

lexia
Education Services
Changing the lives of young people



Positive Handling and Physical Contact Policy

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Date of Review: 2nd September 2026 (reviewed annually)
Date of Next Review: 2nd September 2027

Policy Statement

This policy aims to ensure that all tutoring interactions are safe, positive, and professional. It focuses on the use of positive handling techniques – including non-verbal and, when absolutely necessary, physical intervention – to keep learners safe and free from harm.
Our overarching duty of care requires us to prevent situations where a learner injures themselves or others. However, any physical intervention must be proportionate, reasonable, and necessary.

Physical Contact Policy

Physical contact should generally be avoided unless it is necessary to support learning or ensure safety.
Appropriate, professional contact may include:

- **Encouragement/Comfort:** Brief, appropriate contact such as a high-five or a pat on the shoulder to encourage effort.
- **Demonstration:** Guiding a student's hand during specialized activities (e.g., music, science, or art).
- **First Aid:** Administering necessary first aid.
- **Safety:** Guiding a student away from danger (e.g., grabbing a hand to stop them running into a road or near hazard).

Unacceptable Physical Contact:

- Staff must never use physical contact as a punishment.
- Physical contact should never be of an intimate or sexual nature.
- Tutors must never shake, pull, or push a student.

Positive Handling (Physical Intervention)

Positive handling is the application of reasonable force to protect a child from harming themselves or others, or seriously damaging property.

- **Last Resort:** Physical intervention should only be used when all other strategies (verbal de-escalation, negotiation) have failed.
- **Minimal Force:** Only the minimum force necessary to manage the situation safely should be used.
- **Proportionality:** The intervention should be appropriate to the age, understanding, and size of the student.

Risk Reduction and De-escalation Strategies

Before considering physical intervention, tutors should attempt to de-escalate behaviour by:

- **Removing an Audience:** Taking the student to a quieter space.
- **Positive Guidance:** Using verbal prompts, calming techniques, and setting clear boundaries.
- **Using Space:** Maintaining a calm stance – not standing toe-to-toe – and keeping a professional distance.

Post-Incident Procedures

If physical intervention occurs:

1. **Safety Check:** Immediately check the student and tutor for injuries.
2. **Reporting:** Log the incident on the Physical Intervention Report Form - Lexia form within 24 hours.
3. **Parental Notification:** Parents/Guardians should be informed on the same day, or as soon as practically possible, regarding the action taken.
4. **Debriefing:** A debriefing session will be provided for all involved to discuss the incident and support emotional well-being.

Staff Training

All tutors should be aware of this policy. Where high-risk situations are anticipated, specific training in de-escalation and positive handling techniques should be undertaken.