

Policy Title Physical Intervention Policy

Adopted: September 2023

For Review: September 2024

Introduction:

Blackthorn Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for pupils' safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour - and use physical intervention only as a last resort. If used at all it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil, and be reasonable and proportional to the circumstances of the incident. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.

It is recognised in both statutory¹ and Common Law that there is a need to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to pupils, staff and property.

This policy relates to legislation in The Education Act 1996 and The Education and Inspections Act 2006. This policy also considers the non-statutory advice outlined in the DfE guidance 'Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for the Headteacher, staff and governing bodies' as well as NCC guidance for schools on the use of restrictive physical interventions.

Key points that are outlined in the advice include:

- All school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force
- Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force
- Senior leaders should support their staff when they use this power

Objectives:

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Maintain the safety of pupils, staff and visitors
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent serious breaches of school discipline

Deciding if the use of physical intervention is appropriate:

Staff will view the use of physical intervention of pupils as a last resort. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent the need for restrictive physical intervention.

Any member of staff who undertakes a restrictive physical intervention should be clear as to why it is necessary and be able to show that it was in the pupil's best interest and that it was reasonable and proportionate. For those pupils assessed as being at risk of restrictive physical intervention Positive Handling Plans will be developed. These plans outline what techniques should/should not be used, along with appropriate de-escalation strategies.

¹ Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

The judgement on whether to use physical intervention and what type of physical intervention should be used, should always depend on the circumstances of each case and in the case of pupils with Special Educational Needs, information about the individual concerned.

In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate:

- Risk of harm towards themselves or others, including; staff, pupils, or visitors
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property
- Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline.
- Where there is possible threat of the pupil absconding
- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence.

Staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about:

- a) The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. The greater the potential for injury, damage, or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
- b) The chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
- c) The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

Staff should also be aware of guidance which states

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder.
- In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

School does not use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate physical contact with children:

Examples of the types of 'physical touch' that are considered appropriate by adults working or volunteering in the school are:

- Holding a child's hand if the child has initiated the touch i.e. putting out their hand to be held.
- Supporting a child with external clothing i.e. removing a jumper/coat (see Intimate care policy)
- A gentle hand on the shoulder or back for reassurance if a child is upset.

This list of appropriate physical contact with children is not exhaustive, however, if in doubt a member of staff should always seek further clarification from a senior leader before using physical touch. Each scenario will be context dependant and staff will be expected to make a reasonable judgement call, based on this policy, as to how they use physical intervention appropriately.

Examples of 'physical touch' that are not considered appropriate by adults working in the school are:

- Holding a child's hand against their wishes.
- Holding a child by the wrist.
- Initiating a hug with a child. If a child hugs an adult, the adult is expected to turn side on and remind the child gently that 'hugs are for home'. This supports a child to understand appropriate boundaries with adults in school.
- Sitting a child on an adult's lap. Always try to sit a child next to you instead and at an appropriate distance that the child's personal space is respected.
- Pulling or tugging clothing that a child is wearing.

Any other forms of physical intervention or touch are covered by this policy. Staff will be expected to ascertain if and what method physical intervention is required and to complete procedures and forms accordingly.

Using physical interventions:

Before using restrictive physical intervention staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil to stop their specific undesired behaviour and communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout the incident. Staff should be specific in telling the pupil that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

The types of physical intervention could include:

- a. Passive physical contact resulting from standing between students or blocking a student's path.
- b. Active physical contact such as:
 - i) Leading a student by the hand or arm;
 - ii) Ushering a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
 - iii) In more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive interventions, which require specific expertise and training.

The restrictive physical interventions authorised by the school are those techniques in which staff have received appropriate training and development through 'Team Teach'.

The core principles of safe practice include:

- Minimum of two staff involved at all times.
- Last resort minimum force and for the least amount of time.
- Techniques that do not rely on pain or locks and allow for verbal communication.
- Staff safety and protection addressed.
- Planned responses and techniques are written out and included in positive handling plans for individual pupils.

Team Teach director Mr George Mathews states that:

"Team-Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent "side-effect" of ensuring that the service user remains safe".

(George Matthews - Director)

Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff is justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the Headteacher of seeking to use the minimum intervention required to achieve the desired result.)

Alternatives to physical intervention:

A member of staff who chooses not to make a physical intervention can still take effective action to reduce risk. They can:

- Ensure that colleagues know what is happening and get help.
- Show care and concern by acknowledging unacceptable behaviour and requesting alternatives using negotiation and reason.
- Give clear directions to the pupils to stop.
- Remind them about rules and likely outcomes.
- Remove any audience or take vulnerable pupils to a safer place.
- Make the environment safer by moving furniture and removing objects which could be used as weapons.
- Use 'positive touch'² to guide or escort pupils to somewhere less pressurised.

Reducing the likelihood of situations arising where physical intervention may be required:

All physical interventions at the school are conducted within a framework of positive behaviour management. The school's Behaviour Policy rewards effort and application, and encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The school's Behaviour Policy also outlines the steps the school undertakes to ensure a calm, orderly and supportive school climate which minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind, thereby reducing the need for physical intervention.

Staff should recognise the need to effectively manage individual incidents. It is important to communicate calmly with the pupil, using non-threatening verbal and body language and ensuring that the pupil can see a way out of the situation. Strategies might include, for example, going with the staff member to a quiet room, away from bystanders or other pupils, so that the staff member can listen to concerns; or being joined by a particular member of staff well known to the pupil.

Wherever practicable, a pupil should be warned that physical intervention may have to be used before applying it.

Authorisation of staff to use physical intervention and staff development:

All members of staff have legal power to use reasonable force. We adopt a preventative and pro-active approach and individual staff are identified to assist any pupil with a positive handling plan in place. Authorisation is given by the Headteacher (or someone deputising when they are absent). Information regarding the positive handling strategies, including de-escalation techniques, will be shared with all identified staff.

Certain members of staff are trained in specific physical interventions and de-escalation strategies. Once staff have received full training, refresher training will take place 2-3 years following initial training.

The names of staff who have been trained to use physical intervention techniques are included in Appendix 1, along with the dates they received their training.

Positive Handling Plans:

² 'Positive touch' is a 'Team Teach' technique where the pupil is guided by touching the arm above the elbow. Please refer to the Team Teach training manual for specific guidance on the technique.

Individual pupils assessed at being at greatest risk of requiring restrictive physical intervention will be identified by the Headteacher and Inclusion Lead. These pupils will have a Positive Handling Plan (PHP) and Risk Assessment (appendix 2), developed in consultation with the school, parents/ carers, and the pupil. The PHP and the Risk Assessment form one document which allows an overview of risk, behaviours and strategies for supporting the child.

Risk Assessments identify the nature and level of potential risk and outline the management and prevention of risk. Positive Handling Plans set out the situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and the de-escalation strategies that are most effective. Specific strategies and techniques that have been agreed by staff when physical intervention is required are also included. Both the PHP and the Risk Assessment will be discussed with parents/carers as well as the pupil in a meeting and a copy provided along with the Primary School's Positive Intervention Policy.

Recording and reporting incidents:

The Primary School keeps a record of all physical interventions. Each incident is recorded on a Physical Intervention Incident Report (appendix 3) and also recorded in a Bound & Numbered book, which is located in the Headteacher's office. Each incident report must be given a log numbered which will relate to the log number on the Bound & Numbered book. All records are kept for seventy five years after the date of birth of the child. Parents/carers will also be verbally notified of any incident that has resulted in the need to use Physical Intervention.

The purpose of recording is to ensure that policy guidelines are followed, to inform parents/carers, to inform future planning as part of the school improvement process, to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the incident and to provide a record for any future enquiry.

Accounts of the incident will be hand written by the member of staff who undertook the physical intervention, the pupil/s involved and any third party witnesses. Parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible after any recordable incident. Parents/carers will be telephoned or spoken to face to face. Parents/carers will be informed of when and where the incident took place, which members of staff were directly involved (anonymised where necessary), why they decided physical intervention had to be used, what physical intervention was used, whether there were any injuries and what follow up action was being taken in relation to their child. Parents/carers will be signposted towards the 'Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy'. Once written, the Physical Intervention reporting form will be shared and signed.

The Headteacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity that a physical intervention has taken place, ensure that the incident is recorded, review the details of incident and provide post-incident support to the pupil or staff.

Governors will be informed of the number of physical interventions on an annual basis.

Post-incident support:

Blackthorn Primary School recognises the need to ensure that staff and pupils have appropriate emotional support. The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. Immediate action will be taken to provide first aid for any injuries requiring attention.

The pupil will be given time to become calm whilst staff continue to supervise. When it is deemed that the pupil is composed, a senior member of staff will discuss the incident with the pupil and ascertain the reason for its occurrence. All necessary steps will be taken to re-

Blackthorn Primary School



establish a positive relationship between the pupil and the member of staff involved in the incident.

All members of staff involved will be allowed appropriate period of time to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff (or his/her nominee) will provide support to the member of staff involved.

A member of the teaching (in the first instance) or a senior member of staff (if a teacher is unable to) will engage parents/carers in discussing the incident and for setting out subsequent actions and support.

Complaint procedure:

If a parent/carer or pupil is concerned about any aspect of the management of an incident requiring physical intervention, they should contact the Headteacher and discuss their concerns. The Headteacher will respond to any concern or complaint in accordance with school policy and procedure.

Physical Intervention Training Record

The following members of staff have been trained to use physical intervention techniques and have permission to use them and assist other members of staff to ensure the safety of staff, pupils, visitors and members of the public, in accordance with the school's Positive Handling & Physical Intervention Policy:

Name	Date of Training	6hr	12hr	Refresher Due
Marc Chambers	21/04/2022		✓	26 th April 2024
Natasha Wilson	3/1/23	✓		January 2026
Diane Saxby	3/1/23	✓		January 2026
Layla Hayden	18/10/22	✓		April 2025
Emma Charter	03/12/2021	✓		December 2024
Jo Surynt	14/05/2021	✓		May 2024
Charlene Clarke	14/05/2021	✓		May 2024
Alina Dumitru	18/10/22	✓		October 2025
Susan McHale	21/10/22	✓		October 2025
Claire Heath	3/1/23	✓		January 2026
Laura Haddon	3/1/23	✓		January 2026
Danielle Anslow	5/9/23	✓		September 2026
Stefan Gordon	5/9/23	✓		September 2026
Simon Hogarth	5/9/23	✓		September 2026
Marlee Goodwin	5/9/23	✓		September 2026
Dorette Stuart-Marshall	5/9/23	✓		September 2026

No.

Physical Intervention Report 2023-24

Date		Name of Pupil	
Location of PI		Start Time / PI	
		Finish Time / PI	
Restoration Location		Ready For Learning by:	
Staff Involved		Witnessed by:	

Events leading up to incident and description of incident

--

De-escalation Strategies used to Manage Behaviour (please ✓ appropriate box)

Verbal Advice and Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-threatening Body Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	Withdrawal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Success Reminded	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reassurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Humour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time Out / Withdrawal Directed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planned Ignoring	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff Changeover	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choices Offered	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change of Location Offered	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calm Talking	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distraction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negotiation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Count Down	<input type="checkbox"/>	Help Hug	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Restraint Criterion Believed to be Satisfied (please ✓ appropriate box)

The pupil was at risk of self-harming or putting themselves in a position of being harmed	<input type="checkbox"/>	There was a substantial risk of physical injury to another pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
There was a substantial risk of physical injury to a member of staff/public	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serious damage to property was being threatened/caused	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serious disruption was being threatened/caused	<input type="checkbox"/>	Absconding	<input type="checkbox"/>

Intervention used and time (please initial appropriate box)

Small Person Escort		Small Person Chair / Beanbag		Small person sitting on floor		Single Elbow Escort	
Double Inside Elbow Escort		Inside Elbow Seated		Single Elbow Floor		Friendly Hold	
Two Person		Single Person		Small Person 2 person Hold		Half Shield	
Response To Bites		Response To Spitting		Response To Hair		Cradle Hug	
Total duration of I (mins)				Staff Qualified (please ✓)		Yes	
Safe Space used?				Time out of Class (mins.)			
Reflection and Repair of Incident				Pupil Debrief <input type="checkbox"/>			
Outcome:							

Any Medical Information/Attention/Details of Injury to Staff or Pupils (please ✓)	Yes	No
If yes, please advise:		
Staff Class Debrief <input type="checkbox"/>	Staff SLT Debrief <input type="checkbox"/>	

Reported to First Aider	Yes	No	Recorded in Medical Book	Yes	No
-------------------------	-----	----	--------------------------	-----	----

Signature of Reporting Members of Staff:	Signature of Headteacher:
Parent / Carers informed by: _____ Face to face / Telephone call Date: _____ Parent Comment: Parent / Carer Signature:	

Name:	DoB:	Plan No:	Date:
Medication:		Nominated member of staff to oversee the plan:	
Triggers:			

Preferred supports / interventions / de-escalation (strategies that help to CALM the situation)

Verbal advice support	Reassurance	Time out offered	Time out directed
Humour	Choices/consequences	Distraction	Success reminded
Remind rules, rights, responsibilities	Offer limited choices with help	Avoid confrontation	Repeat simple clear directions
Other:			

Risk Assessment:

	Risk 1	Risk 2	Risk 3
Description of risk			

Is the risk potential or actual? How frequently does the risk occur?			
Who is affected by the risk?			
How likely is the risk to occur?			
Who/what is likely to be injured?			
What injuries may be sustained?			
How serious are the outcomes?			

Risk Frequency (1-10, where 1 is low):

Risk	Violence towards staff	Violence towards peers	Damage to property	Risk of absconding
Frequency				

The levels below link to the BPS Behaviour Policy, but recognise that children with SEMH difficulties need individual support strategies to enable them to regulate and be safe. The aim is to at all times support the child with de-escalation.

Level 1

Support Strategies	Behaviour
The things we can do or say to prevent situation from escalating.	What name does, says and looks like that gives us clues that he is anxious.

Level 2

Support Strategies	Behaviour
The things we can do or say to stop the situation from escalating further.	What name does, says and looks like that gives us clues that he is engaging in challenging behaviours.

Level 3

Support Strategies	Behaviour
The things we can do or say to quickly manage the situation and to prevent unnecessary distress, injury or destruction.	What name does, says and looks like when he is challenging.

Post Incident Strategies

Support Strategies	Behaviour
The things we can do or say to support name to become calmer.	What name does, say and looks like that tells us that he is becoming calmer.

Behaviour Targets

Behaviour Target 1
Behaviour Target 2
Behaviour Target 3

Additional Support: (Intervention work, external support, EHA)

Copies to:

--

Review date:

--

Signed:

Inclusion Lead:		Date:
Class Teacher:		Date:
Parent:		Date:
Pupil (as appropriate):		Date: