



# LEICESTER THERAPEUTIC SCHOOL

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS THROUGH NURTURE AND MINDSET

## Working positively with pupils Policy (often referred to as behavior policy)

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Leicester Therapeutic School
<b>Date Published</b>	July 2025
<b>Date Of Next Review</b>	July 2026
<b>Circulation</b>	All Staff and Website
<b>Linked Policies</b>	Safeguarding and Child Protection Teaching and learning Suspensions and exclusions

## **Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) at Leicester Therapeutic School**

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we are passionate about providing an inclusive education to children with special educational needs. We recognise and celebrate the individuality of our pupils and use personalised approaches, allowing pupils with SEND to feel supported during the school day. We strive to provide pupils with the same opportunities and experiences that pupils would have received at a mainstream school, believing passionately that in the right environment, with the right support, pupils will flourish in education. We do this by focusing on providing a SEND friendly environment, an adapted curriculum, and a strong focus on developing pupils' personal, social, and emotional development. The special educational needs and disabilities of all pupils at Leicester Therapeutic School is carefully considered and a central theme in through all school policies. For more information, please read the school's SEND Information

## **Safeguarding at Leicester Therapeutic School**

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we are committed to providing an environment in which students feel safe and secure to access their education. All stakeholders are responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all staff are encouraged to maintain an "it could happen here" attitude. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, neglect, and bullying. Leicester Therapeutic School are dedicated to creating a strong safeguarding culture, and that the safety and well-being of children is the central thread that embeds itself through all aspects of the school. If a person is concerned about anything they read, witness, or hear with regards to the school, they should contact the school's designated safeguarding lead immediately or Headteacher. Safeguarding, and the safety and well-being of all pupils at Leicester Therapeutic School is carefully considered and a central theme through all school policies.

## Legislation and statutory requirements

---

Legislation and statutory requirements Leicester Therapeutic School acknowledges its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, and in terms of safeguarding and supporting students with special educational needs. This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour in schools: advice for Headteachers and school staff 2022](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and student referral units in England 2017](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting students with medical conditions at school](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice.](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools 2022](#)

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its young people
- Sections 88-94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which require schools to regulate young people' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate young people' property.

The [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#); paragraph 7 outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the

## Aim

---

This policy seeks to outline the importance of positive working relationships, and how they are vital in supporting the young people of Leicester Therapeutic School.

- **Building Connection:** Connecting with a young person helps to form strong, lasting working relationships that allow them to thrive.
- **Respectful Interactions:** Promoting respectful interactions based on empathy and understanding. Including using some of the strategies highlighted in this document.
- **Confident Communication:** Strategies for confident communication, balancing the needs of the individual with the needs of the organisation. Clear, confident communication that is consistent will support young people to make active positive choices.
- **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** Collaborative approaches to problem-solving, involving young people in decision-making processes. This could include finding resolutions to classroom issues, or even looking at ways to improve the schools. Focus should be to develop pupils co-regulation skills, moving towards self regulation to promote learning.

Positive working relationships are about supporting pupils to know their place in the world, understanding the expectations of others and being provided with the tools to meet these. All pupils are taught about respect, equity & equality and the importance of tolerance. Enabling them to be active citizens within their

communities and wider world is a crucial part of the work of our schools. We will not tolerate bullying (including cyber bullying) and any pupil involved in bullying or child on child abuse will have intervention tailored and targeted in line with their age and stage of social understanding.

By using positive working relationships with our pupils, we will support, encourage and model respectful treatment of others, care for the environment and develop pupils' skills to work towards independently regulating their emotional responses effectively.

Mobile phones are not generally accessed by pupils during the school day unless as part of the explicit learning that is taking place on an individual or small group basis (this can include the appropriate use of technology during supervised social time - which is a key learning time for pupils). Some pupils may have a mobile phone linked to their medical needs and the use of this will be outlined within personalised plans. Where pupils access learning with another education provider (alternative provision) the policies of these organisations are followed (where they are different from those of the school). The schools Child Protection Policy and training throughout the year linked to this clearly cover the use of technology and how adults should work to safeguard children and young people.

## Communication without demand (Expectation of adults)

---

Communication without demand helps to set the foundation for positive working relationships with young people. To do this, we must use appropriate communication strategies that allow pupils to feel valued, heard, and important to you. By doing this, when pupils truly need us, or when we do need to place demand on them, the relationship is already there.

- **Clear and Effective Communication:** Strategies for clear and concise communication, avoiding demands and using positive total communication strategies .
- This can just look like a 'good morning' when the children arrive at school, or even knowing what the children have for lunch
- **Active Listening:** Techniques for active listening, including empathy, validation, and non-verbal cues. By doing this, you will be showing the young people that they are important to you. Active listening means giving your full attention (devices away), maintaining eye contact (at their level, if appropriate), nodding or responding appropriately to what they are saying, reflecting their words, and validating their feelings to show you understand and care.
- **Positive Responses:** Interactions that build on the connections that have been made with the young person. Our positive responses reinforce that we care, value, and are interested in the young people in our schools.
- **Processing and Response Time:** Pupils often require additional processing and response time to fully understand and respond to information. It is crucial that all staff supporting a young person remain patient and understanding, allowing them the time they need to fully engage or respond to discussion or demands. It is suggested that we allow 10 seconds of processing time before repeating, rephrasing or amending what was said.

## Debriefs (Range of models and strategies)

---

Debrief is crucial to maintaining positive working relationships with the young people across our schools. It is used as a tool to support pupils to understand how behaviours that they have demonstrated may be seen

by others. This makes sure that pupils understand when the relationships that they are creating with others may include bullying behaviours or demonstrate a lack of tolerance. Whilst these behaviours are often linked to pupils' needs, debriefs help them to understand their role working positively with supporting adults to make changes to their actions.

Debrief should occur as soon as possible after any challenging interactions (including bullying) with young people. It is an important opportunity to understand the reasoning behind a young person's decision making, but also for them to understand your decision making during times of crisis. Where possible, debriefs should also occur for the other pupils who may have witnessed times of crisis amongst their peers.

Debrief needs to be supported by trusted adults with strong connections who can then have challenging communication. We should use a range of strategies and models to debrief. Including, but not limited to:

- Visuals
- Choice boards
- Helping a child communicate how they are feeling
- Supporting social communication e.g. pre-prepared scripts
- Offering a range of coping strategies.
- Zones of Regulation
- Through one to one play
- Using Talking Mats
- Role play
- Quiet space discussion (debrief models)
- Draw Talk
- Being present in a quiet space
- Comic Strip Conversations
- Going for a “walk and talk”
- Using sensory strategies to distract or comfort pupils
- Problem Solving Frames or Social Behaviour Maps

## **Rebuilds and restorative practise**

---

Rebuilds allow for pupils to feel a sense of positive reconnection when they may have done something they may regret or feel negatively about. This may be, after a moment of dysregulation or negative interactions with peers (such as bullying), children will feel a level of shame and it is not for us to exacerbate this but to support them to rebuild and restore with their peers, the staff, and themselves. As a result of this we reestablish communication, rebuild the relationship and repair

### **Restorative Justice Principles**

- Recognising the Impact: Acknowledging the harm caused by the incident, to all involved. This could be just between two pupils, or it could be the wider school community.
- Understanding the Consequences: Exploring the short-term and long-term consequences of the behaviour that came with the dysregulation.

## Repairing Relationships

Strategies for repairing damaged relationships and restoring trust. This will be directed by the trusted adult based on the individual needs of the pupil.

- Restorative Dialogue: Facilitating dialogue between those involved to promote a shared understanding and empathy.
- Restitution and Reparation: Developing to make amends for any harm caused, such as restitution, repairing what might be broken (where possible), or apologies.
- Reconciliation: Working towards reconciliation and rebuilding relationships.

## Positive Culture

Our school is a community, so bullying (in any form) and child on child abuse are not tolerated. Staff respond swiftly to concerns raised, reporting them using the online systems and work with pupils to address the concerns. This builds on our culture of restorative practice, where mistakes are seen as opportunities for learning and growth. Based on the needs of the pupils the work undertaken is long term and revisited through the PSHE and RSHE curriculum regularly.

## Sanctions

---

Sanctions are applied on an individual basis and are dependent on each pupil's specific needs, understanding, and circumstances. The purpose of any sanction is to support personal development, promote self-regulation, and encourage positive behaviour, rather than to punish.

When considering a sanction, staff will take into account a pupil's age, level of understanding, special educational needs or disabilities, and any relevant emotional or environmental factors. Reasonable adjustments will always be made in line with the **Equality Act 2010** to ensure that sanctions are fair, proportionate, and supportive of each pupil's wellbeing.

The school follows a **engage disengage, re-engage** approach, focusing on understanding the reasons behind behaviour and teaching appropriate alternative strategies. Sanctions are used only when necessary and are designed to help pupils reflect on their actions and make positive choices in the future.

All serious incidents and sanctions are **recorded and monitored** by senior staff to ensure consistency and fairness. Pupils (where appropriate) and parents are involved in discussions regarding any significant sanctions, in order to promote shared understanding and effective support.

Corporal punishment is **strictly prohibited** in all circumstances. Sanctions will never compromise a pupil's dignity, safety, or welfare, and will always be applied in line with the school's **Safeguarding Policy** and the principles of care, respect, and restorative practice.

All staff receive **regular training** in positive behaviour management, de-escalation, and safe practice to ensure a consistent, supportive, and needs-led approach across the school.

## Caregiver and Parental Engagement & Support

---

Family engagement and support is vital to ensuring positive relationships with the young people in school. If debriefs are not able to happen at school, they may be able to happen at home. The same processes of holding positive engagement and relationships with the young people should apply to parents.

- Open and Honest Communication: Maintaining open and honest communication with parents and carers is crucial.
- Collaborative Partnerships: Building collaborative partnerships with parents and carers helps to show young people that the adults working with them are there to support them together. That unity will help pupils to build trust with the staff in school.
- Effective Communication Strategies: Using effective communication strategies will help families to engage positively with their children. Staff should recognise and support the communication needs of families in the same way we do with the pupils.

## Recording and Reporting

---

- Every incident involving RPI must be documented in detail via CPOMS and communicated to parents/carers as soon as practical but before the end of the working day.
- Staff involved must complete a Cpoms report and participate in a post-incident debrief to reflect on practices, updating Engagement Support Plans (ESP) and reviewing outcomes.
- Child on Child concerns are reported on the school safeguarding system (CPOMS) , designated safeguarding leads assess the situation and guide the work to be completed by perpetrators and victims. This work includes working closely with parents, keeping everyone informed.
- Behaviours identified as bullying are recorded on Cpoms by staff and tracked by leaders. Class teachers work with parents to ensure that they are aware of the situation for all pupils involved and personalised plans are updated.

## Challenging Conversations & Tricky Truths

---

Clarity is important for our children and adults often want to protect children from challenging conversations. This is understandable, however, it avoids opportunities to develop emotional regulation - both co-regulating, and self-regulating. Challenging conversations can help create clarity for both the pupils and the staff working with them. It is important not to avoid or ignore them, but to work directly with the young person to be able to notice, label and respond to the emotion they are feeling.

- **Difficult Conversations (Including Alternative Communication Strategies):** Staff should have different strategies for holding difficult conversations with pupils. These communications can be awkward, challenging, and will sometimes be upsetting for all involved. However, working through these together will strengthen the working relationship.
- **Conflict Resolution:** This is not 'fixing' the problem for the young people, but working alongside them to find a resolution to any issues. Sometimes this can just be being present while they argue or fall out. Other times, it may be that the adults need to offer an opportunity for pupils to use their voice. They may need someone to advocate for them or support their self-advocacy skills.

- **Setting Boundaries:** Establishing and maintaining clear, healthy boundaries in relationships helps pupils gain a clear understanding of their role within the school community and within their relationships. It also gives them consistency they can work with. If staff are emotionally dysregulated or unpredictable, pupils may find it difficult to trust them as reliable sources of co-regulation
- **Delivering Developmental Feedback:** Strategies for delivering what could be negative feedback in a constructive and supportive way.
- **Addressing Challenging Behaviour & Managing Difficult Situations:** Staff should address challenging behaviour based on the pupil needs, and what their Engagement Support Plans (ESP) states.

## Mirror and Mode

---

Mirroring and modelling are strategies staff use to show pupils how they want them to be in difficult moments. Using mirroring can help young people feel calm, settled, and willing to try difficult things.

- **The Power of Modelling:** The importance of modeling positive behaviours and attitudes.
- **Mirroring Techniques:** Mirroring is using facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, and deliberate actions to show young people how you are feeling during interactions with them.
- **Supporting and Modelling Social Communication:** Social communication can be nurtured through modeling, practice, and real-life interactions. If a pupil uses language that may not match the context or their intent, we can support them by offering alternative ways to express themselves that align with the situation while respecting their individual communication style.

## Environment

---

How the school looks and feels helps to promote a positive learning environment that is defined by the Equality of Access / Learner Passport. It is important that staff have a positive attitude towards their learning spaces. Showing love, care, and pride in our environment will help the pupils understand that we have a positive relationship with our jobs.

- **Creating a Positive Environment:** Utilising physical and social environments that promote positivity and care.
- **Sensory Considerations:** Understanding and addressing individual sensory needs to create a comfortable and supportive environment.
- **Routine and Structure:** The importance of routine and structure cannot be understated. When expectations are clear, children can thrive. Routine and structure can take time to embed, but once embedded it should be maintained throughout the school year.

## Continual professional development

---

All staff will receive training so that they can implement this policy effectively. This will occur prior to starting their role during induction and will be updated every half term for pupil facing roles and annually for other roles. Any employees who struggle with understanding this policy will be given additional personalised training.

## Leadership and Management

---

Leaders in school are responsible for ensuring that actions taken to deal with situations are reasonable and proportionate, supporting learning to continue and addressing concerns for all pupils involved. Working positively with pupils is focused on understanding their stage of learning and the impact that their needs can have on meeting expectations. The systems in place support leaders to reinforce the principles of restorative justice and the actions that can be taken include:

- Updates to Engagement Support Plans identifying personalised strategies to manage situations for pupils
- Environmental adaptations including changes to locations that pupils can access to ensure that everyone can continue to learn.
- Modifications to curriculum (guided by the needs of the pupil)
- Restorative acts to support pupils to repair with their school communities (on an individual and group level)

There can be times when meeting the complex needs of a pupil is not possible. When this situation arises, Senior Leaders will work in collaboration with the Headteacher to make a decision about suspending a pupil or in the most serious circumstances, permanent exclusion.

Leaders in each school will regularly review the effectiveness of this policy. The headteacher will oversee the monitoring and consistency of implementation. Local Governing bodies will receive regular analysis of data around incidents and responses.

The proprietors will work with the headteacher and other leaders across the schools to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy, having analysed data and consistency of approaches, and report to the Governors.

## Engage Disengage Reengage (EDR)

---

The EDR model is followed at Leicester Therapeutic School. Engage Disengage Reengage is a positive behaviour for learning training model developed within 6 special schools in Leicestershire. It is written to ensure best practice within all facets of school life.

**Engage** allows staff to engage with behaviour professionally and accurately in order to improve outcomes for pupils.

**Disengage** focuses on strategies and techniques including the use of reasonable force to help staff and students stop challenging behaviours.

**Reengage** focuses of reflective processes needed to secure and demonstrate the impact of EDR and how accurate reporting and recording systems can generate meaningful data to drive while school improvement.

The Engage Disengage Reengage training model ensures that all staff have access to up to date, relevant training, designed specifically for our workplace and the particular needs of our pupils and staff. Members

of staff are trained to deliver this model to others and therefore staff have trained people on site in order to support and give advice if and when required.

There are 5 frameworks that EDR is based upon:

### **1. Behaviour for Learning**

Adults can support children and young people by the quality of our relationships with each other and them. These relationships are crucial. Each adult is a significant adult for our children and young people. Supporting Positive Behaviour for Learning is the result of the designated teacher or staff's commitment and dedication to building positive relationships with groups of pupils and with each individual pupil within the group. Pupils are more likely to adopt Positive Behaviour for Learning habits if the teacher/staff is able to demonstrate respect for each pupil and their individual needs and preferences by investing time in building those relationships. Children and young people at Leicester Therapeutic School may find learning difficult; learning new behaviour is a task, just like learning to read or write. As adults, we must consider the learning styles and needs of children and young people; we must also have realistic expectations about the rate of progress a child will make when learning to adapt or develop new behaviours. Most of our children and young people learn in small, incremental steps over a very long period of time.

### **2. Positive Behaviour Support**

How children behave gives us important information about how they are feeling. A Positive Behaviour Policy supporting children to effectively communicate is a very important part of supporting children and young people to behave appropriately. Children with severe and complex needs will need a personalised approach to behaviour management and consideration must be given to sensory needs, pain thresholds and levels of stimulation and engagement.

### **3. Restorative Practice**

The fundamental premise of restorative practice is that people are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes when those in authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them. Restorative practice includes the use of informal and formal processes that proactively build relationships and a sense of community to promote good behaviour and self-discipline. These processes are most clearly evidenced in an approach to inappropriate behaviour that seeks to acknowledge responsibility for the harm caused, identifies how people are affected, and promotes the repair of relationships. In schools, the use of restorative practices has been shown to reliably reduce inappropriate behaviour, bullying, violence and crime among pupils and improve the overall climate for learning.

### **4. Pupil Voice**

Pupil Voice is a framework for more meaningful pupil engagement in schools. Pupil Voice provides pupils with systems and structures to enable them to contribute to school policy and practice and have a genuine role in designing their learning environment and curriculum on the premise that when pupils are more actively engaged in the system, they are more likely to actively engage with the system.

### **5. Token Economy**

A token economy is the awarding of tangible tokens as positive reinforcement to pupils for completing tasks or adopting positive behaviour for learning habits. The basic principle is that a pupil earns a certain number of tokens by engaging in desired behaviours (called "target behaviours") and can then exchange these tokens – effectively using them as payment, which in turn reinforces positive behaviour.

## Quality of training

---

As part of their induction, all new staff will initially receive a day's training delivered by trained EDR trainers within the school's staff team on the law, current government guidance documents and the Duty of Care. This will ensure all staff understand the legal framework within which they operate. Refresher training will happen throughout the year focusing on different aspects which are deemed important. Teachers can also request training to be delivered for class groups if they wish to discuss individual children or scenarios.

New engagement support plans have been introduced in order to make it more apparent how to support the children. The new engagement support plan includes aspects such as triggers and how to support the children. These plans are to be located within the students individual files for quick updates or to inform new staff. It is important that these behaviour plans are discussed with parents in order that they fully understand how we support their child. Staff are encouraged to discuss with their teams how best to support the children and if they require any more support, EDR trainers are happy to discuss any concerns or strategies.

## Serious Risk

---

Serious Risk Behaviour is behaviour that presents a risk of physical or emotional harm to pupils or staff, or that risks significant damage to property. If, despite all attempts to divert, distract and de-escalate, behaviour becomes serious, the teacher needs to take charge of the situation calmly and assertively to manage the risks appropriately. In such situations, the teacher may need to employ some or all of the following strategies:

- Direct the pupil to leave the room and go to a safe place – The safe place/quiet place may be identified on pupil's planning documents or it may be an impromptu location. Directing the pupil to a specific location is an important aspect of this strategy as it helps to ensure the teacher fulfils their duty of care obligations. The timetabled teacher is still responsible for the safety of the pupil even after they have been asked to leave the room or area and therefore teachers must direct the pupil to a safe place, ensure that the pupil has gone there and establish that appropriate supervision is in place. In practical terms, this may mean clearly directing a member of staff to follow the pupil.
- Remove the group – Sometimes it is safer to remove the other pupils and take them to a free room. Teachers can identify free rooms by calling reception. The safety of the pupil left behind is still the teacher's responsibility and therefore appropriate supervision must be in place.
- Call for assistance – In some instances, it may be appropriate for the teacher to call for additional staffing to support. The teacher is the person who makes this decision and may direct a colleague to find someone in reception.
- Use of Force – When the risk of not physically intervening is greater than the risk of physically intervening, staff are authorised to use force as long as they apply the appropriate reasonable, necessary and proportionate criteria to each situation, they act honestly and in good faith, and that they apply the minimum force for the shortest amount of time possible.

## Use of Reasonable Force

The Department for Education document, Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies, states:

1. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
2. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a pupil needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
3. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
4. As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
5. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
6. School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

There is no national regulatory body for the use of physical interventions and therefore there is no 'approved' list of techniques or holds. Certain techniques have been identified as posing a far greater risk of injury or death and under no circumstances should these techniques be used. The techniques in question are: Face- down, prone restraints; **the 'seated double embrace; the 'double basket-hold'; and the 'nose distraction' method.**

All members of school staff, as well as any volunteers, have the legal power to use reasonable force. When deciding whether to use this power, all staff must make a dynamic risk assessment to establish whether the use of force is in the best interests of the pupils, whether it is reasonable, proportionate and necessary, and whether the risk of not using force is greater. Staff should use all of their skills in de-escalation, distraction and diversion where possible to avoid the use of force to control or restrain pupils. Staff should be sensitive to the fact that pupils with autism may find any physical contact particularly difficult to manage. British law allows for the lawful use of violence under specific acts of parliament. Under common law, everyone has the right to self-defence which also includes the defence of others. Under the Criminal Damage Act 1971, everyone has the right to use force to protect property. The Criminal Law Act 1967 allows for the use of force to prevent a crime or make an arrest. All of these laws apply at school, just as they do in society.

However, acting lawfully may not protect staff from disciplinary proceedings and all staff should be aware that although the law allows for staff to use force to defend themselves, others, property, and to prevent a crime, the ethos of the school is against the use of pain compliance techniques.

## Physical Intervention/Restraint

Restraint is the positive application of sufficient force to ensure, by physical means alone, that a child or young person does no injury either to him/herself, a member of staff, another child or young person, or property.

- Should rarely be used, and only after all other interventions have been exhausted.
- Should be part of pupil's Engagement support Plan (ESP)
- Children with profound and complex needs will need a personalized approach to behaviour management and consideration must be given to sensory needs, pain thresholds and levels of stimulation and engagement.
- Should only be used if the child or young person is putting himself or others in danger and where failure to intervene would constitute neglect.
- If used, it must be recorded in the school's incident recording system- CPOMS
- Where appropriate a risk assessment will need to be carried out.
- After a reflection/staff debrief\*, a positive handling strategy may be included in the pupil's ESP. This may apply when an individual child or young person needs physical intervention strategies as a part of an ongoing ESP.
- Staff should update the child or young person's ESP after a significant incident, outlining any interventions or specific approaches. As before this should occur after a reflection meeting led by the Behaviour Specialist
- Staff need to be able to establish the possible consequences of using a particular EDR method or methods of physical intervention when difficult behaviour occurs.
- If restraint is used, parents/carers need to be contacted before the child arrives home.

### **What Is 'Physical Intervention'?**

There is a difference between Physical Intervention and Restrictive Physical Intervention. In this school these are defined as follows:

Type Definition Example

**Non-restrictive physical interventions-** Where physical touch is used to support the young person and they have the choice to move away from the touch or where a cause of distress can be removed without the need to touch the young person.

In this school this may include:

- guiding/shepherding a person from A to B
- Removal of a cause of distress, such as adjusting temperature, light or background noise.

**Restrictive physical interventions-** Where the adult takes control of the young person and their actions to prevent, impede or restrict movement or mobility. In this school this may include:

- Isolating a child in a room
- Using EDR physical interventions
- Blocking a person's path
- Pushing/pulling

### **Duty of Care**

Staff should be aware that their employment imposes upon them a duty of care to maintain an acceptable level of safety. It is acknowledged that the behaviour of children and young people can become dangerous and physical intervention may be required. This is inevitably a high risk action. Guidelines cannot anticipate every situation and, therefore, the sound judgement of staff at all times is crucial. This may mean not getting

physically involved if this would put you at direct risk, but could include summoning relevant assistance. It is not acceptable to do nothing.

The two types of physical interventions likely to be required in the school are:-

**Emergency/unplanned interventions**- Use of force which occurs in response to unforeseen events. This should always be a trigger for a Risk Assessment and planning once it has occurred.

**Planned interventions**- Any situation that staff might reasonably expect to occur, in which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods which are based on a risk assessment. Planned Interventions must be recorded on their ESP. This could be in an individual plan for the management of the behaviour of a specific pupil but could be generic risk assessments and plans for situations which are likely to occur such as a fight in a playground.

## **Glossary of terms used in policy**

---

### **Active Listening**

Techniques to show full attention and understanding during communication, including empathy, non-verbal cues, and validation.

### **CPOMS**

The platform used for documenting and reporting incidents involving restrictive physical intervention (RPI) and other significant events.

### **Boundaries**

Clear, healthy limits set in relationships to provide consistency and promote trust within the school community.

### **Challenging Conversations**

Difficult but necessary discussions to help pupils develop emotional regulation and clarity about their emotions and actions.

### **Child on Child Abuse**

Behaviours between children that cause harm, including bullying or other forms of abusive interaction.

### **Clear Communication**

Concise, consistent communication strategies that promote understanding and confidence in young people.

### **Collaborative Partnerships**

Joint efforts between staff, pupils, and families to build trust and support positive outcomes for young people.

### **Collaborative Problem-Solving**

A method of working with pupils to resolve issues and improve their ability to self-regulate and make positive choices.

## **Communication without Demand**

Strategies to foster relationships with pupils through non-demanding, positive interactions, such as greetings or casual conversations.

## **Corporal Punishment**

The use of physical force as a disciplinary measure, which is strictly prohibited under this policy.

## **Debrief**

A reflective process after challenging interactions to understand decisions, rebuild relationships, and offer support to all involved.

## **De-escalation Techniques**

Non-physical strategies used to calm and manage situations before they escalate into dangerous or harmful behaviours.

## **Deprivation of Liberty**

A legal term describing actions that restrict an individual's freedom of movement or decision-making. Any such restriction must be documented and justified according to legal and ethical guidelines.

## **Empathy**

The ability to understand and share the feelings of others, fostering connection and respect.

## **Engagement Support Plan (ESP)**

Individualised plans tailored to each pupil's needs, guiding staff in managing and supporting challenging behaviours.

## **Equality of Access / Learner Passport**

Documents outlining accommodations to ensure an inclusive learning environment for all pupils.

## **Mirroring**

Using non-verbal cues like body language and facial expressions to reflect a pupil's emotions and promote calmness.

## **Modeling**

Demonstrating positive behaviours and attitudes to guide pupils in social and emotional interactions.

## **Positive Culture**

A school environment that views mistakes as opportunities for growth and encourages restorative practices.

## **Processing and Response Time**

The additional time pupils may need to understand and respond to information, requiring patience from staff.

## **Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)**

Physical actions taken as a last resort to prevent harm, which must be documented and communicated per policy.

## **Restorative Dialogue**

Conversations aimed at repairing harm and restoring trust after conflicts or incidents.

## **Risk Assessment**

A process within the ESP to evaluate potential risks and outline tailored support strategies for managing behavioural challenges.

## **Routine and Structure**

Consistent practices and schedules that help pupils feel secure and supported in their learning environment.

## **Sensory Considerations**

Adjustments made to the environment or interactions to address individual sensory needs of pupils.

## **Social Communication**

Interactions that foster understanding, respect, and connection, supported by modeling and tailored strategies.

## **Zones of Regulation**

A framework to help pupils recognise and manage their emotions by categorising them into color-coded zones.

## **Appendix A**

---

### **1. Legal Frameworks**

This policy adheres to the following legislation and guidance:

- Education Act 1996 and 2011
- Education and inspections Act 2006
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- [Use of Reasonable Force \(DfE Guidance 2013\)](#)
- [Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement \(DfE Guidance August 2024\)](#)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE, 2024\)](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2015](#)

### **2. Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)**

Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) refers to the use of physical contact to manage situations where a pupil's behaviour poses a significant risk of harm to themselves, others, or property.

#### **RPI is only employed:**

- To prevent imminent harm to the pupil or others.
- To prevent significant damage to property.

- To ensure safety in situations of dangerous behaviour that cannot be managed by other means.

## Principles for Using RPI

- RPI must be reasonable, proportionate, and absolutely necessary to manage the risk.
- De-escalation and non-physical strategies should be attempted prior to the use of physical intervention.
- Interventions must prioritise the safety, dignity, and well-being of all individuals involved.
- RPI must not involve the deliberate infliction of pain or techniques likely to cause injury.

## Training and Review

- All staff authorised to use RPI must receive training on positive handling, de-escalation techniques and safe physical intervention.
- Regular reviews of RPI incidents and practices will be conducted to ensure
- A compliance with legal standards and ethical guidelines.

### 3. Restriction of Liberty

Restriction of liberty refers to any action limiting a pupil's freedom of movement, including seclusion or isolation. Restriction or Deprivation of Liberty is the legal term that describes when a person's freedom is restricted to the extent that they cannot leave a place or make decisions about their own movements.

## Guidance on Use

- Restriction of liberty may only be used in exceptional circumstances to ensure safety.
- Isolation rooms, if used, must comply with the DfE's guidance:
  - Pupils must have their basic needs met (e.g., access to water and the toilet).
  - Supervision must be continuous and in line with Engagement Support Plans.
- Locking doors to enforce isolation is strictly prohibited.

## Accountability

- All instances of restricted liberty must be documented and reviewed by the senior leadership team (SLT).
- Parents/carers must be informed on the day when restriction of liberty is employed.

### 4. Suspension and Exclusions

Suspension is a temporary removal from school, while exclusion is a permanent removal.

**Only** the Headteacher (or person identified to deputise in their absence) can authorise a suspension or permanent exclusion. Please refer to the Suspensions & Exclusions Policy

## 5. Prohibited Sanctions

Staff should be aware that the following sanctions are prohibited, and should never be used:

- Corporal punishment
- Deprivation of food or drink
- Requiring pupils to wear distinctive or inappropriate clothing
- Withholding communication<sup>1</sup>
- Withholding curriculum activities without it being a formal internal exclusion

## Appendix B | Engagement Support Plan Format (ESP)

Name:	Class:
<b>Key Worker:</b> (This person can help me when I am really disengaged)	

### Six Things I Need To Help Me Regulate

<sup>1</sup> Staff may use tactical ignoring but will continue to give pupils a chance to communicate at frequent intervals

### Positive Strategies that help keep me engaged in addition to my 'Six Things'

- 

Risk Assessment					
T Code:	Yes No	Child on Child	Yes No Verbal Physical	Physical Support: (If yes, detail below in 'how to help me')	Yes No

<b>Minor dysregulation What does this look like?</b>	<b>How to help me, including Positive Physical Interaction</b>
-	e.g. Deep pressure hug
<b>Moderate dysregulation What does this look like?</b>	<b>How to help me, including Physical Support</b>
-	e.g. Guided to a quiet space as I may not be able to choose to go there.
<b>High Level Challenge (RPI)</b>	
<b>Should there be a major incident of dysregulation that requires Restrictive Physical Intervention, this must be recorded on CPOMS, and parents informed.</b>	
<b>How to support my debrief e.g. 'the way I like to calm', 'the words I like to use'</b>	

**Staff involved in any major incident should meet to reflect, review, and identify next steps. This should be recorded on CPOMS**

These people know about my plan and understand the work that is being done to help me	
<b>Parents:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Class teacher:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Class:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Key Worker:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
The review of the Engagement Support Plan. Copies of plans will be sent home and stored on Google Drive and used in class by all staff working with the pupil.	

## Appendix C

Descriptor	Description
High Level Challenge	High level physical challenge where RPI has been used to keep pupils safe.
Persistent Dysregulation	Repeated incidents of dysregulation across the week eg. spitting at peers throughout the day across the week. This should then be added to a young person's ESP.
Bullying (inc. Cyber Bullying)	There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is: repeated. intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally. often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.
Significant Behaviour of Note	Incident where significant change in 'usual' behaviours are demonstrated. Examples include sexualised behaviours, acts of discrimination and bullying, cyberbullying.