

# East Midlands Academy Trust

## Positive Handling & Restraint Policy

**'Every child deserves to be the best they can be'**

Scope: East Midlands Academy Trust & Academies within the Trust	
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Policy type:	
Statutory	New policy

## Revision History

Revision Date	Revisor	Description of Revision
April 2026 v2	JN	<p>Review and update in line with DfE Restrictive Interventions, including Use of Reasonable Force guidance (from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of Significant Incident added to the policy, p5</li> <li>• Position on parental requests to not use reasonable force, p5</li> <li>• Four definitions of applying reasonable force, p9</li> <li>• No ground holds guidance added, p11</li> <li>• Extra definitions added to Unacceptable uses of Force, p12</li> <li>• Definition of Seclusion added, p15.</li> <li>• Follow up analysis of staff and student briefings following on from a physical intervention added, p15</li> <li>• KCSIE Reference to allegations against individual members of staff, p16</li> <li>• Recording incident updates, p17</li> <li>• Need to inform parents/carers of a restrictive intervention on the day, p17</li> <li>• Template to communicate in writing the use of restrictive intervention to parents/carers, Appendix 3, P31</li> </ul>
November 2024 v1	JN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Policy</li> </ul>



The Everyone's Invited campaign has rightly served to focus our minds on the need to continue to work together to protect pupils.

We, at EMAT, believe that schools play a crucial role in teaching pupils about sex and relationships, equality and diversity and modern citizenship as well as preparing them for the modern world. This is enacted through each school's culture, its curriculum, and all policies. We aim to give all pupils and colleagues a voice to enable them to act in a protective manner towards themselves and others. This includes developing a robust whistleblowing culture as well as fostering a culture of integrity and mutual respect.

We recognise that we have the responsibility of tackling sexual violence and harassment, instilling values in our stakeholders and encourage all to be driven by their strong moral compass. Like so much of education, our work must complement that undertaken by parents and carers so that young people receive a consistent message, and they can go about their lives free from harassment and abuse.

All of our schools will continue to engage with their stakeholders, listen to their concerns and signpost necessary support and provision within and beyond its schools. We ask that anyone who has experienced such behaviour, or who is suffering because of it, to report it to an appropriate adult either in the school or within the EMAT team so they can be supported, and steps can be taken to address the issue.

A dedicated NSPCC helpline is now available to support anyone who has experienced sexual abuse in educational settings or has concerns about someone or the issues raised. The dedicated **NSPCC helpline number is 0800 136 663 or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)**

Colleagues can also seek support from **Vivup on 0330 380 0658** or by visiting their website [www.vivup.co.uk](http://www.vivup.co.uk)

If you are troubled about possible wrongdoing at work, please don't keep it to yourself. Our **[Whistleblowing Policy](#)** is there to reassure you that it is safe and acceptable to speak up and to enable you to raise any concern you may have at an early stage and in the right way. If you feel unable to raise the matter with your manager, for whatever reason, please raise the matter with:

- **EMAT Head of Governance & Compliance** – Alexandra Rigler – [alexandra.rigler@central.emat.uk](mailto:alexandra.rigler@central.emat.uk)
- **EMAT Senior Workforce Planning & HRBP** – Vicky Donnelly – [Vicky.donnelly@central.emat.uk](mailto:Vicky.donnelly@central.emat.uk)

If you are unsure about raising a concern you can get free and independent advice from **Protect helpline on 020 3117 2520 or by emailing [whistle@protect-advice.org.uk](mailto:whistle@protect-advice.org.uk)**

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## Introduction

It is the philosophy of all academies within East Midlands Academy Trust (EMAT) that the first priority is upholding the safety of its pupils and colleagues alongside ensuring that students needs and care are attended to at all times.

The term 'Positive Handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging and or unsafe behaviour. Included in this framework are a small number of responses which may involve the use of force to control or restrain a student. The term 'physical restraint' is used when force is used to overcome active resistance. These are referred to as 'Restrictive Physical Interventions' in National Guidance [DfE "Use of Reasonable Force" – A Guide for Headteachers, Colleagues and Governing Bodies; July 2013](#)

A clear and consistent positive handling policy supports students who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties within an ethos of mutual respect, care and safety.

Students experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties sometimes present a risk to themselves and others. **Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006** describes the circumstances in which teachers and others authorised by the respective academy's Headteacher may use reasonable force to control or restrain students. Examples of when such action may be reasonable are to prevent injury to others or self, committing a criminal offence (eg – damage to property) or the breakdown of discipline.

This policy details how we implement the guidance across EMAT. It should be considered alongside the most recent LA policy statements and recent local and national guidance (as above) to help colleagues to ensure that any actions they take are reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary.

## Rationale

The purpose of this Positive Handling Policy and Restraint policy is to describe the ethos, culture and values within a framework for relating positively to pupils and improving individual ability to self regulate behaviours. This approach requires an environment with clear, predictable and consistent structures that also operates in such a way as to maintain the naturalness and flexibility of academy life.

This positive view of pupils and the work of colleagues underpins and drives our culture and ethos of ensuring every child can be the best they can by creating a firm foundation for the positive management of behaviour.

## Scope

This statement of policy and practice relates to the operation of the academies/units across EMAT.

## Principles

This policy and practice establishes the following key principles:

- A whole Trust approach conducive to quality physical and emotional care, and therapeutic intervention which incorporates effective teaching and learning in an innovative and sensitive way.
- Arrangements and practices which are known to students, colleagues, parents/carers and placing authorities that effectively convey the culture of EMAT.
- A sense of home, community and shared values across the academies. Mutual respect
- The promotion of positive relationships



- A commitment to proactivity rather than crisis driven approaches
- The encouragement of self-worth, self-confidence and self-discipline
- An emphasis on positive effort and achievement
- The encouragement and generalisation of good behaviour in the academy environment
- An appropriateness to off-site experiences and environments as well as on-site
- An active partnership with parents/carers
- That restorative approaches are embedded as a response to inappropriate behaviour that impacts on others
- That any use of sanction is considered, fair and consistent
- Sensitivity to the needs of the individual academy or unit.

## Entitlement

EMAT recognises that pupils, colleagues, parents/carers, placing authorities (for EHCP students) and their communities all have rights and responsibilities that should be reflected in its policy and practice for managing and supporting student's behaviour.

### Pupils Entitlement

All pupils are entitled to:

- be listened to through pupil voice.
- Opportunities to develop self-worth through gaining success and accepting responsibility.
- opportunities to develop self-discipline, self-regulation and emotional intelligence.
- an orderly, caring and supportive regime in which each individual's growth can be nurtured through adaptive teaching and learning.
- Consistency of treatment from colleague to colleague and between colleague groups.
- know the rules, routines and expectations of the academy which they attend (especially for in year admission pupils who will require a full induction)
- praise and reward for positive achievements and endeavour
- open access to support mechanisms (eg – school counsellor, Mosaic pathway offer, Blossom, etc)
- positive role models to emulate
- be treated as an individual
- expect individual potential to be fully explored in a range of situations and activities
- have any complaints dealt with effectively and speedily
- a de-briefing process following physical interventions (when appropriate)

### Colleague Entitlement

All colleagues are entitled to:

- respect
- an orderly and supportive environment in which effective caring and teaching can occur
- active participation in the development and review of the policy and practice
- systems which allow colleagues to be involved in the personal and social growth of the students



- access to positive handling training – Team-Teach (where necessary/appropriate)
- advice and support from senior Academy and Trust colleagues
- regular time allocation for induction, personal and professional development
- a de-briefing process following physical interventions (when appropriate)

## Parents/Carers Entitlement

Parents/Carers are entitled to:

- be regularly and actively involved in the academic, social and personal education of their children.
- be asked for their views on any risk assessments that are drawn up in relation to de-escalation plans for their child.
- information about EMAT’s policies and practice in relation.

## Policy Statement

Colleagues in EMAT places of learning are trained to look after the students in their care. Colleagues have a duty to intervene in order to prevent students from hurting themselves or others and to ensure their emotional well-being. There may also be situations in which a student seriously disrupts good order in the academy/unit or causes damage to property. Any parents/carers wishing to view this policy may do so on request.

As per DfE guidance from “Restrictive Interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools“, Academies cannot grant any requests from parents/carers to not use reasonable force and other restrictive interventions via a non-contact policy.

## Academy/SEND Unit Expectations

EMAT takes its duty of care towards students, employees and visitors to the academy/unit very seriously. Colleague protection is an important part of student protection; both depend on confident and competent colleagues who feel supported by leaders. This policy has a clear focus.

- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the students in our care.
- The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

## Significant Incident

In line with Section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 which requires schools to record and report significant incidents of use of force to parents. A significant incident is defined as any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff as described by ‘Other physical contact with pupils’ within the DfE’s Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026) . This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

## Positive Behaviour Management

All physical interventions across EMAT are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour. The Trust’s Behaviour Policy is intended to reward effort and application and encourage students to take responsibility for their own behaviour, effective self-management and emotional health and well-being.

Part of our preventative approach to risk reduction involves looking for early warning signs, learning and communicating any factors which may influence inappropriate behaviour and taking steps to divert behaviours

leading towards foreseeable risk. Students are encouraged to participate in the development of their own Behaviour Management Plans (where they are necessary) by focusing on positive alternatives and choices. However, if problems arise, colleagues have an additional responsibility to support all students when they are under pressure and safely manage crises if, and when, they occur.

## Alternatives to Physical Controls

A colleague who chooses to not or cannot (eg – due to medical grounds) perform a physical intervention must still take effective action to reduce risk.

They can:

- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting
- alternatives using negotiation and reason.
- Give clear directions for students to cease the inappropriate behaviour.
- Remind students about the academy/unit's values, rules and likely outcomes.
- Remind the student about previous successful strategies.
- Remove an audience or take vulnerable students to a safer place.
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects.
- Use safe touch to guide or escort students to somewhere less pressured.
- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and obtain help.

## Modifications to Environment

Colleagues will not wait until a crisis is underway before conducting a risk assessment of the environment. We know that some students in school may at times exhibit unsafe and possibly physical behaviour. In general, it is a good rule to keep the environments clutter free. This may mean giving consideration to secure storage for a range of everyday objects when they are not being used. For example:

- How is the availability of pointed implements (including pens, pencils, compasses, and scissors) controlled?
- What small items are available to a dysregulated student who may be tempted to use them as missiles?
- What objects are available to be used as blunt instruments?
- Do said objects all need to be left out all the time?
- Are there sharp edges or corners which present a risk?
- Are the design arrangements or furniture safe and appropriate for students who exhibit unsafe behaviours?
- Is there a comfortable place to sit with an agitated student?
- Are protocols in place to encourage a dysregulated student to take themselves to a safer place?

## Help Protocols

The expectation across EMAT is that all colleagues should support one another. This means that colleagues always offer help and always accept it. Help does not always mean taking over. It may mean just staying in the area of an incident in case you are needed, getting somebody else, or looking after somebody else's group. Supporting a colleague does not only mean agreeing with their suggestions and offering sympathy when things go wrong. Real support sometimes means acting as a critical friend to help colleagues become aware of possible alternative strategies. Good communication is necessary so that colleagues avoid confusion when help is

offered and accepted. Individuals need to agree on protocols so that all parties understand what sort of assistance is required and what is available.

At EMAT our script includes;

- **“How can I help?”** when looking to support colleagues or students.
- **“More help available”** when a colleague has offered help, been told that help is not needed but feels the colleague requires further support.
- **“I am holding you safely until you can hold yourself safely”** when holding a student to ensure their safety and that of others around.
- **“I care too much to let you hurt.....yourself....other people.....let yourself do something you would later feel upset about....”** When a student is being held due to others being at risk, or they are at risk of hurting themselves, others, destroying property etc.

## Well Chosen Words

A well-chosen word can sometimes avert an escalating crisis. When students are becoming heightened there is no point in getting into an argument. Telling young people to calm down can actually escalate a situation. Pointing out what they have done wrong can make things worse. The only purpose in communicating with a student that is heightened is to prevent further escalation. It is better to say nothing and take time to choose your words carefully than to say the wrong thing and provoke a further escalation.

## The Last Resort Principle

EMAT academies only use physical restraint when there is no realistic alternative. This does not mean that we always expect people to methodically work their way through a series of failing strategies, before attempting an intervention in which they have some confidence. Nor does it mean always waiting until the danger is imminent, by which time the prospect of safely managing it may be significantly reduced. National guidance is clear on this point.

**“If necessary, colleagues have the authority to take immediate action to prevent harm occurring even if the harm is expected to happen sometime in the predictable future.”**

Para 10, Page 4, Department of Health – 1997 – “The Control of Children in the Public Care: Interpretation of the Children Act 1989” – London: H M S O.

It does mean that we expect colleagues to conduct a dynamic risk assessment and choose the safest alternative. It also means that we expect colleagues to experiment and think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective.

## Emergency Doctrine

Emergency Doctrine is a principle that allows individuals to take action in the face of a sudden or urgent need for aid, without being subject to normal standards of reasonable care. Also called imminent peril doctrine, or sudden peril doctrine.

The emergency doctrine allows people to act in critical situations that call for quick action - a fire, a car crash, a collapsing building — without danger of recrimination. An example of someone who might be covered under the emergency doctrine is a person who performs cardiopulmonary resuscitation on a heart attack victim and in so doing breaks several of the victim's ribs. Another example is when a driver, surprised by a pedestrian who steps out from between two parked cars, swerves to miss the pedestrian but then hits another car. The emergency doctrine also covers situations in which an individual acted in **Good Faith** when disaster seemed

imminent even though ultimately it was not.

Parents/carers rights are diminishing rights as children grow older and become more capable of making their own decisions. Good parenting involves encouraging and supporting children to assess and manage risks for themselves. There may, however, be circumstances in which a dynamic risk assessment determines that older students, or young adults, lack capacity in the short term. For example, somebody under the influence of alcohol or drugs, suffering from hypothermia, a head injury or a blood sugar imbalance related to diabetes or suffering extreme emotional distress, may lack capacity in the short term. In such an emergency there is a positive duty to do whatever is immediately necessary to prevent a serious deterioration in the physical or mental well-being of the student or adult concerned. In such circumstances restraint or other deprivations of liberty may be justifiable for students.

## Summary

Our Positive Handling Policy, respective Behaviour Policies along with Team-Teach training are designed to minimise risk and help young people to build and maintain positive relationships. Identified colleagues receive clear guidance and regular training so that they are more likely to be both confident and competent at supporting the young people we care for. Confident colleagues can reassure people who are anxious, offer boundaries and choices when people challenge, with safe and effective physical intervention strategies as a last resort. We can also help people to learn how to better manage their own feelings and therefore their behaviour by providing opportunities for support, reflection and repair. Our academies are places where colleagues go to work not expecting to be hurt. They are places where students and adults know they will be positively cared for. They are places of safety and security, providing for some a contrast with the chaos, confusion and instability they may have experienced elsewhere. For some people a teacher can become a pivotal person in their lives. How our colleagues respond to our students, as opposed to the behaviour, can build the bridges which lead to positive and lifelong change.

## Proactive Physical Interventions

It is sometimes reasonable to use physical controls to prevent extreme behaviour from becoming dangerous provided that it is an agreed part of the students Positive Handling Plan.

Examples of this are where a student has shown ritual patterns of behaviour, which in the past have led to the student becoming more distressed and physical. In such circumstances it may be reasonable to withdraw the student to a safer place when the pattern of behaviour begins, rather than wait until the student is distressed and at a crisis stage. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the interest of the student and that it reduces, rather than increases, risk.

## Reasonable and Proportionate

Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. People should not react in anger. If an individual feels they are becoming angry they should withdraw to allow someone else to intervene with the situation. Where colleagues act in good faith, and their actions are reasonable and proportionate, they will be supported.

When physical controls are considered, colleagues should think about the answers to the following questions:

- How is this in the best interest of the student?
- Why is a less intrusive intervention not preferable?
- Why do we have to act now?

- Am I the best person to be doing this?
- Why is this absolutely necessary?

If colleagues can answer these questions it is more likely that a physical intervention will be judged to be reasonable and proportionate.

When reasonable force is applied, it should only be used if the following criteria apply:

- To prevent or stop a pupil from injuring themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Damaging property
- Causing disorder among pupils at school. Whether during a teaching session or in unstructured time.

If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should immediately release their holds or re-position into a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible, no ground holds should be used under any circumstances.

## Unreasonable use of Force

It is not reasonable to use force simply to enforce compliance in circumstances where there is no risk. Nor is it reasonable to use any more force than is necessary to achieve a reduction in risk. Under no circumstances should pain be deliberately inflicted or should students be deliberately subjected to undignified or humiliating treatment (this should not be confused with the unavoidable discomfort associated with some approved techniques for disengaging from assaults such as bites and grabs). Other than as a one-off emergency measure to protect health and safety, force should never be used to keep a student secluded. Seclusion is only lawful by specific court order subject to a deprivation of liberty authorisation or Court of Protection order under the Mental Capacity Act (2005) and cannot become part of a planned strategy in our academies/units.

It is illegal to use force for punishment and pupils should never be restrained when it affects their airway, breathing, or circulation.

## Team-Teach

It is EMAT policy that identified colleagues working closely with students who exhibit more challenging behaviours are trained in the pre-emptive and responsive positive handling strategies and techniques of Team-Teach, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the Behaviour Policy.

## Prompts, guides and physical contact

Prompts, guides and physical contact are used to support children's individual needs. The following definitions are set out in the Team Teach handbook:

**Prompts and Guides:** "The use of touch to gain attention or direct movement as part of teaching"

**Physical contact:** "This covers the full range of physical interactions ranging from light to firm pressure touch. It is necessary for a variety of purposes including the provision of care, comfort, communication, reassurance and safety."

Within the Trust we have made an informed, evidence-based decision to allow safe touch as a developmentally appropriate intervention that will aid healthy growth and learning.

Every colleague must know the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch. Colleagues need to demonstrate a clear understanding of the difference at all times, in line with the Trust's Safe Touch policy.



Where a prompt, guide or physical contact is made during an incident involving challenging behaviour, this should be reported on the academy's behaviour monitoring system.

## Health and Safety

If heightened/unsafe behaviour presents a significant risk of injury to people, there is a legal Health and Safety issue to be addressed. Physical behaviours should be regarded just as seriously as dangerous equipment. Physical occurrences should be reported to the Headteacher and DSL. We all have shared responsibility to identify risk, communicate potential risks and take active steps to reduce risk wherever possible. We recognise that it is not possible to entirely remove risk. Sometimes things go wrong even when we make our best efforts to do the right thing. Sometimes we are faced with unpalatable choices. In these circumstances we have to try and think through the outcomes of the options available, balance the risks and choose whatever course of action which seems to involve the least risk.

As a minimum requirement, in order to comply with health and safety legislation, each employee has a responsibility to ensure that they are conversant with this policy and guidance, and to cooperate to make its learning environments safer. It is also a requirement that they participate in training if they are directed to do so. This does not necessarily mean that all colleagues can be involved in all the physical activities. The non-physical aspects of positive handling training are crucially important too.

When considering a student's behaviour colleagues should think about the following questions:

- Can we anticipate a Health and Safety risk related to this student's behaviour?
- Have we got all the information we need to conduct a risk assessment?
- Have we provided a written plan as a result?
- What further steps can we take to prevent unsafe behaviour from developing?

## Risk Assessment

Informal dynamic risk assessments should be a routine part of life for colleagues working with students who may exhibit unsafe or risky behaviours. Responsible colleagues should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. If a proposed activity or course of action involves unacceptable risk the correct decision is to do something else.

Factors which might influence a more immediate risk assessment, and therefore a decision about how to intervene, might include the state of health and fitness of the colleague, their physical stature, competence, confidence and relationships with the students concerned. Confidence and competence are often related to the level of colleague training. Other than in an emergency, colleagues should only attempt physical controls when they are confident that such action will result in a reduction of risk. When faced by extreme behaviour, or even in a physical altercation situation, the judgement may be that by becoming involved, a colleague will increase the chance of somebody getting hurt. In this situation, the correct decision is to hold back from the physical controls.

## Getting Help

The following support structures are in place, determined by the management of each individual academy/unit:

- Risk Assessments and Behaviour Management Plans for those students who have particular SEND. These are kept on file to ensure all relevant information about each student is available to all colleagues working with them.



- Effective information sharing procedures in each academy/unit to ensure all relevant colleagues are in command of all necessary information relating to individual students.
- Home/school liaison workers who support families.
- Regular safeguarding meetings in each of the academies across the Trust.
- Use of help protocols and language to remind all colleagues of availability of colleagues to offer help including change-overs of colleagues during a crisis situation with a student.
- Debrief sessions after a crisis (which may involve the student), reflecting on how the crisis was managed by all involved and identifying any points for review or learning.

## Behaviour Management Plan/Risk Assessment

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All students who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Behaviour Management Plan/Risk Assessment. These plans should be shared with all colleagues working with the pupil and be used to identify steps to be taken when supporting a pupil in crisis. The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. If particular physical techniques have been found to be effective they should be named, along with alerts to any which have proved ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Behaviour Management Plans/Risk Assessments should be considered alongside the SEND documentation and any other planning documents which relate to the student. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special need and social context. Behaviour Management Plans should result from multi-professional collaboration.

## Reactive Physical Interventions

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and EMAT recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which colleagues 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:

- In the best interest of the student
- Reasonable and proportionate
- Intended to reduce risk
- The least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective.

Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning. Where possible, colleagues should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical interventions. They should only use the techniques and methods approved for use. In general, if colleagues act in good faith and their actions are reasonable and proportionate, they will be supported.

## Seclusion

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving. It should only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioral dysregulation. In such circumstances, the pupil is not acting with intent. The place to which the pupil is confined should be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil. The pupil should be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil should be allowed to leave. All incidents involving the use of seclusion must be

recorded by academies and reported on to LABs and regulatory bodies when requested.

## The Post Incident Support Structure for Students and Colleagues

Following a physical restraint, it is policy to offer support for all involved. People take time to recover from an incident. Until the incident has subsided the only priority is to reduce risk and calm the situation down. Colleagues should avoid saying or doing anything which could inflame the situation during the recovery phase. Immediate action should be taken to ensure medical help is sought if there are any injuries which require more than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded using the appropriate systems. It is important to note that injury in itself is not evidence of malpractice. Even when colleagues attempt to do everything right, things can go wrong.

Part of the post incident support for colleagues may involve a reminder of this, as people tend to blame themselves when things go wrong. Time needs to be found to repair relationships. When careful steps are taken to repair relationships, addressing an incident with use of Physical Intervention does not necessarily result in long term damage. This is an opportunity for learning for all concerned. Time needs to be given to following up incidents so that students have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective. When time and effort are put into a post incident support structure the outcome can be learning, growth and strengthened relationships.

Part of the post incident process after a physical intervention should include a staff de-brief, preferentially led by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident itself. Thought should also be applied to whether a pupil be-brief is needed, especially if any young people have witnessed the event(s).

## Complaints

It is not uncommon for students to make allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force following a physical intervention. EMAT has a formal Complaints Procedure, details of which can be obtained directly from the respective academy/unit or by accessing EMAT websites. Students should be reminded of the procedure and encouraged to use the appropriate channels. The Complaints Policy applies equally to colleagues. We are an open multi-academy Trust and promote transparent policy and practice in order to protect the interests of colleagues and students alike. Any colleagues' concerns regarding the welfare of students should be taken to the DSL/Headteacher for student protection within the respective academy.

Any complaint against an individual member of staff will be addressed in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and EMAT policies.

## Training

Teachers and employed colleagues authorised by the respective academy's Headteacher who are expected to use planned physical techniques should be trained. EMAT has adopted the Team-Teach Model of training. All training courses have been fully accredited in accordance with DfE and Department of Health guidance. Positive handling training is always provided by qualified instructors with rigorous guidelines.

All identified colleagues will receive a Team Teach accreditation. This will be refreshed every two years to ensure latest guidance is shared and colleagues remain confident in all aspects of Team Teach. The level of training required is kept under review and may change in response to the needs of our students. Once trained, colleagues should practice regular guidance. By training selected colleagues, we ensure an authentic approach to everyone supporting in ensuring a pre-emptive preventable approach in the use of restrictive intervention in a learning environment where a high percentage of the students have SEND.

## Recording

Whenever force or restriction of movement is used the incident must be recorded using the approved forms. The Bound and Numbered Books are kept in secure locations within the respective academies/Units. All colleagues involved in an incident should contribute to the record which should be completed before the colleague leaves site that day or in the event that is not physically possible, within 24 hours of the event occurring. Parents/carers must be informed at the earliest convenience and on the same day.

Colleagues should:

- Ensure that the Bound and Numbered Book is completed factually – if this is not available complete the form in Appendix 2b.
- Take time to think about what actually happened and try to explain it clearly using specific language in relation to any restraint undergone (e.g. – a single elbow was implemented, a Seated T-Wrap was applied, etc.)
- Complete all names in full.
- Sign and date all forms.
- Ensure that a pupil's SEND status is recorded (statutory mechanism from 1st April, 2026)
- Ensure that any post incident support offered also needs to be recorded (statutory mechanism from 1st April, 2026)
- Ensure that parents are given a written account of any restrictive intervention recorded (statutory mechanism from 1st April, 2026) by utilising the template on Appendix 3.

Bear in mind these records will be retained and cannot be altered. They will be kept for many years and could form part of an investigation at some time in the future.

The Bound and Numbered Book should not be completed until the individuals concerned have recovered from the immediate effects of the incident. They should not be rushed.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required. The academy incident log is open to external monitoring and evaluation. The original documents will be archived and kept with a copy of the same policies each year. Every term an analysis of this data is undertaken which informs next steps of risk management.

## Follow Up

Following an incident, consideration may be given to conducting a further risk assessment, reviewing the Behaviour Management Plan/Risk Assessment, or this policy. Any further action in relation to a colleague, or an individual student, will follow the appropriate procedures.

## Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:  
EMAT Colleague Code of Conduct  
EMAT Health & Safety Policy  
EMAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



## **Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)**

In preparing or amending this policy, the author has given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty; that is, they have considered any potential impact on people who share certain protected characteristics. These protected characteristics are defined as: race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

## Appendix 1: Legal References

Legislation and Guidance Pertaining to Physical interventions within Children's Services		
Title of Guidance	Date of Publication	Relevant sections and/or sub-sections.
Environments where children can flourish (Ofsted)	March 2018	A guide for inspectors about physical intervention and restrictions of liberty.
Mental health and behaviour in school	March 2016	Clarifies the responsibility of the school, outlines what they can do and how to support a student or young person whose behaviour - whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise - may be related to an unmet mental health need.
Behaviour and discipline in schools	January 2016	Developing the school behaviour policy and explains the powers and duties for colleagues.
DfE 'Use of reasonable force in schools'	July 2013	To provide clarification on the use of force to help school colleagues feel more confident about using this power when they feel it is necessary and to make clear the responsibilities of principles / headteachers and governing bodies in respect to this power.
DfE(2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'	September 2018	Statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
The use of force to control or restrain students	April 2012	Guidance specific to educational establishments.
The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009	Nov 2009	Schools are required to record and report significant incidents where colleagues have used force to control or restrain a student, which they are able to do where the student is endangering themselves or others and in order to prevent injury, damage to property or serious breaches of school discipline. The powers schools and colleges currently have to search for weapons on students and students is extended to cover alcohol, drugs and stolen items.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006	2006/2007	<b>Section 93: Power of colleagues to use force.</b> This enables colleagues to use reasonable force to prevent a student from committing an offence, causing personal injury, damaging property or doing something that prejudices discipline at the school.
The Education and Inspections Act 2006	2006/2007	<b>Sub-sections 1 – 6 (points 467 – 472) of the above section.</b>
The Education and Inspections Act 2006	2006/2007	<b>Section 94: Defense where confiscation is lawful.</b> This protects colleagues against civil or criminal liability where a lawfully confiscated item is retained or disposed of.
The Education and Inspections Act 2006	2006/2007	<b>Sub-sections 1 – 6 (points 474 – 477) of the above section.</b>
DfE and DoH Guidance on the use of restrictive physical interventions for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder	July 2002	This is guidance related to the Education and Inspections Act (as is). It describes differences between restrictive and non- restrictive, and also differentiates between physical, mechanical and chemical interventions. It offers definitions of Time Out, withdrawal and seclusion, and talks in detail about planned/unplanned intervention, reporting and recording, policy, training for colleagues, the importance of prevention and ‘last resort’.
DfE and DoH Guidance on the use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for students with severe behavioural difficulties.	Sept 2003	This is a more generic version of the above and as such needs to be included and considered.
DfE(2020)‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’	September 2020	Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	December 1991	<p>Article 3: All organisations should work to the best interests of the student.</p> <p>Article 12: Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinion taken into account.</p> <p>Article 19: All children should be properly cared for and be protected from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents or anyone who looks after them.</p> <p>Article 23: Children who have any kind of disability should have special care and support.</p> <p>Article 28: Children have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children’s human dignity.</p> <p>Article 31: All children have the right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of activities.</p>
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974		<p><b>The Act</b> provides the legal framework to promote, stimulate and encourage high standards of health and safety in places of work. It protects employees and the public from work activities. Everyone has a duty to comply with the Act, including employers and employees.</p>
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974		<p><b>Employer’s Responsibilities:</b> Provide and maintain safety equipment and safe systems of work. Provide information, training, instruction and supervision. Ensure colleagues are aware of instructions and guidance. Provide a safe place of employment. Provide a safe working environment. Provide a written safety policy/risk assessment.</p> <p>Look after health and safety of others. Talk to safety representatives and other advisors.</p>
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974		<p><b>Employee’s responsibilities:</b> take care of their own health and safety and that of others persons.</p> <p>Employees may be liable. Co-operate with their employers and must not interfere with anything provided in the interest of health and safety.</p>
<p>The latest guidance is Behaviour and Discipline in Schools January 2016 and Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2013</p>		

## Appendix 2a): Report Form SERIOUS INCIDENT

Student's Name:	Compiler:	Time:
Date:	Status:	Duration:
Location:	Signature:	

**STUDENT BEHAVIOUR:**

**ANTECEDENTS:**

Kicking		Head butting	
Punching		Absconding	
Biting		Defiance	
Spitting		Threats	
Disruptive		Abusive language	
Damaging property		Throwing/ Destruction	
Pushing/pinching		Bullying	
Self-harm		Other	

**Behaviour:**

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**Consequences:**

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**Estimated reason for behaviours displayed:**

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Substance misuse		Anger	
Frustration		Learned behaviour	
Peer dynamics		Conflict	
Medication issues		Psychological	
Failure to anticipate/accept consequences			

**TO BE COMPLETED IF ANY FORM OF POSITIVE HANDLING HAS BEEN EMPLOYED:**

DID YOU COMPLETE A DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERING ALL PARTIES? **Yes / No**

WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF YOU HAD NOT USED POSITIVE HANDLING?

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**REASON FOR POSITIVE HANDLING:**

Committing a criminal offence		Prevent/interrupt absconding	
Causing personal injury		Causing damage to property	
To ensure that the student leaves a classroom or work area		To move student from A to B	
Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline			

**NATURE OF POSITIVE HANDLING USED: SINGLE ELBOW/DOUBLE ELBOW/WRAP/SHIELD ETC:**

Sequence:	Hold:	Position:	Minutes:	Number of Colleagues	Names:	Witnesses:

**DE-ESCALATION USED:**

Humour		Calm talking/distraction		Time out	
Reminder of Success		Removal of audience		Persuasion	
Tactical ignoring		Limits/consequences		Negotiation	
Change of adult		Advice & support		Other	

**INJURIES:**

Were any parties injured?		
Students:	Yes/ No	Colleagues: Yes / No
<b>Details of any injuries</b> (please complete body map on attached page):		
Medical consultation <b>MUST</b> be offered.		Response to offer: Yes / No
If not accepted, assessment of possible injury by qualified first aider sought?		Yes / No
Medical attention given?		
Parents / Carers informed?	Yes / No	By Who:
Reported to Head Teacher	Date / Time:	By:

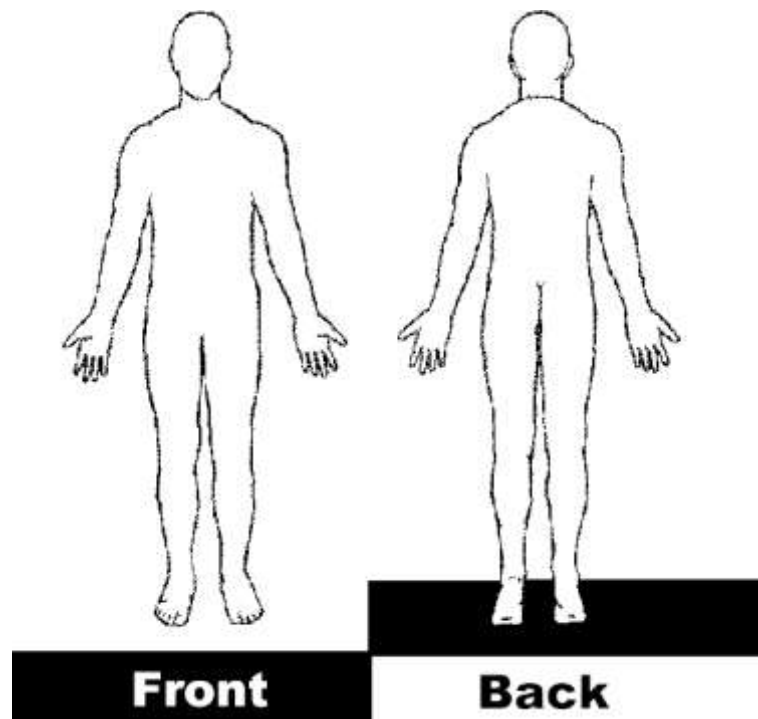
Was sufficient/appropriate de- escalation used?		Is the reporting complete & comprehensive?	
Were there grounds for positive handling?		Was positive handling used reasonably?	
Were approved TT interventions used?		Was positive handling absolutely necessary?	
Has appropriate/sufficient post incident action been taken?		Do all aspects comply with EMAT policy?	

Completed by: .....

**STUDENT RESPONSE:**

**INJURED PARTY NAME:**

To be completed if any party was injured during the incident or necessary restraint.



## Appendix 2b): Risk Assessment and Significant Incident/Restraint/Restricted Record (Bound and Numbered book)

Name of child or young person concerned:			
Age:			
Names of other people present:			
Date:	Time:	Location:	
Details of behaviour leading to the use of the measure (what the child or young person was doing or saying):			
Details of any methods used to avoid the need to use that measure (what you did – what you said – what you tried):			
Humour		Verbal advice & Support	Firm clear directions
Limited choices		Negotiation	Distraction
Diversion		Reassurance	Planned ignoring
Calm talking		Contingent touch	Calm stance
Patience		Withdrawal offered	Withdrawal directed
Swap adult		Reminders of consequences	Success reminders
Why was the measure necessary? – (describe your dynamic risk assessment and why you believed the chosen measure was in the best interests of the child or young person)			
Risk to self		Risk to others	
Risk to safe physical environment		Prevention of psychological distress	
Prevention of physical harm		Prevention of criminal offence	

Temporary loss of competence or capability			
Description of the measure used (what you did and what you said):			
The effectiveness of the measure:			
Duration of any measure of physical restraint or restriction in minute sand any time intervals between provision of active support:			
Any consequences of the use of the measure:			
A description of any injury to the child concerned or any other person:			
A description of any medical treatment			
Offered:			
Administered:			
External Agencies informed and supporting records:			
			Date &/or Log Number

Medical Referral	
Social Worker	
Health & Safety Report	
LADO	
Safer Schools Partnership Report	
Placing Authority	
Responsible parent	
Confirmation that the person authorised to make the office record has spoken the child or young person concerned and the person using the measure about the use of the measure and the feelings of both of them.	
Views of the young person and any additional comments:	
Name & signature of the person authorised to make this record	
Name:	Sig:
Name, signature and designation of the person monitoring the record	
Name:	Sig:
Designation:	
Date Checked:	

### Appendix 3: Master letter to inform parents/carers that a restrictive intervention has been used on their child (and in the event of an injury if applicable)

Date:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to inform you that staff applied a restrictive intervention on your child today in order to prevent him/her from:

- Causing injury to themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Damaging Property
- Causing disorder among pupils whether during a taught lesson or during break/lunch/ or another time (eg – off site visit)


The antecedents of the incident were

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Our intervention procedure complies with DfE’s “Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)” and EMAT’s Positive Handling & Restraint policy. The incident has been logged on our records.

- Staff checked that your child was not injured
- I can confirm that he/she was seen by a trained First Aider
- I can confirm that he/she refused being seen by a First Aider
- I can confirm that a debrief with your child took place after the incident (although dependent on the circumstances, this is not always possible.)
- (If applicable) Your child was checked and had sustained the following injuries
- \_\_\_\_\_

(If applicable) Medical attention was sought and the advice and guidance issued was:

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This incident may have been distressing for both your child and the members of colleagues involved. Please feel free to contact us if you wish to discuss the incident further.

Yours sincerely,

## Appendix 4: Training

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team to ensure that colleagues are fully informed of the academy policy and understand what authorisation entails.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team to arrange training or guidance to colleagues, through appropriately trained members of a regulated body.

An up-to-date list of authorised colleagues should be maintained within academies/schools and teachers should know who they are.

Team- Teach is a whole setting holistic approach to managing difficult or challenging behaviours. It is accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (B.I.L.D) and is affiliated to and moderated by the National Control and Restraint (General Services) Association.

Colleagues are trained in advanced Team-Teach and receive regular updates. Named colleagues hold a first-aid certificate.

Supply colleagues, temporary colleagues, volunteers and student teachers are advised not to become involved in any use of physical restraint but to offer support in other ways by going for help, moving or supervising other children, making an area safe etc.

## Appendix 5: Authorised Colleagues

The statutory power conferred by Section 93 of the Education and inspections Act 2006 is in addition to the common law power of any citizen in an emergency to use reasonable force in self-defense, to prevent another person from being injured or committing a criminal offence.

The DfE guidance (2013) 'The Use of Reasonable Force in Schools' provides advice about the use of physical restraint in schools for governing bodies, headteachers and school colleagues.

The Headteacher and the Senior Management Team should identify people, other than teachers, whom they wish to authorise to have control or charge of students and therefore be able to use force if necessary. Authorisation may be on a permanent or long term basis because of the nature of the person's job, or short term for a specific event such as an academy/school trip. The Senior Leadership Team should explicitly inform the people concerned, and ensure that they are aware of and properly understand what the authorisation entails. To ensure that, the SLT may find it helpful to arrange for a senior member of the teaching colleagues to provide training or guidance. They should keep an up-to- date list of authorised people and ensure the teachers know who they are.

Supply colleagues, temporary colleagues, volunteers and student teachers are advised not to become involved in any use of physical restraint but to offer support in other ways by going for help, moving or supervising other children, making an area safe etc.