

CLEARSPACE LEARNING LTD

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

Company Registration	15950890
Policy Owner	Stuart Knox (Director)
Version	1.0
Date of Issue	October 2026
Review Date	October 2027
Approved by	Stuart Knox, Director

1. OUR STANCE

Clearspace Learning supports young people through relationship, understanding and de-escalation. We do not use planned or routine physical restraint, and we do not teach or use restraint techniques. Many of the young people we work with are neurodivergent, anxious or have experienced trauma, and restraint can be frightening and harmful for them.

In this policy, positive handling means everything we do to help a young person stay safe and regulated without force, and the very limited circumstances in which physical intervention might be unavoidable. It sits alongside the Behaviour Management Policy (Use of Physical Intervention).

2. PREVENTING CRISES

- Learn each young person's triggers, sensory needs and communication from the referral, their plan and their family, and write it into their risk assessment and support plan.
- Keep demands low and flexible, offer real choices, and give time and space.
- Notice early signs of distress, and respond before a crisis.
- Plan sessions in places with room to move and a clear way out.
- Review plans after any incident and when circumstances change.

3. DE-ESCALATION

- Stay calm, use a quiet voice, and slow down.
- Give space. Step back, and stay close enough to help, but out of the young person's personal space.
- Reduce demands and reduce the audience. Offer a choice or a break.
- Use the young person's own regulation strategies.
- Do not threaten, give ultimatums or demand an apology during a crisis.
- If it is not getting safer, end the session safely and leave, and contact the parent or carer. Leaving is always preferred to restraint.

4. PHYSICAL CONTACT THAT IS NOT RESTRAINT

Physical contact is minimised, appropriate and brief, and happens with the young person's consent, as set out in the Safeguarding Policy (Physical Contact). Examples are showing how to hold a tool, or first aid.

5. WHEN PHYSICAL INTERVENTION MAY BE USED

Physical intervention is a last resort, used only when all other strategies have failed and it is needed to prevent serious harm to the young person or to others. It must be:

- The minimum force needed, for the minimum time
- Proportionate to the risk, and stopped as soon as the risk has passed
- Never used to punish, to force compliance, or to make a young person stay or do an activity

We never use: prone (face-down) restraint, holds that restrict breathing or cause pain, seclusion or locking a young person in a room, or mechanical restraint.

Stuart Knox usually works alone, so there is no second adult to help or to witness. For that reason we plan to avoid situations where intervention might be needed, and we leave rather than restrain wherever we safely can. If a young person runs towards danger, such as a road, we stay close and call for help, and only use the minimum physical contact necessary to prevent imminent serious harm.

The same approach applies to adults aged 18 to 25 that we support.

6. AFTER ANY PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

- Make everyone safe and give first aid. Seek medical help if needed.
- Record it straight away: date, time and place; what happened before; what de-escalation was tried; what was done and for how long; any injuries; and what the young person said. Use the Accident/Incident Report Form (Health and Safety Policy) and the incident report in the Behaviour Management Policy.
- Tell the parent or carer the same day.
- Tell the commissioning school or council.
- When the young person is calm, talk it through with them and check how they feel.
- Review the risk assessment and support plan, and plan alternatives.
- Consider whether the placement can continue safely. If physical intervention is needed often, discuss with the commissioner whether the provision is right for the young person.
- Any complaint or concern about how force was used is handled under the Safeguarding Policy (If an Allegation is Made; Allegations Against Stuart Knox).

7. ASSOCIATES

Associates follow this policy and are briefed on it when they join. No associate is asked to use restraint.

8. THE LAW AND GUIDANCE

- Equality Act 2010 (reasonable adjustments for disabled young people)
- Department for Education guidance on the use of reasonable force, and Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention (2019), followed as good practice
- Human Rights Act 1998

RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

POLICY APPROVAL

This Positive Handling Policy has been reviewed and approved by:

Stuart Knox

Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead, Clearspace Learning Ltd

Date: October 2026

Next Review Date: October 2027

Company Registration: 15950890

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