



Embracing Empathy | Achieving Excellence | Unlocking Opportunities

Physical intervention policy

See also, who we are, what we do and how we do it,
anti-bullying and safeguarding policies

Date	
Signed	

Introduction

Staff at Redbourn Park School are trained to work with challenging students and work to a clear, positive student-centred behaviour policy, which focuses on prevention and de-escalation. This policy is based on guidance issued by the Secretary of State, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)*, Department for Education (DfE), September 2020, *Positive environments where children can flourish, (Ofsted), March 2018* and *Behaviour in schools Advice for headteachers and school staff, September 2022*.

Where the wealth of strategies available to colleagues fail, physical handling of students is the absolute last resort and is used to keep students, and staff, safe. It is used safely and positively, drawing upon the formal physical intervention training staff have (received from Team Teach in line with staff training and induction protocols), when all other strategies have failed to avert behaviour that is likely to cause harm to the student or others around them.

Definition

Physical intervention is the positive use of force in order to avert danger by preventing or deflecting a student's action, or by removing the physical object which could be used to harm the student or others.

In all circumstances, Redbourn Park School recognises that physical intervention can only deal with the immediate problem and careful assessment is needed to prevent repetition. This assessment takes the form of a reflective debrief with a senior leader at the end of the school day (it is important to ensure staff are given time to debrief and reflect on the incident, including in terms of their own well-being) which is recorded on our physical intervention log.

Use of physical intervention

Where there is a risk of a student:

- **endangering or harming others**
- **self-harming**
- **causing damage to property**
- **significantly disrupting the school, its students or members of the public**

Staff will use reasonable force (any use of physical intervention will, as far as possible, be a trained hold and will be undertaken by staff with up-to-date training) to manage the situation only when all alternatives have been exhausted (eg. calm talking, distraction, warnings, relaxation room, reassurance, humour, options, change of face) and have failed. Our starting point is always the rights, needs and safety of the student (and other students and staff present).

Any use of force will be recorded and will be signed-off as part of a reflective debrief with a member of the leadership team at the end of the same day. Where necessary and appropriate, the student's parents/carers will be informed at the end of the school day at the latest.

The leader signing the record will inform the designated safeguarding lead where there are specific safeguarding concerns or where social care services have asked to be informed. In both such cases, the student's allocated social worker will be informed by the designated safeguarding lead.

All records of physical intervention are logged, collated, reviewed at leadership team meetings on a weekly basis and trends are analysed over time. Where patterns appear, strategies (such as timetable changes) are

Last Review	August 2024	Next Review	August 2025	Owner	Head Teacher
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trialled. The data we use is based on overviews of physical interventions as well as data on interventions for specific students.

We use physical intervention:

- If a student's behaviour presents a risk to themselves or others, including staff, *significant* damage to school property or if they are *significantly* disrupting the school (and are likely to be a trigger for other students)
- As a safety measure where aggressive behaviour could put the student or other people at risk. It is **never** used as a punishment or as part of a behaviour management strategy

We ensure that:

- The number of staff involved will always be the minimum necessary to safeguard the student and others but where appropriate, and especially where large, strong or particularly violent students are involved (as identified on their risk assessment) there ideally should always be 2 staff members involved in any physical intervention
- The force used will be the minimum necessary to deal with the harm that needs to be prevented, i.e. it must be reasonable in the circumstances. Staff will aim to 'hold' a student for the minimum time possible
- During a physical intervention, staff will not attempt to discuss the incident as the student will be too distressed to think about it and it may further escalate the challenging behaviour. The time for reflection is later when the student has calmed down. Staff will focus any talking on trying to soothe the student and help them calm down. They will verbalise their belief in the student's ability to calm down and turn the situation around. They will verbalise their commitment to continue to support them ("I'm here to help you" etc.)
- The student will have time to rest, reflect & recover; they will then re-join the activity or lesson when appropriate. This must be neither rushed (the student must be properly calmed and ready to re-engage) nor unnecessarily elongated
- Any student who has been held should be given the opportunity to be debriefed and talk through their experience with a member of staff who was not involved in the physical intervention, normally by the end of the school day.

Risk assessments

- All students have an individual risk assessment which outlines specific considerations for that student in relation to physical intervention. These are updated on a termly basis, or more frequently if specific issues arise
- In an emergency situation, staff will inevitably need to make a dynamic risk assessment, which will include a judgement of the capacity of a young person at that moment to make a safe choice
- When considering a student's dynamic risk assessment, if there is a temporary period of incapacity that may place a student at risk of significant physical or emotional harm, staff may need to use physical intervention as one of the measures to protect the student

Last Review	August 2024	Next Review	August 2025	Owner	Head Teacher
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- When it comes to protecting students, staff are encouraged to consider what they would want somebody else to do if that was their child - this helps to direct staff towards best practice.

Staff training

Staff will be trained in physical intervention and behaviour support. We aim to have all staff have in-date training. Certificates are kept on file and refresher training is offered annually. For new staff, opportunities are provided as quickly as possible to enable them to complete the training – in the meantime they must not get themselves involved in any physical intervention with students.

Monitoring standards

The leadership team monitors physical intervention on a daily basis and works with staff to reflect on causes and steps taken before, during and after interventions. This monitoring is shared with the leadership team and the governing body:

- The leadership team reviews all physical intervention data formally as part of its weekly agenda. In particular; periods of physical intervention that are lengthy, an incident that involves a high number of staff, situations that are escalating with physical intervention being used more frequently, children sustaining injuries and repeated incidents or patterns that are easily identifiable.
- The governing body reviews termly and annual data as part of its role in holding leaders to account on a termly basis.

Last Review	August 2024	Next Review	August 2025	Owner	Head Teacher
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