



Bracken Hill School

Positive Handling Policy

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Policy Type: Whole School

This policy is reviewed bi-annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

The Governors of the school recognise that all staff play a vital role in the achievement of high standards and in providing our pupils with the best opportunities matched to their needs.

Rationale

At Bracken Hill we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn effectively. We take the safety of our pupils and staff very seriously, and believe everyone has the right to be and feel safe when at school or on a school-run activity. This policy provides a framework for staff to work with pupils with challenging behaviour in an appropriate and reasonable way to ensure the pupil's own safety, the safety of the staff working with them and other pupils around them.

Aims

The Physical Intervention Policy contributes to the whole school [Behaviour Management Policy](#) and aims to:

- To safeguard and provide a safe learning environment.
- To provide a framework in which all staff that come into contact with pupils are clear about their roles and responsibilities within the context of physical intervention.
- To support the school's Child Protection, Safeguarding and Behaviour Management policies.

The law

The [Education and Inspection Act \(2006\)](#) introduced a statutory right for school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence or engaging in conduct that could be an offence.
- Causing injury to themselves or others.
- Damaging property.
- Prejudicing good order and discipline at the school.

The power applies where the pupil is on school premises or any other place where s/he is in the lawful control or charge of the school staff member. This means that the power extends to school visits.

While there is no statutory definition of 'reasonable force,' it is generally understood to be the minimum amount of force necessary to prevent harm or maintain order. Reasonable force is proportionate to the situation and considers the age, vulnerability, and individual needs of the pupil.

Examples of reasonable force may include guiding a pupil away from danger, preventing a pupil from harming themselves or others, or restraining a pupil who is engaging in violent or disruptive behaviour. Staff should always use their professional judgment and act in the best interests of the pupil. Any physical intervention should be justified in the context in which it takes place and proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. The degree of force should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Minimising the Need to Use Reasonable Force

In Bracken Hill, staff have a responsibility to follow this policy and to seek alternative strategies where possible to prevent the need for physical intervention.

De-escalation strategies include:

- Verbal advice and support
- Choices and consequences
- Using diversion and diffusion
- Using negotiation
- Time out
- Re-assurance
- Tactical ignoring

Training In Team Teach

All staff are required to complete the appropriate level of Team Teach training, which focuses on de-escalation strategies such as verbal de-escalation, active listening, positive reinforcement, and conflict resolution. These strategies must always be the first response to challenging behaviours.

Staff are also expected to follow the three key principles of Team Teach when considering physical intervention:

1. **Necessary** – Use physical intervention only when absolutely essential to prevent harm, danger, or significant disruption.
2. **Proportionate** – Ensure the response matches the situation and the level of risk posed.
3. **Reasonable** – Actions must be reasonable, maintaining the safety and dignity of everyone involved.

New staff will receive comprehensive training upon joining Bracken Hill School:

- **Level 1 Certification:** One-day training.
- **Level 2 Certification:** Two-day training.

All staff will participate in annual refresher sessions to maintain and update their skills and renew certifications.

Any staff member who is unable to engage in physical intervention due to health or medical conditions must inform the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) at the time of their appointment or as soon as they are diagnosed with a condition that affects their ability to perform these duties safely.

Staff will not be expected to engage in physical intervention if it poses a risk to their own health or safety.

All staff who need to use physical intervention will judge what level of intervention is required, either a guide, escort, response to a specific behaviour or restrictive hold and use appropriate techniques.

Physical intervention should be used when incidents fall into three broad categories:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is imminent risk of injury.
- Where there is a significant risk of injury to the pupil themselves.
- Where there is a risk of significant damage to property.

Reporting And Recording Incidents

Any incident that has needed physical intervention must be recorded that day on Behaviour Watch, the online recording and monitoring system Bracken Hill use for behaviour.

Incidents which require physical intervention are Level 2 incidents, and when recording the incident staff must include which hold has been used, staff involved, time the intervention took and details about what intervention was needed.

Where staff have used a restrictive hold, they must discuss with SLT and complete a 'Pupil Reflection tool' with the pupil, to be saved in their pupil reports folder and parents/carers must be informed by telephone.

All incidents involving a restrictive hold will be reported to parents/carers as soon as possible. Staff will discuss the incident with parents/carers, explain the reasons for the intervention, and answer any questions they may have. The school will work collaboratively with parents/carers to develop strategies to support the pupil and prevent future incidents. Staff should use their professional judgement about when to report to parents. If staff are unsure whether to report to parents, they should seek the guidance of the SLT.

Any new behaviour that has resulted in physical intervention, must be included into a pupil's Behaviour and Risk Management Plan (BRMP) by the class teacher. If a pupil does not have a BRMP in place, it is a class teacher's responsibility to raise this new behaviour with SLT and to create a new BRMP. Any known behaviours that are requiring regular or increased use of physical intervention must be raised as a concern by a class teacher to SLT. SLT will provide support in these cases and if necessary, refer to other professionals for additional support e.g. CAMHS, Educational Psychologists, Occupational therapists.

Post-Incident Support

Following the use of physical intervention staff and pupils will be supported, the immediate needs of all parties will be met and staff will ensure positive relationships are maintained.

Complaints and Allegations

All complaints and allegations related to physical intervention will be taken seriously and investigated promptly. The school will follow its established complaints procedure, which includes a fair and impartial investigation, opportunities for all parties to be heard, and appropriate action taken based on the findings of the investigation.

Role of Governors

The SLT will report regularly to Governors termly about the use of physical intervention, including the frequency and duration of any incidents.

Governors will seek reassurance that every effort has been made to avoid or minimise the use of incidents that have required physical intervention.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually – January 2026