Positive and Physical Handling Policy

Frequency of Review:	Every 2 years
Date of Approval:	January 2025
Date of Next Review:	January 2027
Adopted by the Board of Empower Trust	

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Positive and Physical Handling Policy

This policy should always be read alongside the Relationships (Promoting Positive Behaviour) Policy

Schools should also ensure that they have read and are aware of the DfE guidance on Use of Reasonable Force – Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies – July 2013

Expectations

In Empower Trust Schools, we strive to have a safe, caring and friendly environment for all pupils and staff. It is rare in our schools that there should be a need to use force to prevent children harming themselves, others, or school property.

School staff are experienced in de-escalation strategies. However, if 'reasonable force' is needed, this policy sets out what reasonable force is and is not, who can use reasonable force, when reasonable force can be considered and the record keeping of incidents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Relationships (Promoting Positive Behaviours) Policy as this policy sets out the steps that must be applied when managing relationships and behaviour so that the use of physical force can be prevented.

In Empower Trust schools the use of reasonable force should be carried out by staff trained in Respectful Restrictive Engagements where possible. However, if delaying the use of reasonable force would place the child at risk of harming themselves or others, then staff should not wait for a member of RRE trained staff to attend.

We only use physical interventions when the risk involved of doing so are outweighed by the risk of not doing so.

Positive Behaviour Management

As outlined in our Relationships (Promoting Positive Behaviours) Policy, all staff adopt a positive approach to building relationships and improving behaviour. We promote safe environments for children and staff and we all work in partnership with those who know the child well to:

- Find out why this child is displaying these behaviours
- Understand the factor that may influence this child's behaviour
- Identify early warning signs and triggers to take measure to de-escalate or redirect

This approach helps to ensure that early and preventative intervention is the norm and ensures that the use of physical intervention is rare.

What is reasonable force?

The DfE Use of reasonable force guidance (July 2013) states that the term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils. Force can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight. Reasonable means using no more force than is needed; for example, guiding a pupil to safety by the arm or blocking a pupil's path.

Physical restraint is typically used in more extreme circumstances. In these instances, the Respectful

Restrictive Engagement (RRE) trained staff use the techniques from that training for as little time as possible.

Other forms of physical contact

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary, such as if you:

- Hold the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school
- Comfort a distressed pupil
- Congratulate or praise a pupil
- Demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- Demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching
- Give first aid

When reasonable force can be used

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from:

- Hurting themselves
- Damaging property
- Causing disorder

It can never be used as a form of punishment. It is up to staff's professional judgement to decide whether to physically intervene. This decision should always depend on the individual circumstances and if staff are unsure, they should call a member of the team trained in RRE to support.

Pupils with SEND

Reasonable force can be used on these pupils, but when deciding whether this is appropriate, staff should know and understand the needs of the pupil concerned.

Respectful Restrictive Engagements (RRE)

To ensure that reasonable force and positive handling is carried out in the most appropriate way, a select number of staff have additional RRE training. This training covers how to safely support children who may be in crisis. It also equips staff with the knowledge and understanding of de-escalating situations and encourages that positive handling and physical intervention are a last resort. The preferred model is that each Empower Trust school has at least 3 members of staff that are trained in Respectful Restrictive Engagement. There must be a minimum of 2 members of staff trained in each Empower Trust School and staff must attend annual refresher training.

RRE is used:

- To promote the least intrusive positive handling strategy and a continuum of gradual and graded techniques, with an emphasis and preference for the use of verbal, non-verbal de-escalation strategies being used and exhausted before positive handling strategies are utilised.
- To enable our school to develop acceptable and authorised responses to disruptive, disturbing, angry and aggressive behaviours in a manner that maintains positive relationships and provides safety for all.

- To reduce the number of serious incidents involving physical controls in all school and to emphasise the importance of exhausting behaviour management strategies in the first instance.
- To increase the awareness of staff concerning the importance of recording and reporting, monitoring and evaluating, all incidents involving positive handling.
- To provide a process of repair and reflection for both staff and children.

Key points of Respectful Restrictive Engagement (RRE)

Where possible, the expectation is that staff will exhaust all behavioural management strategies before they physically intervene. Where and when there is time, the physical interventions should be viewed as a "last resort option" for staff.

- Where a pupil requires repeated positive handling, the strategies and techniques will be planned for and agreed in advance.
- Physical techniques will not be taught in isolation.
- RRE emphasises positive relationships as being the key element in our work with children.
- The physical techniques have sufficient range and robustness to be appropriate across the age and development range, for both the intentional and non-intentional "challenging" individual.
- The positive handling techniques provide a gradual, graded system of response commensurate with the situation, task and individuals involved, allowing for phasing up or down as dictated to by the circumstances at the time.
- The use of force will always be reasonable, proportionate and necessary.
- The aim of positive handling is for the person to calm down sufficiently so that staff can return the physical control and help find a better way.

- A calm approach with staff is always expected when managing such situations.
- Staff will make a dynamic risk assessment, both before, during and after any serious incident involving positive handling.
- Training with Pride Respectful Restrictive Engagement has been certified by the BILD Act following the Restraint Reduction Network (RRN) standards to reduce the use of physical interventions.

Record Keeping and reporting to parents

Where it has been deemed necessary to use force, then this must be reported via our CPOMs system to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Parents should also be notified of any incidents explaining what happened and why it was felt necessary. This conversation should involve SLT and these conversations should also be noted as part of the child's CPOM record.

Where the incident has required any restrictive physical intervention to be carried out by RRE trained members of staff, the staff that have carried out the physical handling would complete a Serious Incident Report (Appendix 1). This record would then be scanned and added to the CPOM record.

Post Incident Support

Incidents that require use of restrictive physical interventions can be upsetting to all concerned and could result in injuries to the child or staff. After incidents have subsided, it is important to ensure that staff and children are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action

should, of course, be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded in accordance with school procedures. The school should take action to report any serious injuries to staff or students in accordance with trust guidelines.

We need to consider: -

- thoughts, feeling, emotions,
- emotional 'first aid'

Stage 1 – Immediate 'Are you ok' This should occur before people leave to go home.
Stage 2 – De-briefing checking people have adjusted to an emotionally difficult event. This should occur within 48 hours.
Stage 3 – Formal support may be available when requested by a member of staff, however it is not imposed. This will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Post incident review

Focus on actions and behaviour:

- Who did what, when, why, how?
- What was the outcome?
- What does it tell us about what we already know about the young person?
- What have we learnt and what or how does this inform our practice?

APPENDIX 1

Record of Positive Physical Handling or Intervention

PART A – To be completed for all incidents involving unruly or unacceptable behaviour by pupils.
To be completed as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident by person(s) involved in the incident.

Name of Pupil: Class:_____

Incident date/time/place: _____

Is there a Behaviour Management Plan in place for the above named pupil? YES / NO

Nature of Incident: Vandalism Physical Control
(Tick as appropriate)

Bullying `	Absconding	Assault	Substance Abuse
Diversion	Non-compliance	Isolation	Serious Disruption
Time Out	Danger to self	Danger to others	Other (please state)

ANTECEDENTS: (events leading up to incident)

BEHAVIOUR: (how did the pupil respond, describe what actually happened)

CONSEQUENCES: (how did the staff intervene, how did the young person respond and how was the situation resolved)

NAMES OF THOSE INVOLVED: (staff and pupils)

NAMES OF WITNESSES: (staff and pupils)

SIGNATURE OF REPORT COMPILER: _____ Date: _____

(Please turn over)

PART B – To be completed if the use of 'restrictive physical controls has occurred

WHAT DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES WERE USED PRIOR TO PHYSICAL CONTROLS:

(Tick as appropriate)

Verbal advice and support	Negotiation	Reassurance	Humour
Calm talking/stance	Contingent touch	Time out directed	Time out offered
Choices/limits/consequences	Transfer adult	Distraction (likes etc)	Success reminder
Planned ignoring	Others (please specify)		

JUSTIFICATION FOR USE OF PHYSICAL CONTROLS:

(Tick the appropriate box below)

To prevent/interrupt:
- A criminal offence
- Injury to pupil/staff/others
- Serious damage to property
- Disruptive behaviour
- Pupil absconding
- Others (please specify)

NATURE OF PHYSICAL CONTROLS USED: (include estimate of duration of use of physical controls)

(Please tick appropriate box)

Holding arm/hand	Guiding by shoulders	Standing	Sitting
Kneeling	Prone	Other (specify)	

Duration _____

RESPONSE AND VIEW OF THE PUPIL: (this field must be completed)

DETAILS OF ANY RESULTING INJURY: (Injury to whom and action taken as a result, e.g. first aid, medical treatment)

ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION:

Parents MUST be notified: Face to face By telephone In writing

NAME OF SENIOR PERSON NOTIFIED: TIME/DATE:

HEAD TEACHER'S COMMENTS:

SIGNATURE OF HEADTEACHER: _____ TIME/DATE:_____

Please add a copy of this document to the CPOMS record.