



Charlton Park Academy and Mulberry Tree House De-escalation Policy and Protocols

Rationale

Charlton Park Academy is a low incidence special needs School (Academy) for students aged 11-19. The Academy meets the needs for students with Autism, severe learning difficulties, complex medical needs and moderate to profound learning difficulties. Mulberry Tree House is a small boarding unit aimed at supporting students with complex needs through short breaks and respite Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday night term time only.

Students present with a wide range of learning difficulties that may affect their behaviour. Some students have significant, complex and/or specific behaviour difficulties. Some of these behaviours may be displayed through challenging or aggressive behaviour where they do not always respond in a predictable way, partly due to their learning difficulties.

Staff and students have the right to feel safe and secure at school. The best interests of the student will take precedent and will inform any actions undertaken by staff to modify inappropriate behaviour. Actions taken by staff must be proportionate, reasonable and necessary. (Related legislation – Children Act 1989)

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary by law for school staff to use a De-escalation room in order to protect student's legal rights and/or fulfil the Academy's legal obligations, as outlined below.

Legal Considerations

The 2010 Guidance, referring to the 2002 Guidance principles states;

The use of seclusion (where a person is forced to spend time on their own against their will) is a form of physical intervention and should only be considered in exceptional circumstances. The right to liberty is protected by criminal and civil law and seclusion outside the Mental Health Act should always be proportionate to the risk presented by the pupil.

The use of seclusion must be seen as a restrictive physical intervention. It is only used as part of a holistic broad approach to the management of extreme challenging behaviour. The inappropriate use of seclusion may be unlawful, as will any unreasonable use of force where there is no legal justification. The Academy will only ever adopt the use of seclusion in lawful circumstances. Therefore, seclusion should only be used when:

- It is in the best interests of the person being secluded – and never for ease of management.
- It is the least restrictive response and its use is proportional to the level of risk presented.
- It is used for the minimum period of time to restore safety.

- Other strategies such as de-escalation have been used or are considered to be inappropriate in the circumstances.
- The student has a Positive Behaviour Support plan (which does not list the use of a De-escalation room as a strategy as other methods have alleviated the need to do so) and all strategies have been attempted to no avail.

Seclusion must not be used with any intent to punish or teach the person any new behaviours – its use must be as a responsive strategy aimed at managing the presenting behaviour at that time.

Emergency use of restrictive physical interventions, such as the De-escalation room, may be required when students behave in ways that have not been foreseen by a risk assessment.

Guidelines

The term “De-escalation room” refers to any space with the door closed that provides safety for the student, staff and other students. The student is secluded and there is a temporary restriction of liberty.

It is a risk assessed personalised and structured (reported, recorded and reviewed) strategy. It is used in the child’s best interests, with the aim of preventing the risk of significant harm to themselves or others.

Where a student uses a De-escalation room and the door is closed they will be continually monitored by at least one member of staff. The time that the student is inside the De-escalation room must be recorded on the De-escalation room Log.

The use of De-escalation room and Temporary Restriction of Liberty will be described in full within the student’s PBS plan. Any use of a De-escalation room, other than use detailed on individual’s PBS must be recorded in the bound book, kept in the Leadership office.

The De-escalation room can have many functions for our students. Some enjoy using it as a quiet place and will use it often to manage their own anxieties and behaviour, independent of staff involvement. A calm place to ‘retreat’ to and in some cases a reward after completing good work. Students will self-regulate and direct themselves independently into the De-escalation room.

Temporary Restriction of Liberty

The temporary restriction of liberty is a safeguarding strategy that may be agreed with parents and identified/agreed within a student’s PBS plan, for those students that display aggressive and dangerous behaviour: helping to protect the student and staff from any harm.

Planning and Safeguards for the Use of the De-escalation room

If seclusion is considered to be appropriate, the following issues must be addressed before use.

- Any use of seclusion must be in the context of the appropriate Academy Behaviour policy and all those involved should have a thorough understanding of this policy.
- The agreement to the use of seclusion for an individual should be part of a detailed PBS plan, which identifies the reasons for an individual's behaviour and provides a holistic graded approach to the risks and management of challenging behaviour. The plan should involve and be agreed by everyone involved with student.
- Good practice emphasises the involvement of the individual and their family in the consideration and planning of the use of seclusion, parents and families are expected to sign the PBS and to go through the content in detail with the class teacher.
- Staff involved will be LeAFE Approach trained in line with the restraint, reduction network pledge (RRN) and which is certified by CPD UK.
- Staff will need to be trained in the use of seclusion for the individual concerned within the wider context of a holistic approach to behaviour management and in the use of monitoring, recording and reviewing processes.
- When an incident arises, staff should consider the balance of risks between managing the situation where it is happening and withdrawing everyone to create a calming area, compared with moving the student to a De-escalation room and then withdrawing.

Recording and Reporting the Use of Seclusion and De-escalation room

All incidents must be:

- Monitored and recorded on the De-escalation room log
- Recorded on incident forms and in the bound book if the use of a De-escalation room is not included as an integral part of the student's PBS.
- Reported to the class tutor responsible as soon as possible.
- Reported to parents/carers as soon as possible and at least by the end of the day, when the De-escalation room has been used above and beyond what they have agreed to in the PBS.

Monitoring trends

Trends will be monitored using the behaviour watch online recording system, tracking and monitoring behavioural incidents over time. Reports can be generated automatically and used to identify types of physical interventions including specific types; helping to both identify and track trends over time. Reports are generated weekly for the Senior Leadership Team : to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation takes place. All pastoral groups are overseen by a middle leader who will support and meet class teams to re-evaluate behaviour plans when there has been an increase in physical interventions. Specific strategies will be trialled to gradually reduce the use of physical intervention and a report will be produced termly for Senior Leadership Team evaluation and will be part of the termly report Safeguarding report to Governors.

Reviewing the use of seclusion and De-escalation room

The review should assess each use of a safe space and seclusion and record whether:

- The use of seclusion is an effective response and how this compares with other possible responses or strategies
- It offers a lower level of intrusion than other possible responses or interventions.
- It offers improved safety for the secluded person and those around them.
- It helps the person to calm and return to normal behaviour as or more effectively than other responses or strategies
- It decreases the probability of the same behaviour occurring in the future when taken in the context of the student's PBS.
- PBS plans are reviewed every term, reviewing the use of De-escalation rooms must be part of Behaviour Management review.

Reviewing practice

All new staff will receive a full day training course plus additional pre-course reading from LeAFE Approach training. LeAFE training is delivered in line with the Restraint Reduction Network pledge (RRN) and certified by CPD UK. All trained staff will receive annual refreshers from LeAFE trainers, this will be a half day refresher training. School and staff can request subsequent drop in sessions from LeAFE trainers to support class teams in addition to those delivered by the training. As an Academy there are clear lines of accountability and it will be the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they adhere to behaviour protocols set, ensuring we continue to maintain and improve the quality of behaviour interventions designed to support and protect both staff and students.

The Academy's obligations concerning liberty

In line with legal principles established at the date of issuing this policy, the Academy will take all necessary steps to ensure that the liberty of students, within the meaning of article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights as incorporated by the Human Rights Act 2000, is preserved.

The requirement to use best endeavours

In order to meet their legal obligations, the Governing Body will use their best endeavours to secure that, the special educational provision (i.e. support) which a student's learning difficulty requires is provided for. This may include the use of the De-escalation room in certain cases where school staff and/or specialist professionals consider this to be an appropriate measure.

The application of reasonable adjustments

School staff and/or professionals may conclude, after very careful consideration, that it necessary to use the De-escalation room as a form of reasonable adjustment in order to avoid placing a student at a substantial disadvantage. The Governing Body acknowledges its obligations under the Equality Act and has developed an equality policy to re-enforce this commitment.

The training of staff

In line with government guidelines and common practice, school staff will receive training, including updates and refresher courses, appropriate to their role and responsibilities within the Academy. Staff who are expected to employ supportive holding may undertake additional, more specialised training, where appropriate. School staff will only use methods of supportive holding for which they have received LeaFE training.

Implemented:	October 2021
Date reviewed:	October 2025
Next review:	October 2026

Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents and guidelines:

- Children Act 1989
- Children & Families Bill 2013
- Section 317 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010
- Section 93 Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour management Policy
- LeAFE Documentation Training Records
- Incident and cause for Concern files
- Individual Risk Assessments
- PBS plans
- DFES Guidance on Use of Force 2011 & 2012
- Specialist guidance according to particular disabilities and special educational needs, where appropriate
- Guidance on the use of restrictive physical interventions for staff working with children and adults who display extreme behaviour in association with learning disability and/or Autism Spectrum Disorders (2002)
- Improving behaviour and attendance: guidance on exclusion from schools and Pupil Referral Units (2008)
- Specialist professional assessment reports, where appropriate

Links with Other Charlton Park Academy Policies

- Learning Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff Handbook
- Equality Policy

Appendix 1 - De-escalation room Procedure

Charlton Park Academy
De-escalation room Procedure
October 2021

Preconditions

- The De-escalation room is to be used only in conjunction with PBS Plans. The use of De-escalation room and Temporary Restriction of Liberty will be described in full within the student's PBS Plan, except in cases of an emergency.
- PBS plans must clearly state staff use of the De-escalation room for individuals. This must be shared with parents when requesting their signature and agreement with the PBS Plans.
- Staff must follow the PBS Plan in order to minimise the time that the student spends in the De-escalation room i.e. they must continue to use calming techniques, communication aids, and reminders of rewards and consequences.
- Staff must complete the PBS plan if the calm room is used in an emergency, the use of the De-escalation room must be included in the student's risk assessment.

Safeguarding protocols

- The door must remain open whenever possible to aid communication and calming. If the door is closed the young person must be continually monitored.
- If it is within the best interests of the young person, there may be circumstances where the young person is prevented from leaving the De-escalation room. In this situation the student must be monitored continually through the window and the door must be opened as soon as is safe to do so.
- There may be circumstances where the door to the De-escalation room is secured: **door held shut – not locked under any circumstances**. This will have been pre-determined on the PBS plan for that student or in cases where students pose a significant risk to themselves and/or others. If staff are securing the door, this must be recorded and its use must be indicated in the student's individual PBS Plan so that parents and other professionals are made aware.
- Any incident which involves the De-escalation room must be recorded on to the De-escalation room log, indicating how long the student was in the room: when the student entered the room and when the student left the room.
- If the use of the De-escalation room goes above and beyond what is detailed in a student's PBS Plan, the bound book in the Assistant Principals office must be completed.

If the De-escalation room is not working to help the young person to calm down and reduce challenging behaviour the student's PBS Plan will be reviewed by the professionals involved with the young person. An internal Behaviour Review with the SVP & AP may be held to discuss and decide on future behaviour management techniques and this professional committee may seek external support if required from professionals such as Educational Psychologist, Health team.

Appendix 2

De-Escalation Room Log

Name of class: _____

Teacher/tutor: _____

De-Escalation Door number: _____

[illegible]

Completed De-Escalation Log sheets must be handed into your Assistant Principal