

# Bridlington School

## Physical Intervention Policy (non-statutory)



<b>Approved by:</b>	Full Governing Board	<b>Date:</b> September 2025
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**1. Introduction**

The Governors and Staff of Bridlington School fully recognise the importance of safeguarding children and play a full and active part in protecting students from harm. It is the objective of Bridlington School to maintain consistent and safe practices in the use of handling, reasonable force and restraint.

This policy should be used in conjunction with:

- Strategic School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- School Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Whistle Blowing Guidance

**2. Relevant guidance and legislation:**

- Use of reasonable force Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DFE, February 2025)
- Education Act 2011 Part 2 (Discipline)
- Behaviour in Schools; Guidance, advice for headteachers and school staff (DFE, February 2024)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025)
- Keeping children safe during community activities, afterschool clubs and tuition: non statutory guidance for providers running out of school settings (DFE, May 2025)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Children Act 1989
- Human Rights Act 1998

### **3. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to make clear the position of the school with regards to necessary physical interventions and to safeguard the well-being of students and staff when a situation or incident requires the use of physical intervention.

This policy is drawn up under Section 550A of the 1996 Education Act to clarify the powers of teachers and other staff who have lawful control or charge of students to **prevent** students committing a crime, causing injury or damage to themselves, other people or property or causing disruption.

This policy applies when a member of staff is on the school premises or has charge of a student elsewhere e.g. fieldtrip or activity out of school.

## **PHYSICAL INTERVENTION SHOULD ONLY BE USED IN AN EMERGENCY AND WHEN ALL OTHER ATTEMPTS TO DE-ESCALATE THE SITUATION HAVE NOT WORKED.**

There may be particular training needs for staff who work closely with students with additional needs or disabilities. However, all staff will be trained (as appropriate). Staff will be made aware of this policy and procedures during their induction. Training will focus on the management of behaviour and the de-escalation of situations, as well as the occasions on which restraint may be necessary, and the ways in which this might be used.

### **4. Legislation and guidance**

The law allows all adults who are authorised by the Headteacher to be responsible for students to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a student:

- a) Committing a criminal offence (or for younger children that which would be an offence)
- b) Causing personal injury, injury to others or damage to property
- c) Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline.

Staff should not hesitate to act in these situations provided they follow this policy and the attached guidance; however, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of their professional colleagues.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's:

- Statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025)
- Use of Reasonable Force, Advice for Headteachers, staff and Governing Bodies (DfE 2025)
- Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention (HM Government 2019)
- Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE 2023).

In addition, this policy has been created ensuring that we meet our legal duty under the Equality Act (HM Government 2010) and the SEN and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years (DfE 2024).

## 5. Definition of Terms:

**Handling** – refers to any physical intervention applied by a member of staff where it necessary to make physical contact with a student in order to manage their conduct or ensure their own or others safety. Handling strategies may be restrictive or non-restrictive and include shepherding, guiding, supporting, blocking, confining, holding and, in the most extreme cases, restraining.

**Use of Reasonable Force** – There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use ‘reasonable force’ to safeguard children. The term ‘reasonable force’ covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

‘Reasonable’ in these circumstances means ‘using no more force than is needed’. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student’s path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom. (KCSiE 2025 Paragraph 163)

**Control** - The term control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom.

**Restraint** - is the positive application of force in order to actively prevent a child from causing significant injury\* to him/herself or others or seriously damaging property.

\*Significant Injury would include: actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to, themselves or others by wilful or reckless behaviour, and self poisoning.

It must be shown that on any occasion where physical restraint is used there were strong indicators that if immediate action had not been taken, significant injury would have followed.

## 6. Who can Physically Intervene

Ideally only members of staff who hold a current Physical Intervention Qualification (Team Teach – Positive Behaviour Training Level 2) will engage in any form of physical intervention.

In some extreme circumstances any member of staff may use reasonable force to prevent students committing an offence, causing injury or damage to themselves, other people or property or causing disorder. Reasonable force covers a range of interventions that involve physical contact with students. However, the staff member should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of their professional colleagues.

N.B. No member of staff should feel obliged to intervene and should only use physical intervention if they feel confident to do so. They must, however, send for immediate assistance.

Staff authorised by the Headteacher to search are vigilant about possible biases (conscious or unconscious) affecting decisions to carry out or escalate searches. Where possible to decision to carry out a search is

made in collaboration with safeguarding senior leads before taking place. Data from the record of searches is analysed by the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Chair of Governors to identify any groups that have been disproportionately subject to searches. This data is published termly to the Governing Board.

## **7. When to Physically Intervene**

- Self defence
- Serious risk of injury to the student themselves
- Serious risk of injury to other students/adults
- Serious risk of damage to property BUT only if this endangers the safety of the student/others

### **AND**

**only after all attempts to de-escalate the situation have not worked.**

### **7.1 Examples of behaviour likely to lead to restraint:**

- Physical attack by a student on another student or adult
- Deliberate damage to property which could result in harm to the student/others e.g throwing objects at/through a window
- Student behaving in a way which places others or themselves at risk e.g. pushing, tripping on a staircase, preventing a student running into a busy road
- Where physical intervention is or may become required members of staff should, where possible, ensure that adult assistance is requested before intervention, although it is understood that circumstances may lead to the need for intervention prior to the assistance arriving.

## **8. How to Physically Intervene**

### **8.1 Minimising the need for Physical Intervention**

In most circumstances Physical Intervention really should be a last resort or an emergency action. Therefore, all staff should:

- endeavour to create a calm environment which will minimise the risk of incidents where the use of physical intervention may be required;
- endeavour to teach students how to manage strong emotions and conflict through opportunities for SMSC and wider aspects of the school curriculum;
- quickly seek to de-escalate incidents if they do arise;
- only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force;
- be aware of risk assessments and positive handling plans for specific individual pupils.

### **8.2 In what way can staff physically intervene?**

Staff considering handling, use of reasonable force or restraint should wherever practicable provide opportunity for the student to alter their behaviour / actions before employing a physical intervention strategy. Give slow and clear instruction, tell the student who is misbehaving to stop and what will happen if he or she does not.

The teacher or other person should continue to communicate with the student throughout the incident and make it clear that physical contact will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

In all cases the force used must be **PROPORTIONATE** to the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent.

The method of physical intervention employed must use the **MINIMUM REASONABLE FORCE FOR THE MINIMUM LENGTH OF TIME.**

There are a number of ways in which you can physically intervene and you must choose the strategy appropriate to the situation and presenting least risk to yourself, the student and other persons.

Appropriate actions include:

- **Shepherding or Guiding;** using body positioning and positive gestures to move a student away from harm. This may include the placing of a hand on the back (between the shoulder blades) and using reasonable force to actively move them from one place to another.
- **Blocking or Interposing;** placing yourself between the student and their objective (e.g another student) thereby preventing the potential injury damage or disruption to good order.
- **Holding and Leading;** gripping the student appropriately (e.g by the forearm / upper arm) to prevent them from injury, damage, etc. In cases of resistance from a student, it may be necessary to employ holding to effectively achieve shepherding and, hence you are actively leading them away.
- **Restraining;** used only in the most extreme cases. Essentially, restraining is a more extreme version of holding, may require more than one adult and may last significantly longer than other strategies. However, the same care must be taken to restrain a student appropriately. It should be carried out by staff who have been trained to use Physical Intervention.

**ASSISTANCE** should be sought before any physical intervention, whenever possible. The student should be told that assistance has been sent for.

Any other students who are at risk should be removed from the vicinity.

**The use of Physical Intervention should be avoided in a one-to-one situation – adult witnesses are important.**

### **8.3 In what ways must staff NOT Physically Intervene?**

The purpose of physical intervention is essentially to maintain good order and ensure the safety of all individuals, therefore it is never appropriate to employ a physical intervention strategy if you are not in control of your own emotions. Physical interventions must never be employed in anger or frustration. If

you find yourself angry or frustrated by the situation at hand you must step back and allow someone else to manage the issue.

Sometimes a member of staff should **not** intervene in an incident without help, for example when dealing with a physically large student or if the member of staff believes he or she may be at risk of injury. In these circumstances the member of staff should remove other students who may be at risk and summon assistance from colleagues. The member of staff should inform the student that he or she has sent for help.

It is never appropriate to use physical intervention strategies as a punishment.

Just as there are a number of acceptable intervention strategies, there are also a number of actions it is completely inappropriate to take.

Staff should **NEVER**:

- hold a student around the neck or collar/hood, or in a way that might restrict breathing;
- slap, hit, strike, punch or kick (while it is entirely possible that in the course of an intervention eg. breaking up a fight you may be hit yourself, you must not strike a student);
- twist or force limbs against a joint (it is not okay to deliberately inflict pain eg. arm up a student's back);
- trip;
- hold or pull by the hair or ear;
- hold a student face down on the ground;
- Make contact with sexually sensitive areas of the body (where at all possible contact should be restricted to arms, shoulders and the back as previously described).

**N.B. Staff must avoid holding / touching a student in any way that may be considered indecent.**

#### **8.4 Guidance for managing your intervention**

- a) **De-escalation:** Always give a student an opportunity to resolve the situation without use of physical intervention first.
- b) Always send for assistance from colleagues or another authorised adult; other students should never be involved in physical intervention. You may have to intervene before help arrives, but not managing this entirely on your own is safer for all concerned.
- c) Be aware of your emotions. Are you comfortable and confident to deal with this scenario without anger? If not – don't intervene.
- d) Continue to communicate with the student (and witnesses) throughout the incident even if the student doesn't respond. Be clear about what you are doing and inform the student that the intervention will cease when it is no longer necessary.
- e) Apply only appropriate strategies and the minimum required force to achieve the required outcome (prevention of injury/harm, student/staff safety, restoration of good order). Release the student once this has been achieved.
- f) Manage the situation calmly – even if the student responds negatively.
- g) Complete a 'Physical Intervention Record Form' as soon as possible after the event and sent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will share it with the Headteacher.

- h) DSL will review the 'Physical Intervention Record Form' as soon as possible after the event to ensure that the record is accurate and factual. The DSL will upload the physical intervention form to CPOMS and place a paper copy in file signing to say that it has been reviewed and uploaded to CPOMS.
- i) The Headteacher will review the physical intervention log as soon as possible after the log is made and direct any further actions as required often in conjunction with the DSL and pastoral lead.
- j) The Headteacher and DSL will meet at the end of each term to review any logs made and look for future learning and patterns that may be emerging.
- k) Incidents are reported termly to the Full Governing Board and reviewed by the Headteacher, DSL and Safeguarding Governor specifically to identify any patterns or bias (conscious or unconscious)

## 9. Recording Physical Intervention

**In all cases where Physical Intervention has been used, the member of staff MUST make a written report of the incident, on a Physical Intervention Recording Form, listing witnesses, and make this available to the DSL the same day. The DSL must enter the incident in the Physical Intervention Log Book (situated in the Designated Safeguarding Lead Office) and make the CPOMS entry.**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform any necessary agencies / authorities of the physical intervention in accordance with DFE and LA guidance.

The Headteacher will ensure that parents / carers are appropriately informed.

For the safeguarding of both staff and student, any subsequent investigation of the situation / incident should be undertaken by the HR lead.

## 10. Monitoring of physical intervention

Incidents are reported termly to the Full Governing Board and reviewed by the Headteacher, DSL and Safeguarding Governor specifically to identify any patterns or bias (conscious or unconscious)

**PHYSICAL INTERVENTION RECORDING FORM**

<b>Date :</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Member of Staff:</b>
<b>Student Name:</b>	<b>Tutor Group:</b>	<b>Place of Incident</b>
<b>Adult Witnesses</b>	<b>Student Witnesses</b>	<b>Reason for use of force</b>
<b>Incident leading to restraint &amp; action taken by staff</b>		
<b>Student response</b>		
<b>Details of any injury/damage to property</b>		
<b>Senior staff summoned</b>		
<b>THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED THE SAME DAY, COPY TO HEADTEACHER OR DEPUTY HEADTEACHER AND DSL</b>		
<b>Reviewed by Headteacher:*</b> Signed	<b>Reviewed by Designated Safeguarding Lead:*</b> Signed	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	

*\* This may be counter-signed by another senior leader in the case of a conflict of interest where the Headteacher or DSL is involved in the restraint.*