

Oriel High School Physical Management of Students Policy

Date Amended: September 2024

Date of Ratification: 25.09.24

Next Review Date: September 2025

This policy has been updated following new guidance from the DCSF (2010) "The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils" which supersedes the November 2011 Education Act.

Aims

This policy aims to protect staff and students, maintain the safety of our students and staff and prevent serious damage or disruption.

Policy

All adults working with students at our school must recognise that physical management of students is only acceptable in very specific circumstances, outlined below.

Physical contact must never be used as a punishment. This would be unlawful as it would fall within the definition of corporal punishment which was abolished by section 548 of the Education Act 1996.

Physical intervention should only be used in an emergency, and in accordance with the details set out below. Apart from these extreme and rare occasions there should be **no physical contact** with students except when administering First Aid, or giving physical support in practical teaching. Even if a student is upset there must still be **no physical contact**.

Maintaining a calm, orderly environment minimises the risk of incidents that might require physical management. It is important that staff communicate calmly with students, using non-threatening verbal and body language and ensure the student can see a way out of a situation. See Behaviour for Learning Policy

Pastoral and SEN staff will write risk assessments and positive handling plans for individual students who pose a risk of requiring physical intervention, require specific physical contact to address SEN needs or should never be physically managed due to disabilities. Details must be communicated to all staff and regularly reviewed.

Only staff authorised by the Headteacher to have control or charge of students may use physical management. This applies to teaching and non-teaching staff and includes first aiders and staff accompanying students on trips or visits. Prefects are not permitted to use physical management.

Staff should only consider using physical management in emergency situations such as:

- In self-defence, where a student is **attacking** them
- The student is **attacking a member of staff or another student**
- Students are **fighting and at risk of causing injury** to themselves or others
- The student is committing, or on the verge of committing, **deliberate and serious damage to property**

- To prevent the student **committing a criminal offence**
- The student is **at risk of causing injury or damage** to themselves or others by accident, by rough play or misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- The student attempts to leave a class or the school building and this would **threaten their safety or the safety of other students or property**
- The student is engaging in **behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline**, both in the classroom and elsewhere.

If physical management is used, it must be the **minimum** required to encourage compliance, and only if the following criteria apply:

- Every reasonable effort has been made to **de-escalate the situation verbally**
- Wherever practical, a **clear oral warning** has been given to the student that force may have to be used, and they have been given the **opportunity to back down** and **another responsible adult is present** to support, observe and call for assistance.
- Physical contact must **not injure** the student, unless it is an extreme emergency and there is no viable alternative to maintain the safety of students and staff
- **Restraint will stop as soon as the student calms down**, and this is communicated to the student
- Students must never be touched or restrained in a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate

Physical intervention should **not** be used if:

- The member of staff believes that by doing so **they are at risk of serious injury**, they should instead summon assistance, if necessary the police, and take steps to remove other students who might also be at risk
- The member of staff is visibly angry or frustrated or **unable to act in a calm and measured way**.

Any use of physical management must be reported and documented, and followed up accordingly:

- Physical management Incident Form should be completed by the member of staff involved, with support from their line manager, and passed to the Headteacher immediately. The Headteacher may then authorise for details to be reported to external agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive, YOT and the police.
- Parents of the student must be contacted as soon as possible to inform them of the circumstances
- The Governing Body Teaching & Learning Committee will monitor and review reported incidents.
- Staff and students should receive support for as long as they need it following an incident and should be actively encouraged to rebuild relationships.

Further information

Section 93 of the **Education and Inspections Act 2006** enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a student from doing or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing any offence
- Causing personal injury to, or damage the property of, any person including the student him/herself
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any students receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

Any citizen has a **common law** power in an emergency to use reasonable force:

- In self-defence
- To prevent another person from being injured
- To prevent another person from committing a criminal offence
- To prevent damage to property

Para 19 of November 07 guidance states: “As the statutory power to use force is held by individual members of the staff, no school should have a policy of ‘no physical contact’ because this would make staff members feel deprived of that power or hinder their exercise of it.”