



# Lumen Learning Trust

Learning together for a brighter future

## Safe Holding Policy

<b>DATE APPROVED BY LUMEN LEARNING TRUST</b>	6th November 2025		
<b>REVIEW DATE Biennial</b>	6th November 2027		
<b>SIGNED DEPUTY EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL</b>	Sarah Kober 	<b>DATE</b>	06/11/2025
<b>SIGNED CHAIR OF DIRECTORS</b>	Jo Roberts 	<b>DATE</b>	06/11/2025

The Lumen Learning Trust puts the children's needs at the heart of its provision. Our whole school community is committed to enabling the children to become successful lifelong learners and happy, fulfilled adults who can make positive choices about their future.

### **Aims**

Good, transparent relationships between staff and pupils are vital. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the behaviour expectations practised by the staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances staff may need to take action where the use of safe holding or touch may be required.

The Trust and the individual schools will make every effort to ensure that:

- Staff clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where safe holding or touch is necessary.
- Staff are provided with regular and appropriate training to deal with these situations should they occur. Training includes how to report and record incidents.
- Staff will use safe holding or touch as a last resort to keep pupils safe, if de-escalation strategies have not been successful.
- Reflection, review and risk management form part of any post incident process
- Minimum force and maximum care are used to prioritise pupil's dignity and safety
- Pupils understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits which govern behaviour in school.
- Pupils understand the circumstances in which safe handling and touch may be used, taught during PHSE lessons in an age-appropriate way.
- Parents have committed themselves through their school's Home School Agreement to ensure the good behaviour of their child and their child's understanding of the need to follow reasonable requests from an adult.

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils. This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils, specifically the school's Behaviour Policy and the latest published DFE guidance.

Any member of staff has a duty of care to use reasonable force in an emergency to prevent harm.

### **Definitions**

#### *Physical Contact*

Situations in which proper physical contact takes place between staff and pupils, e.g. in sports/PE, to comfort pupils, celebrate success. Incidental physical contact (e.g. comfort, praise, sports, first aid) is a normal and appropriate part of school life. Such contact does not require recording unless it forms part of a significant intervention.

Examples:

Circumstances where physical contact may be used with a child are:

1. To provide necessary and urgent first aid treatment
2. To provide comfort or praise
3. To reinforce communication
4. To teach or build life skills such as getting dressed after a PE lesson

We do not adopt a "no Contact policy" and will not grant requests to parents/carers or staff members not to use safe holding or touch (reasonable force and/or restrictive interventions).

Safe Holding and Touch includes use of reasonable force and restrictive interventions

#### *Reasonable Force*

Reasonable force is the minimum degree of physical contact necessary, in the circumstances, to prevent personal injury, damage to property or serious disorder, when other non-physical strategies have been exhausted or are not feasible. This covers both control (e.g. guiding, blocking) and restraint (where a pupil resists) within the spectrum of permissible force.

#### *Restrictive (Physical) Intervention*

A restrictive (physical) intervention is any action that restricts or limits a pupil's movement, used as a last resort, by trained staff, and only to the extent necessary and proportionate to maintain safety or prevent harm.

Examples of safe holding and touch:

To carry out the duty of care a school and its staff has which includes:

- a. stop a child from self-injuring or placing themselves risk (this can include safe movement during PE lessons)
- b. stop a child from injuring or placing others at risk
- c. causing damage to property including that of the pupil themselves
- d. committing a criminal offence (even if the pupil is below the age of criminal responsibility)

Safe holding or touch can include prompts, guides, blocks and holds.

Safe holding and touch (reasonable force and restrictive interventions) are used as part of a holistic approach to behaviour support, within a framework of prevention, de-escalation, and repair

### **Use of safe holding and touch**

The application of any form of safe holding and touch places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for safe holding and touch.

Staff consistently use positive and de-escalation strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order to ensure that safe holding and touch is used as a last resort. Wherever reasonable force or restrictive intervention is used staff must use the minimum force with the maximum care. Please refer to our Behaviour Management policy for more detail on the strategies used.

Staff should consider the impact on pupil's dignity, human rights and well-being balanced against any actions taken. Whenever safe holding and touch is used, staff will keep talking to the pupil to ensure they know why it is occurring.

When using safe holding or touch, staff must satisfy themselves that it meets these criteria:

- 1) Is it reasonable?
- 2) Is it necessary?
- 3) Is it proportionate?

Safe holding or touch can only be deemed reasonable, necessary or proportionate if:

- it is warranted by the particular circumstances of the incident
- it is delivered in accordance with the seriousness of the incident and the consequences which it is desired to prevent
- it is carried out as the minimum to achieve the desired result
- the age, understanding, vulnerability/needs and the gender of the pupil are taken into account
- it is likely to achieve the desired result
- wherever possible, assistance has been sought from another member of staff before intervention
- appropriate de-escalation and prevention strategies have been used

### **Prevention and De-Escalation**

Staff receive training to understand the importance of de-escalation and prevention.

Whole school measures are in place which support and emphasise de-escalation and prevention.

Whole School Approach may include:

- School and classroom environments are well considered to help pupils thrive
- Application of consistent positive behaviour management policy, throughout the whole school, including playgrounds
- Staff treat others with unconditional positive regard
- Staff training on effective communication and de-escalation strategies
- An open culture of review and sharing good practice

- Prioritising forming positive relationships
- Culture of review and analysis to inform improvement planning
- Culture of supporting children to self-regulate and understand their emotions

Individual Approaches may include:

- Working closely with parents/carers
- Individual Behaviour Plans and Risk Assessments
- Reasonable adjustments to provision

Consideration for children with SEND may include:

- Removing/reducing stimuli or demands
- Change in adult or body language/tone
- Reduce language and use of visual cues
- Distracting or reengagement
- Change of environment

### **Training**

Safe holding and touch training will be made available to staff and it will be the responsibility of a Headteacher to ensure this is carried out in a timely manner. No member of staff will be expected to undertake safe holding and touch without appropriate training unless in emergency situations to carry out their duty of care

Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken.

### **Recording**

Where safe holding or touch has been used for a behavioural incident a record of the incident always needs to be kept. All recording needs to be completed in writing as soon as practical after the incident and should include the following:

- Name of pupil and staff directly involved
- Any relevant needs of the pupil, including whether a pupil has SEND
- Time, date, location and approximate length of time the intervention was used
- Brief account of the incident, including what led to the incident, triggers, de-escalation and preventative strategies used
- What type of safe holding and touch was used
- Any details of physical injuries sustained if necessary
- Brief account of why safeholding or touch was used
- Post incident support and review
- Allocation to a member of SLT

To foster a culture of continuous improvement, the post incident review will include:

- evaluation to understand why safe holding or touch were used
- review of risk assessment to reduce risk of recurrence
- review with parents/cares and the pupils where necessary
- support for pupil or staff well being where necessary

### **Parents/carers**

Schools will inform parents/carers of each incident in which a member of staff uses safe holding or touch on a pupil.

This should include:

- time, date, location and length of time
- brief account of the incident and type of safe holding or touch that was used
- brief account of why the reasonable force was used and what de-escalation strategies were used

Parents/carers to be informed even if the use of reasonable force in certain circumstances has been agreed with parents/cares on the pupil's behaviour plan.

### **Pupil Voice**

Where age-appropriate, the pupil's account and perspective should be sought and recorded as part of the post-incident review. This supports dignity, restorative approaches and a culture of learning.

Where appropriate, a restorative conversation will take place with the pupil to support learning, repair relationships and reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

### **Safeguarding**

Where the use of force gives rise to a safeguarding concern or an allegation against staff, procedures in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

### **Review of Data**

Data on use of safe holding and touch will be reviewed termly by the Local Governing Body.

Data on safe holding or touch will be reviewed by school leaders to:

- identify and implement improvements to policy
- identify areas of learning and development for school staff
- identify patterns and triggers for pupils
- identify any disproportionate use of reasonable force, especially in relation to pupils with protected characteristics, SEND or other vulnerability.

### **Complaints**

The availability of a clear policy regarding Safe Holding and Touch should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them. Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's Complaints about Staff Procedure Policy.