



Positive Handling and Physical Restraint Policy

Our Mission

"Together we work as one family to ensure excellence for all."

Our Vision

To be an ambitious, inclusive, collaborative family of schools, ensuring fullness of life and excellence in education, whilst celebrating individuality.

Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Board of Directors:	Autumn Term 2025
Date of Next Review:	Autumn Term 2027
Responsible Officer:	Lindsey Vollans

Introduction

One Excellence Multi Academy Trust (the 'Trust') aims to provide the highest possible quality of education for all children, in order to ensure that pupils from all backgrounds are able to success. Guidance concerning the use of reasonable force to restrain pupils can be found in section 550(A) of the Education Act 1996, as inserted by section 4 of the Education Act 1997. This provision was extended to include all schools by section 131 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Use of Reasonable Force (July 2013) DfE Guidance document for headteachers, staff and governing bodies.

Other policies to be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Relationships and Positive Behaviour Policy
- Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy
- SEND Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Looked after Children Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Legal Framework

The DfE Use of Reasonable Force Guidance; Advice for Head teachers, staff and Governing bodies (July 2013) allows all staff at a school to use reasonable force to keep children safe. It also allows other adults in the school to use physical interventions where reasonable, proportionate and necessary to ensure the safety of children. Those might include

- classroom assistants
- care workers
- midday supervisors
- specialist support assistants
- escorts
- caretakers
- voluntary helpers, including people accompanying pupils on visits, exchanges or holidays organised by the school.

The right for school staff to use reasonable force is further set out in the DfE document Behaviour and Discipline in Schools; Advice for Head teachers and School Staff (September 2022) which states that members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to

- prevent pupils committing an offence
- injuring themselves or others,
- damaging property
- maintain good order and discipline in the classroom.

Positive Handling should only be used when all other strategies which do not employ force have been tried and found unsuccessful or in an emergency situation

There is no legal definition of reasonable force. The Criminal Law Act (1967) allows any person to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent an offence (e.g. physical assault) being committed.

Reasonable minimal force must be a matter of personal judgement. All teachers have a professional 'duty of care' within their job description which is underwritten Part 7 and Annex 1 of School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document September 2021. Together with the legislative framework this enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Head teacher to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from: committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, damaging property and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom.

Healthy touch and physical contact with children or young people in other circumstances

It is not illegal to touch a child or young person. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary. For example:

- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching.
- in design and technology.
- giving first aid.
- cleaning a young child after an accident/wetting or soiling.
- young children and those with SEND can need staff to provide physical prompts or help.
- when a child or young person is in distress and needs comforting.
- when a child or young person is being congratulated or praised.
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument.
- holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school.

Some children seek touch and may use inappropriate behaviour to find this. If this is deemed the case, and to prevent a child's behaviour escalating, healthy touch in the guise of a hug, shoulder touch, hand hold (or another appropriate touch that the teacher deems acceptable). This may be used regularly with children who suffer from attachment issues and need emotional regulation.

Staff should use their own professional judgement to decide if a child or young person needs this kind of support. Some children and young people find touching particularly unwelcome; for example, those sensitive to physical contact because of their cultural background or because they have been abused.

Physical contact becomes increasingly open to question as children and young people get older. Staff should bear in mind that even innocent and well-intentioned physical contact can, sometimes, be misconstrued.

Communicating the school's approach to the use of force

- One Excellence schools do **not** have a 'no contact' policy as this risks putting staff at risk of being in breach of their duty of care or prevent them taking the necessary action needed to prevent a pupil causing harm.
- For some pupil's **touch** which may include a **hold** is required for sensory regulation.
- Sensory regulation is the ability to listen to the environmental feedback your body is receiving and respond through movement accordingly. Sensory regulation is required during all aspects of life, it is how we interpret the world around us, complete everyday activities and be able to function in a safe and successful manner.
- One Excellence staff do all they can to ensure that staff, pupils and parents are clear about when force might be used by completing behaviour plans and risk assessments where necessary and reporting incidents.

Power to search pupils without consent

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, Head teachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following "prohibited items"

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

The power to search without consent may also apply to prevent a pupil from;

- Committing an offence

- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

What does it mean to restrain a child?

Positive Handling is;

‘The positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property’.

The proper use of Positive Handling requires skill and judgement, as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of restraining.

The decision to use Positive Handling as restrictive physical intervention must take account of the circumstances and be based on an assessment of the risks associated with the intervention compared with the risks of not employing a restrictive intervention. The physical intervention must also only employ a reasonable amount of force

- that is the minimum force needed to avert injury or damage to property, or to prevent a breakdown in discipline
- applied for the shortest period of time.

Why use restraint

Positive Handling should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child’s action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/herself or others.

Positive Handling skillfully applied may be eased by degrees as the child calms down in response to the physical contact. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

What is reasonable force?

The term ‘reasonable force’ covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.

Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

‘Reasonable in the circumstances’ means using **‘no more force than is needed’**. As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them.

Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.

Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.

School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

Minimising the need to use reasonable force

Staff should always try to deal with the situation using other agreed strategies to calm a situation before considering using force. Our policy on the use of reasonable force is part of our overall pastoral care procedures and closely related to our policies on managing pupil behaviour and safeguarding policy. Although the Trust recognises that preventative measures will not always work, there are numerous steps that will be taken in order to help reduce the likelihood of situations arising where the power to use force may need to be exercised. We endeavour to:

- Create a calm, orderly and supportive environment that minimises the risk of violence of any kind

- Develop effective relationships between children and young people and staff that are central to good order
- Adopt a whole-school approach to developing social and emotional skills
- Take a structured approach to staff development that helps staff to develop the skills of positive behaviour management; managing conflict and also support each other during and after an incident
- Recognise that challenging behaviours are often foreseeable
- Effectively manage individual incidents while understanding the importance of communicating the child or young person, using non-threatening verbal body language and ensuring that the student can see a way out of a situation. For example, children and young people should always be given an option of going to a quiet space with the staff member away from bystanders and other peers, so that the staff member can listen to concerns; or being joined by a particular member of staff well known to them
- Wherever practical, warning a child or young person that force may have to be used before using force.
- To protect every person in the school community from harm.
- To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations.
- To use the minimum degree of force necessary to accomplish positive handling.
- To give full support to staff who have been assaulted or have suffered verbal abuse from pupils or others.
- To maintain accurate records of incidents where Positive Handling has been employed.

Staff authorised to use reasonable force

- 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 headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

Staff Training

Staff training will occur in accordance with the Trust's continuing professional development practices and policies. This training will include a chosen system of positive handling and positive touch for relevant staff. All staff will also be trained in relational policy and practice including de-escalation techniques. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO) will also make individual risk assessments available to staff where it is known that force is more likely to be necessary to restrain a particular individual, such as a child or young person whose SEN and/or disability is associated with extreme behaviour. Appropriate training will be given to the necessary staff working with these individuals on a regular basis, and staff will be notified about procedures in place.

Some key members of staff and at least one member of SLT within each school will be trained and regularly updated in the use of positive handling. CPD records will carry a record of this for each school. Usually the staff are those most likely to find themselves in a situation that may require the use of reasonable force and are therefore trained to do them correctly and in a lawful manner.

The legal framework states that any member of the staff can use positive handling to restrain pupils, when the situation warrants such an action. The school recognises that this may be necessary, however, where possible, trained and designated members of staff should be called upon in the event of an incident, as soon as possible.

The designated trained staff list will be reviewed at the end of each academic year, with mainstream staff being given the opportunity to remove/add themselves from/to the list if they so wish. All designated staff will be trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategies and techniques and must possess a certificate. School staff working in an enhanced provision within a school must hold a certificate.

When can reasonable force be used?

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- 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 disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Schools cannot:

- use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Alternatives to Physical Controls

All members of staff, before making physical intervention, should take effective action to reduce risk. They can:

- Familiarise themselves with children's individualised behaviour plans
- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason.
- Give clear directions for pupils to stop.
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.
- Remove an audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place.
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons.
- Use positive touch to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressured.
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help

Deciding whether to use reasonable force

Staff should only use force when the risk of not using force significantly outweighs those of using force. Then the judgement whether to use force and what force to use should always depend on the circumstances of each case. Children and young people with a special educational need and/or disability (SEND) should be handled according to information about the individual concerned.

Decisions on whether the precise circumstances of an incident justify the use of significant force must be reasonable. Typically, such decisions have to be made quickly, with little time for reflection. Nevertheless, staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about:

- The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used.
- The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified
- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means the more likely it is that using force can be justified.
- The relative risks associated with the physical intervention compared to the risks of using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force can be justified

Individual Risk Assessments

One Excellence respect for the rights of the individual takes into consideration the context of The Human Rights Act (1998) and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990). The school's ethos and the guidance in this policy are based on the presumption that every adult and child is entitled to:

- Respect for his/her private life
- The right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment
- The right to liberty and security: and
- The right not to be discriminated against in his/her enjoyment of those rights.

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, it is our intention to plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning needs to address:

- Managing the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary);
- Involving the parents/carers to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take;
- Briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance);
- Ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate.
- If Positive Handling is likely to be necessary, this should be included in the pupil's Individual Plan together with information on: de-escalation strategies; the manner in which the pupil will be held; how support can be summoned if needed; any medical factors to be considered.

Using reasonable force

Staff, as far as possible, should not use force unless or until another responsible adult is present to support, observe and call for assistance. Staff should always only use the minimum amount of force to achieve the desired effect. Before using reasonable force staff should, wherever practical tell the child or young person to stop and communicate in a calm measured manner throughout the incident. Staff should not give the impression of acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

Types of reasonable force used could include:

- Passive physical contact resulting from standing between children and young people, or blocking a child and young person's path.
- Active physical contact such as leading a child or young person by the arm or hand or ushering them away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- In more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds

Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or of serious injury, any member of staff would be justified in taking necessary action (consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum force required to achieve the desired result). Such situations could include preventing a child or young person running off the pavement onto a busy road or preventing a child or young person hitting someone with a dangerous object such as a glass bottle or hammer.

Staff should always make every effort to avoid acting in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. However, in the most extreme circumstances it may not always be possible to avoid injuring a student.

Staff should always avoid touching or restraining a child or young person in a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate.

Action Steps:

1. Tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and state possible consequences of failure to do so;
2. If possible, summon another adult;
3. Continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident;

4. Make it clear that restraint will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary;
5. Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include:
 - Providing medical support
 - Providing respite for those involved (A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem)

Principles Related to the Use of Physical Restraint

- Physical restraint must only be used as a last resort when other de-escalation strategies have failed. It must serve to defuse or prevent a violent or potentially violent situation. It must not be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate risk to people or property.
- Staff should have good grounds for believing that immediate action (Physical Restraint) is necessary in order to prevent a pupil from injuring him/herself or others, or causing serious damage to property.
- Where possible, staff should take steps in advance to avoid the need for physical restraint e.g through dialogue and de-escalation. The pupil should be warned orally that physical restraint will be used unless s/he desists
- Physical restraint should never be used in anger, if at any point a member of staff feels they are becoming angry they should consider withdrawing to allow someone else to deal with the situation.
- When it becomes apparent that the pupil is not responding to verbal instructions and a violent incident is imminent, the member of staff, wherever possible, should call for assistance before engaging in physical restraint.
- When it becomes necessary to restrain a pupil, the member of staff must, if possible, continue to talk to the pupil in a calm manner, offering choices and time for the pupil to become calm.
- The age and competence of the pupil must be taken into account in deciding what degree of intervention is necessary (see individual behaviour plans)
- Only the minimum force necessary, to prevent physical injury or damage should be applied. Particular care must be taken to avoid inflicting any unnecessary pain or injury.
- Restraint must not involve deliberately painful or dangerous procedures. It must:
 - Never interfere with breathing, blood supply or genital area.
 - Never involve holding the head, throat or fingers.
 - Be discontinued as soon as the situation is deemed safe.
- As soon as it is deemed safe, restraint must be gradually relaxed as the pupil regains self-control.

Recording/reporting Incidents

All incidents of restraint should be recorded as quickly as possible and in any event within 24 hours of the incident. The Head Teacher / DSL or a person acting on his or her behalf must be informed at the earliest opportunity. The schools will monitor and analyse CPOMS records of restraint to inform risk assessments and positive handling plans for individual pupils.

Details should include:

- Name of pupil(s)
- Staff member(s) involved
- Factors necessitating physical intervention
- The strategies which were employed prior to using physical intervention
- How physical intervention was effected
- Outcome of restraint
- Any other action taken in the management of the incident parents/carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This action should also be recorded.

Monitoring at the individual level allows for improved practice with the individual member of staff and/or child or young person, whilst at the strategic level it has the potential to influence policy and practice.

For those pupils for whom restraint is used regularly there is both a Positive Handling Plan and a Behaviour Plan in place that is shared with the staff in school, with both the child and their parents. This is reviewed with all key people regularly.

Plans need to include how support will be provided for the individual with challenging behaviour including strategies for prevention, de-escalation or defusing which can both avert and reduce the need for use of reasonable force.

Behaviour Plans typically will detail response/script and strategies used by all staff when a pupil begins to appear anxious, aroused or distressed. Positive Handling Plans require guidance on how staff will react when a pupil's behaviour escalates to a point where they place themselves and/or others at risk of harm.

The use of any force can cause the parents of the child or young person involved great concern. Parents should be informed as soon as possible and given an opportunity to discuss the incident with the Headteacher.

In deciding what a serious incident is, teachers should use their professional judgement and consider the:

- Pupil's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident.
- Degree of force used.
- Effect on the child or young person or member of staff.
- The child's age.

One Excellence staff acknowledges that sometimes there is a necessity for an unplanned intervention to take place where there is no behaviour plan or personal risk assessment in place. In these cases, a risk assessment is undertaken subsequently to inform whether a plan needs to be written.

Post Incident Support Structure for Pupils and Staff

The circumstances and reason for using physical restraint must be recorded on CPOM's as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours after the incident.

'Voice of the child' - time needs to be given to following up incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective. The staff talking with the child does not necessarily need to be the same person who was directly involved with the incident.

Staff should be provided with opportunities to discuss incidents involving restraint and their subsequent feelings. Where it is clear that the teachers need further advice/ training, the Head teacher should take prompt action to see that it is provided.

If any injuries have occurred, they should be recorded and reported using the school's systems.

Complaints

If staff follow the clear guidelines and parents are notified, most complaints should be avoided. However, this might not prevent all complaints and use of reasonable force could still lead to some form of investigation. The possibility cannot be ruled out that a complaint might result in a disciplinary hearing, a criminal prosecution, or a civil action brought by a child or young person or parent. In these circumstances, it would be for the disciplinary panel or court to decide whether the degree of force was reasonable in the circumstances.

If a formal complaint is received:

All complaints about the use of force should be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated. Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action. Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. Schools should refer to the "Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff" guidance and the school "Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy" where an allegation of using excessive force is made against a teacher. This guidance makes clear that a person must not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought.

The Trust will consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate. Headteachers will take advice from the LADO where they believe that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy has been breached.

If a decision is taken to suspend a teacher, the Trust will ensure that the teacher has access to a named contact who can provide support. The Local Stakeholder Board will always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the teacher. As employers, it is important that Headteacher and school senior leaders provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.

Summary

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. It is not enough to thoughtlessly apply rules without thinking through the likely consequences. The key principals are that any physical intervention should be:

- Be in the interests of the child or young person.
- Be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.
- Use the minimum force necessary for the minimum time necessary.
- Be based on a comprehensive risk assessment and/or positive handling plan.
- Have due regard for others present.
- Respect the safety and dignity of all concerned.

Appendix 1

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force? Examples include where a pupil is;

- Committing an offence;
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or amongst its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Examples of situations that fall into one of the first two categories are

- A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- Pupils fighting;
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects;
- A pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others;
- A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (NB. This will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom.
- A pupil is behaving in such a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

Incident Report Form

Completing an incident report form

Good incident recording protects us and those we care for.

A significant incident record should:

- Be practical and simple for everyone to use and understand
- Contain a clear, honest, and accurate account of what has happened
- Give a comprehensive account of the incident with specific, clear details
- Avoid abbreviations and jargon where possible
- Where technical terms are used, there should be reference to a glossary explaining what they mean

The purpose of keeping incident records is so people can work out what happened, where it happened, how it happened, who was there, and who did what. This also enables post-incident support analysis and learning.

Name of the individual		Date of birth	
Full name of the person completing form		Date of writing this report	
Signature			

Location of this incident		Date of the incident	
Full names of other individuals present			

The following information is an account of what happened before, during, and after the incident.

- Give a comprehensive and accurate account of the incident with specific, clear details.
- Avoid abbreviations and jargon where possible.
- Give details of any restrictive and non-restrictive practices used, including the full names of individuals involved, and the impact it had.

What happened before the incident?

What happened during the incident?

What happened after the incident?

Start time of any restrictive physical intervention

Duration of any restrictive physical intervention

Why was the intervention in the best interests of the individual?

Describe any injuries and if medical treatment was offered and accepted.
Injuries should also be recorded in your organisation's accident book.

External agencies who have been informed of this incident (if applicable)

Other supporting records relevant to this incident (if applicable)

Viewpoint of the individual (Wherever possible, the viewpoint of the individual should be gathered and recorded using appropriate communication support strategies.)

Signature of the individual (if applicable)

Was a debriefing offered?

Yes / No

Was a debriefing accepted

Yes / No

Include any completed debrief form with this report.

Risk Assessment Implications following this incident

Follow Up Action, if required

Name of the person
monitoring these records

Role

Signature

Letter to Parents / Carers Following Use of Physical Intervention with a Student

While our focus should always be on de-escalation, there may be occasions when a member of staff in your school feels it is reasonable, proportionate and necessary to use a restrictive intervention in order to keep everyone safe.

In these situations, it is vital to keep parents and carers fully informed about what has happened, and ensure they are offered the opportunity to discuss the incident with any relevant staff members. Open, two-way communication underpins the restorative process, enabling schools and families to work collaboratively to find ways forward together.

A 3-step approach to support

It can be upsetting for parents and carers to find out that a physical intervention has been used to support their child. They may feel angry, worried, confused or frustrated about why the intervention was necessary, and what will happen in future to reduce the likelihood of it happening again.

It's helpful to put a robust 3-step system in place following the use of any restrictive practice so you can inform and support families and ensure they are part of decision-making processes:

1. In-Person/ Phone Call

As soon as possible, let parents / carers know what has happened, either in person or over the phone. Where there is a face-to-face meeting, this should take place in a quiet, private and comfortable space, to ensure confidentiality. This conversation is an opportunity to clarify the reasons for the intervention, allay any fears, and offer reassurance.

2. Written Follow-Up

After talking about the incident, write a letter (see template example) that provides details of the incident explaining what will happen next to move forward together. You may also want to share the [Team Teach information leaflet](#) so that parents / carers can understand more about behaviour support strategies used in school.

3. Planned Meeting

Set up a meeting with the parents / carers to identify ways to avoid similar situations happening in the future, and to review and update individual risk assessments and support plans. If appropriate, you may also want to involve the student and any relevant staff members. This can form part of a wider restorative process, to encourage the repairing of damaged relationships and to promote a culture of post-incident reflection and support.

Letter Template for Parents / Carers Following the Use of a Physical Intervention with a Student (Please transfer the contents of this letter onto headed paper with your school's logo and contact information.)

Dear [insert parent / carer name]

Further to our conversation, here are the details of the recent incident involving your child:

Date of the incident	
Time of the incident	
Location of the incident	
Details of the incident	<i>Give a brief description of the incident, including the type of physical intervention used and why it was a reasonable, proportionate and necessary response. Use clear, factual language and avoid any emotive statements.</i>

We understand that you may be feeling worried or upset about what has happened. Please be reassured that the safety and wellbeing of your child is always our priority and physical interventions are only used as a last resort in order to keep everyone safe. The Team Teach information leaflet included explains more about the ways we support your child at school.

We would like to find a convenient time to discuss what we can do to reduce the likelihood of this happening again and find the best ways to support your child moving forward.

Please get in touch to let us know when you would be available to meet [insert contact details].

If you have any concerns about your child's physical, emotional or mental wellbeing as a result of this incident, or want to ask any questions, please do get in contact. If you are worried about your child's health, especially in relation to any physical symptoms, please contact your doctor immediately.

Yours sincerely

Date of Incident		Date of debrief	
Individuals Involved		Debrief led by	
Review Date			

Debrief planning checklist:

Key considerations	Notes
Where is the debrief taking place and why?	
What time of day is the debrief taking place and why?	
Who is involved in the debrief and why?	
Are there any communication needs to consider?	
Are there any sensory / regulation needs to consider?	
Are there any accessibility needs to consider?	
Is the individual and / or staff member(s) ready to engage in the debrief?	
Are there any other factors to consider before the debrief takes place?	

Questions

These questions are for guidance only. It is important to consider your context and the individuals you support and adapt the questions accordingly. If you feel questions are not appropriate or further questions needed to be added they can be added onto the bottom of the form.

Question	Response
Tell me what happened from your perspective.	
How did you feel before / during / after?	
How do you think other people felt and why?	
Were there opportunities to do things differently?	
What could you do differently in the future?	
What support do you need with this?	
How can we move forward positively now?	
What have we all learned from this?	
Is there anything else you would like to add?	

Agreed Next Steps	
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