensure that our staff are trained, skilled and confident in finding the best ways to keep children safe

3. Aims of this Policy

This policy provides guidance to school staff and information to parents, carers and students on how physical intervention and the use of reasonable force is approached at Honley High School so that all those who work in our school can do so confidently and safely. All staff should read and adhere to the policy and seek support where it is required from the Headteachers or other members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

4. Legislation and Policy Guidance

This policy is compliant with the following advice and guidance:

- The Education Act (1996)
- The Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- [Use of reasonable force – advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies](#) (DfE, July 2013)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation – advice for head teachers, school staff and governing bodies](#) (DfE, January 2018)
- [Positive environments where children can flourish - A guide for inspectors about physical intervention and restrictions of liberty](#) (Ofsted 2018)
- [When To Call The Police](#) – guidance for schools and colleges (NPCC, 2020)

This policy also links to the following School and Trust policies:

- School Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Medical Needs Policy

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

5. Authorised Staff

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act allows all staff employed by a school, including temporary and unpaid voluntary staff, to use reasonable force to control or restrain students in certain defined circumstances outlined below (section 9).

Individual members of staff cannot be required or directed to use physical restraint. However, as teaching and non-teaching staff work in 'loco parentis' and should always operate with an appropriate 'Duty of Care'.

The application of any form of physical control 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 this policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible to prevent the need for physical intervention.

6. How Challenging Behaviour Should be Addressed

The following strategies are employed as a means by which to deal proactively with challenging behaviours and to ensure that restrictive physical interventions are used as a last resort and only when absolutely necessary:

- Knowing our students well
- Building strong positive and trusting relationships with students and with their families
- Establishing clear expectations for behaviour and conduct
- Teaching and reinforcing clear routines and acknowledging compliance
- De-escalation, diffusion and distraction strategies to calm and refocus students
- Using calm, non-confrontation communication
- Use of the school stepped consequence system (School Behaviour Policy) if appropriate
- Positive handling techniques such as prompts, guides and escorts
- Analysing behaviours and setting in place supportive plans to manage difficult and challenging behaviour, involving students and parents/carers
- Implement reasonable adjustments for students whose special educational needs can result in behaviours that are challenging or endanger themselves and/or others
- Teaching self-regulation and working with students to support them to manage emotions and to raise self-esteem
- Completing an individual risk assessment to minimise the likelihood of an incident
- Teaching and modelling restorative practices to enable all parties to listen and be heard
- Referral to external agencies for expert guidance and support

7. Before Applying a Physical Intervention

It is not always possible to foresee or prevent an incident that might require the application of a physical intervention.

Honley High School takes effective action to reduce risk by:

- Showing care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiating and reasoning (appropriate to the level of understanding of the individual)
- Giving clear directions for students to stop
- Reminding the student about rules and likely outcomes
- Removing an audience or taking vulnerable students to a safe place

- Making the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used to cause harm
- Using positive guidance to escort students to somewhere less pressured
- Staff seeking assistance (whenever possible) and informing colleagues of what is occurring

8. Definitions of Safer Handling

This policy does more than simply outline the use of positive handling in school. It aims to provide a transparent overview of how we use physical contact to both care for and, where appropriate, control our students.

Reasonable Force No legal definition of reasonable force within a school's context exists, however for the purpose of this policy and its implementation:

'Reasonable Force uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a student harming himself, herself, others or property'.

Passive physical contact: situations in which physical interaction occurs to either care for or guide students who may be distressed, or have an additional need or disability, or in subject areas such as physical education in order to promote inclusive learning opportunities and deliver the academic curriculum. It may include a comforting hand on the shoulder, a guiding hand on the elbow, or strategies such as 'hand over hand' supported writing.

Active physical intervention: this may be used to divert a student from destructive or disruptive action, for example, guiding or leading a student by the arm. The techniques implemented here may include physical prompts to move students in the right direction in accordance with Safer Handling principles.

Restrictive physical intervention (control and restraint): this will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to students, staff or property. The main factor that distinguishes this from the other two areas is the non-compliance of the child or young person. It is important to note that the use of reasonable force should be seen as a last resort and intervention should always be the least amount required and for the shortest amount of time.

Similarly, it may be necessary for an adult to apply an appropriate break-away technique should they be grabbed or restrained by a student. The measure of force used should be proportionate to risk of harm given the individual circumstances.

Where required, restrictive physical intervention will be conducted in accordance with Safer Handling principles and reflect the strategies and techniques developed as part of the training undertaken annually by key staff.

9. When it is Permissible to use Physical Intervention

There are a range of situations where physical intervention might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a student:

1. Where action is necessary in self-defence
2. Where there is a developing risk of injury or significant damage to property
3. Where a student is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of situations in categories 1. and 2. above include:

- A student attacking a member of staff, or another student, or students fighting
- A student engaging in, or on the verge of committing, deliberate serious damage or vandalism to property
- A student using, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- A student running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which they might cause an accident likely to injure themselves or others
- A student absconding from class or trying to leave school (Note: this will only apply if a student could be at greater expected risk if not kept in the classroom, or at school)

Examples of situations that fall into the category 3. are:

- A student persistently refusing to obey an order to leave a classroom
- A student behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson and cannot be managed through the usual behaviour policy and routines

In the third category, control or restraint should only be used if the student could cause harm to staff or other students (e.g. through violation of health and safety).

10. Action After an Incident

In addition, procedures will be put in place to ensure that appropriate support is provided for staff and children, and that following an incident, student-staff relationships are rebuilt and repaired to ensure that a positive learning environment is maintained.

After every incident/crisis, the process that should take place for positive listening, learning and debriefing are to support staff and children. Relationships should be rebuilt and repaired to ensure that a positive learning environment is maintained.

- **Reflection:** What did we do?
- **Repair:** Is there anything we can do to repair the relationship?
- **Re-build:** What we can do next time – learning opportunities.

Where staff have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force they should have the opportunity for a brief period of rest and reflection and in the case of more serious incidents, access to counselling and support.

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a student, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Review of the student's My Support Plan or Educational Health Care Plan (where appropriate)
- Risk Assessment
- School Behaviour Policy
- Safer Handling Policy
- Child Protection/ Safeguarding Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Exclusions Procedure

The member of staff will be kept informed of any action taken. In the case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

11. Recording, Reporting and Monitoring

Lower level but active interventions, such as guiding a child by the hand, may or may not include an element of force. If the intervention does not include an element of force, then it is not restraint. If it is not restraint, it does not need to be recorded as such.

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use reasonable force, this will always be recorded and documented following agreed procedures. See Appendix A.

All incidents involving restraint will be reported and recorded on CPOMS. Copies of all documentation relating to the incident must be scanned and uploaded as attachment to the CPOMS record.

All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the record which should be completed before the colleague leaves site that day or, in the event that is not physically possible, at the latest within 24 hours of the event occurring.

Any injury to staff or students must also be recorded in the school's first aid records and, if necessary, by using the school incident reporting procedure.

Where there are repeated incidents, triggers are analysed and proactive, preventative and supportive plans are drawn up, where appropriate involving the student and the parents/carers. Copies of these plans will be held on and be accessible from the school provision map and will help to guide staff on how best to offer support to a student.

Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert Senior and Pastoral Leaders and the SENDCo to the needs of any students whose behaviour may require the use of reasonable force. The Headteacher will monitor trends and patterns in the data about individual children, individual staff and groups of staff.

Reports of violent incidents within the school are reported on an annual basis to the Full Governing Body. A summary of incidents of physical intervention will also be provided in the annual safeguarding report to the Trust Board.

12. Planned Strategies – a Graduated Approach

The below are all short term planned strategies to support a young person to resume their engagement with either educational programme:

12.1 Graduated Approaches

Offered time out – positive offer (should they wish to) to allow the young person to use a different environment for a short period to encourage emotional regulation.

- **Directed time out** – adults may verbally direct (rather than offer) the young person to use a different environment for a short period to encourage emotional regulation as part of the behavioural management strategy.
- **Withdrawal** – which involves removing the young person from a situation which causes anxiety or distress to a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities.
- **Segregation** – similar to withdrawal the young person is removed from a situation that causes overwhelming, prolonged anxiety or distress to an individual learning space/classroom for an extended period of time where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are able to manage being in a classroom. This strategy will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that it remains to be in the best interests of the young person.

12.2 Seclusion

This is defined as ‘The supervised confinement and isolation of a person, away from others in an area from which the young person is prevented from leaving e.g. either by being able to unopen a door or gate or by a person blocking the way’.

Seclusion must not be seen as part of the routine staged approach. The use of seclusion that prevents a child from leaving a room of their own free will only be

considered in **exceptional circumstances as a one-off response** when all other efforts and options have been exhausted. If there is an agreement there may be a foreseeable need to use this again this would need to be agreed in full consultation with other appropriate professionals e.g. clinical psychologist/psychiatrist. It must be part of a clear short-term Behaviour Support Plan supported by a comprehensive risk assessment which is regularly reviewed and agreed by parents. Seclusion must not be used with any intent to punish or teach the person any new behaviours.

Seclusion must be recorded and reported in CPOMS and clearly identified as seclusion.

In all instances the school will ensure the health and safety of students and any requirements in relation to safeguarding and student welfare.

The school ensures that reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure that expectations of students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are developmentally appropriate and fair.

13. Training

Honley High School will provide annual training for all teachers and student-facing staff in the form of a legal briefing and the functions of behaviour and dynamic risk assessments. In addition, accredited training in positive handling will be delivered to those staff by Safer Handling accredited trainers. The approach is affiliated to The General Services Association and its courses have been accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities and The Institute of Conflict Management (2015).

14. Complaints

All complaints will be dealt with in line with the Trust's Complaints policy and will be investigated thoroughly and speedily. If necessary, staff disciplinary procedures may be used to respond to any concerns of misconduct.

Where a member of staff has acted legally and in line with this policy, this will provide a defence to any criminal or civil action or claim of malpractice.

Appendix 1: Restraint Incident Reporting Sheet

Student		Form		Date	
Location of incident				Time	
Full names of staff involved:					
Describe what was happening and what led up to the incident:					
What happened and why did you think that this was in the best interest of the child:					
Signed				Date	
Follow up and any recommended action taken:					
Additional staff involvement:					
Signed				Date	