

The John Frost School

RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION / POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

This policy has been written in accordance with the Welsh Governments framework for Restrictive Physical Intervention policy 2005, The Use of Force to control or Restrain Students, the powers of which are contained in Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, Safe and effective intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons 2010 (amended 2013) and Reducing Restrictive Practices Framework (2021). It should be read in conjunction with school policies on Relationships and Behaviour, Child Protection and Health & Safety.

The John Frost School recognises the importance of ensuring good order to provide a safe environment for staff and students. To achieve this, it is recognised that, in extreme circumstances, it may be necessary for school staff to intervene physically to manage certain harmful behaviours by students.

The use of restrictive practices should be within the context of the European Convention on Human Rights and in line with the principles described in the Human Rights Framework on Restraint produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

1. It is our school's policy that Restrictive Physical Intervention, sometimes referred to as positive handling, will be used as a last resort, normally after non-physical strategies have failed to manage a student's behaviour and to make a situation safe.
2. Restrictive Physical Intervention is defined as direct physical contact between persons where reasonable force is positively applied against resistance, either to restrict movement or mobility or to disengage from harmful behaviour displayed by an individual.
3. In The John Frost School we will work to create an environment that minimises the risk of incidents that might require restrictive physical intervention. This will include :-
 - the implementation of whole-school behaviour management strategies
 - training staff to de-escalate and defuse potentially disruptive situations
 - working with individual children and their parents to identify trigger behaviours and to develop preventative strategies that avoid the need for physical intervention
4. Restrictive physical intervention will only be used when the risk of not intervening outweighs the risk of doing so. We will only be use restrictive physical intervention to prevent students:

- **Harming themselves or others**
- **Committing a criminal offence**
- **Causing serious damage to property**
- **Engaging in behaviour which is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline**

5. Action taken during a restrictive physical intervention will be:

- **Reasonable**
- **Proportionate**
- **Necessary**
- **In the best interest of the child**

6a. Parents will be informed of the school's policy on Restrictive Physical Intervention. The policy will be published on the school Website and a copy of this policy will be sent to parents on request.

6b. 'Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent "side-effect" of ensuring that the service user remains safe" George Matthews – Founder, Team Teach.

7. While any member of school staff may intervene physically in an emergency, and all teachers are legally enabled to use reasonable force under section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, only those staff who have been specifically authorised by the Head Teacher will normally take part in restrictive physical interventions that have been included in Positive Handling Plans. An up to date list of authorised staff will be kept in the school and will be reported annually to the Governing Body.

8. In cases where it can reasonably be foreseen that a student is likely to require positive handling, a Positive Handling Plan (PHP) will be drawn up by the school with the agreement of parents/carers and in consultation with relevant agencies and the child, and will be reviewed regularly.

The PHP will seek to meet the child's needs in a person centred way that promotes wellbeing and the opportunities for individuals to realise their rights.

Consent should always be sought from people who have capacity about the inclusion of any restrictive practice in a plan, it is important to include the wishes of the individual in any plan. If a person lacks capacity to consent, their wishes should still be included in the plan and any advance directives should be considered. Where a person with parental responsibility for a child gives consent on behalf of their child, the child's wishes should also be recorded in the plan. *If there is no consent, this would be recorded on the PHP, but it would not mean that a restrictive intervention would not be used if such an action were deemed necessary in a specific circumstance.*

In line with a rights approach, schools should ensure that children are given accessible and age appropriate information to enable them to understand their rights in relation to the use of restrictive practices. This should also include *information about where to go for advice and help if they are worried about the use of restrictive practices.*

9. Records :-

All incidents involving restrictive physical intervention will be recorded on the relevant RPI form and kept locked in the Head Teacher's office.

All serious incidents will be reported to the LA where possible within 24 hours of the incident in order to provide appropriate follow up and support for students and staff. The LA will respond to all reports.

Parents will be informed as soon as practical about all serious incidents.

A completed Violence at Work form will be sent to the Local Authority (LA) if a member of staff is injured during an incident.

The Restrictive Physical Intervention reporting form is attached as Appendix 4.

10. The school's RPI forms will be reviewed every half term by the Head Teacher and the Governor with responsibility for Child Protection issues, and all incidents will be monitored by an LA representative. The information will be used to review Positive Handling Plans for individual children, staff training needs and relevant school policies.
11. The Head Teacher will determine the training needs of school staff after assessing the likely need and scope of physical intervention that might be required. Advice and support on assessing training needs will be available from the LA.
12. Training will be provided by Newport City Council and will meet the standards approved by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities. Staff will only use intervention techniques which they have been trained to use, except in extreme emergencies. Staff will not use any technique that restricts a child's breathing or which requires a child to be held face down.
13. All staff involved in a restrictive physical intervention will be allowed time to seek medical attention if necessary, to recover and to be debriefed by a colleague nominated by the Head Teacher. Written records will be completed within 24 hours, if practical.
14. Students will be given medical attention if necessary and will be given time to become calm before discussing an incident. The student will be given the opportunity to explain things from their point of view and steps will be taken to re-establish the relationship between the student and the staff involved in the incident via a restorative meeting/conference.
15. Staff who act in accordance with this policy will be positively supported by the LA and the School, but staff will be expected to use their professional judgement when handling children, and everyone involved must be aware that their actions may be subject to scrutiny and possible legal action.
16. While staff will use the minimum force for the shortest time during a restrictive physical intervention, it is recognised that minor injuries, such as bruises and scratches, may occur. Such minor injuries will not, by themselves, be regarded as evidence of misconduct.

17. All complaints relating to restrictive physical intervention will be recorded by the school and details will be shared with relevant LA staff and other agencies. The Head Teacher will clarify the details of all complaints in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy, and will ensure they are dealt with appropriately.
18. This policy will be effective from 13/03/2025 and will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body. Appendices may be amended at any time to reflect changes in legislation or good practice.