



Stone Lodge School

Positive Handling Policy

Approved by:	Ollie Sharp	Date: May 2026
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Next Review	May 2027
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1. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- The Children Order 1995
- The Education Order 1998
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

2. Definition of Positive Handling

At Stone Lodge Therapeutic School, physical intervention (positive handling) is defined as:

The safe, reasonable and proportionate use of physical contact or intervention to support, guide or protect a pupil, others, or property from harm, while maintaining the pupil's dignity and emotional wellbeing.

Physical intervention is always part of a **therapeutic, relational approach** and is **never used as punishment**.

At Stone Lodge Therapeutic School:

- Seclusion (the supervised or unsupervised confinement of a pupil in a room or area from which they are prevented from leaving) is not used.
- Any use of space for regulation is supportive, supervised, and non-restrictive

3. Types of Intervention

Supportive Physical Intervention

- Guiding or leading a pupil
- Blocking or redirecting movement
- Providing physical reassurance or support

Restrictive Physical Intervention- Last Resort, (where possible).

- Delivered using **Team Teach techniques**
- Must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary and for the shortest time possible
- Aims to reduce risk and restore safety

Restrictive physical intervention is carried out within a **calm, coordinated and relational approach**, always maintaining respect for the pupil.

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Last reviewed on:	May 2026	
Next Review	May 2027	

4. Therapeutic Ethos and Policy Aims

Stone Lodge Therapeutic School supports pupils with SEND. This includes, **Autism social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs**, often linked to trauma and adverse childhood experiences.

Our approach prioritises:

- **Regulation before compliance**
- **Relationships before behaviour management**
- **De-escalation over control**

Our aims are to:

- Keep all pupils and staff safe
- Minimise the need for physical intervention by using de-escalation techniques
- Ensure any intervention is **necessary, proportionate and respectful**
- Support pupils to develop **self-regulation and emotional awareness**
- Provide staff with the training and confidence to respond safely and therapeutically using a PACE approach

Positive handling is only one part of a wider approach that includes:

- Trauma-informed practice
- PACE approach
- Emotional regulation strategies
- Individual support and risk plans

5. Appropriate Physical Contact

At Stone Lodge, appropriate and safe physical contact is recognised as part of a **nurturing environment** and is part of our daily practice, for example:

- Comforting a distressed pupil
- Supporting regulation (where appropriate and agreed)
- Guiding a pupil safely
- Educational support (e.g. PE, practical activities, sensory needs)

All contact must be:

- Appropriate to the individual child

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Next Review	May 2027
--------------------	----------

- Non-intrusive and respectful
- In line with safeguarding expectations

6. When Restrictive Physical Intervention May Be Used

Restrictive Physical Intervention may be necessary where:

- There is an **immediate risk of harm**
- A pupil is **physically aggressive**
- A pupil is attempting to **leave a safe area (absconding)**
- There is **serious damage to property**
- Behaviour is **unsafe and cannot be de-escalated by other means**

Examples include:

- Fighting or assault
- Throwing dangerous objects
- Running into unsafe environments
- Severe dysregulation leading to risk of harm to self or others
- Self-harm

7. Recovery and Repair

Following any incident, priority is given to **emotional recovery**.

Pupils will be supported through:

- Time in a calm, safe space
- Regulation activities
- Restoring a sense of safety
- Returning to routine when ready

Repair and Reflection:

- Reflective conversations will take place when the pupil is calm
- Apologies are encouraged but **not forced immediately**
- Staff will model empathy and repair relationships

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Next Review	May 2027
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8. Risk and Injury

While trained techniques aim to reduce harm, there is always some level of risk.

- Any injury must be **recorded and reported immediately**
- Parents/carers and senior leaders must be informed
- Incidents must be logged on the school system

9. Staff Responsibilities

Staff must:

- Carry out **dynamic risk assessments**
- Follow individual pupil plans
- Use de-escalation strategies first
- Justify any use of force
- Record all incidents accurately

Staff must not:

- Use force as punishment
- Use excessive or unreasonable force
- Put themselves at unnecessary risk

10. Training

- Staff receive yearly training in Team Teach Level 2 certificate.
- Training is regularly updated
- Staff who are not trained must still support through **de-escalation strategies**

11. Recording and Monitoring- See flow chart

All incidents involving restraint must:

- Be recorded as soon as possible
- Include full details of the incident
- Be reviewed by senior leadership

Monitoring ensures:

- Safe and consistent practice
- Identification of patterns or additional needs
- Ongoing improvement in support strategies

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12. Staff Support

Following incidents:

- Staff will be offered **debrief and support**
- Time to recover will be provided where needed
- Reflective practice is encouraged

13. Whistleblowing

Any concerns about the misuse of physical intervention must be reported to:

- Head of School or Director of Schools
- Or the Chair of Governor

All concerns will be taken seriously and investigated.

Any complaints relating to the use of force will be managed in line with the school's

Complaints Policy.

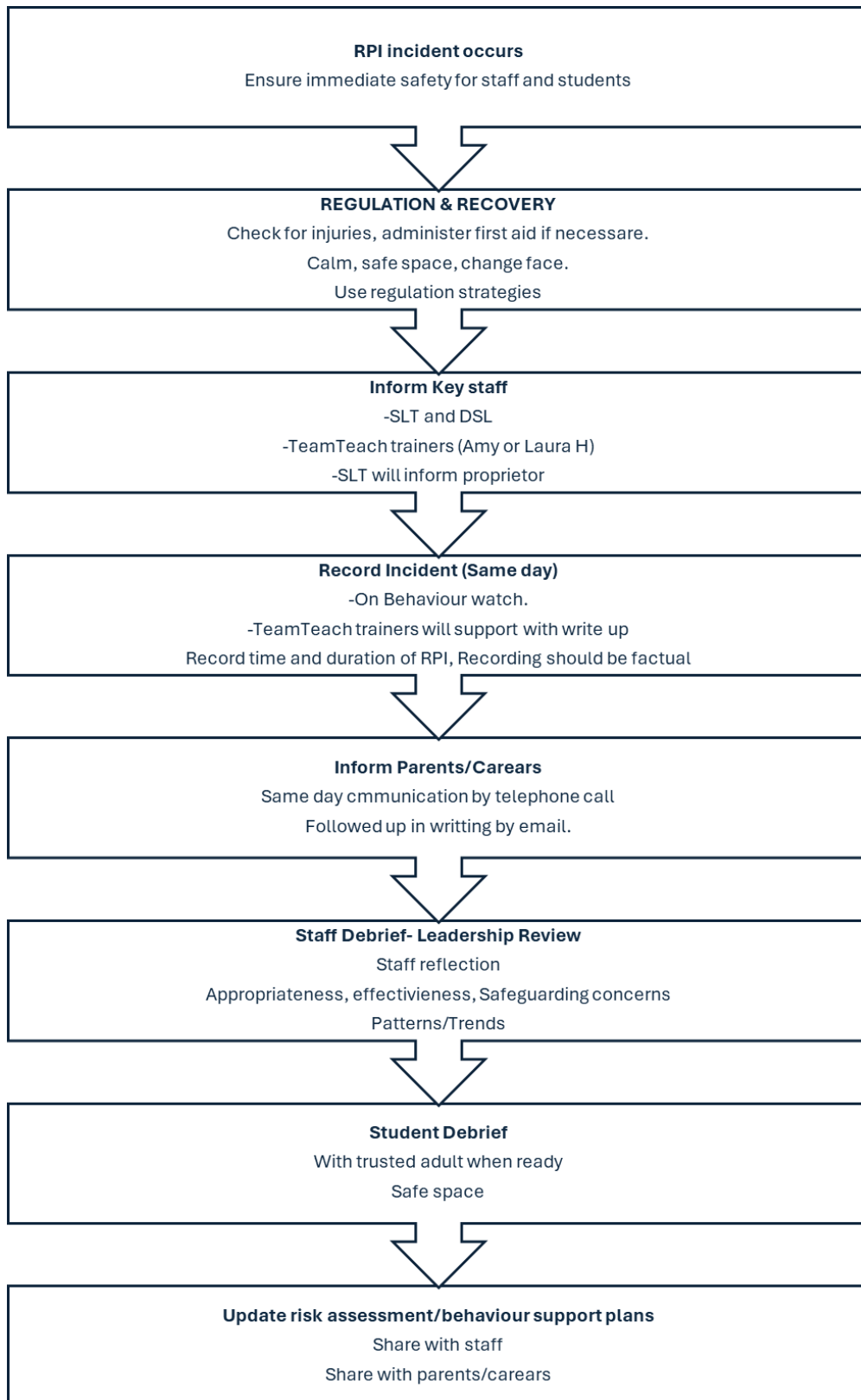
14. Update risk assessment/behaviour support plans

- Share with staff
- Share with parents/carers

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