



ENERGY COAST UTC

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

2023-2026

Approved: Curriculum and Standards Committee

Signed: *P Freeman*

Date: March 2023

Date for Review: March 2026

Revision History:

Revision History			
Revision	Date	Owner	Summary of Changes
1	16/02/2018	BLS	New
2	April 2019	BLS	Updates as identified via DfE Safeguarding Audit.
3	February 2020	CBT	Review
4	March 2023	RDP	Review

A – Rationale. (Duty of Care)

Energy Coast UTC students need to be safe and encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The vast majority will behave well, but some (generally only a few and very occasionally) need support in this area. They need to know that, if absolutely necessary, UTC staff are able to control students safely and confidently. UTC students nearly always respond well to the school rules and conventions. Situations in which physical intervention may be needed are therefore likely to be very rare.

Energy Coast UTC staff need to be safe and confident in how they manage the rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour. They have to be clear about options open to them when all the normal systems have failed or when there is a clear emergency. They need to be free of undue worries about the risks of legal action if they use appropriate physical interventions; and need to know that the UTC will offer support if they are challenged. Training for staff should be available at regular intervals.

Energy Coast UTC parents need to know that their child and those who are teaching her or him are safe and free from disruptive influences or danger. They also need to know that they will be properly informed if their child is the subject of physical intervention; and they need to know the nature of the intervention and the rationale for its use.

B – Our approach: “Prevention is better than cure”

The UTC always tries to avoid using physical interventions and regards them as a last resort for a tiny minority of situations. We provide a properly planned and differentiated curriculum that provides appropriate levels of challenge to all students, and maintain an effective school behaviour policy that is known and understood by all staff and students.

Positive handling is then our method of last resort, after all other approaches have been tried or in situations of clear danger or extreme urgency. 95% of crisis situations can be dealt with through calm, dignified and skilled intervention. (The use of non-confrontational approaches and understanding of messages received from body language are vital).

The UTC will always utilise only the minimum force required to resolve the situation safely. How we respond always has regard to the circumstances and to the age and understanding of the child or young person.

Where there is a foreseeable risk that a student could behave in such a way as to require restrictive physical intervention we undertake a risk assessment in order to balance the risks to the student and to others of intervening or not. Planning is also undertaken to see if trigger situations can be avoided and other positive strategies employed to reduce the likelihood of such incidents occurring.

C – Who may use physical intervention and when

The DFE paper - Use of Reasonable Force -July 2013 - allows teachers, and other persons who are authorised by the Principal to have control or charge of students to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the students were not under the age of criminal responsibility);
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property);
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its students, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.

All school staff are also, like anyone else, allowed to use reasonable force (the minimum necessary) to defend themselves.

Staff are not expected to put themselves in danger; and that removing students and themselves from a source of danger is a proper thing to do. We appreciate the integrity of our staff and value their efforts to rectify situations that are difficult and in which they exercise their duty of care for their students. However, we do not require them to go beyond what is reasonable. It is acceptable for any member of staff to decide that they will not use physical intervention for personal reasons.

D – Positive Handling Strategies

Reasonable force is not defined legally in isolation. When used to restrain a child or young person it must be justified as appropriate by the circumstances. Staff will only use only the minimum force that is needed to restore safety or appropriate behaviour; and will take account of the age, understanding and gender of the student.

The approach advocates;

- **At least two members of staff**
- **Minimum force and time**
- **Maximum care and control**
- **Last resort – after use of behavioural management strategies**

Acceptable forms of intervention at the UTC include all stipulated on the Safer Handling of Children course (friendly hold, single elbow, double elbow, figure of four, the wrap, the shield etc) which allow;

- leading or guiding a student by the hand or arm, or shepherding them with a hand in the centre of the back;
- holding a student who has lost control until they are calm and safe;
- physically moving between and separating two students;
- fielding / blocking a student's path;
- where there is immediate risk of injury, any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force' – for example to prevent a student running into a busy road or hitting or hurting someone;
- using more restrictive holds in extreme circumstances.

It is also acceptable for doors to be locked to ensure pupil safety, as long as a member of staff is always with the students in such circumstances. (Care needs to be taken here regarding Health and Safety Fire Regulations).

Staff may move, defend themselves, lead, restrain or block someone, bearing in mind the whole time their own safety as well as that of others and of the child who is the subject of any restraint or other intervention.

It is unacceptable and likely to be illegal or grounds for disciplinary action for staff to use any physical intervention designed to cause pain or injury including:

- any form of corporal punishment, slapping, punching or kicking;
- holding by the neck or collar, or otherwise restricting the ability to breath;
- holding by the hair or an ear;
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- tripping up a pupil or holding an arm out at neck or head height to stop them;
- holding a pupil face down on the ground or sitting on them;
- shutting or locking a pupil in a room, except in extreme situations whilst summoning support.

Staff should also avoid personal touching or holding a student in a way that might be considered inappropriate.

The dignity of students is vital, and the UTC will always seek to protect students' self-respect.

Physical interventions are not in general used to achieve a search of clothing or property even if the UTC has good reason to believe that a weapon or dangerous drugs were being concealed.

E – Using Physical Intervention

Except in cases where there is immediate danger the UTC staff should normally try other ways of resolving or de-escalating a situation. These could include:

1. Calmly re-stating the rules and expectations for the situation;
2. Removing other students from the situation and thus from danger;
3. Use of physical proximity, but not in a threatening way;
4. Encouraging the student to withdraw to a safer and calmer situation;
5. Calling another adult for support or to take over.

The UTC will always ensure some staff are fully trained in positive handling (physical restraint). If more than minor physical intervention is judged to be necessary the teacher or adult in charge should;

- Send for the assistance of a qualified positive handling teacher. Two support assistants working together without a teacher should only be used as an extreme last resort.
- Remove other students from the scene if possible; *
- Continue to talk calmly to the pupil explaining what will happen, and under what circumstances the physical intervention will cease (but not in a threatening way);
- Use the minimum force necessary and cease the intervention as soon as it is judged safe;

In some circumstances UTC staff may consider it appropriate to call the police.

Following a significant incident of physical intervention, when a student has resisted or challenged and force has been used, the teacher or adult responsible should as soon as possible inform the Principal. The UTC acknowledges that such events are stressful for both students and staff and both parties will need time to recover, with the chance of debriefing and resolving the situation.

NB – In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to use physical intervention on intruders from outside the school community. Points 1 – 4 listed above should still be used, and again, only when resolving and de-escalating strategies have failed.

*Intervention Removal Areas

- 1st Floor – Principal’s Office – School Counsellor’s room
- Ground Floor Main Building – Assistant Principal for Pastoral’s Office
- Workshops - Restorative Room or SEND Room

Following any use of force, a full written account of the incident will be made by the member of staff concerned and recorded on an incident sheet (See Appendix 1). The report will contain:

- Name(s) of student(s) concerned, when and where the incident occurred
- Names of staff or students who witnessed
- The reason why force was needed
- How the incident began and progressed, who said what, who did what
- What was done to calm things down
- What degree of force was used? What kind of hold, where and for how long
- Student’s response and the outcome of the incident
- Details of any injury to any person or damage to property* (An unfortunate consequence of restrictive physical intervention is that the student may suffer minor injury to prevent a major injury or safety concern). This must then be signed and dated by the member of staff and countersigned if possible by another member of staff who was at the incident.

Time should also be spent after the incident to:

- discuss the incident with the student as soon as possible. The aim is for the student to learn from the incident so that Positive Handling is not needed in the future.
- interview staff involved and any other witnesses;
- inform the student’s parents/carers and social worker if relevant (letter and phone call) (See Appendix 2)
- record any disagreements expressed by the student or adults about the event;
- take any appropriate further action, liaising with LADO, Governors or Unions as appropriate, and acting within the LA’s Child Procedures
- make a record of the incident on CPOMs

All restraining incidents will be reported to the governing body

F – Planning for Physical Intervention

Where the UTC thinks a student might require physical restraint we plan in advance and know who will do what. This planning includes helping students to avoid provoking situations, helping them find success and minimise frustration, and develops our own skills. It also helps us see better where

we can head off difficulties when we spot them early enough. The student’s individual behaviour plan (IBP) would;

- involve the parents and the student to gain their views and to ensure that they are clear about what specific action the school might need to take;
- manage the student (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, at what stage and what type of holds to be used);
- identify key staff who should know exactly what action they should be taking. Any member of staff who may have to use a physical intervention should always be fully briefed about the child in question, and it is best if they are well known to the child.

G – Training

We are clear that training of staff is vital in this area if we are to be seen to adopt best practice and maintain a record of safe management of all school situations. We therefore make budgetary allowance to develop behaviour management in the school. Training and refreshers will also be made available when needed in restraining techniques.

H – Who needs to know?

Everyone connected with the school should know of the existence of the policy. However, not everyone needs to know about specific incidents. The chart below sets out the information.

	About the policy	About a specific incident
Trustees	Yes	Yes – Next trustees meeting / Meeting DSL and Safeguarding Governor
Parents	Yes	About incidents relating to their own child <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal – same day • Letter within 3 days
Staff	Yes	About any incidents involving students they may have charge of – through Individual Behaviour Plan if needed.
Students	Yes	Only those they witness – following day
LA Safeguarding Team	Yes	Normal annual report – although through “The Hub” if felt necessary.
Unions	Yes	If informed by members.

I – Complaints

The UTC hopes that by adopting this policy and keeping parents well informed, this should help to avoid the need for complaints. Any disputes that do arise about the use of force by a member of staff will be dealt with in accordance with the UTC Child Protection procedures, a copy of which is

available on the school website. This could in some circumstances lead to an investigation by police and social services.

Complaints about this policy should be directed to the Principal or Chair of Governors.

J – References

Reference can be made to the following documents:

- British Institute of Learning difficulties (BILD): Code of Practice for Trainers in the Use of Physical Interventions 2001.
- Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Bath and North East Somerset Education Service – Physical Intervention to control or restrain pupils – guidance for schools
- DFE –Use of reasonable force Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies– July 2013

Name of Young Person		Date of Birth	Form /
Date and Time of incident		Person recording the intervention	
Location of incident			
Staff members involved			Job Title
Other witnesses to intervention			
De-escalation techniques used: NB number in order used			
Verbal advice <input type="checkbox"/>	Humour <input type="checkbox"/>	Space given <input type="checkbox"/>	Step away <input type="checkbox"/>
Other student removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Time out <input type="checkbox"/>	Verbal support <input type="checkbox"/>	Reassurance <input type="checkbox"/>
Direction given <input type="checkbox"/>	Calm Talking <input type="checkbox"/>	Alternative offered <input type="checkbox"/>	Distraction <input type="checkbox"/>
Planned ignoring <input type="checkbox"/>	Contingent touch <input type="checkbox"/>	Adult transfer <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	Time out offered		
Response to de-escalation			
Reason for intervention (please tick)			
Immediate danger to self <input type="checkbox"/>	Potential damage to property <input type="checkbox"/>		
Disruption to immediate environment/peers <input type="checkbox"/>	Threat of absconding <input type="checkbox"/>		
Fighting <input type="checkbox"/>	Immediate danger to peers/staff <input type="checkbox"/>		
Assault/attempted assault <input type="checkbox"/>	Threats verbal/physical <input type="checkbox"/>		
Other			
What happened prior to the intervention?			

Technique used in intervention		NB number in order used	
Wrap <input type="checkbox"/>	Shield <input type="checkbox"/>	Friendly hold <input type="checkbox"/>	Single elbow <input type="checkbox"/>
Double elbow <input type="checkbox"/>	Face ie spitting <input type="checkbox"/>	Legs <input type="checkbox"/>	Figure of four <input type="checkbox"/>
Position <input type="checkbox"/>	Standing <input type="checkbox"/>	Sitting <input type="checkbox"/>	Ground <input type="checkbox"/>
Did the position change? <input type="checkbox"/> If so, to what position?			
Is this intervention an agreed strategy linked to the behaviour management plan? Yes/No/N/a			
Details of incident:			
Duration of incident Hrs Mins		Duration of physical intervention Mins	
Medical intervention:			
Breathing monitored during incident Yes/No		Circulation monitored during incident Yes/No	
Injuries to young person Yes/No		Injuries to staff Yes/No	
If yes, describe injury		If yes, describe injury	
Entry in accident book Yes/No		Entry in accident book Yes/No	
Injured party seen by (circle) F/Aider GP Casualty dept.		Injured party seen by (circle) F/Aider GP Casualty dept.	
Action taken after incident			
Incident report completed Yes/No			
If yes, who supervised report?			
Any additional measures imposed			
Young Person's Comment			
Time:	Date:	Staff signature	
	Date:	Young person's signature	
Notifications & Signatures			
Staff signature:		Date:	
Head of Service:		Date	
Parent		Phone	Letter
Police		Phone	Letter
EWO		Phone	Letter
Social worker		Phone	Letter
Other		Phone	Letter