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**THE WHEELS PROJECT
31 - 32 Bonville Road
Brislington
BRISTOL BS4 5QH**Registered Charity No: 1081236

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| **POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY** |

**Definition of Physical Restraint**

This policy outlines physical restraint as an intervention used in response to a young person displaying challenging behaviour that poses a risk to their own safety or the safety of others. It involves the use of physical force to limit or restrict the young person's movement or mobility in order to control the behaviour when the person resists efforts to manage their actions.

**Introduction**

Due to the workshop environment and the presence of potentially dangerous tools and equipment, The Wheels Project may refuse a place to any young person who, through a completed risk assessment, is found to consistently display challenging physical behaviours. This decision is made with the primary aim of protecting and safeguarding all involved, ensuring their safety and well-being**.

Expectations**

The use of physical restraint is not part of the disciplinary management process – it is a response, albeit a considered one, to an exceptional situation. The use of restrictive physical interventions should always be considered within the wider context of other measures; these include: -

* establishing and maintaining good relationships with the young people that attend
* using diversion, diffusion and negotiation to respond to difficult situations
* non-physical, non-threatening and aggression free strategies should always be tried first.

**Use of restrictive physical interventions in unforeseen and emergency situations**

The Wheels Project acknowledges that, on occasion, staff may find themselves in unforeseen or emergency situations.

Staff should assess the situation and try to use diversion or diffusion to manage the situation. Verbal comments should be tried to calm the young person. If this fails they should immediately seek help.

Ensure all other young persons are removed from the situation as quickly as possible.

 **Use of Force or Restraint**

Even trained and named persons who could intervene should not do so if they put themselves at an unacceptable risk or where they believe that attempts to restrain will exacerbate the situation.

 **Key point**

‘To be judged lawful, the force used would need to be proportional to the circumstances it is intended to prevent’. The degree of force used must be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

 **Pupils with SEN**

Those exercising the power to use force must also take account of any particular SEN and or disability that a pupil may have. The Wheels Project has 2 key duties: -

* Not to treat a disabled a young person less favourably for a reason relating to their disability.
* To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled young people at a substantial disadvantage to pupils who are not disabled.

**Deciding if the use of force is appropriate**

The judgement on whether to use force and what force should be used will always depend on the circumstances of each case.

Decisions on whether the precise circumstances of an incident justify the use of significant force must be reasonable. Typically, such decisions have to be made quickly with little time for reflection. Nevertheless, staff will need to make the clearest possible judgements about:

* The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder.
* The chances of achieving the desired outcome by another means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by another means the more likely use of force will be justified.
* The relevant risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies.

 **Before using force**

Before using force, staff should, wherever possible tell the pupil to stop misbehaving and communicate in calm and measured manner throughout the incident. The types of force necessary may be: -

* Passive physical contact resulting from standing between pupils.
* Active physical contact such as; leading a pupil by the arm
* ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the middle of the back
* In more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds, which may require specific expertise.

Staff must always ensure that every measure has been taken to reduce risk of injury. The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

**Can use reasonable force if: -**

* The behaviour of the pupil represents a physical danger to themselves
* The behaviour of the pupil represents a physical danger to others
* The behaviour of the pupil represents a significant physical threat to property
* The behaviour of the pupil represents a serious threat to the good order of the school

**Cannot use reasonable force to: -**

* Use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment

 All staff must work positively to ensure no escalation of the incident occurs so: -

* move calmly and confidently
* make clear, simple statements to the young person
* keep voice quiet, firm and assured
* lessen threat of your presence by sitting down or allowing the young person space (don’t stand too close or corner the young person)
* talk to the young person all the time
* offer comfort, reassurance, and security
* maintain eye contact
* where possible have help at hand
* allow the young person to ‘save face’
* throughout restraint process to tell the young person precisely what you are doing and why and remind him/her continuously that physical restraint will cease the moment they become calm and in control.

**What not to do**

Methods or techniques that control by pain are forbidden. Use of pressure against joints e.g. fingers, wrists, elbows are dangerous and should not be used. Avoid the breast, upper thigh area when holding a pupil. Forcing a young person’s arm up his/her back is forbidden as is squeezing the windpipe or lifting the person off the floor to intimidate, pulling hair, striking the pupil or causing actual injury.

 **Safe Techniques**

All Wheels Project staff have been trained in Physical Intervention Face to Face training carried out on a by annual basis delivered by experts.

**Post-incident support**

Incidents that require use of restrictive physical interventions can be emotionally upsetting to all concerned and may result in injuries to the pupil or staff. After any incidents staff and the young person or persons should be allowed time to regain composure before they engage in the process of counselling, analysis and report writing. Basic first aid treatment should be given for any injuries. For serious injuries those affected should be taken to hospital or an ambulance called. Parents / carers and relatives should be immediately informed. All injuries should be reported, and an accident form filled in.

**Reporting and recording use of restrictive physical interventions**

All incidents requiring the use of physical intervention should be thoroughly and systematically documented using the Incident Report Book held in the main office. The report should be signed and dated by the staff member directly concerned along with the General Manager.

That report should include: -

* The name of the young person involved, and when and where the incident took place
* The names of any staff or pupils who witnessed the incident
* The reason that force was necessary
* How the incident began and progressed, including details of the young persons behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to diffuse the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied and for how long
* The young person’s response and the outcomes of the incident
* Details of any injuries suffered by the young person, other young people or staff members and any damage to property
* The time parent / carers / police / other agencies were alerted and notes of the telephone conversation.

**Complaints**

The use of restrictive physical intervention can lead to allegations of inappropriate or excessive use. In the event of a complaint being received in relation to use of force by the trained staff member please refer to our Complaints and/or Grievance Policy.