Cabot Learning Federation

Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy

Approved by: CLF Board
Date Approved: October 25
Next Full Review: July 2027

History of most recent Policy changes

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation
Date	E.g. Whole Document	Detail of change	Reason for change
Apr 2021	Whole document	Introduction of central policy	Policy alignment
May 2023	Whole document	Overall review – 2-year cycle	Awaiting outcome of DfE consultation
Sept 25	Whole document	Overall review -2-year cycle	Updates with support from Elementa

Policy Equality Impact Screening

Date of screening: 20.9.25
Name of person completing screening: S Weaver
Should the policy have a Full Equalities Impact Assessment? This Policy has been fully reviewed following feedback from the DfE Consultation and working in partnership with experts in this area of Safeguarding. People across all identified groups have the potential to be impacted by the CLF Safeguarding policy and systems. By ensuring robust and consistently high-quality safeguarding policies and systems, in line with legislation and best practice, across the CLF, the impact is positive for all groups, as issues are less likely to be missed or dismissed by poor understanding, practice or bias. We will look to review the data on an annual basis to explore any potential themes and patterns in the reporting through Safeguarding reviews and audits.

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1 Policy Statement

1.1 Frome Vale Academy aims to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all its pupils to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. The Academy takes the safety of pupils and staff very seriously. The Academy believes that all pupils and staff have the right to be safe and feel safe whilst at school or on a school-run activity.

2 Reference to other relevant policies

2.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- CLF Safeguarding Policy
- CLF Code of Conduct
- Local Academy Behaviour policies

3 Legislation or non-statutory guidance

3.1 This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole trust and whole school community with input from members of staff, Academy Council members, parents/carers, children and young people, and other partners. This policy is also written in line with national and local policy on the same subject.

3.2 This policy considers the legal requirements as outlined in the following legal framework:

3.3 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education Act 2011
- The Children Act 1989
- The Equality Act 2010

Education and Inspectors Act 2006

3.4 This policy has due regard to the following guidance:

- DfE current 'Use of reasonable force in schools' Feb 25https://share.google/iFoIjvVTUEDKyixwb
- DfE current 'Working Together to Safeguard https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6849a7b67cba25f610c7db3f/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf
- DfE current 'Keeping children safe in education' https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Each Academy will appoint a member of their Senior Leadership Team with the necessary status and authority to be the responsible member of staff to oversee the application of the **Positive Handling Policy.** It may be that this is something that the **Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead** has the overview of, within their role of being responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare who will attend senior leadership meetings to report on, plan and help implement Safeguarding across the Academy.

4.2 The overall responsibility for the appropriate application of this policy lies with the Principal and Senior Leadership Team. A key element of the application of the policy is the regular and timely training, which needs to be clearly tracked and monitored to ensure that all the relevant staff have specific training on the use of reasonable force, within the context of our Positive Handling approach.

5 Minimising the Need to Use Reasonable Force

5.1 The Academy is firmly committed to creating a calm and safe environment which minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of reasonable force. Staff use the PSHE curriculum to explore and strengthen emotional responses to situations. Staff will only use reasonable force as a last resort and strongly believe in de-escalating any incidents as they arise to prevent them from reaching a crisis point. Staff will be skilled in promoting and rewarding positive behaviour and will utilise various appropriate techniques in the management of a class environment. Staff will only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved by not using force.

6 Staff Authorised to Use Reasonable Force Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act (2006)

6.1 The Principal at Frome Vale Academy empowered to authorise those members of his/her staff who are enabled to use reasonable force. At Frome Vale Academy the Principal has empowered the following members of staff to use reasonable force:

- Teachers and any member of staff who has control or charge of pupils in a given lesson or circumstance have permanent authorisation.
- Other members of staff such as site management and administrative teams also have the power to use reasonable force if a circumstance should arise in which immediate action should be taken.

6.2 All members of school staff have a legal power to use ‘reasonable force’.

- This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Principal has temporarily put in charge of pupils, such as unpaid volunteers, or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

- As a general rule nobody has the right to touch, move, hold or contain another person. However, people with a duty of care operate in exceptional circumstances where it is sometimes necessary to act outside this norm. Whenever they do so they should be clear about why it is NECESSARY. The best legal defense would be to show that any actions

were in the child's BEST INTEREST and that they were REASONABLE AND PROPORTIONATE, along with being for the LEAST AMOUNT of TIME, and using the LEAST AMOUNT OF FORCE.

- Whilst training is recommended, where there is risk presented/assessed and indicates the need for RPI (Restrictive Physical Intervention), all education professionals are empowered under the Education and Inspectors Act 2006 to act to use reasonable force to keep children safe. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents

7 Deciding whether to use reasonable force

7.1 Under English law, members of staff are empowered to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from or stop them continuing:

- Self-harming;
- Injury to other children, service users, staff or teachers;
- Damaging property;
- Committing an offence; and
- Any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline within the school, or among any of its pupils.

7.2 It is each member of staff's responsibility to make an assessment of the particular circumstances. Staff will need to decide if control is appropriate, and if it is, at what level. It is not considered appropriate at to adopt a blanket approach to the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention simply because a pupil may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Staff will need to take the following factors into consideration:

- The behaviour of the pupil;
- The known intention of the pupil;
- Their known wishes, feelings and emotional state;
- The pupils personal history;
- The influence of other pupils, family and friends;
- Any events that may be causing the pupil anxiety;
- Knowledge of the pupil;
- The time of day;
- The antecedents to the situation;
- Whether the consequences of not intervening would have seriously endangered the wellbeing of a person;
- Whether the consequences of not intervening would have caused serious and significant damage to property;
- Whether the chance of achieving the desired outcome in a non-physical way was low;
- The age, size, gender, developmental maturity of the persons involved.

7.3 This could include the following situations:

- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that puts others at risk of harm;

- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground;
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

8 Staff training

8.1 The Academy will ensure that all staff have an understanding of de-escalation skills as well as ensuring that a wide range of staff receive physical intervention training to manage challenging behaviour. The overall model would be to train all staff with a broad understanding and the de-escalation approaches and strategies that are part of overall culture. Frome Vale Academy has embraced the Team Teach approach to positive handling.

8.2 The Team-Teach approach will:

- Reinforce policy and practice, inform of current legislation, legal considerations and circular guidelines concerning restrictive physical interventions
- Reinforce the essential verbal and non-verbal skills required in a crisis situations
- Make staff groups aware of necessary interventions appropriate to the level of behaviour reached by the pupil.
- Following training, providing staff with knowledge, understanding and physical skills required for their personal safety, and the management of young people in their care.
- Offers post-incident structure to both the pupil and member of staff using the relevant reporting structures as required by the federation.
- Be underpinned by the foundations of all actions being assessed against being reasonable, necessary and proportionate.

9 Designated staff trained to use reasonable restraint

9.1 Although all staff can use reasonable force for situations outlined in the above paragraph all academies will also be required to have a number of staff trained in the use of the Team Teach positive handling approach.

9.2 There is a CLF requirement that all CLF Academies have a minimum number of staff trained in this approach as outlined below:

- Primary Academies - minimum of 4 staff to complete the training

9.3 Please include in the table below the names of all staff members that have received Positive Handling Training – the content of this table may be stored separately to the policy, and should be kept live by the Operations Lead/SLT within an Academy.

Name	Position within school	Date of Training
Janet Saunders	Principal	10/12/24
Maria Cerpenova	Vice Principal	26/11/24
Lynn Ovens	Operations Manager	23/10/25
Kirsty Nightingale	TA	29/1/25

9.4 Staff are also expected to remember that physical intervention is only one option and for behaviours involving extreme levels of risk it may be more appropriate to gain support from other agencies, including the police. Staff will be kept informed and have a duty to inform others about the plans around specific pupils who can present risks to themselves and others. This may include information about any specific SEN needs, personal circumstance and temporary upset. The information gathered here may be captured in the form of CLF Contextual Safety Plans.

10 Proactive Physical Interventions

10.1 Positive Behaviour Plans may be put in place for pupils who are known to display behaviours that may lead to them becoming distressed or violent, contextual safety plans can also be used effectively in this case. In these circumstances it may be reasonable to withdraw the child to a safer place when the pattern of behaviour begins, rather than wait until the child is distressed and out of control. The overriding factor is that action is taken in the interest of the child to reduce rather than increase the risk.

11 Reasonable and proportionate force

11.1 When using force, members of staff should only use the minimum amount of force required in achieving the required outcome. It should never be carried out in a situation that involves anger.

11.2 When considering physical intervention staff should think about the following questions:

- How is this in the best interest for the child?
- Why is a less intrusive prevention not preferable?
- Who do we need to act now?
- Why am I the best person to do this?
- Why is this absolutely essential?

11.3 If staff can answer these questions then it is more likely that physical intervention will be judged reasonable and proportionate.

11.4 Staff should, where possible, avoid any type of intervention that is likely to injure a pupil, unless in the most extreme of circumstance where there was no viable alternative. Also staff should avoid using force unless a designated Team Teach trained member of staff or until another member of staff is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

11.5 Other considerations:

- Remove any audience or take other vulnerable pupils to a safer place.
- Make the environment safer by removing potential objects that could be thrown.
- Use positive touch to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressured.
- Ensure that colleagues know this is happening and that there is a clear communication plan to get help and support as required.

12 Help Protocols

12.1 The expectation of this Academy is that all staff support one another by offering help but this does not mean taking over a situation. Staff make clear what help they need and use the following scripts to make clear what sort of assistance they need.

12.2 Scripts that may be used include:

- “How can I help?” When looking to support a member of staff or child.
- “More help available” when a staff member has offered support, been told help is not needed but feels that the member of staff may actually need further support.
- “I am holding you safely until you can hold yourself safely” when holding a child to ensure their safety and that of others around.
- “ I care too much about you to let you hurt.....yourself.....other people.....let yourself do something you would later feel bad about.....”

12.3 When a child is being held due to others being at risk, or they are at risk of hurting themselves, others, destroying property etc. A well-chosen word can sometimes avert an

escalating crisis. There is no point getting into an argument when pupils are getting angry. Telling people to calm down or pointing out what they have done wrong can escalate the incident further. It is better to say nothing and take time to think of what to say rather than saying the wrong thing and risk provoking an escalation of behaviour.

13 Restriction of Access / Exit

13.1 In the ordinary course of maintaining a supportive and stable educational experience, staff may limit pupil's liberty by requiring them not to do things that they may prefer to do, including restricting them within a building. However, if the pupil complies with the reasonable request, restriction of liberty is not an issue.

13.2 There may be occasions, however, when a pupil has lost self-control, and is intent on serious self-damage; inflicting injury on others; damage to property, or is considered potentially likely to do so, that it would be appropriate to prevent access to dangerous environments by locking doors to them. Restricting access under such circumstances is considered appropriate staff action.

14 Recording, reporting and monitoring record keeping

14.1 All documentation must be kept in line with the Federation data storage policy **HERE**

14.2 In addition to the above, Team Teach strongly recommends that all services should keep records / copies of incidents of restraint, for a minimum period of 25 years from the date of the incident.

14.3 The behaviour of some individuals presents a hazard to themselves and others. In settings which cater for individuals who exhibit hazardous behaviours, records serve a number of purposes:

- They can be an invaluable aid to risk assessment and risk reduction by communicating information about known hazards.
- They can provide evidence of both poor and preferred practice to help leaders and managers target training.
- They can direct leaders and managers towards improving the quality of the guidance they provide for staff.
- They can expose malpractice and protect staff against false allegations.
- Employers who fail to establish effective recording and reporting systems to protect children, young people, vulnerable adults and staff are in breach of their statutory duties under the relevant Health and Safety legislation.

14.4 Records:

- Should be completed after everyone has recovered from the initial incident (before the end of the day in the case of a contentious incident, or within a 24-hour period in all other incident cases);
- Should use structured recording forms (MIR's) and entered into the CLF bound and numbered book;
- Should include the de-escalation techniques used;
- Should state briefly exactly what happened;
- Should contain pupil voice;
- Should be signed and dated;

- Should be monitored and evaluated;
- Should inform positive handling plans (PHP's);
- Should be archived along with the current policy and guidance.
- Reporting must include if the young person has an EHCP, specific area of SEND, evidence of review to reduce risk of needing RPI and informing significant adult(s) for young person.
- All incidents recorded should be logged on CPOMS with the bound and numbered incident number attached, the CPOMS incident log number should be added to the Bound and numbered book.

The CLF and Elementa have now provided a training module on reporting incidents which can be accessed through the following link- https://elementa.thinkific.com/courses/reportingrecording

14.5 The Principal/SLT should monitor the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention, particularly Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI), by examining:

- The frequency of their use
- The justification of their use
- Their nature
- Their users
- The views of the pupils concerning them

14.6 The Principal will ensure that:

- The need to use Restrictive Physical Interventions are minimised;
- Restrictive Physical Interventions are used only in the appropriate circumstances;
- Only the appropriate Restrictive Physical Interventions are used;
- A summary report on the use of Restrictive Physical Interventions is provided to the school's Academy Council;
- Appropriate action is taken over issues of concern of either a generic or specific nature;
- The Major Incident Report Forms are made available on request to the authority's officers.

14.7 It is the responsibility of any member of the school's staff team to alert a member of the Senior Leadership Team of any concerns they have regarding any individual pupils in their care.

15 Post-incident support

15.1 Following the use of physical intervention, staff and pupils will be supported, the immediate physical needs of all parties will be met and staff will ensure that positive relationships are maintained.

15.2 Where necessary emotional or wellbeing support will be offered to staff and where necessary further training will be given. Pupils will be allowed time to calm down before they return to their classroom environments. The incident will be discussed with pupils and

appropriate support and sanctions implemented. Sometimes it is more appropriate to discuss events with pupils later in the day when they are more receptive to discussion.

15.3 Parents will also be notified and appropriate action and support agreed for their child.

15.4 All incidents will be logged as outlined in section 14.

16 Parents / Carers

16.1 Parents and carers are entitled to information on the behavioural management and positive handling techniques which staff employ in last resort situations or as part of a documented planned response to a student's behaviour. The responses should be documented in the students Positive Behaviour Plan.

16.2 When appropriate, they are also invited to contribute to their child's individual Positive Behaviour Plan/ Contextual Safety Plan. It is considered 'good practice' for Parents / Carers to be given/have available a copy of the school's policy on the use of reasonable force (Policy, along with the Behaviour Management Policy) to read. It is also good practice to demonstrate the hold which may be used with their young person, allowing the parents/carers to experience the hold where the parents/carer are willing.

17 Complaints and allegations

17.1 Frome Vale Academy recognises the contribution it can make to protect its children and support pupils and staff in school. The aim of the CLF Complaints Policy is to provide clear guidelines for the handling of any complaints.

17.2 The academy will also make clear to pupils that they have a right, and are able, to question/complain about the use of reasonable force. The Academy will ensure that mechanisms are in place for pupils, parents, carers and staff to voice the opinions, comments or concerns. Please refer to CLF complaints policy for further information.

17.3 Complaints and allegations will be taken seriously and will be investigated by the Principal/relevant member of the SLT/Executive team and outcomes discussed with the relevant parties. Appropriate procedures will be followed and Academy Council involved if necessary.

Appendix 1 Examples of Non-Physical Crises Intervention Techniques

SOME NON- PHYSICAL CRISES INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

Do	Don't
appear calm and relaxed	appear afraid and unsure of yourself; appear bossy, arrogant; assume an "I don't give a damn about you" attitude
keep the pitch and volume of your voice down.	raise your voice
feel comfortable with the fact that you are in control (if you control yourself, you control the situation); project a calm assured feeling that you will see the situation through to peaceful end no matter what happens	appear to expect an attack (or you will have one)
talk with the pupil	give commands; make demands
be very matter of fact if the pupil becomes agitated; be sensitive and flexible; be flexible yet consistent; be aware of body language; monitor breathing (chest movements) which can telegraph aggressive responses	make threats (Especially any that you are not absolutely sure that you can carry through!); maintain continuous eye contact; gesticulate (this may provoke confrontation)
stay close to the pupil and attend to him/her	turn your back or leave; invade the pupil's personal space
be patient; if a pupils agitation increases to the verge of attack: Acknowledge his/her feelings; Continue with a matter of fact attitude; Always leave the pupil an avenue of escape	display emotion; argue; corner the pupil physically or psychologically
where possible, remain seated as long as the pupil does; avoid crowding	get up and move towards the pupil
stay near him/her, about one arm's length away; stand to one side; give the pupil more space if appropriate	give up
seek to relax your muscles and keep them under control.	tense your muscles

Appendix 2 Advice for staff

1. At Frome Vale Academy, we believe that physical intervention and/or restraint should be the last resort. In the majority of cases de-escalation and diffusion are the appropriate methods of dealing with situations that might result in a threat to the health and safety of any individuals. On extremely rare occasions it may be appropriate for staff to intervene physically with or between pupils. These include:

    - Injury, or risk of injury, to another pupil
    - Injury, or risk of injury, to a member of staff
    - Serious damage to property that would result in harm to a person.

2. Any intervention should be a last resort and be proportionate, reasonable and appropriate, and be done with the aim to reduce not provoke.

3. All staff owe a duty of care to pupils. To take no action, where the outcome is that a pupil injures him/herself, or another, including staff, could be seen as negligence.

4. Staff are strongly advised not to physically stop pupils from leaving their room if the member of staff considered that there would be a risk of physical harm to themselves.

5. Remaining calm – the ability to try and remain calm and appear relaxed is less likely to provoke. A relaxed posture and a non-threatening (CALM) stance, i.e. not toe-to-toe, are recommended.

6. Awareness of Space – try to be aware of the space around you and avoid stepping into another individual's personal/intimate space. Try to take a step back outside the circle of danger.

7. Pacing and Chasing – angry people often pace around in tense situations and staff should try to avoid the temptation to follow as they attempt to help them calm down. This can be counter-productive as it may trigger an animal chase response and drive the other person away. Where possible it is preferable for the staff member to stand still, speaking calmly, clearly and confidently – or even sit down.

8. Intonation - when people are anxious or angry they tend to talk faster, higher and more loudly. In a potential crisis situation staff need to deliberately speak slower, lower and more quietly

9. Help Script

    - Connect by using pupil's name
    - Recognise the feelings
    - Tell the pupil you're there to help
    - You talk and I will listen
    - Give direction

10. Diffusing body language responses :
    - Social distance

- Sideways stance, step back
- Intermittent eye contact
- Relaxed body posture
- Palms open

11. Calm Stance:

- Think of the values of stepping back from a situation, both physically and emotionally:
- Allows a more considered response
- Time to make a 'dynamic' risk assessment and seek assistance
- Allows other person 'take up' time to make their own choices

12. Application of Force (DfES advice to schools 10/98)

Staff should NOT act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. This includes: - Slapping, punching, kicking or tripping a pupil - Twisting or forcing limbs against joints - Indecently touching, holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear - Other than in circumstances that are exceptional, using reasonable force to hold a pupil face down on the ground

13. In the event of a serious incident e.g. a fight, staff should:
    - Make their presence felt – "stop fighting, stop fighting"
    - Send for assistance
    - Spell out sanctions
    - Remove the 'fuel' by clearing the 'audience' away
    - Be a witness
    - Intervene physically if confident and having assessed the degree of risk but should not ignore or walk away