

## Care and Control of Students at D6A

### Rationale

At Dixons Sixth Form College our primary responsibility is to ensure that all staff and students are safe, so they focus on being the best version of themselves each day. Our culture is based on respect and kindness. A huge part of this is respecting other people's personal space.

As a college we explain the behaviours we want to see and use verbal and non-verbal instructions to ensure students are safe, inside and outside of the classroom. However, we also recognise that there are times when some passive or supportive physical contact is inevitable and that this, along with some rare instances of reasonable force, are necessary in ensuring the wellbeing and safety of both students and staff, as well as for maintaining the climate of the college.

In order to ensure that physical contact is appropriate and proportionate, and to maintain the dignity of all students and professionalism of all staff, we aim to use the guidance provided by the DfE, Dixons Academies Trust policies, and our own staff training and support to provide clarity and consistency for all parties involved. In our DAT Care and Control Policy we have identified three levels of reasonable force that might be used:

### Definitions

**PASSIVE PHYSICAL CONTACT** – 'light touch' contact either to care for or guide students who may be distressed, have an additional need or disability, or in PE / sports or other practical subjects.

Does not constitute 'positive handling' and does not need to be recorded.

Excessive use / abuse of this concept may constitute 'low level concern' under KCSIE22' definitions.

Examples include a comforting hand on the shoulder, a guiding hand on the elbow, or 'hand over hand' support with writing.

**ACTIVE PHYSICAL CONTACT** – this may be used to divert a student from destructive or disruptive action and is defined by the compliance of the student i.e. once blocked, guided etc. they do not resist.

If used regularly as part of a student's support a Positive Handling Plan should be in place.

Incidents may escalate if the student is not compliant.

If physical contact has been used to move or block a student, an Incident Form should be completed.

Examples include blocking a student's path, stepping in between students who are fighting, or linking arms with a student to walk them away from a situation (escorting).

**RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION (CONTROL AND RESTRAINT)** – this will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to students, staff or property and its defining characteristic is non-compliance of the student.

If being used regularly a Positive Handling Plan should be in place.

Every incident should be recorded, reported and stored on CPOMS.

Use of this level of reasonable force should always be a last resort.

Any use of this level of reasonable force should be proportionate i.e. no more force than is needed and no longer amount of time than is needed.

Although use of reasonable force may, at times, be necessary and legitimate, there will always be implications for the student(s), staff member(s) and witnesses involved, including impact on future relationships.

Staff cannot, under any circumstances, use force as a form of punishment.

We define reasonable force as the force a reasonable professional would use in the same situation.

Force is used to either control or restrain.

Control = blocking, leading, or guiding a student.

Restrain = to physically hold a student to prevent movement / action.

'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed for no longer amount of time

## Use of Reasonable Force

Reasonable force can be used by the Safeguarding, Progress and Wellbeing staff (and anyone else directed by the Principal at D6A that is any member of staff) in order 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 student were not under the age of criminal responsibility).
- Injuring themselves and others.
- Causing damage to property (including their own property).
- Engaging in behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at school or among any of its students, whether in the classroom or elsewhere.

When using reasonable force remember to:

- Consider impact on future relationships, behaviour management, other students etc.
- Ensure that you keep yourself and others safe.

## Search and Confiscation

Staff have the power to conduct a non-intimate search (i.e. instructing a student to empty pockets, show locker etc.) or to search locker, coat etc. with the consent of the student. The Principal, and those authorised by them, have the power to search without consent if there is reason to believe there may be prohibited items:

- Knives, weapons.
- Alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco etc.
- Stolen items.
- Fireworks.
- Pornographic images.
- Anything that has been used or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause injury or damage.
- Any item banned by the school rules and specified in the behaviour policy.

## Recording an Incident

- ALL incidents of restrictive physical intervention (control / restraint) should be recorded.
- MOST incidents of active physical intervention should be recorded (speak to SLT about each incident).
- The incident Record Form is available as appendix 3 of the DAT Care and Control Policy.
- Completed forms should be uploaded to CPOMS.

NB – it is advisable that staff speak to a DSL or someone else on SLT to ensure the wording used is in line with our policy and an accurate reflection of the incident



Appendix 1 - Positive Handling Plan and Appendix 2 - Incident record form for physical intervention, can be found in the Trust Care and Control policy <https://www.dixonsat.com/uploads/files/About/Policies/Care-and-Control-of-Students.pdf>

