

Camden Children, Schools and Families Directorate

**Physical intervention and
restraint policy for schools
and centres**



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1 Introduction

This 'tool-kit' is an attempt to ask key questions about physical interventions in schools and centres and to provide references and examples of good practice.

Vision:

- To ensure that CSF, schools and settings have fully discharged their duty of care to students, children and employees.
- To provide a framework for the management of physical interventions that is legal, effective, safe, appropriate and proportionate.

The real or perceived need for physical intervention and the management of aggressive or violent episodes is seen as a major barrier to inclusion, and a persistent reason for exclusion from schools.

This document is designed to provide advice and guidance for schools, nursery classes and children centres on the understanding, appropriateness and management of physical interventions with young people and children. It should be considered with and refer to the school/setting's behaviour policy which in turn should be relevant to and reflect the age, development stages and any specific special educational needs and/or disabilities of pupils and children within the school or setting.

The document also aims to provide schools with guidance on the circumstances in which physical intervention may be appropriately used, procedures that should be in place and the techniques that are considered to be suitable. It is vitally important that staff, pupils and parents understand these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Furthermore it is intended to ensure that staff are clear about their role when they are working with children in order that both their own rights and those of children are protected.

This document refers to **Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006** (replacing section 550A of the Education Act 1996) and to **DCSF guidance, 2007**, which replaces and supersedes DfES Circular 10/98, *The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils*. It is aimed particularly at senior school/setting leaders and staff with specific responsibility for pupil/child behaviour, but is relevant to all staff and governors.

The guidance includes examples of model physical intervention policies and key points for staff that schools/settings may wish to consider, use and/or adapt according to context.

Whilst recognising that there are circumstances that will require more particular approaches, any use of physical intervention should always be set within an **overall positive behaviour management framework underpinned by sound risk assessment**.

Camden schools and children centres cater for a wide and complex set of differing individual needs and difficulties. Although the vast majority of young people in schools and settings will never require any form of physical intervention, many staff in our schools and settings deal on a day-to-day basis with some young people who exhibit challenging behaviours on a regular basis. Strategies for dealing with such behaviour need to be equally varied and matched carefully to particular circumstances and individual needs.

Successful inclusion of more young people and children in mainstream settings increases the need to assist all staff in preserving good order and discipline within an environment conducive to meeting the needs of all young people. At the same time, the risk of accusation of improper conduct towards a young person needs to be minimised in order that the staff may act appropriately in difficult circumstances. The guidelines support the need for physical restraint but as only one of the strategies available for the management of challenging behaviour.

Use of language

Much of the language surrounding this field is negative in its connotations. It is important to emphasise that managing aggressive behaviours is only one side of the coin. Physical contact also has a positive side: comforting children, shaking hands, etc. **This guidance implicitly acknowledges that good relationships are at the core of managing all behaviour strategies.**

Positive Physical Contact

Staff and adults need to be aware of sensitivities of any form of physical contact with children/pupils. Contact between children and adults might be appropriate for a variety of reasons, including:

- Holding hands in the playground
- Calming/reassuring/comforting contact
- A gentle touch on the arm to re-focus attention
- Guiding (without force) a pupil/child away from a situation or location.

Any physical contact has to be managed in order to make sure that it is appropriate and leaves neither party vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Factors to consider might include:

- Knowledge of the child, e.g. history/background
- Age (and age difference) – of child and adult
- Context – where, when, why
- Relationship between staff member and child
- Gender

Planned physical intervention can be viewed as positive, because it is committed to keeping children and adults safe and included in all settings.

2. The Law and DCSF Guidance (2007)

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 strengthens schools' 'powers to discipline' and establishes the powers of teachers and other staff (this includes support staff) who have lawful control or charge of pupils and children to use reasonable force in order to prevent children:

- Committing an offence (or what constitutes an offence if under the age of criminal responsibility)
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to property
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order.

(See Appendix 1 for examples of situations that fall into these categories)

This power applies to:

- Any teacher who works at the school
- Any other person the head has authorised to have control or charge of children/pupils – e.g. support staff, learning mentors, lunchtime supervisors etc.
- Can include people given temporary authorisation – e.g. unpaid people assisting a school trip, refereeing a sports match

This power may be used where the child/pupil (including pupils from another school) is on school premises or elsewhere in the lawful charge of a staff member.

Clearly some/or all of the above criteria in 1.1 is open to interpretation:

- Would one, for example, physically intervene if a child/pupil breaks a pencil in anger?
- 'Prejudicing the maintenance of good order' will also have differing interpretations in practice.

We would advise that the member of staff utilises other strategies – e.g. warnings, language of choice, referring to the school/settings rules and sanctions - in such circumstances.

The definition of 'reasonable' will always be a matter of personal and professional judgement that will need to be justified, reported and recorded.

Schools are required by law to have a clear school behaviour policy. Physical intervention is an action of last resort and is not a substitute for behaviour management strategies. We recommend that schools and settings make reference to the use of Physical Interventions as a last resort and in exceptional circumstances, in or alongside the Behaviour Policy – this should be clear and transparent. It is also recommended that Behaviour Policies emphasise prevention and de-escalation strategies.

DCSF Guidance (2007) contains some explicit key messages:

- Strong emphasis on staff training in de-escalation strategies alongside physical intervention skills – this should include support staff, lunchtime supervisors etc.
- Acknowledges the potential for injury to children/pupils and staff involved in physical intervention responses
- Schools should have a policy on the use of reasonable force to control pupils, along side the behaviour policy
- No school should have a policy of 'No Physical Contact'
- All staff need to understand their powers and options open to them – what is acceptable and what is not

Right to Search – section 45 Violent Crime Reduction Act: Reasonable force may be used in exercising the statutory power to search pupils without consent for weapons where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion. This applies to head teachers and staff authorised by them. However there is clear and strong advice in the guidance **NOT** to search pupils where resistance is expected, but rather to call the police.

Some useful considerations regarding physical interventions:

- Is the risk of not intervening greater than the risk of intervening?
- Any force applied should be done in a manner that attempts to **REDUCE** rather than **PROVOKE**
- Staff should **NOT** act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury
- The best legal defence (for intervening physically) would be to show that any actions were taken out of **BEST INTEREST** and that they were **REASONABLE AND PROPORTIONATE** to the context – i.e. the force used should be proportionate to the consequences it was intended to prevent
- It is always unlawful to use force as punishment
- Failure to intervene where the outcome is that a child injures him/herself or another (including staff) could be seen as negligence (in a court of law) – however intervention does not necessarily have to be physical - e.g. a pregnant staff member should not reasonably be expected to break up a fight between two 16 year old boys but might instead make her presence known, send for assistance, and clearly spell out expectations and consequences.

3. Management responsibilities

As in all organisations, employers and managers of educational settings have a responsibility for the safety and well being of their staff.

The Head teacher should ensure that all teachers and other authorised staff are appropriately trained and understand and accept the responsibility of their role in the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. It is advisable that training should be available for all staff and **embrace a whole establishment approach** rather than for a small group. Clearly the amount of training will depend on the level of need of the children and young people in the school. Training should emphasise the use and development of **diffusion and de-escalation** skills and strategies and include what is appropriate (and legal) and what is not.

Through supervision or appraisal, all staff should be allowed access to discussions of incidents involving physical intervention.

Different adults respond in different ways to psychological stress. Support following incidents of aggression should reflect the individual needs and strengths of each member of staff including, where necessary, time for the member of staff to have a breathing space and de-brief after an incident.

All staff should be encouraged to ask for their use of physical intervention to be monitored or to report any incidents that give rise to concerns.

All schools need to ensure that, as far as possible, preparation and planning has taken place to identify areas where physical intervention might be used (see Risk Assessment, section 6).

It would be sensible for a school's/setting's policy or reference to physical intervention describes the kinds of circumstances the school/setting regarded as justifying the use of force or physical intervention on a child/pupil, such as to prevent injury to someone.

Where schools work with children with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviour they should develop policies on the use of physical intervention, including recording, support and de-brief and parent/carer contact.

All schools should monitor and record any use of physical intervention and the recording should be clear, comprehensive and prompt (examples in appendix). These documents should form part of a yearly review that examines practice for policy review and informs future planning. In addition, a named Governor and the CSF Advisor to the provision should support the Headteacher in monitoring and review, with a timescale.

There should be easy access to a complaints system for pupils, parents or staff, with known procedures and identified senior member of staff to monitor the outcome; the involvement of an appropriate person outside the school should be considered. The complaints procedure must be consistent with Child Protection procedures. Once a complaint has been received, early inter-agency discussion between Education, Safeguarding & Social Care and the police will take place.

Where physical intervention is needed on a regular basis, the resource implications should be consistently reviewed. This should include the role of the management in the support of staff.

Following an incident of restraint, clear procedures should be established to support both the young person(s) and the member(s) of staff involved in the incident. Best practice would include same day contact with the parent/carer.

Staff are entitled to appropriate medical treatment and sick leave if injured during a physical intervention.

4. POLICY

A Physical Intervention Policy might be a 'stand alone' policy or be included in the Behaviour Policy

It should refer to or include the following:

- Aims, objectives, and mission statement with reference to the physical, emotional, material and social well being provided in the environment in which pupils, parents and staff will work together.
- Reflect on how these aims are maintained and provides a transparent overview of all aspects of physical interaction between the young people and the staff.
- A philosophical statement in relation to Positive Handling distinguishing between actions in which one restricts the movements of another against resistance, as against other forms of physical contact such as manual prompting, physical guidance or simply support which might be used in teaching, therapy or reassurance.

- Describe circumstances justifying physical interventions
- Involve all the adults working in the setting
- Include monitoring and recording of incidents
- Has clear procedures following an incident of restraint
- Policy statements should acknowledge the potential of injury, to both child and staff in physical intervention responses.
- Is reviewed on an annual basis

Schools should have a set review process for incidents where physical intervention has taken place. For most schools this could be part of their normal procedures for recording and reviewing incidents. That review should include the following:

- Was the use of physical intervention **necessary, appropriate and proportionate**? E.g. Is the use of physical intervention appropriate to prevent a child/student from leaving a classroom
- What steps are taken to ensure that minimum reasonable force is used if physical intervention is needed?
- Have the incidents needing physical intervention increased/decreased?
- Are incidents monitored to ensure that the length of time physical intervention is used is kept to a minimum?
- Are practices reviewed and alternative methods not using physical intervention explored as a possible outcome in each case?
What steps are taken to ensure that physical intervention used causes a minimum of pain or distress?
- Where physical intervention is used, what method is there for checking medical advice?
- What steps are taken following physical intervention for the young person and the adults involved?
- Are there separate debriefing sessions for both pupil and members of staff who have been involved in the intervention? Does the review explore antecedents, consequences and alternative courses of action?
- A regular and planned review of these issues is an essential part of their management.

(See Appendix 2 for advice to staff on managing confrontation and physical interventions)

Physical Intervention – A Model Statement for Parents and Carers

A model statement for parents and carers on the use of reasonable force for inclusion in the school prospectus might include:

If staff become aware of, or have need to become involved in, situations where a child/pupil may be at risk of hurting themselves or others, or if the behaviour of a child/pupil seriously disrupts good order in the school or causes significant damage to property, staff may need to take steps to intervene physically. In such circumstances staff will follow the school's policy for dealing with such situations. Any parent/carer wishing to view this policy may do so on request.

5. Children with behaviour emotional and social difficulties (BESD)

The needs of children and young people who present emotional and behavioural difficulties pose a range of challenges. At one end of the spectrum of need are young people who behave in ways that are considered disruptive. They may display behaviour that is socially inappropriate and in some instances is dangerous.

There is a qualitative difference between deliberately disruptive behaviour and impulsive behaviour arising from emotional/psychological disturbance – such as self-harm. Both sorts of behaviour raise concerns because of the possible increase of risk of injury to the young persons or their educators/carers or to other children. Instances where pupils/children have a total disregard for the safety of themselves or others (such as deliberately pushing their hands through window glass, throwing items at others, self-injury or deliberately wandering across a busy road) present circumstances where there may be no alternative other than to restrict the young person's range of movement by reasonable force.

Such young people often have difficulties in appreciating or understanding the consequences of their actions or their environment. Some young people, as a result of their own insecurity, will test the limits of acceptable behaviour by adopting extremes of emotional or physical behaviour. Those young people who exhibit challenging behaviour but are not statemented should be identified through the SEN Code of Practice and have an individual educational plan (IEP).

BESD children/pupils who require regular physical interventions should have this documented and effective strategies shared, including diffusion, de-escalation and types of physical interventions, as part of their Individual Behaviour Plan, and all staff should be provided with written guidance.

Where schools are catering for children with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviour all staff should be provided with written guidance on permissible methods of physical intervention and this should be supported through regular accredited training, including review of effective practice.

When considering BESD children and the application of behaviour and physical intervention strategy and policy reference should be made to the **Disability Discrimination Act, 1995**, which states that some BESD children with longstanding diagnosed conduct disorders may be considered disabled.

The Act requires schools/settings to make 'reasonable adjustments' to take account of a child's needs. In practice this duty in the disability discrimination legislation requires schools to think ahead, anticipate the barriers that pupils may face and remove or minimise them before a disabled pupil is placed at a substantial disadvantage.

6. Children with severe learning and/or communication difficulties

Young people and children with severe learning difficulties or communication difficulties may lack self-motivation and self-care skills, requiring staff to physically prompt, encourage or guide them to participate in activities with which other young people would join in naturally.

For such pupils, challenging behaviour may be a response to a particular situation that is disturbing to them. It may be an act of frustration as a result of being unable to express something or do something. In many cases it will be of a very individual nature, such that the particular triggers or circumstances are entirely unique to that individual. Physical intervention for this behaviour may need to relate much more closely to an **Individual Positive Handling Plan** designed specifically for each individual pupil and agreed with the parent/carer. Such plans should be reviewed regularly and plan for progression.

The complexity, range of need and consequent support for the young person/child is such that physical intervention is the norm, not the exception.

It is important for staff to work within the guidelines of the individual school policy. However the policy must guide staff strategies and responses to the need for physical intervention in such a way that staff feel empowered within that policy to respond flexibly according to the needs of the situation. Judgements leading to this response may be affected by staffing availability, setting, the young person's behaviours, and health and physical well being as well as the young person's motive for the behaviour.

Physical intervention – Low and medium level interventions would, as a rule, not require recording but would be monitored through the individual IEP.

Incidents and events that constitute **LOW** Level Intervention would include:

- Limitation of movement through the use of high level or double handles to doors
- Leading by the arm
- Being held or assisted in maintaining a position e.g.: sitting in a chair
- Use of reins, wrist-straps, buggies for management and safety of the young person out of school (especially in the early years)

Incidents and events that constitute **MEDIUM** Level Intervention would include:

- Removal of young person from an activity
- Placing a young person in a chair or other confined area with the intention of limiting mobility
- Removal from an area of the classroom or playground
- Catching a young person by whatever safe means is possible, to prevent them from harming themselves or others
- Holding a self-injuring young person, e.g.: by the hands while they become calmer.
- Beyond the low and medium levels of restraint, the staff of an SLD School *must* follow the procedures described in the main document (although in individual cases, a protocol may be established with low and medium level interventions).

HIGH Level Intervention would include:

- Lifting a young person in order to remove him or her from a situation
- Restraining in a chair (with arms), 2-3 members of staff maintaining an enforced control (one holding feet, one either side holding arms)
- Holding a young person, on the floor, in a seated position, one adult sitting supported by a firm surface, arms around the young person's body with a second adult maintaining control of legs

7. Risk assessment

This section has particular reference to settings that cater for children with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviour.

General Risk Assessment – considers:

- Environment
- Hot-spots
- Times of day – potential difficulties
- Supervision
- SLT presence
- Off-site activities

Risk assessments and monitoring should carefully consider equality issues including race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and disability.

Procedures for risk assessment should help staff to identify activities or environments that are associated with risk. The procedures should:

- Establish the likelihood of adverse outcomes for either children or adults;
- Provide some estimate of the likely consequences if such outcomes were to occur;
- Enable staff to take steps and seek assistance in order to avoid unreasonable risk to themselves;
- Provide opportunities to discuss, as a staff team, responses to unforeseen situations.

Individual Risk Assessment – This might apply when an individual child needs physical intervention as a part of an on-going behaviour management plan (for an example of an individual risk assessment form, designed for PRU's, please contact Martin Cresswell)

Individual risk assessments should:

- Identify causal factors and triggers to a child's behaviour
- Refer to effective diffusion/de-escalation strategies that might preclude the use of physical intervention with an individual child
- Identify type of physical intervention
- Allow for the sharing of information
- Establish the possible consequences of using a particular method or methods of physical intervention when difficult behaviour occurs.

The type of physical interventions, which are used or authorised for use, should be identified and written into the plan with reference to the following:

- What are the potential hazards?
- What possible outcomes, positive and negative, could arise from this physical intervention?
- What are the likely outcomes if no action is taken?
- How are staff kept informed of pupils who may present a risk and those for whom there is an agreed protocol?
- Note that doing nothing (planned ignoring) is a realistic course of action if it is taken deliberately

- Who might be harmed and how - e.g.: the young person, the adult, bystanders, property?

Evaluate the risks. Look for the least restrictive physical intervention to respond effectively to foreseeable incidents.

Review and record the findings of such an evaluation regularly.

8. Staff training

Camden has a team of Team-Teach Tutors who deliver accredited (BILD) whole staff training in schools and settings; non accredited 'twilight' training covering the law, good practice and diffusion/de-escalation strategies can also be delivered to schools as appropriate – contact: martin.cresswell@camden.gov.uk;

If Physical Interventions are a regular occurrence in a given setting staff training in this area is essential – e.g. BESD schools/settings, PRU's, Special Educational Needs schools/settings.

Teachers and authorised staff should have regular training on knowledge, skills and values for the management of anger, intervention and post-intervention action.

Schools should also deliver appropriate training for *all* staff (e.g. lunchtime supervisors and site officers, not just teaching staff) so that their awareness is raised, they understand the powers and options open to them, and they know what is acceptable and what is not.

All schools need to ensure that, as far as possible, preparation and planning has taken place to identify areas where physical intervention might be used (see Risk Assessment, section 6).

Staff should only employ physical interventions, to the best of their ability, that they have been trained to use.

Staff development should be organised to ensure that appropriate training on physical intervention or behaviour management is available if identified by or for a member of staff.

Head teachers and Governing Bodies/Management Committees should only contract trainers who have adopted the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) Code of Practice

Appendix 1: Practical Advice and Guidelines on the Use of Force

Examples of situations that fall within the first two categories listed in Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 include:

- a. A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- b. Pupils are fighting;
- c. A pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate and serious damage to property;
- d. A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- e. A pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others;
- f. A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school other than at an authorised time. The judgement on whether to use force in this situation would depend on an assessment of the degree of risk to the pupil if he or she is not kept in the classroom or school (age and understanding would be critical factors).

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are where a pupil – **this is not to suggest that all these cases would lead to or require the use of force:**

- g. Refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom;
- h. Is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson;
- i. Blocks a door to prevent others from leaving;
- j. Is using a mobile phone to disrupt a lesson (an authorised member of staff could forcibly confiscate the phone by removing it from a hand or desk but could not lawfully search the pupil for the phone); and
- k. Resists attempts to search him or her for a weapon.

In all these cases use of force would only be reasonable (and therefore lawful) if it was clear that the behaviour was sufficiently dangerous or disruptive to warrant physical intervention of the degree applied and could not realistically be dealt with by any other strategies.

Key question: Does the risk of not intervening outweigh the risk of intervening?

There is no legal definition of reasonable force and that it is therefore not possible to set out when it is reasonable to use force, or the degree of force that may reasonably be used. This will always depend on the circumstances of the case and be a matter of personal and professional judgement.

The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the circumstances do not warrant

the use of physical force. Therefore physical force could not be justified in order to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that clearly could be resolved without force.

The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Types of intervention which may be appropriate:

- Any holding tactic in which a young adult is held without injury until the young adult calms down.
- Physical contact with a young person designed to control the young person's movements which pose a danger (e.g.: holding by the arms against the side of the body). Standing by the side of the young person is likely to minimise the risk to adult and young person.
- The holding of a young person's arms or legs to prevent/restrict striking/kicking.
- The use of sufficient physical force - without causing injury - to remove a weapon/dangerous object from a young person's grasp (if foreseeable this requires specialised training).
- Physically preventing a young person from exposing themselves to possible danger by leaving the premises.

Where children have been identified as possibly requiring the use of physical interventions, it is strongly recommended that staff working with these children are trained in the use of appropriate techniques. However, *all* staff have a duty of care in this respect.

Pupils should not be placed on the floor unless staff have received specialist training. Where risk assessment has taken place it is imperative that techniques are outlined within the pupils' Positive Handling Plan. Following ground-holds, pupils should be monitored every fifteen minutes for at least three hours. All relevant authorities, including the parents/ carers, must be informed as soon as possible following the incident.

The member of staff should advise the young person calmly and repeatedly that he/she could stop the restraint by applying self-control.

The young person should be released from restraint as soon as is safely possible. Release must always be carried out in a planned and controlled way.

As far as is possible staff should avoid any actions that could be viewed as sexual. If a member of staff feels that a necessary restraint action may be viewed by a young person as having a sexual content, the staff member should describe what he/she intends to do and why, giving the young person an opportunity to avoid it. If the action remains necessary, while carrying it out, the staff member should repeat why it is necessary, stressing that it is in the young person's power to remove the need for restraint.

If restraint is required for an extended period because the child cannot be released safely the senior member of staff on duty will monitor the situation closely with a view to safeguarding the young person and the staff concerned. Best practice during a long intervention would be to rotate the staff involved; this requires training.

As far as possible actions should be calculated to reduce the need for restraint or, when restraint is used, to reduce the length of time for which it is necessary.

Only a court may judge what is reasonable in terms of the amount of force used in physical restraint and obviously does so retrospectively.

The following actions are examples of what would be deemed as unreasonable:

- Striking a person
- Exerting excessive pressure on any part of a young person's body
- Causing actual injury to a young person
- Forcing a young person's arm up his/her back
- Squeezing a young person's windpipe
- Sitting on a young person
- Lifting a young person off the floor in order to intimidate
- Pulling a young person's hair

The following are also prohibited as forms of control

- Corporal Punishment

It is totally illegal to use corporal punishment in all state-maintained schools. Corporal punishment may be defined as any act or threat of an act, such as hitting, kicking, slapping, punching, poking, prodding, biting, throwing an object, rough handling etc, which causes or threatens harm.

- Restriction of liberty (e.g. locking someone up)
- Deprivation
- Requiring the wearing of distinctive or inappropriate clothing (clearly this does not include wearing of school uniform or school sports-wear)
- Fines
- Intimate physical searches

Appendix 2 - Managing Confrontation and Physical Intervention

Advice for staff

At all times try to manage your own emotions – maybe take a deep breath – and don't become involved in a '**conflict spiral**'. Situations are rarely personal.

Name the inappropriate behaviour; express clearly the desired behaviour – calmly, confidently and assertively.

Use 'language of choice' – put the responsibility/ownership of behaviour with the child/pupil

Remaining Calm - the ability to try and remain calm and appear relaxed is less likely to provoke.

Calm Stance - Think of the values of stepping back from a situation, both physically and emotionally.

Pacing and Chasing - Angry people often pace around in tense situations. Try to remain still when attempting to help a student calm down.

Awareness of Space - Try to be aware of the space around you and avoid stepping in to another individual's personal/intimate space.

Intonation - When people are anxious or angry they tend to talk faster, higher and more loudly. In a crisis situation staff should deliberately speak slower, lower and more quietly. How we deliver a message is as important as what we say.

Help Script – Particularly useful when addressing an agitated student. Connect by using student's name; recognise the feelings – "I can see you are upset"; "I'm here to help"; Give direction but not promises.

Diffusing body language responses

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

Physical Interventions:

On extremely rare occasions it may be appropriate for staff to intervene physically with or between students. These include:

- Injury or risk of injury to another student
- Injury or risk of injury to a member of staff
- Serious damage to property

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

Physical intervention procedures:

As soon as a member of staff has decided to intervene physically in order to prevent injury occurring to any person, or serious damage to property, then she/he should:

- a) Give clear instruction, warning the young person of the consequences of failure to comply.
Note: this warning must not comprise any threat of unlawful assault.
- b) If at all possible, summon a second adult – this can help to:
 - Reduce the risk of injury (to staff or child)
 - Act as a witness to the situation (for the protection of adult and child)
 - Diffuse the situation – the second adult may not be the focus of anger and could indeed take over
 - Remove other children from the situation
- c) While intervening the member of staff must:
 - Employ minimum physical force necessary for the minimum period needed to restrain the young person;
 - Keep talking to the young person for example: ‘if you stop kicking I will release my hold’ (unless an individual protocol is in place);
 - Avoid committing any act of punitive violence
 - Keep his or her temper under control
 - Ensure that there is a record of the incident

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

Staff are strongly advised not to physically stop students from leaving their room unless absolutely necessary – give choice and consequences.

Application of Force (DCSF guidance to schools 2007)

Staff should NOT act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. This includes:

- Slapping, punching, kicking or tripping a pupil
- Twisting or forcing limbs against joints
- Indecently touching, holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear
- Other than in circumstances that are exceptional, using reasonable force to hold a pupil face down on the ground

In the event of a serious incident e.g. a fight, staff should:

- Make their presence felt – “stop fighting, stop fighting”
- Send for assistance
- Spell out sanctions
- Remove the ‘fuel’ by clearing the ‘audience’ away
- Be a witness
- Intervene physically if confident and having assessed the degree of risk

But should not ignore or walk away.

Key question: Does the risk of not intervening outweigh the risk of intervening?