

Physical Intervention Policy



Objective:

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.

It is the objective of Brighton Hill Community School to maintain consistent and safe practices in the use of physical intervention, reasonable force & restraint.

Duty of Care

We all have a duty of care towards the students in our School. When students are in danger of hurting themselves or others, or of causing significant damage to property, we have a responsibility to intervene.

The law allows all adults who are authorised by the Headteacher to be responsible for students to use reasonable force 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.

Teachers at Brighton Hill Community School are authorised, by the Headteacher, to use reasonable force to control a situation and/or physical restraint to restrain a student during on-site and/or offsite activities. Teachers will be supported in their legal right to restrain students physically where their actions conform to this policy.

Staff trained in 'Team Teach' (April 2021) and appropriate physical intervention methods include: Guy Wilkinson (Assistant Headteacher), Craig Matthews (Pastoral Support Officer) and Marie Richards (Student Support Team). These staff should be contacted for support and advice if other staff are unsure about whether physical intervention might be required.

Key Definitions:

BHCS Physical Intervention Policy

Physical intervention is when a member of staff uses reasonable force intentionally to restrict a child's movement against his or her will. It should rarely if ever be used.

Use of Reasonable Force is the application of appropriate and proportionate force required to achieve the required outcome from the handling strategy employed (see above) without further endangering the student, member of staff or others present at the time of physical intervention.

Restraint - is the positive application of force in order to actively prevent a child from causing significant injury* to him/herself/themselves 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.

Policy Application

This policy applies to all staff.

The lead manager for the application and monitoring of this policy is the Headteacher.

All staff at Brighton Hill Community School aim to help students take responsibility for their own behaviour. We do this through a combination of approaches, which include:

- positive role modelling
- teaching an interesting and challenging curriculum
- setting and enforcing appropriate boundaries and expectations and providing supportive feedback
- implementing a rigorous behaviour management policy at all times, to support all students

The promotion of positive behaviour can be found in our behaviour policy. This policy is consistent with our Child Protection, Safeguarding and Single Equality policies, and with national and local guidance for schools on safeguarding children.

No member of staff is required to employ any physical intervention strategy if they are not comfortable or confident to do so effectively.

No member of staff should intervene physically if they have reason to believe that to do so would worsen the situation/incident that is taking place.

Situations where appropriate physical intervention and/or restraint would be deemed reasonable include:

- Prevention of an offence being committed
- Prevention of injury to others or prevention of self-harm

BHCS Physical Intervention Policy

- Self-defence – where it is apparent that the teacher is about to be attacked by the student
- Prevention of damage to property
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the School

Staff will NOT use physical intervention out of anger; out of frustration or in any way which could cause injury to a student. Staff will NOT use physical intervention, force or restraint as a punishment.

Use of Physical Intervention:

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff in the following appropriate actions:

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 exit, another student) thereby preventing the potential injury damage or prejudice to good order.

Holding and Leading; gripping the student appropriately (e.g by the 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, restraining may require a significant amount of force in order to prevent significant injury (as described in the policy). 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.

Inappropriate Use of Physical Intervention:

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. 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.

Inappropriate actions include;

Hitting or striking; while it is entirely possible that in the course of an intervention (e.g. breaking up a fight) you may be hit yourself, you must not strike a student.

BHCS Physical Intervention Policy

Deliberately inflicting pain; it is not okay to twist limbs or put pressure on joints (e.g. arm up a student's back), pull or hold hair, pinch or hold a student in a pain inducing way (e.g. by the ear).

Making 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.

Restricting breathing; by holding round the throat or for a prolonged period around the chest. It is also never appropriate to sit on/straddle a student or hold them face down to the floor.

Some helpful strategies and/or responses:

DO:	DO NOT:
Remain controlled	Use confrontational body language
Talk clearly giving clear instructions	Engage in prolonged and exaggerated eye contact
Keep talking calmly	Use confrontational language
If a student needs to be removed, move WITH the student towards the appropriate exit	Use physical intervention unless all other methods of calming have been used
Request help and tell the student you are requesting help	Use restraint to prevent the student leaving the scene if it is apparent that he/she does not represent a threat to others or his or herself
Remove any audience to maintain a calm atmosphere	Hold a student around the neck or collar or in any other way that might restrict the his/her ability to breathe
Remove other people if they are in danger	Slap, punch, trip or kick a student
Remove potential weapons	Twist or force limbs against a joint
Assume the student is going to calm down	Hold a student by the hair or ear
Only ever use reasonable force relevant to the circumstance	Use more force than is required

Power to search without consent

BHCS Physical Intervention Policy

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following “prohibited items”:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force **cannot** be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

Recording and Reporting

If physical intervention occurs the incident must be recorded using a Physical Intervention Report using the appropriate category in CPOMS (see image below as guidance).

Brighton Hill Community School | Dashboard | Reporting | Planner | Library | Admin | Account Settings | Add Link

Student: Begin typing a student's name

Incident: [Large text area]

Categories:
 Attendance Child Protection Details Contact with External Agency HISTORICAL paper-based file available (DSL USE ONLY) Inappropriate Use of the Internet Medical Issues Mental Health CO
 Physical Intervention Incident PREVENT Safeguarding CONCERN Safeguarding Strategy Plans

Linked student(s): Begin typing a student's name

Details about the following must be recorded:

- what form of physical intervention was required
- why staff felt physical intervention was required
- how was physical intervention applied, and by whom
- details of any other staff who supported/witnessed the incident and application of physical intervention
- when and where the physical intervention happened

The school does not require parental consent to use reasonable force on a student, however the parents/guardians of the student will be informed of the incident as soon as possible after the event.

BHCS Physical Intervention Policy

We recognise that there may be some children within our school who find physical contact in general particularly unwelcome as a consequence of their culture/religious group or disability. There may be others for whom such contact is troubling as a result of their personal history, in particular of abuse. A risk assessment may be carried out by a senior member of staff where there is cause for concern about a student.

Supporting and Reviewing

We recognise that it is distressing to be involved in a physical intervention, whether as the student being held, the person doing the holding, or someone observing or hearing about what has happened.

After a restrictive physical intervention, we will give support to the student so that they can understand why it was necessary. Where we can, we record how the student felt about this. Where it is appropriate, we have the same sort of conversations with other students who observed what happened. In all cases, we will wait until the student has calmed down enough to be able to talk productively and learn from this conversation. If necessary, the student will be asked whether he or she has been injured so that appropriate first aid can be given. This also gives the student an opportunity to say whether anything inappropriate has happened in connection with the incident. We will also support adults who were involved, either actively or as observers, by giving them the chance to talk through what has happened with the most appropriate person from the staff team.

Concerns and Complaints

If a student or parent / guardian has a concern about the way restrictive physical intervention has been used, our School's complaints procedure explains how to take the matter further. (*Operational Policy no. 23*)

Where there is an allegation of assault or abusive behaviour, we ensure that the Headteacher is immediately informed. We would also follow our child protection procedures. If the concern, complaint or allegation concerns the Head teacher, we ensure that the Chair of Governors is informed.

The monitoring and review procedure for this policy is as follows: the Headteacher will maintain a log of any instances of physical intervention and report all instances to the Governing Body via his report to the Governors. The analysis of the log will consider equalities issues such as age, gender, disability, culture and religion issues in order to make sure that there is no potential discrimination; we also consider potential child protection issues.

Author: Mr G. Wilkinson

Last reviewed on: September 2023

Next review due by: September 2025

Approved by: Mr C Edwards

BHCS Physical Intervention Policy