



Physical Intervention & Positive Handling Policy

High Impact Academic Coaching Ltd

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Audience: All Staff

Owner: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

1. Policy Statement

High Impact Academic Coaching Ltd (HIAC) is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for all children and young people (C/YP) in our care. We prioritise positive relationships, proactive de-escalation strategies, and trauma-informed, person-centred approaches to reduce the need for physical intervention.

We recognise that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to use reasonable force to prevent harm. This policy outlines our approach to positive handling and physical intervention in line with legal duties, safeguarding obligations, and the latest statutory guidance.

2. Legal Framework

This policy complies with the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 93)
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- Use of Reasonable Force – DfE Guidance (2013)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Statutory Duty to Record and Report Use of Force (Effective Sept 2025)

3. Definitions

- **Positive Handling:** Planned, sensitive, and legal physical intervention to prevent harm and support emotional regulation.
- **Physical Intervention:** Use of force to control or restrain a person, including guiding, escorting, or holding.
- **Restrictive Physical Intervention:** Any intervention that restricts liberty of movement beyond gentle guidance.

4. Principles

- Physical intervention is a last resort.
- Any use of force must be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary.
- Positive handling may be used to:
 - Prevent injury to the child or others
 - Prevent serious damage to property
 - Prevent behaviour that disrupts safety or well-being
- Staff must preserve dignity and avoid punitive or harmful actions.
- Interventions must align with individual care/support plans or risk assessments.
- Use of force during searches for prohibited items will follow Section 550ZB of the Education Act 1996.

5. Staff Training & Support

- All staff receive training in de-escalation and trauma-informed practice.
- No untrained staff should engage in restrictive physical intervention unless in an emergency.
- Staff involved in incidents will be offered emotional support and supervision.

6. Preventative Approaches

- Behaviour is understood as communication.
- Tutors build trusted relationships with learners.
- We use structured routines, safe spaces, and clear expectations.
- De-escalation techniques include:
 - Verbal reassurance
 - Offering choices
 - Change of face
 - Allowing time and space
 - Moving to a calmer environment
- Support strategies are documented in EHCPs or individual plans.

7. When Physical Intervention May Be Used

Physical intervention may be necessary in exceptional cases:

- Risk of self-injury or self-harm
- Risk of injury to others
- Significant damage to property
- Risk of absconding into danger (e.g., traffic)
- Escalating behaviour that threatens safety, where other strategies have failed

8. Post-Incident Protocol

Following any physical intervention:

- Immediate care and support will be offered to all affected.
- A full written record will be completed using the HIAC Incident Reporting Form.
- The DSL will be notified.
- Parents/carers and referring bodies will be informed within 24 hours.
- A debrief will be held with staff and the learner.
- Support plans and risk assessments will be reviewed.

9. Recording, Monitoring & Analysis

- All incidents must be recorded to the DSL/Positive Handling Log.
- Records are reviewed monthly by the DSL and SLT.
- Data trends will be analysed to inform training, planning, and preventative strategies.
- Records are stored securely in line with our Data Protection Policy.
- From September 2025, all significant uses of force will be reported to parents/carers as per statutory duty.

10. Parental Involvement

- Parents/carers will be informed of support strategies in advance where possible.
- If physical intervention is used, they will be notified on the same or next working day.
- Parents may request a meeting or appeal any actions taken.
- Alternative formats or translations of this policy are available upon request.

11. Children with SEND or Complex Needs

We recognise that C/YP with SEND, sensory differences, autism, or trauma backgrounds may be more vulnerable. We will:

- Use individual risk assessments and support plans
- Consult with professionals (e.g., psychologists, SENCOs)
- Minimise triggers and maintain consistency
- Ensure tutors are appropriately matched and trained

12. Complaints and Allegations

- Complaints regarding use of force will follow our Complaints Policy.
- Allegations of misuse will be investigated by the DSL and referred to the LADO if necessary.

13. Review and Development

This policy is reviewed annually or following any serious incident. Updates will be made in consultation with staff, schools, parents/carers, and relevant professionals.

Year-on-Year Document Review

Review Date	Reviewer Name	Changes Made / Notes	Next Review Date
01/10/25	Kris Geddes	N/A	01/10/26