



Physical Intervention Policy v2

Strive for Education

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Statement of intent

Strive for Education (Strive) believes that it is important to establish a safe, secure and stable environment to enable students to grow, develop and learn. To achieve this, the school recognises that, in certain circumstances, physical intervention, including safe touch and the use of reasonable force, is necessary.

The school understands that behaviour is often a means of communication which may signal that a student needs support but does not know how to express this; therefore, the school takes a proactive approach to anticipating, managing and minimising potential triggers of distressed behaviour that may cause harm.

This policy acknowledges that situations may arise in which staff members will be required to use physical intervention, and in some cases reasonable force, in order to handle students' emotions or aggressive behaviour when other measures have failed to do so.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that physical intervention is used in a correct and safe manner, which is in accordance with the relevant legislation and national guidance.

1. **[Updated]** Legal framework

[Updated] This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2011
- Children Act 1989
- Equality Act 2010
- **[Updated]** DfE (2013) 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force in schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- **[Updated]** DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- HM Government (2019) 'Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour and Positive Relationships Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2. **[Updated]** Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Monitoring the overall implementation of this policy.
- Understanding that the Behaviour and Positives Relationships Policy should include the power to use reasonable force.
- Evaluating, on an annual basis, instances of physical intervention to analyse how and when reasonable force is used and identify any trends.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Responding to any complaints, from students or parents regarding the use of reasonable force.
- Deciding whether members of staff require additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities, considering the needs of students.
- Ensuring all members of staff understand the correct conduct in terms of positive handling.
- Handling any allegations of abuse in line with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- Maintaining the records of the use of reasonable force and evaluating on a termly basis how reasonable force and physical intervention is used.
- Ensuring that any member of staff who uses reasonable force completes the necessary Incident forms on CPOMS.
- Ensuring that the Behaviour and Positive Relationships Policy sets out the circumstances in which force might be used.

- **[New]** Responding to any complaints, from students or parents regarding the use of reasonable force.
- **[New]** Carrying out risk assessments to ensure that staff who regularly work alongside students can use reasonable force and other restrictive interventions as safely as possible, if and when required.

The SENCo is responsible for:

- Providing training to members of staff on how to handle the needs of students with SEND.
- Ensuring staff understand how students with SEND may react differently to reasonable force.
- Ensuring that staff understand the additional vulnerability of students with SEND or medical conditions.
- In conjunction with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, developing individual risk assessments for students with SEND or medical conditions that are agreed with the student's parents, and ensuring teaching staff are aware of these.
- Ensuring that staff understand how reasonable force principles may need to be adapted for students with medical conditions.
- Regularly evaluating how reasonable force and physical intervention is used regarding students with SEND, in collaboration with the Headteacher.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Providing staff with annual reasonable force training where the Headteacher deems it necessary.
- Ensuring all members of staff use reasonable force in accordance with this policy.
- Reviewing this policy in liaison with the Headteacher.

All staff members will be responsible for:

- Avoiding restrictive interventions wherever possible and only using reasonable force as a last resort.
- Only using reasonable force in certain circumstances, including to prevent or stop a student from:
 1. Causing injury to themselves or others.
 2. Committing a criminal offence.
 3. Damaging property.
 4. Causing disorder among students, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.
- Understanding the unacceptable uses of force and the legal implications of using force in this way.

3. **[Updated]** Definitions

[Updated] Restricted intervention: An action or measure used to prevent, limit, or control the movement of a student's body, or part of their body. Within this policy, restrictive intervention is used as an umbrella term encompassing both physical and non- physical interventions intended to restrict a student's movement or behaviour.

[Updated] Reasonable force: A legal term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive interventions. All members of school staff have the statutory power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Reasonable force refers to the minimum level of force necessary, applied for the shortest possible duration, and proportionate to the specific circumstances of the incident.

[Updated] Significant incident: Any incident in which the use of force exceeds appropriate physical contact between students and staff. This includes situations where physical force is used to carry out or support a non- physical restrictive intervention.

[New] Seclusion: A non- disciplinary intervention involving the confinement of a student to a space away from others, with their freedom to leave restricted. This may be achieved through physical obstruction, blocking exits, or actions that lead the student to believe they will face negative consequences if they attempt to leave.

[Updated] Restraint: A term used in legislation to describe a non- disciplinary intervention that immobilises a student or restricts their movement. Restraint may involve direct physical contact or indirect actions. Examples include holding a student's arms to their sides or removing an item that enables mobility, such as crutches.

For the purposes of this policy, '**physical intervention**' is used to refer to any situation in which physical contact with a student is necessary – this includes reasonable force, e.g. to defuse a situation in which a student is at risk of harming themselves or others, and safe touch, e.g. comforting a student in emotional distress.

For the purposes of this policy, '**positive handling**' is defined as the overall, graduated approach of responding to students' behaviour and emotions with the intention of protecting students and staff, and limiting damage to others and property. Positive handling adapts the least intrusive intervention techniques in response to situations, before using physical intervention and reasonable force as a last resort.

For the purposes of this policy, '**reasonable force**' is considered to refer to a broad range of actions that may be used to control or restrain a student to prevent that student from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. Reasonable force covers force that is necessary and proportionate to the circumstances.

There are two key types of reasonable force:

- '**Control**' – actions used in an attempt to direct a student's movements; this includes passive physical contact, e.g. standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact, e.g. leading a student out of a classroom by their arm.
- '**Restraint**' – actions used in an attempt to physically bring a student under control. This type of force is typically used in more extreme circumstances, e.g. where two students are fighting and refuse to separate, causing staff to intervene to hold them back from one another physically.

For the purposes of this policy, '**safe touch**' is defined as physical contact which, if avoided, would be inhumane, unkind or cause distress to a student, e.g. where a student is significantly distressed and in need of physical comfort.

4. **[New]** Avoiding physical intervention and reducing risk

The school will expect staff to assess whether the incident requiring a response can be resolved without physical intervention.

Where possible, the school implements an approach of prevention, where staff will be trained in recognising warning signs of severe pain or distress and/ or aggressive behaviour, communicating empathetically with students displaying such signs to aid them in regulating their emotions, and altering their environment to minimise distressing stimuli.

Teaching staff will be aware of the behavioural patterns, medical conditions and levels of need of students in their class, and will ensure that incidents of disruptive or aggressive behaviour in the classroom are handled in line with individual students' needs.

Staff will not generally resort to physical contact or reasonable force immediately without first questioning whether there is a need to use physical intervention. Staff will question whether:

It is necessary:

- Staff will consider whether there are other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage a situation.
- Staff will assess whether a restrictive intervention is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself.
- Where possible, staff will communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.

It is proportionate:

- Staff will use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce relevant risks.
- If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, staff will reconsider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy.
- Staff will consider the personal circumstances of the student, e.g., medical conditions, SEND or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics, e.g., age and size, and relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.

The student's welfare:

- Staff will consider the impact on the student's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken.
- Staff will maintain respect for a student's dignity.
- Where possible, staff will clearly and calmly communicate to the student what is happening, why, and explain what the student needs to do.
- For students with communication difficulties or EAL, verbal and/ or non- verbal strategies will be used to ensure the student understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond.

- Staff will seek to understand the student's feelings and use this information to determine whether the restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced, or stopped.

[New] Reasonable force will only be used in situations where it is needed to stop a student from causing harm to themselves or others, committing a criminal offence, damaging property, or causing disorder among students. Any reasonable force such situations where it is justified and perceived necessary to prevent harm to others or property in the circumstances.

[New] The school understands that, in some cases, action may be required very quickly, e.g., in the event that a student attempts to run out into a busy road, or where students begin a violent fight with one another and staff are forced to pull the students apart. Staff will not be penalised for resorting to the use of physical intervention or reasonable force in such situations where it is justified and perceived necessary to prevent harm to others or property in the circumstances.

[New] Positive handling will be applied with the intention of re- establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the student to regain self- control. Reasonable force is not used as a method of behaviour management or discipline, only as a last resort in situations that require de- escalation to prevent harm.

5. Positive handling

The principle of positive handling means that the school expects staff to assess whether the incident requiring a response can be resolved without physical intervention.

Where possible, the school implements an approach of prevention, where staff will be trained in recognising warning signs of severe pain or distress and/or aggressive behaviour, communicating empathetically with students displaying such signs to aid them in regulating their emotions, and altering their environment to minimise distressing stimuli.

Teaching staff will be aware of the behavioural patterns, medical conditions and levels of need of students in their class and will ensure that incidents of disruptive or aggressive behaviour in the classroom are handled in line with individual students' needs.

Staff will not generally resort to physical contact or reasonable force immediately without first questioning whether there is a need to use physical intervention. Staff will question whether:

- Verbal de-escalation can be attempted.
- There are actions that can be taken to remove triggers from students, e.g. dimming the lights and encouraging quiet where a student is having a meltdown in response to sensory overstimulation.
- The student can be removed from the situation without physical intervention, e.g. if they will follow a member of teaching staff out of the classroom.
- The student has a condition or support needs that mean physical intervention would be inherently more dangerous, e.g. asthma which may be made worse by restrictive holds or sensory issues where physical touch would contribute to sensory overload and may provoke aggressive behaviour.

- They have the ability, training and adequate support to physically intervene safely without causing unnecessary harm to the student or themselves.

Where there is no immediate risk of harm to themselves or others, destruction of property or serious disruption, reasonable force will not be used on the student. Any reasonable force used in situations that are non-urgent will only be used once all alternative options have been exhausted and where the staff member in charge deems that the situation is escalating.

The school understands that, in some cases, action may be required very quickly, e.g. in the event that a student attempts to run out into a busy road, or where students begin a violent fight with one another, and staff are forced to pull the students apart. Staff will not be penalised for resorting to the use of physical intervention or reasonable force in such situations where it is justified and perceived necessary to prevent harm to others or property in the circumstances.

Positive handling will be applied with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the student to regain self-control. Reasonable force is not used as a method of behaviour management or discipline – only as a last resort in situations that require de-escalation to prevent harm.

6. **[New]** Seclusion

[New] The school will recognise seclusion as a non-disciplinary measure that may be used, in exceptional circumstances, to reduce risk and avoid the need for physical intervention when a student is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation and is not acting with intent.

[New] The school will ensure that seclusion is used only as a safety measure to protect the student or others from harm and will not use seclusion as a consequence or through the threat of punishment.

[New] Where seclusion is used, the school will ensure that:

- The space used will be safe, suitable, and not intimidating or threatening to the student.
- The student will be appropriately supervised at all times.
- The restriction will last only for as long as the immediate risk of harm remains.
- The student will be allowed to leave as soon as it is safe to do so.

[New] The school will record and report any incident involving seclusion in accordance with the procedures set out in the recording and reporting incidents section of this policy.

[New] Seclusion will not be used as a disciplinary response to deliberate or wilful misbehaviour. The school will use appropriate disciplinary measures, such as removal from the classroom, in line with the behaviour policy.

7. Reasonable force

Staff members will use actions that are appropriate and in proportion to the circumstances. Physical restraint will never be used routinely. Where reasonable force is required, the degree and type of force that is used will depend on the student's circumstances, e.g. their age or SEND. The following

list is not exhaustive, but provides examples of situations where the school may decide to use reasonable force where other methods of defusing a situation have been exhausted or are not appropriate:

- Members of staff need to control students risking the safety of themselves or others outside of school premises where the same range of support options are not available, e.g. on school trips.
- Members of staff must prevent a student from leaving an area, e.g. the classroom or school grounds, where doing so would risk their safety or the safety of others.
- A student is attacking a member of staff or another student.
- A student is at serious risk of harming themselves and a member of staff must intervene to prevent this.
- The Headteacher or authorised staff are conducting a search for items prohibited under the Education Act 1996, e.g. knives and weapons, alcohol, and illegal drugs.

All members of staff will be permitted to use reasonable force where they believe it to be appropriate in line with their training, as long as all necessary precautions are taken. The decision to physically intervene during a situation is down to the professional judgement of the member of staff and always depends on the circumstances and the student's individual needs.

The power to use reasonable force also applies to any individual whom the Headteacher has identified as temporarily in charge, such as volunteers.

In many cases where physical intervention or reasonable force is required, minimal and non-restrictive force will be appropriate, e.g. holding a student's arm to escort them from a classroom.

Reasonable force techniques that involve restraint will only be used where the staff member in charge feels it is necessary to prevent serious harm. In general, restraint will only be used briefly and prolonged restraint will not be used, i.e. restraint beyond that which is necessary to remove the immediate threat a student is posing to themselves or others.

Where staff determine physical intervention is necessary, they will calmly communicate the reasons for their actions to the student and explain why it is necessary in a non-threatening manner. In most cases, staff will communicate this to students before making physical contact to minimise distress and/or further aggressive behaviour from the student; however, the school recognises that this is not possible in some emergency situations.

Staff will never give the impression that they are acting out of anger or are punishing the student. Staff members will always avoid acting in a way that could cause injury; however, the school understands that accidental injury may occur in emergency situations where there is not sufficient time for a considered response, e.g. bruising on a child's wrist where a staff member has grabbed them to prevent them running onto a busy road.

Where a member of staff believes that they are at risk, e.g. where an injury is likely to occur, they will not intervene in an incident without the help and assistance of another staff member.

Reasonable force techniques which present an **unacceptable** risk and will not be used under any circumstances include:

- The 'seated double embrace' where two staff members force a student into a sitting position and lean them forward whilst a third staff member monitors their breathing.
- The 'double basket-hold' in which a student's arms are held across their chest.
- The 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the student's nose.

Staff will also be aware that, in some instances, it will cause more distress to a student, and may increase the risk of harm to their peers, if they are prevented from leaving an area, e.g. their classroom, using physical intervention. Where it is not dangerous to allow them to leave, the staff member in charge of the situation should use their judgement in allowing a student to remove themselves from the area, as environmental factors in the area specifically may be provoking their behaviour.

Following the incidents where reasonable force is used, the student involved may be subject to separate disciplinary procedures, in which strategies should be formed to help avoid reoccurrence of such incidents.

8. [Updated] Students with SEND

[Updated] The school will have due consideration to how students with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. Staff members will be trained on understanding triggers and how students that find communication challenging may express their needs, discomfort or confusion through actions.

[New] The school will seek to minimise the potential disproportionate use of restrictive interventions used on students with SEND by understanding underlying triggers of challenging behaviour and providing proactive support.

The SENCO will ensure that the stipulations of the Equality Act 2010 are adhered to in relation to reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and the Public Sector Equality Duty, and will ensure that staff that come into regular contact with students with SEND are aware of the ways in which their needs can be met without reasonable force.

[New] The school will utilise staff who know individual students well to help identify and manage risk such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur, and develop proactive strategies to reduce the likelihood of restrictive interventions being used.

[New] The school will also work with the student, parents and other professionals to develop prevention and de-escalation strategies.

[New] De-escalation strategies may include:

- Removing stimuli that may be causing distress.
- Changing body language, facial expression, or tone of voice.
- Supporting the student to express their emotions before they become overwhelmed.
- Engaging the student in an activity which can help them manage their feelings of anxiety.
- Distracting the student in something that interests them or by introducing familiar objects and activities to redirect their attention.

Staff members will not assume that a technique employed for one student with SEND will be applicable to other students with SEND.

[New] Where appropriate, staff will work with students with SEND and their parents in the co-production of behaviour support plans. These plans will outline any adjustments and methods to communicate their needs effectively. Behaviour support plans will also detail circumstances where it may be appropriate for staff to have increased physical contact with a student. Any behaviour support plan will be reviewed with the student and their parent periodically and following any significant incident.

[New] Where there is an identified risk, e.g., an increased likelihood in the need to use reasonable force and other physical interventions, the school will put risk assessments in place and mitigate these risks through training and prevention strategies.

The school is aware that students with SEND may sometimes experience meltdowns, which can sometimes manifest in behaviour which may be aggressive or seem uncontrollable. Where it is known that a student is prone to meltdowns, the SENCO and Headteacher will draft a risk assessment to determine planned strategies for managing the student's meltdowns that are tailored to the student's specific needs, to avoid the use of reasonable force. These risk assessments will be conducted in collaboration with the student and their parents, where appropriate.

Some students with SEND may require physical intervention when they feel overwhelmed or stressed, e.g. a tight hug; however, this will be discussed as part of relevant risk assessments.

Staff will also be aware that students with SEND may engage in frequent, repetitive self-stimulatory behaviour, known as 'stimming', and that some students may engage in self-injurious stimming, e.g. repeatedly hitting or scratching themselves. While this can be alarming, staff will be aware that stimming is often carried out as a means of emotional regulation or self-soothing in response to stressful or overwhelming stimuli. Staff members will aim to remove distressing stimuli from the environment, where possible, or will support students to engage in less harmful stimming methods, e.g. by providing them with something to play with or demonstrating a less harmful stim, such as hand flapping.

Staff will be aware that restraining a student in a way that prevents them from stimming entirely can cause extreme distress and lead to further aggressive behaviour. Self-injurious stimming and tactics to support a student to engage in safer stims will be included as part of the student's risk assessment.

The school will adhere to its Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy at all times.

9. [Updated] Post-incident support

[New] The school will evaluate all incidents involving the use of restrictive intervention as soon as practicable after the event to understand why it was used, the impact on students and staff, any patterns and trends, and how the use of restrictive interventions might be avoided in the future.

[New] If appropriate, the student and staff member involved will receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible.

[New] Follow-up conversations will be used to facilitate reflection, learning and to support student and staff wellbeing. Such conversations will be framed as part of the overall debriefing process and seek to understand what happened during the incident and why, based on separate reflections from both the staff and students involved. This process will be facilitated by a staff member who was not involved in the incident, with input from an additional person to ensure impartiality and support.

[New] The school will continue to monitor student and staff wellbeing and provide additional support if needed. Additionally, any student who witnesses an incident of restrictive intervention will also be provided with appropriate support where necessary.

Following an incident of reasonable force, all students and staff members involved will be given any necessary first aid to treat injuries as soon as possible, and emotional support.

Wherever reasonable force is used, staff members and students involved in incidents will be given separate opportunities to reflect on what happened.

It will be explained to the student involved the reason that such intervention was used, and reassured that the use of the intervention was not a punishment for their behaviour, but rather a method of defusing the situation and preventing them from harming themselves or others. The student will be asked about the reasons for their behaviour, including:

- Why their environment was causing such distress for them, e.g. in an instance of sensory overstimulation leading to a meltdown.
- Whether they feel there was anything that could have been done to meet their needs before the situation escalated.
- Whether, and how, staff actions were helpful or unhelpful.

Staff will be encouraged to reflect on their actions and how they handled the situation, and will be reassured, where appropriate, that they have done nothing wrong and acted in what they perceived to be the best interests of students.

10. [Updated] Recording and Reporting incidents

[New] The proprietor will ensure that a procedure is in place for recording and reporting each significant event in which a staff member uses force on a student.

[New] Incidents will be recorded as soon as practicable after the event. It will be recorded by the staff members involved and they will aim to do this no later than the same day. The requirement to record will apply even if the use of restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a student's behaviour support plan.

[New] The school will record the following details as a minimum:

- Names of students and staff directly involved.
- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the student, including whether the student involved has SEND, and their SEN status code.
- The time, date, location, and approximate duration of the intervention.

- A brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of any physical injuries sustained.
- A brief account of why the force was assessed as necessary in that instance.
- Any post-incident support, e.g., details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts.

[New] The school may also record details such as witness accounts, how and when parents were notified, and what follow-up action has taken place.

[New] Records should be retained and analysed by the headteacher, and SENCO where physical intervention was used on a student with SEND, on a termly basis to ensure that such interventions are being used appropriately, and to identify patterns of behaviour and responses to that behaviour that may require changes to school practice, e.g., increased staff training or further behavioural or emotional support. Records should also be sent to the governing board annually for evaluation.

[New] Where reasonable force or physical restraint has been used, the student's parent will be informed unless it appears that doing so would be likely to result in serious harm to the student. If the decision is made that the parents cannot be informed as this would place the child at greater risk, the incident will be reported to the LA.

[New] A report of the incident made to parents will include the following details as a minimum:

- The time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention.
- A brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary.
- A brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force.
- The details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable.

[New] Parents will also be invited to have a follow-up discussion about the incident where appropriate. This may include a discussion about:

- Behavioural triggers or warning signs of an impending incident.
- Whether any agreed behaviour support plans were followed.
- What de-escalation strategies were used and how effective they were.
- What might be done differently in the future.

The Headteacher will be responsible for conducting a thorough investigation to find out the correct details of what occurred; this may include talking to other students about the incident, for instance those who witnessed the event.

[New] **Recording and reporting the use of seclusion and non- force related restraint**

[New] The Headteacher will ensure that a procedure is also in place for recording and reporting any incident involving seclusion or non-physical restrictive intervention, whether or not the physical force has been used. This duty applies even where such interventions are agreed with parents as part of a student's behaviour support plan.

[New] Incidents involving seclusion or non- physical restrictive intervention will be recorded as soon as practicable after the event by the staff members involved and, wherever possible, no later than the same day.

[New] For the purposes of this policy, non- physical restrictive interventions include actions that restrict a student's movement without direct physical contact, such as preventing a student from leaving a space or removing an item that enables mobility.

[New] The school will record the following details as a minimum:

- Names of the student and staff directly involved.
- The time, date, location, and approximate duration of the intervention.
- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the student, including SEND where applicable.
- A brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance.
- Any post- incident support provided, including medical or emotional support where relevant.

[New] Parents will be informed of incidents involving seclusion or non- physical restrictive intervention as soon as practicable, and no later than the same day, unless it appears that doing so would be likely to result in serious harm to the student. Where parents cannot be informed for this reason, the incident will be reported to the LA.

[New] Where an incident involving seclusion or non- physical restrictive intervention also constitutes a significant force of use, the school will follow the reporting procedure for significant use of force only, and information will not be duplicated/

[New] Records of seclusion and non- physical restrictive interventions will be retained, monitored, and reviewed alongside records of physical intervention to support oversight, identify patterns or trends, and inform any necessary changes to school practice or student support.

11. [Updated] Complaints

[New] Any complaints regarding the use of restrictive interventions will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures policy.

[New] If an allegation regarding inappropriate use of force or other restrictive interventions is made against a staff member, the procedures in Keeping children safe in education will be followed, including the provisions regarding suspension of staff.

All members of staff will be made fully aware of the consequences and legal retributions that can occur following the incorrect use of physical intervention and force.

All complaints regarding the use of physical intervention or force will be investigated in a thorough and speedy manner. The person making the complaint is responsible for providing evidence for their allegations, e.g. testimony of events or evidence of injury – it is not for the member of staff to prove that their actions were made reasonably.

In extreme circumstances, parents may take civil action or pursue a criminal prosecution. In the case where a member of staff has acted within the law, this will provide a defence to any civil or criminal prosecution.

Members of staff accused of using excessive force will not be automatically suspended as a response to the allegations. The following procedure will be adhered to, in line with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy:

- Careful consideration will be given to whether the case warrants a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved.
- The Headteacher will always take into account whether a staff member has acted within the law when considering whether or not to take disciplinary action against a staff member involved in an incident.
- Where a member of staff is suspended, the school will ensure that the staff member has access to a named contact that can provide support and guidance.
- The school will provide pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation.

Where a safeguarding allegation is made against a member of staff that involves physical contact, e.g. restraint, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the LADO will take into account that teachers and other school staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain students in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour.

12. Safe touch

The school understands that the following examples are instances of safe touch which may occur between staff and students:

- Comforting an upset or distressed student
- Congratulating or praising a student
- Holding the hand of a student to guide them, such as when crossing a road
- Giving first aid to a student
- Demonstrating exercises or techniques during sports lessons
- Administering medicine
- Using musical instruments

The school understands that certain types of physical contact between staff and students are inappropriate, e.g. cuddling, lap-sitting and some instances of holding hands, and that safe touch should never be invasive, humiliating or flirtatious.

The school designates that the only appropriate places on a student's body to touch them are their shoulders, arms and upper back.

Staff employing touch for reward or comfort will use the 'school hug', rather than an embrace. The school hug is a sideways hug whereby the member of staff places their hands on the student's shoulders. This type of hug prevents the student from turning themselves towards the member of staff and thus engaging in a 'front' embrace, which the school deems inappropriate.

The school recognises that staff will sometimes need to hold a student's hand, e.g. to guide them or prevent them from physical harm. Staff needing to hold a student's hand will use the 'school hand hold' in order to prevent any inappropriate exchange between staff and students. The school hand

hold involves the member of staff holding their arm out and the student wrapping their hand around the staff's lower arm. If required, the member of staff can then place their free hand on top of the student's for extra security.

The school understands that students are not always aware of the boundaries between staff and students and thus may try to engage in physical contact, such as lap-sitting or inappropriate hand-holding and hugging. Should a student try to engage in any inappropriate physical contact, the member of staff will explain to the student why it is unacceptable and encourage them to engage in the school-hug or school-hand-hold instead.

If a member of staff attempts to use one of the safe methods of touch and a student is unhappy or uncomfortable with this, the member of staff will retract immediately in order to respect the student's wishes.

Appropriate touch involving students with SEND will be in line with their EHC plan or IHP.

Where it is reported that a staff member has engaged, or is suspected to have engaged, in touch that is not appropriate in line with this policy and the Staff Code of Conduct, this will be handled in line with the Reporting Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy, or, where there have been multiple reports of inappropriate touch or an instance of touch which is severely inappropriate, the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

13. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Headteacher, DSL and SENCo who will consider any necessary changes and communicate the findings of the review to all members of staff.

The next scheduled review for this policy is July 2027.