



Physical Intervention Policy

Author	E Cruse	Source	Existing Policy
Approved By	ESPC	Status	Committee
Last Review	July 2025	Next Review	July 2026

Details of Policy Updates:

Date	Details
26.6.25	Reviewed in line with current guidance

Rationale

This policy is intended to outline North Star Academy Trust's philosophy and practice in handling challenging behaviour, namely that involving necessary physical intervention.

The policy addresses where physical interventions may become necessary and looks at physical restraint. It is essential that the approach to managing challenging behaviour is matched to the individual child or young person's level of understanding and his/her ability to make use of the approach. This requires staff teams to know, discuss and plan appropriate, helpful approaches to individuals within each setting.

We are committed to providing, maintaining and positively promoting a healthy and safe environment.

Aims

Behaviour is a means of communication and has a cause and a purpose. Behaviour that challenges may signal a need for support and it is essential to understand its underlying causes. This policy and our practise seek to recognise this and support children and young people to develop alternative ways of expressing themselves that achieve the same purpose but are more appropriate and proportionate.

Core Values

It should always be remembered that when working with challenging behaviour, interventions of any nature should be in the best interests of the child, reasonable, proportionate and necessary. North Star Academy uses the Team Teach system of positive behaviour management. The Trust follows the approach, guidance and ethos of Team Teach in all matters relating to the use of restraint and the use of reasonable force.

If a child is presenting risk to themselves or others or causing serious damage to property, physical interventions that are reasonable, necessary, proportionate and in the best interest of that child may be required. This should be carried out with the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time. Staff should remain with a child following a physical intervention to avoid the child looping back into crisis.

Using reasonable force and / or restraining a child who is out of control can offer a sense of security and can help the child feel you are able to control with care and concern, but this is only when the intervention is of a non-aggressive nature, however firm it must be.

Restraint or reasonable force should not be used as such a regular feature of practice that it comes to be seen by children as an everyday method of control and one which they will come to demand/expect before accepting adult authority.

Children and young people who have suffered serious physical and/or sexual abuse can react powerfully to well-intentioned efforts of reasonable force or restraint, misperceiving such actions as the prelude to further assault of either type. This is not to say that control by reasonable force or restraint should be avoided entirely, rather it indicates that this must be kept in mind by the adult who must be prepared to reassure a child of intention. It also confirms that children should be involved in discussing and identifying behaviours that might require adult intervention and reasonable force or restraint. This should occur at calm times, both prior to the need for any such intervention and as part of talking through occasions of reasonable force and / or restraint.

Staff using physical intervention must remember;

- To ensure that one person takes the lead in talking to the child during the interventions. This can avoid creating further confusion.
- After any physical intervention a visual check of the child needs to be completed to check for injuries and ensure any medical treatment that is required is actioned and this is recorded on the report.
- Incidents of reasonable force or restraint are recorded within 24 hours on CPOMS.
- To ensure that any appropriate amendments are made to the child's Risk Assessment /Supporting Behaviour Plan.
- Reasonable force / restraint can only be used by a member of staff who is trained in the use of Team Teach or if physical intervention is required in an unforeseeable event.
- Reasonable force / restraint can only be used if a child is in danger of hurting her/himself, yourself or another person either physically or mentally, causing serious damage to property or, only in school, seriously disrupting other children.
- Reasonable force / restraint can only be used if other forms of intervention have been tried and preventative steps are unsuccessful. These may include talking, comforting, calming, withdrawing yourself from the situation.
- Remember reasonable force / restraint are defensive protective techniques. They should never be used offensively.
- Reasonable force / restraint should only be used until the child is calming down, no longer than absolutely necessary.
- The event must be recorded afterwards. Time should be allowed to calm and to evaluate the incident. Any use of reasonable force must be recorded within 24 hours.

All staff are trained to identify positional asphyxia and should ensure that practitioners monitor risk both during the restraint and afterwards.

Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the child, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent "side-effect" of ensuring that the child remains safe. All incidents of injuries to a child are reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for further investigation.

Monitoring of Incidents

All incidents of use of physical intervention and restraint are logged on CPOMS, monitored by a Team Teach Intermediate Trainer (who was not involved in the incident), and transferred weekly onto a whole school tracking sheet.

Records should:

- Be completed within 24 hours
- Be factual and objective
- Be dated
- Inform risk assessment and supporting behaviour plans.

After any physical intervention a visual check of the child needs to be completed to check for injuries and ensure any medical treatment that is required is actioned and this check, with any outcome, needs recording on the report.

If there is any concern about a child's wellbeing, or if they express concern about their own wellbeing the child will be seen by a member of the safeguarding team. Where appropriate they will document marks, injuries etc. using a body map.

Debriefs will be used if requested by any staff member following a physical intervention, or if a member of the Leadership Team considers it likely to be supportive or lead to more effective support of the child. Unusual or particularly challenging incidents should be considered for debrief. In all incidents of restraint, the child should be given the opportunity to go through the incident with a staff member. This needs to take place within 5 days of the incident.

A key part of going through the incident with the child is about listening to and capturing the child's experience of being held and involving them in thinking about strategies that may help them in the future.

Parents/Carers and Social Workers (if involved) will be informed of any physical intervention. Physical interventions are monitored weekly by the Engagement Team within the respective school and added to a tracker. This tracker is monitored fortnightly by a member of the Central Team and a report submitted to the Executive Leadership Team. Physical intervention data is also reported termly to the Local Governing Board.

Where there is an increase in the number of physical interventions for a child, a risk reduction plan will be developed and implemented.

The LADO is consulted where the use of restraint becomes a concern.

All records are archived along with current policy and guidance.

Training

All staff working directly with pupils will be trained to Team Teach Level Two in positive behaviour management.

Short Team Teach refresher training will be undertaken termly, the content to be determined by review of practice.

Engagement Team Lead in each school is an Intermediate Team Teach Trainer. There are additional Intermediate and Advanced Trainers throughout the Trust to provide training and support as required.

Relevant Documents

Department for Education: Use of Reasonable Force, July 2013

Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention, June 2019

Ofsted: Positive environments where children can flourish, October 2021

Other relevant policies

School Behaviour policy

North Star Academy Trust safeguarding policy

North Star Academy Trust whistleblowing policy

North Star Academy Trust staff code of conduct

The role of Staff

To be familiar with this policy. To ensure that behaviour management in the school is an active process that anticipates the children's needs and meets these where possible before acting out behaviour becomes extreme.

To ensure that any measure of discipline or control is used with thought and care in the best interest of the child(ren).

To reflect on their own practice and to be a critical friend to colleagues.

To contribute to developing best practice, including being open to changing and improving their own practice on an ongoing basis.

The role of the Senior Leadership Team within each School

The leadership team needs to know and understand what is happening in the school, including the way individual children are supported, how groups are contained and what interventions, sanctions, approaches and relationships are in place to support positive behaviour. This involves ensuring sufficient oversight, monitoring and accountability.

The Engagement Team Lead has delegated responsibility to monitor and lead the development of best practice in behaviour management including physical interventions and use of restraint. This is not their responsibility alone; their role is to provide internal consultation and observation alongside close-in support and guidance.

The Engagement Team Lead and the Assistant Headteacher hold oversight of the risk assessments and supporting behaviour plans for each child and directly monitor the recording of incidents. The Engagement Team Lead monitors recording systems and maintain the systems used to ensure practice and recording is of the highest standard.

The role of Central Team and Executive Leadership Team

All physical intervention trackers will be monitored fortnightly by the Team Teach Lead within the Central Team. He/she will provide a fortnightly report to the Executive Team, this information will include the number of physical interventions in each school, any injuries that have occurred and any other causes for concern.

Role of the governing body

The Governors remain focussed on the effectiveness of the school in working safely with and reducing children's challenging behaviours. They review this policy annually.